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## Perception, power, plays, and print: Charles II and the restoration theatre of consensus

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PERCEPTION, POWER, PLAYS, AND PRINT:  
CHARLES II AND THE RESTORATION THEATRE OF CONSENSUS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Theatre

by  
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May 2012

## DEDICATION

For Carrie and James

## PREFACE

The use of dates in this study will be in the new style; thus, the beginning of each year will be assumed to be January 1. Also, I have used modern published editions of plays where possible. Otherwise I have cited the highest quality reproduction of the originals that I could locate.

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to establish the importance of Charles II in the shaping and evolution of Restoration theatre. Even more so than the playwrights themselves, Charles II determined the future of the theatre, both by his conscious efforts to do so, as well as unintentionally through his own behavior and image. The tradition of Restoration theatre began in 1660 with Charles's efforts at establishing a consensus theatre, in which it would appear that he enjoyed unanimous support for his return to England from exile. Consensus theatre was determined by the perception of Charles's rule and character, his power to manipulate the new theatre companies and which playwrights wrote and what they wrote, and his person, or popular image. This attempt at consensus began to fail within a few years of Charles's coming, although his image continued to dominate the theatre, even if only through sometimes negative reactions to his personal image. This influence on theatre continued until his death in 1685.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

On April 22, 1661, England's King Charles II passed through the London streets to celebrate his return from exile, his family's restoration to the English throne, and his formal acceptance of the English crown, which was to be bestowed upon him the following day. On his way from the Tower of London to the Palace at Whitehall, he rode past cheering throngs of celebrants, and at intervals along the route he passed beneath four specially erected triumphal arches. Along the way he was entertained, celebrated, and hailed by special entertainments of many kinds, including poems, songs, and dramatic representations. England had never seen anything quite like it. Although Charles had returned from exile to rule the kingdom nearly a year previously, sufficient time had been given to shape this highly anticipated event into an unprecedented spectacle. Diarist John Evelyn witnessed the scene personally:

This magnificent train on horseback, as rich as embroidery, velvet, cloth of gold and silver, and jewels, could make them and their prancing horses, proceeded through the streets strewn with flowers, houses hung with rich tapestry, windows and balconies full of ladies; the London militia lining the ways, and the several companies, with their banners and loud music, ranked in their orders; the fountains running wine, bells ringing, with speeches made at the several triumphal arches...(Evelyn 1: 354-5)

Samuel Pepys wrote about the procession, which he also witnessed, in his own diary: "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" (Pepys 2: 83). After the coronation, Pepys remarked that "Now after all this, I can say that besides the pleasure of the sight of these glorious things, I may now shut my eyes against any other objects, nor for the future trouble myself to see things of state and shew, as being sure never to see the like again in this world" (88).

Even though this celebration came very early in Charles II's reign, this event was "the single most expensive and elaborate ceremony of Charles II's life" (Keay 7). Thus was the coronation of great import to Charles II and his supporters at the beginning of the reign, an event



the likes of which were all the more crucial since it represented not only the restoration of Charles personally but of the monarchy itself. Borne of sentiments still loyal to the crown, spectacles such as this were public apparatuses designed to create and perpetuate hegemony among the English subjects, subjugating them in a festival atmosphere of spectacle that would keep them from rebelling against the new regime and, if successful in the extreme, would allow Charles to enjoy the type of near-absolutism that his Stuart predecessors had striven for, and which his cousin Louis XIV of France eventually achieved.

Indeed, according to Richard Ollard, “The pursuit of obvious pleasures and the cultivation of a certain elegance in the externals of life were, so far as those closest to him could see, [Charles’s] principal concerns” (Ollard 113). Ollard notes also that “Part of Charles II’s power of historical attraction derives from the consistency with which he put pleasure before virtue” (100). This attitude can only be marginally surprising given that Charles, after his father and predecessor Charles I had been tried and executed for treason, had lived in relative poverty while living in exile abroad, and had narrowly escaped losing his life attempting to regain the crown before escaping from Oliver Cromwell’s soldiers after the Battle of Worcester in 1651. Much of what spectacles like the coronation procession were about, then, were essentially Charles’s determination to avoid a fate like that of his father’s, and, importantly, freedom to do as he pleased, even if it did not seem so at the time.

The term hegemony in the context of Charles II’s return and goals of a rule free from revolution and full of lavishness for himself refers to the definition of the term by theorists such as Antonio Gramsci and Louis Althusser, in which the conquering of subaltern groups, in this case the English subjects, by a dominant group, manifested by the crown and aristocracy, occurs by their own consent, or, as Marcia Landy describes, “the interdependence of groups in power

and the subaltern.” This consent, as Landy explains, is “necessary for understanding the creation of hegemony, and, therefore, for understanding resistances to change as well as identifying collusion with and opposition to existing institutions” (Landy 16). Gramsci describes this consent as “spontaneous” and “given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group.” Further, according to Gramsci, this consent traditionally comes from the “prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production” (Gramsci 12). This particular point, although founded in the Marxist politics of the pre-World War II era and referring specifically to capitalist societies, speaks to this study because, as we will see, the prestige of the crown worked to control the masses in just this way, and Charles II’s allies were involved in the production of much propaganda, such as print and the theatre. And while the Crown’s motives were in many ways personal and not purely economic—Charles II was a well-known philanderer and it has been well-documented that he seemed bored with state affairs—the king needed to control the means of production, trade, and foreign policy in order to stave off potential rebellion and live the lavish lifestyle he desired and that he had been deprived of while in exile.

We can see this implementation of hegemony in public spectacles such as the coronational procession. Public spectacles such as this one are described by Louis Althusser as the ideological state apparatus, or ISA, (Althusser 143). They include institutions such as religion, education, the family, and culture; these cultural aspects of life consist of literature, the arts, sports, and so on, but can also be seen in gatherings of the variety seen here, as well as other public spectacles, such as the theatre. In this single event of Charles II’s coronation procession, we see virtually every method, device, and strategy, including that of the theatrical, to promote

Charles II the person, his court, and his government, as the rightful head of a just and Godly order. We can see these implementations of hegemony in firsthand accounts of the coronation processon. Amateur historian and London barber Thomas Rugg, like Evelyn and Pepys, personally witnessed the festivities, and recorded a description of a speech to Charles at the beginning of the procession revealing the supposed mood of unanimous jubilation at the Restoration. Spoken by a “blew coat boy of Christs Hospital in St. Pauls church yeard” (Rugg 169), the speech extols of the nation’s

...expression of our joy for your Majesties wonderfull preservation in your absence, your safe arrival to us, and your presence amonge us. This yeare may well be called the yeare of wonders and this day of your solemnity may be termed the birthday of Englands happinesse and therefore deserves to be registred in the kalender of the hearts of all loyal subjects...(170)

Rugg writes also of a second speech, this time by “Sir William Wylde, Knight and Baronet, one of his Majestys Serjeants-at-Law and Recorder of the Citty of London” (170), who speaks of the dark times that are seen to be ebbing away at the return of the king:

It is not Longe since, most mighty prince, but yet twas long, Sir, that for want of your royal presence your people [sic] were miserably intangled in and infested with many sad and destructive revolutions, such that thereby so violent a sea of confusion a[nd] disorder was broke in upon them that their lives, liberties, estates, and that which is most deare to all good men, theire very religion (the best reformed throughout the world), were ready to have been swallowed up. But no sooner did your glorious person appear amongst them but those furious watters did abate and that black cloud of misery a[nd] calamity, from thence exhaled and ready to fall upon them, was dispersed and gon, and they in a full careere to theire pristine glory and happiness. (171)

Wylde ends by reiterating the right of Charles to rule over England:

...but to the everlasting prays [sic] of our good God wee have now not only a kinge amongst us, but such a kinge which is a blessinge to his people, not of a mushroom descent but the son of nobles of most royal stemme, not intituled to his kingdoms by perjury and villany but by an ancient and undoubted right, a kinge of whom it may be truly said that had all that clemency, goodness and sweetness of temper proper to a prince and advantageous to a people been totally lost, there are all reunited and concentrated in his royal person. (171)

Thus the procession reflects the celebratory nature of the Restoration that Charles and his supporters wanted to demonstrate before the people, reiterating the “villainy” that took his father from the throne and executed him, and the supposed universal joy that accompanied the king’s return to his kingdom in triumph and healing. The spectacle, of course, was not just for the entertainment of the new king; it was propaganda for all London to hear again that their rightful and God-appointed king had been restored, bringing with him the promise of peace and happiness. Theatre theorist Zygmunt Hubner illuminates just such spectacles, intimating their significance as near-religious ceremonies, recalling the words of Marx: “Mass propaganda has in the past fulfilled the role of ‘the opium of the people,’ and it continues to do so. The religious element is of great significance in propaganda. It aims at raising the ruler above the people, extolling his heroic deeds and sacralizing his person” (Hubner 101-2). This is exactly what the procession was about: using a celebratory event as a spectacle to induce the throngs to believe that each one of them should and did rejoice at the coming (or second coming) of King Charles II.

The coronation further invited hegemonic discourse by heralding the Restoration in a number of other ways, including predictably undermining the old days of civil war and the Interregnum, which had ousted the monarchy, as unnatural and evil. On his trip through the city, Charles witnessed a number of theatrical representations which in part served this purpose. At the first triumphal arch, Charles beheld two women portraying Rebellion and Confusion. The former rode on a hydra, representing the evils of a government with many heads, instead of the natural one, and her companion, Confusion, was “a deformed shape,” and “habited in a Garment of severall ill-matched Colours, and put on the wrong way; on her Head, Ruines of Castles; torn

Crowns, and broken Scepters in each Hand” (Ogilby 13). Then Rebellion spoke to Charles in mock defiance:

Stand! Stand! who’ere you are! this Stage is Ours,  
...You must Me know  
To Kings, and Monarchy a deadly Fo...  
I am Hell’s Daughter, Satan’s Eldest Child,  
When I first cry’d, the Powers of Darkness smil’d,  
And my Glad Father, Thund’ring at my Birth,  
Unhinge’d the Poles, and shook the fixed Earth. (Ogilby 41)

Here we see that the stage, metaphorically representative of the whole of England, is wrongfully claimed by Rebellion, and allied to Satan who had commanded Rebellion and Confusion to infect the world with treason and rebellion. But a third character, Monarchy, vanquishes her and welcomes Charles through the arch, and fittingly to his rightful place on the stage:

To Hell, foul fiend, shrink from this glorious Light,  
And hide thy Head in everlasting Night.  
Enter in Safety, Royal Sir, this Arch,  
And through your joyful Streets in Triumph march;  
Enter our Sun, our Comfort, and our Life.  
No more these Walls shall breed Intestine Strife:  
Henceforth Your People onely shall contend  
In Loyalty each other to transcend.  
May Your Great Actions, and immortal Name,  
Be the whole Business, and Delight of Fame.  
May You, and Yours, in a Perpetual calm  
Be Crown’d with Laurel, and Triumphant Palm,  
And all Confess, whilst they in you are Blest,  
I, MONARCHY, of Governments am Best. (43)

The dramatic representation of allegorical figures who speak as characters is highly indicative of the theatrical and spectacular nature that only a monarch like Charles II could introduce and influence. It further demonstrates the ideas of royalist hegemony that Charles’s royalists wished to disseminate.

In addition to the discrediting of the old order, the coronation procession perhaps most importantly worked to unite the English into some sense of unanimity by restoring and reviving a

flagging Stuart legacy of weakness and defeat. An important part of this in the procession was depicting the oak as the symbol of Restoration providence. The oak had been a royalist symbol since 1651, when Charles II, in his attempt to regain the crown that his father had lost, had been defeated at Worcester, and been forced to flee England, hiding out in disguise for many days from Oliver Cromwell's soldiers. During his flight and escape, Charles had spent time hiding in an oak tree. The fateful oak, many times heralded since the Restoration year, transformed from a mark of humiliation to a symbol of God's intention that Charles should one day rule. The oak was depicted on one of the arches, and also used "In allusion to His Majestie's Royal *Navy*, those Floating Garrisons made of Oak" (Ogilby 37), reminding the crowd of the great importance of a strong navy in order for Charles's nationalistic foreign trade and influence to take hold.

Continuing this naval theme of great influence over the world, a person representing the Thames confesses to Charles:

You are our *Neptune*, every Port, and Bay  
Your Chambers: the whole Sea is Your High-way.  
Though sev'ral Nations boast their Strength on Land,  
Yet You alone the Wat'ry World command. (104)

This was followed by a group of seamen who flattered Charles as the naval ruler of the world:

King CHARLES, King CHARLES, great Neptune of the Main!  
Thy Royal Navy rig,  
And We'll not care a Fig  
For France, for France, the Netherlands, nor Spain.  
The Turk, who looks so big,  
We'll whip him like a Gig  
About the Mediterrane;  
His Gallies all sunk, or ta'ne.  
We'll seize on their Goods, and their Monies...(107)

In addition to his right to rule and his naval might, the coronation processional also took pains to draw attention to Charles's compassion, referring to his granting of indemnity to those who had supported the execution of Charles I, excepting only a select few transgressors. Thus,

the seamen refer to Charles as “The King of all Compassion” (109). This compassion, royalists urged, would be a catalyst in bringing the nation into a new peaceful, plentiful, and harmonious new age, which had not been seen in England for a generation. To this end, an image of Concord is depicted on the arch, with a “Serpent struggling” at her feet, “which she seems to tread down” (115). Then Concord, depicted now as a character, along with Truth and Love, sings a song to Charles, part of which talks of his disarming features and the peace he will bring to the realm:

His Brow, His Brow,  
Bids your Hearts, as well as Hands,  
Together joyn,  
Together joyning bless these Lands;  
Peace, and Concord, never poor,  
Will make with Wealth these Streets to shine,  
Ships freight with Spice, and Golden Ore,  
Your Fields with Honey, Milk, and Wine,  
To supply our Neighbours Store. (136)

It is this idea of concord, peace, and wealth which had been trumpeted even before the new king had landed in England, that ended the processional.

The final arch through which Charles passed specifically represented these times of prosperity that England was supposedly undergoing. The arch depicted the Garden of Plenty, perhaps a reincarnation of Eden, representative of a new golden age ushered in by the restoration of the house of Stuart. A performer representing Plenty ended the day’s festivities, addressed the king with praise, and declared the Golden Age of prosperity as officially upon the realm:

Great Sir, the Star, which at Your Happy Birth  
Joy’d with his Beams (at Noon) the wond’ring Earth,  
Did with auspicious lustre, then, presage  
The glitt’ring plenty of this Golden Age;  
The Clouds blown o’re, which long our joys o’recast,  
And the sad Winter of Your absence past...  
And Bacchus is so lavish of his Store,  
That Wine flows now, where Water ran before.  
Thus Seasons, Men, and Gods their Joy express;  
To see Your Triumph, and our Happiness. (165)

The great spectacle of Charles's coronation, then, reveals in miniature comprehensively how the royalist allies of Charles and the Restoration sought to bring England's people, which it appears were more in support of the restoration than not, under a cultural hegemony of control, encouraging the supposedly spontaneous revelry that surrounded the calculated design of the event. Therefore, the procession is an example of how spectacles operated as ideological state apparatuses that the masses seemed to welcome. This event served to project the illusion of near unanimity when a mere majority actually wished for a restoration of the Stuart line.

This strategy of hegemony looked to be successful at first, as the Restoration of Charles II already had a great deal of support, as historian Tim Harris explains: "it is difficult to find hard evidence to deny that by the spring of 1660 most Londoners did want the return of Charles II" (Harris, *London Crowds* 37). Thus, the season was ripe for Charles to use such occasions as the coronation to strengthen his position as king, using the king's royal image and the pains of the past to bring about hegemony in England. In helping the king accomplish this, royalists sought to discredit the Commonwealth and Protectorate, to recast the images of Charles I and Charles II from their former shame into great acclaim, and to demonstrate the ushering in of a new Golden Age of England, as newly prosperous and peaceful (except to those foreign powers that would dare oppose them), devoid of rebellion and alive with harmony among its people. Such events were designed to lure subjects into a celebratory era in which they would not even consider the merits of any other system of government. If successful, not only would such apparatuses of spectacle work to avoid a disastrous rebellion like that which his father Charles I endured, they would also bring the promise of great favor for those who invented, produced, and performed such events.



## The Restoration and Hegemonic Spectacle

Not surprisingly, the months surrounding the Restoration teemed with glorious spectacle; the age itself could be called great theatre. Many scholars have pointed out the celebratory nature of the Restoration, with its myriad celebrations and seemingly spontaneous outpourings of jubilation, all surrounding the return of the king. London at this time has been described as having a “spirit of carnival,” which, importantly, “The restored regime had a very deliberate interest in maintaining...” (Keeble 42-3). Paula Backscheider, whose work on Restoration spectacles provides a very thorough look at this spirit of spectacle, notes that “The spectacles of the coronation year gradually rewrote the nation’s history and became increasingly aggressive in the presentation of Charles’s restoration as dynastic apotheosis” (Backscheider 19).

Sights and sounds commemorating this atmosphere of transformation abounded from the first days of the Restoration. When Charles was proclaimed king in London for the first time, “the people did shout and holow and make such grat expresions of joy,” and “that night was spent with the greatest of joy that could be expressed. All the bells in the Citty range... numberless of bonfiers, great gunes playing from the Tower, great store of wine give[n] by many and att evry bonefier beere, where they dranke his Majesties health, plentifull” (Rugg 80). On May 29, 1660, the day Charles returned triumphantly to England, there was a similar outpouring of jubilation. John Evelyn reports how the army appeared in the streets “with a triumph of above 20,000 horse and foot, brandishing their swords, and shouting with inexpressible joy; the ways strewed with flowers, the bells ringing, the streets hung with tapestry.” His personal feelings of the event reveal his own gratification: “I stood in the Strand and beheld it, and blessed God... it was the Lord's doing, for such a restoration was never mentioned in any history, ancient or modern...nor so joyful a day and so bright ever seen in this nation, this happening when to

expect or effect it was past all human policy” (Evelyn 1: 341). In addition to the celebrations of the king’s coming, there were rituals of invective and hatred against the former regime of Oliver Cromwell. Citizens burned effigies of Cromwell, his wife, and the state arms (Harris, *London Crowds* 39-40); Cromwell’s body, along with those of the other regicides, were also exhumed and desecrated:

This day (O the stupendous and inscrutable judgments of God!) were the carcasses of those arch-rebels, Cromwell, Bradshawe (the judge who condemned his Majesty), and Ireton (son-in-law to the Usurper), dragged out of their superb tombs in Westminster among the Kings, to Tyburn, and hanged on the gallows there from nine in the morning till six at night, and then buried under that fatal and ignominious monument in a deep pit...(Evelyn1: 350)

Rugg reports that “Oliver Cromwels vault beeing’ [sic] broke open, the people crowed very much to see him, who gave sixpence a peece for to see him” (143). Rugg noted later that “The 3 heads [of] Oliver Cromwell, John Bradshaw, and Henery Ireton was sett upon poles on the top of Westminster Hall by the common hangman” (146). Historian N.H. Keeble captures the hegemonic reality of these times, which were masked by such wonders:

The uniformity and generality of the joy so much insisted on in such memoirs gives the impression that it was entirely spontaneous and universally genuine. The people welcomed Charles with ‘an unanimous consent’, they proclaimed him with ‘universal alacrity’ and they ‘exhausted themselves in festivals and rejoicings for his return’...The assertive confidence of the celebratory pageantry in fact disguised the fragility of the Restoration, the vociferous acclaim with which it was welcomed the very uncertainty of its popular support, the confidence of its monarchical imagery the doubtfulness of the monarchy’s durability. (Keeble 46)

Keeble here importantly outlines what a tenuous hold on the crown that Charles had at the time, masked by the fierceness of the spectacle. Given this delicacy that Keeble describes, Charles and those who supported him needed to use the advantage of the crowd and the theatrical nature of the moment to bolster his chances at continuing to reign for the rest of his life, which he hoped would be a long time.

This spirit of celebration went beyond live spectacles, and into other mediums. Royalist print served the purposes of hegemony very well, and was a tradition that dated from before the Interregnum. The restored theatre also trumpeted the return of the monarchy, even as it celebrated its own reappearance from banishment; the spectacular nature of the times allowed for the stage to thrive in the same manner as the crown, and through the same kind of seeming unanimity that we have been discussing thus far. All these mediums were propagandistic tools designed to allow Charles first to maintain his crown, and secondly to essentially do as he pleased with it. This study is especially concerned with the restored theatre as it was affected by these changes, especially regarding the figure of Charles II.

### Consensus

The blatant posturing of spectacle by Charles II and his adherents to instill a hegemonic control over the hearts of England on behalf of the restored monarch is a typical example of what we will call consensus. Consensus may be here defined as the invented appearance of universal support for Charles II's continued rightful rule and the recovery of rights that the previous Stuarts, especially his father Charles I, had lost. Consensus in this context, as we will see, goes far beyond Charles II's "hands-on" directives regarding the writing and production of plays, and other policies such as the attempted control of print; his very person, as well as the way he was perceived by his subjects, also shaped consensus in the early Restoration. Thus, details of Charles's reign such as how and when he came to power, how his subjects interacted with his unique iconic status, and how ultimately many blamed him for England's misfortunes *directly* determined the path that Restoration theatre took as the newness of the Restoration wore off. This concept of consensus demonstrates the type of hegemony that Gramsci described; he

challenged the notion of the “power of the state apparatuses as the major force in creating consensus,” noting that social and cultural apparatuses made a strong contribution to it as well (Landy 18). Simply put, consensus is the *attitude* that would bring about hegemony, or *control*, such that Charles’s throne would not be endangered and he could rule as he pleased.

Thus, as the present work will show, theatre, spectacle, and print, as well as the perceived image of the king, were driving forces in creating a feigned unity of support for the Restoration and the king. This study will demonstrate how Charles II, both the monarch and the man, *literally* shaped Restoration theatre, directly by way of consensus through his attempted control of the theatre, as well as indirectly through his own personal behavior, status, and celebrity. Charles ultimately failed to establish the desired consensus; this is the last stage in what may be called the consensus sequence. The consensus sequence can be seen in each aspect of print and plays which I examine in this analysis. It begins at Cromwell’s death in 1658 with great support for the Restoration which royalists seized upon, but begins to flag within two years of his accession. Ultimately, as we can see by 1665-6, consensus has failed, though without Charles losing his crown. The repetition of the sequence demonstrates that while Charles was not the physical author of any extant Restoration plays, he far more than any other figure shaped the rich tradition of Restoration theatre that has been passed down to us today.

This work looks at theatricals and printed matter from the time of Oliver Cromwell’s death in 1658, through Charles’s Restoration and reopening of patent theatres, and ending with the closure of the theatres due to the plague in 1665, to show how hegemonic consensus politics and the failure to successfully implement them worked to shape the theatre. By 1665-6 it is clear that even some of Charles’s most sycophantic supporters at his restoration wavered in their confidence regarding Charles’s character and capability in ruling the nation, and that consensus

was failing; consensus in fact never really existed, and therefore total hegemony was never a threat, though in the first year or so of the Restoration it may have appeared thus. Noted theatre historian Robert Hume also notes the closings due to the plague as a turning point in a larger unique period encompassing the reign of Charles II: “The years 1660-5 see clear signs of...new directions. Then the theatres were closed for nearly a year and a half on account of the plague, and thereafter one finds ...Carolean... drama” (Hume 7), meaning a more refined form moving away from the revivals and influences left over from the reign of Charles I and fully indicative of the later years of Charles II’s reign. Further, Hume importantly points out this division of the 1660s as problematic in scholarship, noting that “The drama of the sixties is conveniently divided into two periods by the closing of the theatres from June 1665 to October 1666 on account of plague. Critics have usually paid little attention to plays from the earlier period” (Hume 238). The omission of attention to these earliest works could be a key reason why some scholarship tends to ignore the necessity of examining Charles as the catalyst, if not originator, of Restoration drama.

### Charles II as Restoration Theatre

The evidence that this study has shown thus far suggests that the analysis of Restoration theatre must also be a close study of Charles II himself; again this is true not merely of his policies in regards to plays, playwrights, and playhouses, but in his very nature as a man. Scholars of Restoration theatre recognize the figure of the king in the development of Restoration drama and other written works, but ignore his influence beyond a few important decisions. Most seem to fall short of looking at the new king as the very reason Restoration theatre emerged and developed as it did; in many ways the monarchy and the theatre were

parallel restorations. Derek Hughes has it right when he claims that “The stage and the monarchy were inseparably suppressed and inseparably restored, and for much of the 1660s the twin restorations remained ostentatiously linked, as play after play reenacted and reconsecrated the miracle of [the Restoration]” (Hughes, *English Drama* 1). Aparna Dharwadker writes that “Since king and stage were also restored together in 1660, theatre becomes, on royalist rhetoric, the cultural institution uniquely suited to the celebration of monarchy...” (Dharwadker 141).

The reading of the new and adapted plays of the Restoration, especially early on, reveals these parallels between plots and the royalist version of history. Robert Hume perhaps best recognizes the importance of Charles II on the Restoration; he posits that the suggestion of Charles II’s reign being constituted as “Restoration theatre” has merit (Hume 5). In addition, he argues that the theatre of the early Restoration is a mix of Caroline (that of Charles I’s reign) and new Carolean (Charles II) influences which cannot be denied, that the Caroline drama disappeared after 1665, and that “Restoration drama proper is basically Carolean drama...” (6). His acceptance of calling “Restoration theatre” that which encompasses the years that Charles II sat on the throne suggests that Charles II’s influence was indeed crucial in shaping the theatre of the period. Hume also makes a very important observation regarding the popular nature of Restoration theatre which we would be wise to remember. He writes, “Even though the plays have social/political commentary, and talk about the philosophy of the time, at the core they are mostly for entertainment, not deep meaning... These late seventeenth-century plays are highly conventional, imitative, and repetitive; they are also extremely effective and enjoyable entertainment. That is what they were written for” (Hume 31).

Hubner’s own theory echoes Hume’s point regarding theatre as entertainment, reminding us that “There is no exception to the rule: he who pays has the last say. It is naïve to think that a

theater dependent solely on box-office receipts enjoys absolute freedom in the expression of political views” (Hubner 20). He further illuminates this point:

The individual views and sympathies of the artists do not play a significant role in this matter. If the existence of the theater is dependent on box-office receipts, it theoretically acquires greater freedom, and yet most often this is an illusory freedom, since the clientele comes from the ruling social classes, to whom the thought of undermining the existing system would be absolutely inconceivable. (Hubner 106)

Restoration theatre reflects just this idea; it matters little what the playwrights actually believed, only what they needed to do to have their plays performed and to get into and stay within the good graces of the king. As we will see, many had the further motivation of erasing memories of their lack of undying support for the king.

Indeed, the fact that the plays were entertainment made hegemonic consensus all the more possible for the new Restoration playwrights, given that a popular entertainment which had been banned for nearly two decades was back and highly visible. Some scholars, however, analyze the plays more for clues on authors’ views on government, such as Susan Staves, who combats what she calls the “antiintellectualism” of scholars like Hume who react “against what they perceive as the overinterpretation of certain Restoration plays.” She believes that authors like Hume stress plays as entertainment and “deprecate thoughts of their profundity” (Staves xv). While Staves is correct in stressing the political importance of Restoration plays, Hume’s analysis makes more sense, as royalist use of playhouses to spread a specific message would be less effective were the plays intended to be less than highly entertaining. In fact, Hume does actually concede that “The plays reflect theatrical, political, and social conditions, a point easy to forget when reading the texts in isolation,” but still asserts that “The drama of this period was *popular entertainment*, not for the masses (it being both expensive and ungodly)...”(Hume 29).

Even so, the theatre still reached a good number, especially those of the higher castes of society (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 105). Hume is correct in emphasizing the popular nature of Restoration theatre versus a more complex reading from Staves, whose book “tries to understand how changes in ideas about authority were shaped by common cultural experiences” amongst the learned class, including playwrights (Staves xvi). She adamantly asserts that the plays were “often intensely political and...much of their interest lies in their concern with the problems of political authority and obligation” (47), which is true insofar as it dealt with Charles II, and not much concerning any deeper political ideologies that were developing. As confidence in Charles II waned, critiques of monarchy were really critiques of the monarch. A case could be made for the introduction of more politically savvy works later in Charles’s reign, but essentially Restoration theatre reflects Charles II the man, and vice versa. To further bolster this point, I may also point out that, as we can see from the plays of the first years of the Restoration, authors are typically sycophantic in their praise of the monarch in their works; this should not be surprising at all, given the high popularity of the Restoration in 1660 and the strategies in place at that time for the perpetuation of hegemony.

Authors tailored their plays to simultaneously flatter the king and to entertain; it is unlikely that audiences would have gone to the theatre if they did not think the new plays were entertaining. That there were so many revivals of older plays, and that these plays continued to be revived and were performed alongside new plays as the Restoration moved forward strongly suggests that new political ideologies were not what the playwrights were after; it seems clear that they were seeking to insert Charles II’s consensus within an entertaining medium that would reach numbers of people. This does not necessarily mean they agreed with him; many were acting out of their own self-interest. In attempting to establish consensus, playwrights had a



chance to improve their own standing in the new king's circle. Staves charges that Hume and others view the plays as apolitical; on the contrary, they can be overtly and transparently political, reflecting more than just the nature of the times. Staves's assertion that shifts in style of plays in the Restoration are attributed to ideological changes (Staves 51) does not take the person of Charles II into enough account, focusing instead on the playwrights' intent to disseminate political ideology rather than hegemonic consensus, and later, alternate distaste with the king's rule and commentary on his and his court's behavior. If there were ideological changes reflected in the plays, they came about as a result of Charles II. The contention between entertainment versus authorial ideology is illuminated by Hubner's assertion that "Art is not involved directly in political action; its task is rather to glorify the state in the person of the King and to maintain the prestige of the monarchy" (Hubner 86). This is what we see in Restoration theatre; the politics here again center on the person of Charles II and are reflective of consensus politics, as we shall see.

Another analysis of Restoration theatre focuses upon the recovery of aristocratic ideology after civil war and the interregnum. J. Douglas Canfield's study of Restoration "tragedy" states that it generally "marks a desperate reactionary attempt after the English Civil War to reinscribe feudal, aristocratic, monarchical ideology" (Canfield, *Heroes and States* 1). He argues that both tragedy and comedy are "essentially conservative, reaffirming aristocratic ideology in the teeth of challenges" (1) until the Glorious Revolution ended the brief rule of Charles's brother, James II. Canfield is correct concerning the aristocratic influence; a good number of the plays were written by aristocrats and others who stood to gain from the change of government. At the heart of the aristocratic ideology of the plays is the ultimate aristocrat, Charles II, from which authors hope to gain favor.

Nancy Klein Maguire sees Restoration serious forms of drama, all of which she identifies as “tragicomedy,” as the descendants of earlier traditional tragedy and also the intensely royalist Stuart court masques, which were common during the reign of Charles I. She does alight upon the importance of the king in Restoration theatre, stating that “...both theatre and monarchy were beginning anew in 1660 and followed a parallel process in their post-Restoration rehabilitation” (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 1). Whether or not “The Restoration was a futile attempt to reinstate the Caroline masque-myth” (218), as Maguire believes, she does identify the masque as an important hegemonic device which Charles II’s predecessors, especially his father, employed to reinforce their power and godlike nature in the order of the universe. It is this kind of supremacy, along with all the other devices of the kind which we saw in the coronation, that permeated the theatre. Maguire, however, also asserts that “after 1649, kings maintained power, at least in plays, by political, social, and economic necessity rather than by divine right” (219), positing that Restoration playwrights were attempting to reconcile politically the opposing ideas of regicide and restoration (215). Again, while elements of this are absolutely true, especially after the first few years of the Restoration, this analysis fails to fully consider Charles as its main focus, instead fixing on the playwrights and their ideals. It seems more prudent to consider that the playwrights wrote what they did the way they did because of the king; this is reflected in the drama even when playwrights were not pleased with his rule, as later chapters will reveal.

Paula Backscheider also sees playwrights as attempting to shape politics. Correctly noting the importance of drama to Charles in the Restoration, she observes that “In the early Restoration, when the theater openly accepted its function as a site of distribution and interpretation of news, the theater was a hegemonic apparatus that was being used to influence a critical public in order to legitimate an ideology” (Backscheider 65). The ideology, as we have

previously discussed, is the consensus idea that Charles should rule, and that he is inaugurating a new and glorious period in English history. Bakscheider also writes that the king “attempted to use theater in its broadest sense to help establish his conception of the monarchy and its prerogatives, but that this effort was met by the corrective tropes and themes of writers who had spent the Commonwealth period in England and held a different idea of the monarchy and, more significantly, of the future” (Bakscheider xiii). Like Maguire, Bakscheider’s analysis, while correct in considering monarchy as the subject at the center of the drama, does not sufficiently consider the man Charles Stuart as the most influential figure, and like Maguire, puts more emphasis on the dramatists. Analyses such as these by Maguire and Bakscheider, as Hume has described, underestimate the entertainment feature of drama, and also, as I have suggested above and throughout this work, fall short of demonstrating that Charles himself, in ways he both consciously attempted and unwittingly succeeded, determined the future of Restoration theatre.

### Historical Overview

Restoration theatre came in the midst of a very volatile period in Britain’s history. The country had been through a series of civil wars, a king had been executed, and different forms of government succeeded it. After the Restoration, seventeenth-century England still had one more transfer of power after James II left England, afraid that the same fate that befell his father Charles I would happen to him. Not surprisingly, a great deal of printed matter and plays dealt with these issues both directly and indirectly. The trauma of the times really seems to have lingered in the literature of the second half of the seventeenth century. What follows is a brief overview of the events surrounding the period that this work is concerned with.

From the beginning of the reign of Charles I in 1625, the king had tensions with his various parliaments, particularly over finances. A repeating scenario played out: Charles needed money to finance various wars, but Parliament demanded a redress of grievances (such as its opposition of forced loans levied by the king) before they voted any taxes, and Charles would dissolve or prorogue Parliament to avoid doing so. In 1629, Charles resolved to rule without Parliament, which he did for the next eleven years. In addition to allowing Charles to take control of the kingdom's financial affairs, this Personal Rule, as it is known, gave the king freedom to reform the Anglican church, another sore topic for the king's enemies; this particularly touched the Puritans, who felt that the Arminianism of Charles and his new Archbishop William Laud was tantamount to popery. It has been written that although Charles and Archbishop Laud were not advocating popery, they were reshaping the Anglican Church so as to exclude their opponents (Lockyer 225).

Charles I's Personal Rule became shaky with the coming of the so-called Bishops' Wars. Many Scots felt that the king's religious reforms were irreconcilable with their own Protestantism; thus, a group of Scots called the Covenanters pledged to preserve their own church. Both the king and the Covenanters prepared for armed conflict, though it appears that neither side was keen on going to war (Russell, *Fall* 66) at that time. The best move was for the Covenanters to appeal to their sympathizers in England (60), who were many, and they succeeded. Events in Scotland forced Charles to call a new Parliament in 1640 to finance a campaign against the invading Covenanters. This Short Parliament, as it came to be known, demanded that its grievances of church reform and taxation be addressed before granting any funds, and amidst growing hostility Charles dissolved the Short Parliament after less than a month. Later in 1640, Charles's army met defeat from Covenanter forces at Newburn, and he

was compelled to call another Parliament for funds. This became the Long Parliament, which sat for over a decade. The Long Parliament succeeded largely in taking away many of Charles's prerogative powers, and severely curtailed the crown's ability to govern without Parliament through various measures that eventually they enacted without the king's consent. When the king failed to control Parliament and was unsuccessful in arresting five of its members who were considered leaders against him, war became imminent.

What is now known as the First Civil War began in 1642 and ended in 1646 with Charles's surrender, after his forces were defeated by armies whose members included the Covenanters and the modern, parliament-backed New Model Army, whose creation proved decisive. Desperate, Charles fled to the Scots, hoping to gain their loyalty through concessions; they eventually turned him over to Parliament and thus the king became a prisoner in his own kingdom. While captive, Charles secretly tried to turn the factions of his captors against each other and in exchange for imposing Presbyterianism over the English, the Scots sent an army to defeat the Parliamentarians. This coincided with a number of rebellions in England and Wales, which Lieutenant General Oliver Cromwell put down before defeating the Scots army, ending the Second Civil War. The question of whether Parliament should negotiate a settlement with Charles was eventually decided by Pride's Purge, whereby a large number of members of parliament were forcibly excluded by the army from sitting in Parliament, and over forty arrested (Kishlansky 185). With so many excluded members seemingly sympathetic to Charles, this virtually guaranteed that Charles would be brought to trial before the newly-created High Court of Justice. Because of Charles's obstinacy in refusing to negotiate and his refusal to acknowledge the legality of the body that tried him, he was sentenced to execution and beheaded on January 30, 1649. With no king left, Parliament abolished the monarchy as well as the House of Lords,

setting England up as a Commonwealth. The new government reflected its Puritan components, establishing acts protecting observance of the Lord's Day, and acts against blasphemy and adultery. This included the creation of orders abolishing plays and playhouses in 1642 and 1648.

The king's eldest son, Charles, Prince of Wales, the future Charles II, was to be recognized as the King of Scotland (Charles I had been the king of both Scotland and England simultaneously, and the Scots had not sanctioned the execution of their king), and he wanted to use his Scots crown to invade England and take back his father's lost kingdom. Before he could take his place as Scots king, he had to concede to the Treaty of Breda in 1650, in which he promised, as had his father, to impose Presbyterianism in the kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland, among other concessions. This led to what is sometimes called the Third Civil War. Charles II's predominantly Scottish forces suffered a number of defeats to Oliver Cromwell's Parliamentary forces, the last one at Worcester in 1651, where Charles, having personally commanded his own forces, had to flee the city after his army succumbed to superior numbers. Forced to don a disguise, Charles avoided capture for several weeks before making it safely to the continent.

After subduing the Scots and Irish, and uniting the Scots and English nations, England became a Protectorate in 1653, with Cromwell as Lord Protector. Cromwell ruled as the head of the Protectorate with king-like power, though refusing the crown, until his death in 1658. Perhaps surprisingly, Cromwell made it known that he intended for his son Richard to succeed him as Lord Protector. However, after a very short time, it became clear that Richard Cromwell would not last as Protector, and he was forced to reinstate the purged Parliament, or Rump, and then to resign, ending the Protectorate in 1659. From this time until the Restoration, Parliament contested with Cromwell's army, ignoring their petitions for governing the country and revoking

the commissions of a number of officers, especially Colonel John Lambert, who marched to London and prevented Parliament from sitting. At this point a Committee of Safety was appointed to serve as a liason between Parliament and the army. General George Monk, a former Royalist officer and one of Cromwell's Protectorate generals, opposed to Parliament's treatment, marched south from Scotland. Lambert marched to meet him but his army dissolved before the conflict and Lambert was captured.

Monk's forces arrived in London and the general, now appointed General-in-chief of all forces, readmitted the purged members from the 1648 Long Parliament. This body called for new elections and voted to dissolve itself. The Convention Parliament replaced it, and after receiving the Declaration of Breda from Charles that he would pardon the vast majority of Parliamentarians who had opposed him, ruled that Charles II had been king since his father's execution, and invited him to return. Charles II returned to England in May 1660 as a very popular figure, but in just a short time, the sentiment which favored him had begun to wilt, as reactionary partisanship swiftly became far more characteristic of the political and religious life of the nation than compromise and conciliation (Keeble 85). In addition to failed and expensive military campaigns and his reputation for illicit sexual behavior, various calamities befell England, including an outbreak of plague in 1665 and the destructive London fire of 1666. Yet, unlike his father, Charles remained on the throne until his death in 1685.

### Consensus: Perception, Power, and Personality

As we look through the theatre of 1660-1665, it is easy to see the marks left behind by one of the most flamboyant and interesting of monarchs. One lasting impression Charles leaves us are his and his followers' attempts at consensus, which can be seen in three particular aspects

of his reign: perception, power, and personality. A fuller description of these three elements follows.

Perception refers to the image that Charles II and those who worked in support of his continued rule devised and crafted in order to assert and maintain his hold on the crown and over the hearts of his subjects. Charles knew that the way his subjects perceived him was very important to his ability to influence their thought. In this he was fortunate at first; because of the unpopularity of the Protectorate under Cromwell, Charles was able through an improbable sequence of events to return to England as king, and to do so in a position of relative strength. Seizing on this opportunity, Charles and the royalists went about reviving his legacy, including that of his father, who had been condemned as a traitor and executed by his own subjects. Since the regicide, royalists had already begun this work through print. Eventually Charles's image was dramatically transformed from that of the loser of Worcester, running away from Cromwell and fleeing the country in disguise, to a valiant commander in the battle, losing only because of far superior numbers and deftly escaping the clutches of his bitter and rebellious enemies. The symbol of the oak he hid in, as we have already seen, became an important reminder of his right to rule. The recasting of the Stuart myth is not hard to discover. Richard Ollard's description of the kingly images of both Charles I and II nicely reveals how the two rehabilitated images worked:

Charles I and Charles II are not often brought before the public in a double bill. One is tragedy, the other comedy. One personifies principle, the other cynicism. One was long venerated as a martyr, the other admired as a man of the world, cool, rational, tolerant... Yet besides the far from negligible fact that they were father and son, they have one immense and overwhelming quality in common. Both Kings created images of themselves which had a power and durability that that outrange all competition. (Ollard 19)



As Ollard suggests, the Restoration of the monarchy meant also the restoration of these two monarchs' images in the minds of the people. Ollard writes that the Restoration "perfected the image [Charles I] had in life so dishearteningly failed to establish" (Ollard 51). This deliberate crafting of morphed images by restoration writers is an important part of consensus. The revival of the monarchical pictures of Charles I and II was highly visible in the Restoration theatre. Nancy Maguire notes how playwrights used the death of Charles I mercilessly and "propagandized the Restoration as a tragicomic reversal of the act of regicide" (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 13). This iconography of course reached into the realm of the spiritual. As the head of the Anglican church, Charles II seized on the spiritual aspect of his position, and added this to the kingly image, as Joad Raymond describes: "Seen from this providential perspective, Charles emerges not simply as 'God's anointed,' the legitimate 'Heir' dispossessed by 'Traytorous Enemies,' but as a type of Moses who will lead his people from 'bondage and slavery,' his sacred identification with the nation both proof of and proven by the special care lavished on him by Providence" (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 35). This type of biblical parallel, as we will see, was very important in establishing Charles II's new image. We will also see that this supposed providential return of the monarchy speaks not only of the past, and of the present right of Charles II to rule, but also prophesizes the future, predicting that the Restoration would inaugurate a new Golden Age for England, and heal its gaping wounds from its "late troubles."

Power refers to the influence that Charles had, especially at the beginning of his reign, over the theatre and other aspects of hegemonic politics, such as print. This is the aspect of consensus that Charles controlled most directly; through the theatre, which had been absent for nearly twenty years, Charles and his playwrights could bring specific themes and images to audiences through this popularly restored medium. Charles was very adept at manipulating the

form that he himself restored. In dictating the return of the theatre, Charles reinstated the former two-company monopoly in London, first established by Elizabeth I, back into place, giving two companies—The King’s Company under Thomas Killigrew, and The Duke’s Company under William Davenant—the exclusive rights to perform in London professionally. This gave Charles a great deal of influence over theatre. It is telling also that the two companies were named after Charles and his brother the Duke of York. The two patent theatres are especially important because they “gave considerable power to Davenant and Killigrew, and thus influenced the directions Carolean drama was to take” (Hume 19). And since Charles had granted these patents, he had some influence over them. In addition, Davenant had supported Cromwell during the Protectorate, and recovering his reputation with the king was important, as was the case with many playwrights.

Charles’s patronage over certain playwrights like Davenant is ample evidence of his exercise of power to control the theatre; playwrights were perfectly willing at the time of the Restoration to write works that legitimated the Restoration and the king, as they stood to benefit handsomely. This is a great example of Gramsci’s “consent” needed to establish a firm hegemony. As Deborah Payne (Fisk) has written, unlike before the Commonwealth, “patronage came to constitute the very infrastructure of the theatrical system” (Fisk, “Patronage” 138). Payne’s study of patronage in the Caroline and Carolean theatre reveals just how shrewd Charles II’s actions were in trying to promote the idea of consensus. One key strategy that she notes is the aforementioned patents: “The issuing of patents exclusively to courtier-dramatists who had proved themselves not only loyal royalists during the Civil War, but also purveyors of particular dramatic forms resulted in a severely curtailed repertory of plays, not to mention a restricted notion of what constituted viable play-house architecture” (Fisk, “Patronage” 139). This decision

by king and court was, she writes, “perhaps the most singular feature of the Restoration stage,” and also “had an unprecedented opportunity selectively to re-create the stage out of available dramatic and theatrical models” (140). This simple policy by itself, Fisk reveals, had an incredibly great bearing on the future of Restoration theatre:

The simple elimination of certain individuals from the potential pool of theatre managers in 1660 ensured the perpetuation of some dramatic traditions and the demise of others. Likewise, the decision to limit sharply the number of theatrical patents and award them exclusively to loyal courtiers ensured that an ascriptive hierarchy dominated the flow of resources within the theatrical marketplace. (140)

Further still, Davenant and Killigrew’s posts as theatre managers gave them a measure of control, recalling the Gramscian ideas of hegemony:

...the theatre managers for both companies, in addition to controlling the relations of production, owned the means of production as well, making nigh impossible any opportunity for upward mobility amongst the top actors or shareholders of the company except at times of financial crisis or negligence. Streamlining the organizational and regulatory aspects of the theatre companies virtually guaranteed the court’s patronal control of theatrical largesse and eliminated the need for the court masques that had entertained two prior generations of Stuart monarchs. (139-40)

Fisk also importantly brings the qualifications, or lack thereof, of Killigrew and Davenant into question. Since neither manager was a “man of the theatre,” meaning they were not mainstream playwrights before the Interregnum, it can be said that “the court was not only ensuring a theatrical monopoly, it was, in effect, ensuring the perpetuation of the limited dramatic and theatrical traditions the chosen managers represented” (143), such as court masques and Interregnum closet dramas.

Besides the new theatre managers, Charles II also instituted a “loose chain of command,” which Fisk writes was “running from the court, to the Lord Chamberlain, to the Master of the Revels, and finally to the theatre managers themselves,” a chain which was “quietly streamlined” (139). Also, by his frequent attendance at plays, “Charles II virtually usurped the public space of

professional theatre in the cleverest of public relations ploys” (140). This manipulation went a long way toward steering the direction theatre was to take from the Restoration forward.

The king’s control extended further than the two patent companies. The Restoration was a moment of great opportunity, especially for men like playwrights and other authors, but there was limited room in Charles’s circle for all who might use their skills to flatter the king and promote consensus. This was, as Hutton describes, a “gold-rush atmosphere, with disappointment inevitable for most” (Hutton, *Charles II* 145; *The Restoration* 137). This can be seen in the playwrights who stood to gain much from the patronage of the new king. Many of these, like Davenant, were desperately trying to revive their own images after at least tacitly supporting the protector. It was not hard to find men who switched their outward loyalties away from the king, since a number of royalists spent the interregnum in jail thanks to their loyalty to the monarchy. Susan Staves reminds us that “the survivors of 1660 were those who had compromised or at least given up active resistance to their enemies or those whose cause had been defeated” (Staves 40). When faced with the inevitable, many had accepted Cromwell’s rule, some because of social stability (Potter, *Secret Rites* 29). Nancy Maguire aptly describes the atmosphere of turncoat authors, stating that “...nearly all of the new playwrights were politicians who became playwrights either to gain or to enhance their political credibility,” and that they “defended the traditional power-structure in an attempt to rehabilitate themselves and their culture. In tragicomic rituals reenacting regicide and restoration, they promoted kingship in the new circumstances by exonerating themselves of the execution of Charles I while celebrating the restoration of his son” (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 3). Thus, the playwrights were willing participants in the creation of hegemonic propaganda, with the idea of keeping Charles

on the throne because they really supported him, or because it was a wise move to increase their own careers and prestige (or both).

Charles's theatre, as Maguire notes, was a tightly-knit atmosphere, and in a very real sense, a family. He orchestrated marriages between people in theatre circles and created "a political/theatrical entente that was initially one-sided and made the early Restoration theatre a natural and effective tool, an ideological state apparatus, for propagandizing on behalf of the new regime." The playwrights "formed a political network closely connected through families, experiences, and financial enterprises. Many held official appointments in Charles II's government, and, as we shall see, some wrote political documents for the king" (17). Further, Charles's affairs with actresses were well noted, evidence that he used the new theatre to his advantage in a number of ways. Using his influence, Charles could suggest that certain plays or styles of plays be written, such as Sir Samuel Tuke's *The Adventures of Five Hours* and The Earl of Orrery's rhymed heroic plays; both authors will be examined closely in Chapter 4. All of these connections provide further evidence of Charles II's power over the stage. Paula Backscheider echoes the same observations, noting the influence of the court especially in the first two to three years of the Restoration: "Perhaps at no time in English history have the court and the theater been so close, and few men have been so sure of the king as audience as the court dramatists of 1660-62....So small and close-knit were the professionals and the audience that plays abounded with in-jokes" (Backscheider 62). As for the playwrights, many of them, such as Samuel Tuke, Robert Howard, and Killigrew, had remained loyal, and thus were rewarded well by the king. And they expected to be rewarded; others who had vacillated had to try to get in Charles's good graces, such as Orrery, Edmund Waller, Abraham Cowley, Davenant, and others (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 32-3). Thus, "In an attempt to make the King 'forgett [sic] the ill that is

past' and to remind him of 'the good which is to come', the guilty playwrights accentuated the many practical connections between King and theatre, playwrights and politics, and generally asserted their happiness about the Restoration" (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 34).

Given this leverage, and the fact that at first the audience was "comparatively homogeneous in taste" (Hume 16), the playwrights were not able (or willing, at least) to write anything other than what was popular. Operating, therefore, within a "closed system," the writers had to be "responsive to popular taste." Fads were important for success, so they imitated, plagiarized, adapted, and burlesqued each other (17). Hume notes that at the time of the Restoration there was more interaction and less "evolution" (17). This again reflects the power of Charles II to establish fashion and to exercise leverage over playwrights so that they would choose to write what his theatre needed in order to establish consensus. Outside the theatre, Charles's government enacted the Licensing Act of 1662, which sought to curtail any seditious writing against Charles and his court and government.

Charles's power as the great patron, then, was a large part of his attempts to use the theatre to plant the ideas of consensus. One of Fisk's conclusions outlines the importance of his patronage to hegemonic consensus:

...a central paradox exists at the nexus of patronal/commercial relations. While patronage cannot help but bear witness to the interestedness of kinship or client relations, it still promotes the illusion of a taste rarefied and unsullied by the marketplace. On the other hand, commercialism, while producing the mirage of a largely detached, disinterested, and anonymous audience (who 'get what they pay for'), none the less taints the dramatic artefact with the stench of mere 'lucre.' (147)

Thus, the very nature of the drama, including its literary quality, is directly tied to the policies and decisions that Charles made to the new theatre.

Charles's position, leverage, and ability to establish trends are part of the third element of consensus, that of personality. Charles's personality is that unique iconic impression that he

made, and that others made of him, not only as king, but as English idol, akin to today's superstar. Ronald Hutton writes that Charles II is a "legendary figure," noting that "Other kings had inspired more respect, but perhaps only Henry VIII had endeared himself to the popular imagination as much as this one" (Hutton, *Charles II* 446). Hutton also describes the charm that was an important part of his personality: "To undoubted luck he coupled an unmistakable charm. From childhood he learned how to exert it, and everybody who came into contact with it was captivated...The man was a seducer, in a much broader sense than that normally attributed to him" (Hutton, *Charles II* 447). Joseph Roach has described the star power of Charles II perhaps better than anyone. In his book *It*, Roach identifies Charles II as the first celebrity with "It," which he says is a quality found in "abnormally interesting people" (Roach 1). "It," says Roach, consists of a certain "genius—including the characteristic manifestation of public intimacy (the illusion of availability), synthetic experience (vicariousness), and the It-Effect (personality-driven mass attraction)..." (3). As a fashionable king, Charles was conscientious of the physical image he struck. Ollard observes that "To maintaining appearances Charles II had brought the practice of a lifetime. He paid...great attention to his clothes and to the way he wore them" (Ollard 159). All these qualities Charles used to his advantage in trying to establish consensus, to great effect, especially early on. Hutton further tells us that "...the English nation, like so many smaller groups before, had surrendered to Charles's winning manner" (Hutton, *Charles II* 134).

Additionally, the king could play many parts like a great actor: "He could act a part magnificently, whether that of guest, seigneur, warlord, or sacred monarch. In the theatre of kingship in the age of baroque, he was a star" (Hutton, *Charles II* 457-8). This is fitting, considering the fact that he and the theatre were so closely allied. One of the great roles that Charles played was that of the most desirable man in the realm. Roach writes that "As titular

head of the theaters and a high-profile audience member as well as the head of the established church, Charles II created an image of sexual celebrity that fascinated and troubled his subjects”(Roach 66). He was famous for his mistresses, a number of famous actresses among them. The king did not do much to hide his affairs and was unable to produce an heir with the queen, Catherine of Braganza; he was also perfectly willing to acknowledge his many illegitimate offspring. Thus, many of Charles’s subjects began to look upon him with disapproval, and therefore propaganda tools such as pamphlets and plays gradually ceased to function as such. This is indicative of another aspect of “It,”; Roach notes that the binary opposites of *charisma* and *stigmata*, both of which exist in persons with It, “work cooperatively” in that person (Roach 36). In the end, insofar as Charles’s endeavors at creating consensus went, the *stigmata* began to outweigh the *charisma* in fairly short order after the first two to three years of his reign, and thus, the consensus illusion faded.

### Consensus Fails

Hegemonic consensus ultimately failed for Charles II for a number of reasons. One is that even at the time of the Restoration, when he was at his most popular, Charles had not really achieved it in the first place. According to Restoration historian Tim Harris, while “Most Londoners did support a restoration of monarchy by the spring of 1660... it is wrong to assume from this that there was a political consensus amongst Londoners at this time” (Harris, *London Crowds* 60-1). Another reason was that while Charles reentered England with overwhelming support for his return, what his father had lost, including the belief that the sovereign could do no wrong, could not, in the seventeenth century after the turmoil in England over recent years, be entirely regained. Yet another was that in a very brief period in the middle of the 1660s, a



number of calamities befell the nation, including a particularly deadly outbreak of the plague, a fire that destroyed much of London, and a humiliating naval campaign against the Dutch. But probably the most important reason that consensus did not take hold in England was because of Charles's personal behavior, especially his many public mistresses and his inattention to state affairs, which also directly affected the members of Court, many of whom followed his example.

The court and English theatre at the Restoration were closely related as they had ever been, or would ever be. For one thing, as we learned above, many new playwrights were part of court. Derek Hughes asks, "at what other point in the seventeenth century, before or after the 1660s, did so many members of great noble families write for the public stage?" (Hughes, *English Drama* 25). Hughes also believes, as many others do and did, that "the stage was touched by the court's example" (453). Jessica Munns rightly remarks that "The stage and the glittering world of court were made for each other. They reflected back on each other and confirmed each other's validity" (Munns 109), which is what we have been discussing in terms of consensus. This of course meant that the activities at court were often the subjects of drama; yet as the king and court degenerated in the eyes of the country, this degeneration could be seen more and more in drama, especially as the new playwrights began to be increasingly bourgeois. Hughes writes that the "degeneracy of the gentry was a perennial topic" of the theatre (Hughes, *English Drama* 21). Susan Owen suggests that after the reopenings in 1666 after the plague, there is a distinguishable change in dramatic types and that the reason for this is that the king had less of the confidence of the political nation (Owen 129). This can be seen in the later development of the famous high-class rake of Restoration plays, whose wit and handsomeness were only matched by their sexual appetite.

By the mid-1660s, England took notice of the debauchery of the king and court. Charles was not secretive about his mistresses, whose presence humiliated the queen; his most notorious mistress might have been Barbara Palmer, Lady Castlemaine, whose presence about the king caused many unseemly episodes. The fact that she was a Catholic, and that she had a son with Charles that he admired and some feared he would attempt to elevate to the crown, made matters tense at times. Tim Harris notes how the character of king and court began to draw the ire of many:

The two most distinguished rakes in this society were the king and the duke of York [Charles's brother and the future James II]. By late 1662 an ambassador could quote the Londoners as saying that their monarch only 'hunts and lusts'. In 1664 one Anthony Derrew condemned the king for keeping none but whores about him. Ten years later, one John Weedon condemned the king for keeping 'nothing but whores' and being 'a scourge to the nation.' (Harris, *London Crowds* 79)

Pepys's diary starkly records the slow waning of support that Charles enjoyed. As early as 1661, Pepys, who loved and supported Charles and his brother, writes, "At Court things are in very ill condition, there being so much emulation, poverty, and the vices of drinking, swearing, and loose amours, that I know not what will be the end of it, but confusion" (Pepys 2: 167). On the last day of 1662 he writes:

The King is...following his pleasures more then with good advice he would do—at least, to be seen to all the world to do so—his dalliance with my Lady Castlemayne being public every day, to his great reproach. And his favouring of none at Court so much as those that are the confidants of his pleasure... which, good God put it into his heart to mend—before he makes himself too much contemned by his people for it!

The Duke of Monmouth [the illegitimate son of Charles and Lady Castlemaine] is in so great splendour at Court and so dandled by the King, that some doubt, if the King should have no child by the Queene (which there is yet no appearance of), whether he would not be acknowledged for a lawful son; and that there will be a difference follow upon it between the Duke of York—and him; which God prevent. (Pepys 3: 303)

This behavior by the sovereign seemed to be the model of the whole court. Pepys writes late in 1663 that he has heard "how loose the Court is, nobody looking after business but every man his lust and gain; and how the King is now become besotted upon Mrs. Steward [another

mistress], that he gets into corners and will be with her half an houre together kissing her to the observation of all the world...(4: 371).

By the time various disasters befell England, matters regarding the court degenerated even more. Pepys reports in 1666 that the rumor is that despite the calamity of the plague, Charles and his court continue in their avoidance of duty and their own slothfulness:

...all things [are] mighty dull at Court, and...they now begin to lie long in bed—it being, as we suppose, not seemly for them to be found playing and gaming as they used to be; nor that their minds are at ease enough to fallow their sports; and yet not knowing how to employ themselves (though there be work enough for their thoughts and councils and pains), they keep long in bed. ... there is nothing in the world can help us but the King's personal looking after his business and his officers, and that with that we may yet do well; but otherwise must be undone, nobody at this day taking care of anything, nor hath anybody to call him to account for it. (7: 197)

John Evelyn likewise wrote near the end of 1666 of England's sad condition:

This day was ordered a general Fast through the nation, to humble us on the late dreadful conflagration, added to the plague and war, the most dismal judgments that could be inflicted; but which indeed we highly deserved for our prodigious ingratitude, burning lusts, dissolute court, profane and abominable lives, under such dispensations of God's continued favour in restoring Church, Prince, and People from our late intestine calamities, of which we were altogether unmindful, even to astonishment. (Evelyn 2: 18)

Pepys ended the year's diary entries with an expression of fear for the future due to these events, lamenting, "Thus ends this year of public wonder and mischief to this nation—and therefore generally wished by all people to have an end." This, he says, is largely due to "A sad, vicious, negligent Court, and all sober men there fearful of the ruin of the whole Kingdom this next year—from which, good God deliver us" (7: 426).

Even the aristocratic playwrights Charles patronized were openly critical of Charles's behavior. Pepys reports that Thomas Killigrew himself, manager of the King's Men, denounced the king's bawdy activities. According to Pepys, another royalist playwright and poet, Abraham Cowley, witnessed Killigrew telling the king:

“There is a good, honest, able man that I could name, that if your Majesty would imploy and command to see all things well executed, all things would soon be mended; and this is one Charles Stuart—who now spends his time in imploying his lips and his prick about the Court, and hath no other imployment. But if you would give him this imployment, he were the fittest man in the world to perform it.” This [Cowley] says is most true. (Pepys 7: 400)

It took therefore only a few short years for Charles’s support across much of the kingdom to erode. As Ronald Hutton aptly states, few regimes “have fallen in the estimation of their subjects as dramatically as the restored monarchy did” (Hutton, *Restoration* 185). Tim Harris adds that “Charles could not live up to his image of 1660—a majestic and semi-divine monarch; in reality, he proved to be a rather debauched, worldly man, preoccupied with venereal delights” (Harris, *London Crowds* 94).

There is little doubt why Charles II’s consensus attempts failed so quickly. It was the very frivolity that he in part likely sought consensus for that proved his undoing in terms of his failed attempts to control the theatre to his own purposes. Still, he continued to control it, only mostly with his perception and person—and less with power—as his reign continued into the 1670s and 1680s. Yet his legacy as a rake continued to influence the theatre greatly. Maguire notes the Restoration penchant for dealing with adultery in scripts as Charles began to collect more and more mistresses, resembling a sort of “polygamy” (*Regicide and Restoration* 151). Speaking of literature in general in the later 1660s, N.H. Keeble nicely sums up Charles’s predicament as consensus slipped out of his grasp:

Upon this moral laxity and indifference critics of the King and his court seized. In the satires and lampoons of the second half of the decade, that fecund cluster of Restoration images no longer promises a positive culture of pleasure but is perverted to the degrading pursuit of self-gratification: liberality become libertine license, fecundity fecklessness and prodigality profligacy. What had been construed as a welcome emancipation from political and religious tyranny has now become an abnegation of all moral restraint which threatens the governance of the state. Uncontrollable sexual appetite and perverse sexual practice is both a central charge

against, and one of the rhetorical means by which is registered the degradation of, the court...[in Marvell's "Last Instructions to a Painter" of 1667]. (Keeble 175)

The sentiments expressed here by Keeble describe a trial from which Charles was never able to recover, though because of recent violent history and the fact that he was an iconic figure, if an embarrassing one at times, he remained on the throne until his death in 1685.

### The Argument of Consensus and Hegemony

The present analysis of early Restoration theatre and print further examines how the figure of Charles II was crucial in fashioning Restoration theatre through his attempts at establishing an attitude of consensus. The king promoted hegemony among the English subjects in support of his godly right to rule the realm as he saw fit, and propounded that his and his father's enemies had engaged in rebellion to deny them both that very right. Chapter 2 establishes the trends of consensus through print, demonstrating how current sentiment in books and pamphlets remarkably resembled plays, especially in a particular style, the dialogue. Chapter 3 examines how the very first performances in Restoration England—adaptations, revivals, and translations—were chosen and/or modified to fit the consensus model. Chapter 4 looks at one specific serious form of original drama, the rhymed heroic plays of the Earl of Orrery and John Dryden, to show how this form was born and flourished during the early years of the Restoration and fit the consensus sequence perfectly. Chapter 5 observes new comedies, showing how that genre evolved through the consensus sequence.

Through this analysis of a select number of plays, pamphlets, and other sources, it will be shown that Charles II the man had a far greater impact on the theatre of his day than he is often given credit for. The implications here hopefully will suggest the extension of this study forward into and beyond the reign of James II, and perhaps backward to the early Stuarts and

the Tudors. Such a project may also reveal a more tendentious connection between monarchy, or any kind of governing authority, and the theatre.

## CHAPTER 2: PERCEPTION IN PRINT: THE RESTORATION PRESSES AS IDEOLOGICAL STATE APPARATUS

When Charles returned to take his place as king, he already had a strong propaganda apparatus in place in the form of printed matter which served as an attractive model for new performances: the printing press. Print played a critical role in Charles's attempts to establish a hegemonic consensus in his kingdom during the Restoration, and of the elements of consensus, this particular ISA played most especially to perception and personality. Indeed, James Sutherland notes that "this leisurely and witty king had an influence on the literature of his country such as no other English monarch has had, with the exception of Elizabeth I" (Sutherland 253). This is an important result of the king's making use of sundry printed works as an ideological state apparatus. When we examine the work that printing presses produced at the time of the Restoration, it is evident that these various writings are useful barometers for measuring the content of Charles II's support structure, and of the extent of his successes and failures in producing consensus, and therefore, hegemony. Printed matter from the time of Charles I's execution, increasing after the death of Cromwell and flooding the country during the year of his Restoration, exhibited the same concerns and themes that were prevalent in Restoration plays. Or perhaps more appropriately, the plays largely exhibited the same ideals as the presses; both literary forms worked similarly as ISAs.

Printed material, especially pamphlets, in this period, is especially important in that the press was in the midst of a boom in production as well as a profound transformation in its utility in affecting Charles's perception and personality. Joad Raymond describes this in his book *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain*:

...in the period 1500-1700 a transformation occurred in the role of printing and its relationship to the public, a metamorphosis in the nature and idea of print, which was

partly effected by and through pamphlets...In the early sixteenth century printed texts played a marginal role in politics; by the end of the seventeenth century they were essential in political life, and the pamphlet was the most public print medium. (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 25)

Given the increased role of the press in social and political life, Charles II had a ready-made political weapon upon his arrival back in England, and it had already been in great use for the Royalist cause, as an apparatus to fight the parliamentarians and later, the regicides. The printed word had already played an important role in establishing the perceived consensus that after his father's death Charles II was the rightful ruler, and that his father had been the victim of treasonable acts. While there had been a number of writings in support of Charles II's return during the interregnum, once Cromwell passed away in September of 1658, there was a notable surge in press activity, during which, as Raymond describes, "the sluice gates opened, issuing a flood of printed pamphlets" (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 251).

By 1660, the year of the Restoration, authors including playwrights from before the interregnum found 1660 "a good year to publish old or new Royalist literature" (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 31), and expected to be rewarded for their efforts (32), despite the fact that some of them had wavered in their support of Charles during his exile. This and spikes in the output of new printed matter were part of a much larger boom in the printing industry, as Robert Wilcher notes: "Since the end of 1640, a revolution had been taking place in the printing trade, which saw a sharp rise in the amount of printed material, much of it in the form of short, inexpensive pamphlets that engaged directly with the current political situation" (Wilcher 108). Within this larger trend, publications, especially certain genres, tended to spike in volume during times of crisis (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 166-168; Potter, *Secret Rites* 4). The Restoration was one of those times, and while the content of the pamphlets themselves tried to diminish this feeling, the fact that there were so many of them is evidence that this was a tense time for Charles and the



monarchy. The atmosphere that surrounded the Restoration called for the king and royalists to make use of a proven medium; so the boom in print can be largely ascribed to authors seizing the opportunity to have the presses turn out propaganda in seemingly every written form imaginable. The sooner the king could use the presses to show the perceived consensus, the more likely he could achieve hegemony.

As it became more and more evident that the time of the king's arrival was nigh, many opportunistic writers realized Charles's need to establish the illusion of consensus, especially, as we have seen, in the need to resurrect the images of both Charles I and II. These pamphlet authors wrote as providers of these propagandistic pieces of illusion, desiring to ingratiate themselves to the new sovereign, and in many cases, to avoid retribution for supporting Cromwell. A key part of the Restoration event was Charles giving an assurance of clemency for his and his father's enemies; however, surely some heads had to roll, and these writers could only improve their future prospects or avoid embarrassment or shame by writing in his favor. Many royalist writers, as we will see, had already been dramatists or became playwrights after the Restoration.

### Print in the Early Restoration

What was the nature of this print? In many ways, it was a continuation or evolution of a royalist print tradition that had taken shape during the civil wars, after the regicide, and since Cromwell's death. Many pamphlets and other writings shared much in common with the theatre; they were often dramatic in nature, even to the point of resembling or even taking the form of plays, though they were not necessarily intended to be performed. Perhaps one of the reasons that pamphlets resembled plays was because of the void left by the banishing of legal

performances in England. Yet we must be careful in asserting that pamphlets served as a substitute for live performance. Addressing this point, Dale Randall observes:

It is tempting but too simple to say that the closing of the English theaters triggered the appearance of many midcentury pamphlets that bore the formal trappings of plays...most of all because the inclination toward short, playlike pieces of eight or so pages had already become manifest before September 1642. (Randall 51)

A visible example of these play-like pieces is the series of books known as the “Mistress Parliament” plays, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Despite the fact that these pamphlet dialogues had been seen before the Restoration, it is remarkable how many printed works were written in dialogue form, or even at times in the actual style of a play. It is important that we consider such pieces as at least quasi-dramatic, because the dialogue form suggests an immediacy and personal quality that only dialogue literature can deliver, adding another dimension to the hegemonic utility of the pamphlets. Additionally, since literacy among the public was far from guaranteed, these pieces would have been especially important among literature that was read aloud, especially given the fact that the dialogue begs for this type of engagement. It is extremely unlikely that dialogues were not at times given a *de facto* performance by being read in a public place. Thus, in a certain way, these particular types of pamphlets were at least in some way akin to live plays, whether it was the author’s intent to do so or not. Writing things that had a better chance of being read aloud, then, served the king’s strategy of hegemony very well, opening the content up to a potentially larger audience and giving the message an immediacy not seen in just any form of printed literature.

Despite the attempts of the king and his men to exercise their power to control print to their advantage, these writings, like the plays, shifted gradually over the first few years of Charles’s reign, betraying a lack of confidence in the king and a serious fear that his own transgressions and those of the court and the country at large would bring about the doom of the

entire realm. This meant that the ideological intentions of these works diminished considerably, undermining consensus. Thus, print ceased to function as an ideological state apparatus. The perception that the English subjects developed of their king, as well as his celebrity standing, personally informed these books, just as did Restoration plays. By 1666, plague, fire, and the failed war against the Dutch threatened the consensus that Charles had attempted to establish, as the shifting perception of the king undermined his personality and his power. The Restoration's star figure had lost a measure of all three.

### The Political Tradition of Print in Renaissance England

Though at the time of the Restoration the royalists controlled the press, the tradition of printing had been widely utilized by both royalist and puritan writers. In fact, both sides thought of themselves as "part of the same biblical and classical literary world" (Potter, *Secret Rites* 208). Yet it was not until the latter part of the sixteenth century that pamphlets were considered anything but an "unrespectable, sullied means of speech, socially inferior to manuscript circulation" (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 57). They were "small, insignificant, ephemeral, disposable, untrustworthy, unruly, noisy, deceitful, poorly printed, addictive, [and] a waste of time" (10). Yet by the time of the Civil Wars, both sides used the presses as a serious weapon. As victors against Charles I's forces, parliament actually gained a reasonably firm hold on the presses, though aided by the king's reluctance to make use of propaganda (Raymond, *Invention* 87, 98-9, 149-50). The Civil Wars, and following that the Commonwealth and Protectorate "offered new possibilities for authors and publishers" such that opportunities for authors to profit "were exploited rapidly and eagerly" (Barnard 11). Thus, "The 1640s also saw the proliferation of violently antimonarchical almanacs and prognostications" (6).

However, a great struggle began between the two sides to utilize the press for partisan newsbooks and other printed material, and Parliament resorted to punitive measures to keep royalist print from undermining their cause, especially during messy events like the regicide (Potter, *Secret Rites* 18-19; Wilcher 289; Raymond, *Pamphlets* 20). In fact, it was the royalist side that played the subversive role between parliament control in 1642 and the Restoration in 1660; in this way royalist writings during this period served as nontraditional propaganda, since they were at the same time subversive and attempting to reinforce traditional authoritarian right. Despite attempts to destroy royalist literature, “their culture survived despite numerous attempts to discredit it, succeeded in imposing its view of events on the age, and probably helped (more than conspiracies or uprisings) to bring about the restoration of the monarchy” (Potter, *Secret Rites* 4). Perhaps this was because of the endearing nature of royalist writing, which “was marked by a taste for obscurity, mystery, and playfulness” (209). By the time of the Restoration, which saw a “peak” in print “second only to 1642” (Potter, *Secret Rites* 4), monarchists had built a rich tradition of print which they could revive and build upon, to great effect. This surge in print activity starting about the time of Cromwell’s death marks the shift of royalist writing from subversive propaganda to the Gramscian/Althusserian function of ideological state apparatuses: that of seeming spontaneity and the movement toward Restoration and monarchical rule by the consent of the people. The hegemonic surge in royalist print is comparable to the plethora of celebrations, bonfires, rump roastings, and other “spontaneous” spectacles that dotted the landscape of this period, ushering in the return of the monarchy.

It is important to note that authors were not necessarily writing out of conviction or personal belief; authors could be opportunists, and writing could be very lucrative. Thus, the effect is the appearance of spontaneity. One scholar reminds us of this: “We should not

overemphasize the commercial and opportunistic aspects of the book trade” (Barnard 4-5). This can be seen in the fact that some writers were willing to write for either side, especially during the print war of the 1640s. There was enough to be gained from writing books that “Some printers were willing to work for both government and opposition, radicals and the orthodox” (4). Further, by the time of the Restoration, many authors who had supported the Commonwealth and Protectorate had no scruples in making an about face and writing for the king during the Restoration (2). This behavior mirrors the drama; playwrights were also often opportunists who stood to gain by joining the consensus effort, and as we will see had every reason to write plays for the king’s purposes. Importantly, “only a relatively small number of individuals could claim to have adhered to the royalist cause from the first outbreak of the troubles...” (McElligott 139), and therefore many authors strove to improve their image before the new king. This made them willing to participate in hegemonic practices to strengthen their potential patron’s position.

One well-documented author, John Crouch, is a perfect example of the print opportunist in the seventeenth century. Before the Civil Wars he was a writer with an “uncompromising royalist stance” (145), but turned in the 1650s to writing for the Commonwealth and Protectorate. He made this decision after Charles’s defeat at the Battle of Worcester in 1651, after which:

all organized resistance disappeared, the future of the Commonwealth was secure, and there was a rush of propertied royalists who compounded for their estates and took the Oath of Engagement, as refusal to do so meant being denied justice in the courts. At the same time, the government moved towards a policy of reconciliation with those who would renounce their ‘malignant’ pasts. In such circumstances, a refusal on Crouch’s part to temporize with the regime would have been foolish in the extreme. (McElligott 145)

This explanation provides great insight into why some writers, if not all, chose to change their outward stance, even if their hearts remained unchanged. However, once the king was restored, these writers were left with a difficult decision which would directly affect their future. Crouch

was one who chose to turn back to royalist writing, and he even “re-invented himself as something of an ultra-royalist who had remained loyal throughout the 1650s” (146). Part of his motivation aside from erasing the support for the Commonwealth and Protectorate was “to secure aristocratic, or better still, royal patronage,” but unfortunately “The Restoration did not bring him the wealth and recognition which he evidently believed that he deserved. Instead, it seems to have brought him disappointment, frustration and obscurity; an experience which may have been relatively common among royalists after 1660” (152). Indeed, this was the fate of many a writer, including some playwrights. Others, as we will observe, did attain prosperity and patronage as authors for the king.

### Forms of Restoration Writing

The royalist writing in the era of the Restoration took many forms. There were many types and styles during this period, with many characteristics designed to bring the illusion of consensus. As the exiled Charles began to recover the crown’s power, the press served mainly as a significant boost to his perception and his personality. These writings, though differing in style, were mostly designed to positively affect the perception of both Charles I and II’s images. Additionally, they worked to enhance the king’s personality, or celebrity status. As the images of Kings Charles I and II recovered their former glory, one important genre of writing was the biography, which painted flattering pictures of both kings, alongside other writings that advertised the kingly character of each. Biographies varied in length from just a few pages to massive records of every real or invented detail in the kings’ lives. Already a popular figure by virtue of the fact that he had nothing to do with the Protectorate or Commonwealth, Charles II stood to gain much from the enhancement of his image as the rightful ruler, as well as that which

depicted him as a star. His perception and personality were also greatly augmented by the rehabilitation of his father's image.

This image of the martyrdom of Charles I played an important role in print, which used the regicide and other tactics to discredit the Parliamentarians and Cromwell in particular. The elegy was also of great importance in this regard; of print regarding the regicide, this form was the “dominant genre” of writing (Raymond, *Invention* 165), in which “The image of the saintly monarch, who died to defend the Church of England,” is prominent (Wilcher 292). In this same vein, the panegyric was also a very popular form, with Charles I and/or Charles II as the usual subjects of such writings. These again helped to demonstrate consensus by appealing to the perception and personality of both kings, particularly the younger Charles. The Court encouraged these writings, says Robert Wilcher, who writes that “Of all the poetic genres encouraged by the Caroline court...the most representative of its ethos was the panegyric...often no more than empty flattery by those in search of patronage...” He also argues that the panegyric served a “liturgical function” (Wilcher 13), suggesting a form of kingly worship and reverence.

Poetry was yet another form which, according to Raymond, was forced to evolve during the Cavalier decline. He says that “poetry remained in name an elite, royalist form, but the trials of the Civil Wars demanded that it signify defeat and ignominy as much as heroism and education. The cavaliers were determined to preserve their aesthetic rights, but in the process the heroic verse became the drinking song” (Raymond, *Invention* 165). We will see also that in theatre heroic verse became very important to plays, especially some of the most sycophantic ones. By the time of the Restoration, poetry moved back to flattery and joy for the happy turn of events, again preserving the personality and perception of the monarchy.

Another type of adversarial writing was the ballad. This was a particularly nasty way to mock one's adversaries, writing and printing derisive verses against them in the form of ballads set to popular tunes. This is image-building by blasting one's enemies, and serves therefore the same consensus functions as the genres of writing above. As Dr. Angela McShane-Jones of the Victoria and Albert Museum notes:

The purpose of these broadsides is to mock and to jibe, not to sing. They were read—perhaps out-loud—but they were not really ballads in the sense of singable songs. Their purpose—as I argue—was rhetorical—a means for royalist propagandists to attack their 'low-life' opponents in as low a literary medium as possible—and you couldn't get lower than balladry. (McShane, "Re: Help")

In addition to these pamphlet genres, the sermon was also an important part of the hegemonic aspect of print, as many clergy members would have their sermons published. Raymond notes an "overlap between preachers and pamphleteers...in their persons and in the content of their works. Sermons engaged with pamphlets, and *vice versa*" (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 145), which we will see later in this chapter. Raymond notes that sermons "adopted an increasingly conventional format similar to pamphlets; moreover they shared much of the same rhetoric, and the same theological concerns" (146). These works are of particular importance because an influential public figure like a clergyman could aid the king's cause by creating the illusion of spontaneity and consensus by consent needed to effect a hegemonic atmosphere. Another advantage of the sermon is the live aspect, which brings them naturally into affinity with the theatre, a comparison Raymond also makes: "Sermons and the stage had precisely what print lacked, the testimony of the voice, and the unbecoming silence required writers to think about what constituted public speech, how it could be verified, and what gave it the appearance of authority" (149). Since it was assumed that the printed sermon was an "original pulpit



performance,” even if the sermon was more flexible than that (222), this form presented a more live or theatrical flavor, enhancing the idea of spontaneous consensus.

This illusion of the “live” is additionally very important in the genre of the dialogue, which was not a play but which displayed many of the characteristics of plays, not the least of which was the composition in the form of spoken dialogue. These printed materials are a key genre of writing in this chapter, and will be discussed more in detail in the following pages.

### Power and the Printing Press

As noted above, many writers seized upon the opportunity to capitalize on the Restoration, or to escape the consequences of their loyalty to Cromwell. This was especially true of certain playwrights such as John Dryden and William Davenant, a point which will be examined in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4. Often these authors were successful, as will become evident, though their position became more difficult to maintain because of the deteriorating reputation of Charles II and the various calamities that eventually befell his reign. Charles was wise to manipulate his own image by using these authors and a press that was, during his early reign, almost entirely controlled by his court, and “from the start, was strongly committed to printing and publishing” (Potter, *Secret Rites* 7). The king most likely recognized the fact that his father had not taken full advantage of this medium, and that it may have cost him his life. Yet, as Raymond describes, Charles used the power element of consensus to his advantage by controlling the political viewpoint of the press, and later by legislating control over it: “Charles II did not attempt to quash the press; instead he tried to wrest it to his favour. He had been brought to the throne with a noisy propaganda campaign, and in the early days of his rule he found little opposition from the press. His ministers did not turn their attention to its control

until 1662..." (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 324). It was at this time that Parliament passed the "Act for preventing abuses in printing seditious, treasonable, and unlicensed books and pamphlets, and for regulating of printing and printing-presses" (Weber 151; Raymond, *Pamphlets* 324) in order to control subversive writing. In the same year, Charles made Roger L'Estrange "surveyor of *the* press," and in August of 1663 L'Estrange was appointed "Surveyor of Printing and Printing Presses" (Weber 153). These moves were designed to affect a greater control of the press once Charles realized he no longer had absolute control; his power in the matter was limited and not suited to the ultimate establishing of consensus or hegemony. In print, as on the stage, the king's persona could not be fully protected from the perception (largely earned) that he was not the savior to his kingdoms he and his supporters made him out to be. While Charles could for a time successfully build up the perception of his image and his person as arbiter of style, his power to control the presses completely failed him. He had to exercise his power in a different way as pamphlets slowly ceased to work as effective propaganda; he went from controlling the content of the press to regulating it through law.

### Print and Hegemonic Consensus

As we have seen, one of the essentials for writers working toward consensus was to improve perception of the king and of his personality by revising history. Charles's father had lost the confidence of his people, had seen one of his kingdoms invade the other, had been defeated in battle, and had been executed for treason. Charles II himself had fled from England, had been forced to take the Solemn League and Covenant, had been defeated at Worcester, and had nearly been captured, only escaping after shedding his princely clothes, cutting his long regal hair, and running away to France. For hegemony to work, the Restoration therefore needed its

propaganda to execute a “comprehensive rewriting of the history and literature of the preceding decades,” which started with parliamentary writing, as Joad Raymond explains:

Foremost among the texts that demanded rewriting—aside from the bodies of republicans—were the many pamphlets that had ushered in and casuistically supported the Commonwealth, and those pamphlets that had subsequently justified allegiance to the Protectorate...This rewriting was effected in part in pamphlets. (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 247)

Works by Commonwealth writers such as Marchamont Nedham, one of the men forced after the Restoration to write for the king, “had to be undone in order to present an appearance of near-universal consensus at the Restoration, and the pamphlet was the tool through which this was to be accomplished” (255). Restoration pamphleteers also capitalized on the dissatisfaction of the protectorate, noting the “failures of the republican regime” (255). Thus, authors needed to go back before the Civil Wars in order to find a supposedly happy and carefree time, and argue for a return to those so-called “Halcyon days” in which the elder Charles and his queen, with their refined court, ruled in peace and prosperity. This would revive the perception of Charles II’s father, and therefore the new king himself. According to Lois Potter, “In this version of events, the war was caused by purely verbal differences; pre-war England was a paradise; the population as a whole was now longing for a return to the old ways. A readership which shared these views certainly existed” (Potter, *Secret Rites* 27).

Indeed, the “Halcyon days” were frequently mentioned in printed poems and ballads of the day, which strove to rebuild the image of Charles I and the monarchy. Harkening back to these times served consensus by reviving the image of the formerly disgraced king. One poet remembers, “Such and sweet were those Halcyon dayes, / That rose upon us in our Infant rayes (“The Times,” 201). Another writes about “...all those Halcion dayes we once beheld / When our replenish’t Cornucopia’s swell’d” (“Sol in Ascendente” 7). Samuel Holland rejoiced: “O

Halcyonian, O most happy Age! / No more shall Schisms, and Discontentments rage...”

(Holland 3).

The return to this so-called “Golden Age” in Caroline history (Wilcher 8) had to be accompanied by a reassurance that Charles II would bring all that the country had lacked since the Civil Wars: peace, prosperity, and perhaps most of all, healing. This was a crucial point in consensus-building, in order to paint a utopian future that would be orchestrated by the only man who could do so. Such a prognostication would go far towards persuading citizens to support the Restoration and, importantly, its continuation. Many of the Restoration writings emphasized this point, focusing on the misery and calamity that many had suffered as a result of the civil wars and interregnum, and looking eagerly to the glorious future. One of the most visible examples of this theme is recorded in masque writer John Ogilby’s *The Entertainment of His Most Excellent Majestie Charles II, in His Passage throughout the City of London to his Coronation*, which we examined at length in the introduction. One of the many songs sung to Charles during the procession and pageant commemorating his return went thus:

I.  
Comes not here the King of Peace,  
Who, the stars so long fore-told,  
From all Woes should us release,  
Converting Iron-times to Gold?

II.  
Behold, behold!  
Our Prince confirm’d by heavenly Signs,  
Brings healing Balm,  
Brings healing Balm, and Anodynes  
To close our Wounds, and Pain assuage. (Ogilby 135)

Language like this, depicting Charles as the wondrous physician that will heal the wounds of his kingdoms, abounds during the Restoration. One poem written to Charles in 1660 praises the new king:

*Charles!* thou her bleeding wounds could'st close...  
Skillfull physician! who with Sovereign Balme  
Three *Kingdomes* almost wounded to the death,  
Didst know to cure, who so great a Calme  
After so fierce a Tempest, with thy breath... ("Britain's Triumph" 4)

Another anonymous poet similarly welcomes Charles and his kingly ability "To stanch that waste of Blood long running o're, / And cure our rankled wounds; if wee'l but sip, / That healing Balsom, droppeth from his Lip" ("Sol in Ascendente" 7). Another 1660 broadside ballad lauds:

Let the Kings foes admire,  
    who do reject him;  
Seeing God doth him inspire,  
    and will direct him,  
To heal those evil Sores  
and them to cure...(J.P. 1)

A panegyric by Carew Renell also uses this imagery, telling the new king, "...you came with your *sweetning hand*, which brings / *Balm and Perfumes* to change the worst of things" (Reynell 7). Thus, pamphlets and other printed items functioned as hegemonic propaganda by playing on the raw emotion of the recent past to demonstrate the healing nature of the new king, who would return them to a state of wellness and happiness.

This healing image was also thought to be quite literal, since the king traditionally had the supernatural ability to cure certain skin ailments, called scrofula, or more commonly called "the King's Evil." As Harold Weber describes, the king's curing of the King's Evil symbolizes a "Christ-like 'King of Hearts,' the monarch who wins back his kingdom through love and humility rather than violence" (Weber 52), which is the theme that we have seen in the above poems, ballads, and panegyrics. Weber describes Charles's use of this healing imagery:

...the press played an important role, for it helped create a public forum in which popular belief jostled with scientific investigation; under the scrutiny of the press, the healing touch provoked interest and wonder as a magical rite, popular legend, and subject of scientific examination. During the seventeenth century, the Stuart conception of kingship

became inextricably intertwined with a medical practice that happily acknowledged and celebrated the magical properties of divine majesty. (53-4)

Thus, Charles had to use the press to contend with scientific competition that might undermine his divine majesty.<sup>1</sup> Charles as healer of his country's woes, not unlike the imagery of Christ as the Great Physician, able to stanch the wounds of all who were hurting, was an important part of changing his image to reflect a princely figure, and through hegemonic consensus to shape his subjects' perception of his kingly right to rule over them. His supposed ability to heal also speaks importantly to his personality.

Other printed references of this type decline to use the physician reference but still carry the idea of healing or recovery:

Those channels and those rivers too  
that ran with blood and gore,  
Flow both with milk and hony now,  
As *Canaan* did before. (S.H. 1)

In another work, the author depicts the realm as emerging from the harsh winter into the glorious spring:

Confusion, with grey Winter's snow's dissolv'd,  
Rebellion's ice (that so long time involv'd  
Our Loyal hearts, chilling the noble Blood  
That once so vig'rously that Frost withstood)  
Thaw'd by the Northern Star; the glor'ous Spring  
To th' Worlds great wonder did produce a King. (J.L. 1)

To these same ideas of healing and plenty was added the crucial theme of trade, which we have seen briefly in the coronation march. Trade was crucial because of Britain's geography as an island, and because an important part of hegemony involves the control of economic matters, of which trade was an important part. Consensus ideas of a king prospering in this new Golden Age would therefore allow Charles to control it. Thus, with these ideas in mind and because of the nautical nature of the island nation, many were inspired to write and print naval

and nautical imagery, with England depicted as a vessel at sea. Many writings portrayed England since the Civil Wars as a ship in the midst of stormy waters. These references also served to remind the king of the importance of trade in the realm. Nautical imagery also appeared in plays, as we will see in subsequent chapters. Writing about the stormy seas of England, one anonymous essay from 1660 states:

As a distracted Ship (whose Pilot the raging violence of a tempestuous storm, hath cast down headlong from the Stern) staggereth to and fro amongst the unquiet Waves of the rough Ocean; clashing against the proud surly Rocks, and sometimes reeling up and down the smoother waters; now threatening present shipwrack and destruction, by and by promising a seeming safety, and secure arrival, yet never settled fast, nor absolutely tending to the quiet and desired haven: So the vexed Government of frantick *England*, ever since the furious madness of a few turbulent Spirits beheaded our King and Kingdom, threw down *Charles* the martyr (our onely lawful Governor) from the Stern of Government, and took it into their unskillful and unlawful hands, it hath been tossed up and down, sometimes falling amongst the lawless Souldiers, as a Lam among Wolves, or as a Glass upon Stones) yet in all our Revolutions, (although many gaps have been laid open) the Government hath not steered its course directly to *Charles* the second, its only right and quiet Haven.” (“Englands Redemption” 3-4)

In another pamphlet, interestingly titled “The Traytors Tragedy,” this imagery appears again:

“...the Ship of this *Brittish* Island hath been for many years sadly tost, in a violent Tempest of civil Commotions and Distractions...” (8). Another pamphlet rejoices that “Our Seas have grown calme; our Ayre refin’d, and clear, / with joyfull News re-ecchoing ev’rywhere, / Our CHARLES safe return’d, by whose direction / Were steered, and need not OLIVERS Protection” (Brathwaite 13). Rector Giles Fleming wrote that England was “a Kingdom left utterly headless, and unmanned for so long a time...and floating like a ship upon the surges, without aither Mast or Tackle, Pilot or Helme; and which conduced more to the peril and the ruine of it...so often attempted to be steered by willful and unskilful hands...” (4-5). Poet Rachel Devon depicts the sea as obedient to her sovereign:

Loe how the late revolted Sea obeys,  
How gladly it the Billows prostrate lays

Before Your Royal Navy, proud to bring  
Three widdow'd Kingdoms their esposed King!  
How do the winds contend, the spreading Sails  
Of Your blest Ships, to fill with prosperous Gales. (4)

In terms of trade, another author wrote in a ballad called "Englands Joy in a Lawful Triumph":

Our Exchange shall bee filled with Merchants from far  
'Tis better to deal in good Traffick than war  
With all Neighbor Nations wee'l shake hands in peace  
By that means our treasure and trade will increase. (1)

These writings, available to the public and disseminated regularly, demonstrate the kind of consensus-seeking ideas that royalists sought to spread, those of prosperity and peace and healing, and the source of these being the restored Charles II. The image-building required for this was carefully and deliberately done. Hegemony could not happen by simply allowing the king to rule; his presence had to be hailed by writing operating as propaganda as the only happy (or possible) outcome. Only then could Charles be safe to rule and act as he desired, and, as the authors hoped, reward his loyal authors and other disseminators of his positive perception.

Again, as the above examples suggest, an integral part of literary hegemony lay in rewriting the histories of both Charles I and II. The regicide was an unsightly black eye for the Stuart dynasty, and such an event was unprecedented in England. Thus, ever since the regicide in 1649, royalists had used the event to turn Charles I from traitor to martyr, and as the Restoration approached and arrived, these themes resumed and multiplied. Myriad writings extolling Charles I appeared, from biographies to panegyrics to songs. One song went thus:

Charles the first was a noble King,  
with a fa la la lero,  
His fame throughout the world to ring,  
with a fa, & c.  
To murder our good Kings Majesty,  
Now may these Rebels howl and cry,  
with a fa la la lero.



He was a Prince of courage stout,  
with a fa, & c.  
Although his glass was soon run out,  
with a fa, & c.  
But behind him he hath left a Noble stock  
May give the Traytor a handsome knock,  
For making a King submit to the block.  
with a fa, &c. ("Traytors Downfall" 1)

In a biography of Charles II by Walter Charleton, the author asserts:

Nor is it fit we should proceed, without a glance of Reverence upon the Memory of that refulgent Rock from whence this Gemme was taken; I mean *His* MAJESTIES Royal FATHER, who, by the Confession of even *His* Enemies (yet those were savage Beasts in Human shape) well deserved to be enrolled in the Eternal Registers of Fame, the Greatest, Wisest, most Pious, most Christian King of the Age in which he lived. A *Prince*, into whose truly Heroical breast Divinity has infused a Soul so pure and white, that not with sufficient caution reflecting upon the great depravity of the Times...(7)

Understandably, Charles I is greatly associated with his own death, which, in order to establish consensus had to be transformed from a shameful end to a glorious, sacrificial one so that his son's image could benefit. It is here that the imagery of the stage appears starkly in printed literature, demonstrating the affinity both forms had with one another due to their identical roles as ideological state apparatuses.

One way we see this is in that many authors chose to write about the execution of Charles I as a play in a theatre. Lois Potter notes that "The words 'stage' and 'scaffold' were interchangeable" (Potter, *Secret Rites* 167), and that "...the image of [Charles I's] execution as a stage-play is so common in this period as to be a cliché" (168). One lengthy biography of Charles I, *The Life and Raigne of King Charles, From His Birth to His Death* (1659) by Lambert Wood, depicts parts of King Charles's trial, and only the trial, as a dialogue. The retelling of the proceedings before the High Court of Justice begins as a narrative, but at the point where Charles questions the validity of the High Court of Justice by demanding, "I would know by what Power I was cald hither" (176), the narrative becomes a dialogue, and the author simply states the

speaker followed by the line. This is followed by shifts back and forth between narrative and dialogue. As Potter has mentioned, the execution is also depicted in dialogue style, including the king's famous line, "I goe from a corruptible to an incorruptible Crown, where no disturbance can be, no disturbance in the World" (198). The use of the dialogue form makes the event more personal, and exchanges the moment of martyrdom, as well as the trial that brought him to that moment, for a glorious event for the king and his son, rather than a shameful one. This metamorphosis was, again, the aim of consensus writing and of hegemony.

So too was the perception of the life of Charles II transformed by hegemonic royalist print at the Restoration. Just as the regicide had to be altered to conform to the needs of the royalist cause for consensus, so did certain conspicuous events in the history of the younger Charles. Most glaring of these was the fact that he had joined with the Scots in an invasion of his own English kingdom, and then had been defeated by Cromwell's forces and nearly taken in the field, surviving only by fleeing and hiding out in disguise for a number of weeks before finally escaping to France. "With the defeat at the Battle of Worcester," writes one historian, "Charles II's career touched bottom" (Matthews 1). Harold Weber, in his book *Paper Bullets*, devotes a whole chapter to the royalist attempts to morph these potentially damning events into triumphant moments for a wide readership. Weber bluntly states:

The fictions generated by the escape narratives...reveal how royal power and identity were produced in print after the Interregnum. They reflect how such power could be reconstituted, demonstrating how the late seventeenth century accommodated an elevated tradition of royal panegyric to a new king, recent parliamentary past, and variety of demotic forms produced by a politically and economically sophisticated print trade. (Weber 29)

Indeed, the problem of a weak kingly image was one that royalists could not ignore. Therefore they had to play up or invent the positives of the battle, which were the reports that Charles had acted valiantly in action against overwhelming numbers, and that he cleverly and providentially

escaped from his enemies so that he might one day return to rule. The recounting of Charles's actions at Worcester is yet another excellent example of pamphlets acting as propaganda in converting Charles II into the king that England thought they wanted and needed.

Accounts of the battle recount the valorous Charles. John Dauncey's 1660 biography of Charles relates Charles's braveness the battle:

...his Majesty in person, & in the head of the Horse, sallied out upon him, & that with so much valour and courage that *Cromwel's* one life-guard, and the best of his old Souldiers, (who were thought almost invincible) were forc't to retire, till seconded by those numerous supplies of fresh soldiers... (Person of Quality 113)

Thomas Blount, in his account of the escape, likewise describes Charles's valor:

...perceiving many of His Foot- souldiers begin to throw down their Arms and decline fighting; *His Majesty* rod [sic] up and down among them, sometimes with his hat in his hand, entreating them to stand to their Arm's and fight like Men, other whiles encouraging them; but seeing himself not able to prevail, said, *I had rather you would shoot me, then keep me alive to see the sad consequences of this fatal day:* Such was the magnanimity [sic] of this Prophetique King. (Blount 11)

Of the providential nature of Charles's escape, Dauncey explains:

Perhaps the Reader will think it tedious that I have given so large a relation of his Majesty's escape from that fight at *Worcester*; but it was a work so full of wonder and providence...consider the several difficulties he passed, the many dangers he was in to be betrayed...and God was never so merciful to any people, as to us, in delivering his sacred majesty so wonderfully out of the hands of his Enemies...(127-8)

Thus was the delicate nature of the attempt to reconstruct the most unseemly event of Charles II's life into one of victory and providence. This change can be seen in juxtaposing poems. One clerical supporter of Charles II, Thomas Warmstrey, admitted of Worcester:

At *Worc'ster Fight, the Rout!* and then the Dance  
Through night and darksome Woods, the Oak, and Lane,  
That did secure you from the poys'nous bane  
Of your malicious foes; how ill the Clown  
You acted, and how often to be known  
You were in danger, and how glad you were  
To quit your Kingdoms to discharge your fear. (Warmstrey 1)

Yet the clown becomes the brave and heroic leader who was being groomed by a higher power for the future task of kingship. One Balladeer writes:

In Worcester battle fierce and hot,  
His horse twice under him was shot,  
And by a wise and prudent thrift  
To save his life was forc'd to shift,  
Without difficulty it was not:  
Providence did him safely convoy  
whom God in his mercy would not destroy. (Wade 1)

This providence wrought by God is the explanation for the king hiding from Parliamentary soldiers, having to cut his hair, and exchanging his princely garb for that of a commoner. At one point, the king hid in a large oak tree, as we learned from the coronation procession, a story which became legend after royalist writers retold it over and over. Charles himself personally used the story to enhance his own image and to entertain, and “never ceased to delight in regaling willing or even reluctant hearers with the story” (Matthews 7). He eventually told the story to Samuel Pepys, who took it down for posterity (9).<sup>2</sup> Incredibly, the ideological state apparatus of print turned one of the defining moments of Charles II’s shame into the signal event of his life to that point.

Another way that writers transformed the former images and shame of Charles I’s execution and Charles II’s defeat and flight is through comparing the kings to biblical figures. By making these parallels, writers hoped to promote hegemonic consensus by associating these Stuart kings with beloved and holy icons, as though they shared the greatness of these heroes. Sometimes these authors make mention of these parallels in passing, and others devote an entire work to the subject. Charles I is most often compared to Christ as a martyr for his people. His biographer William Sanderson notes that after his execution, “The world was busied with Epitaphs upon his death, and there were those who have been passionately disposed to parallel

his sufferings with the holy Jesus, but we forbear to censure them, or to say so much” (Sanderson 1149). In his own biography of Charles I, Peter Heylyn writes that “we may affirm of him as the Scripture doth of Christ our Saviour...” (Heylyn 133), and that Parliament, “for the summe of two hundred thousand pounds in ready money, sold and betrayed him into the hands of his Enemies, as certainly they would have done with the Lord Christ himself for halfe the money” (134).

In addition to the comparisons to Christ, a few writers refer to the regicide by citing the story of Cain and Abel, the biblical account of the first murder. Rector Henry Glover, as we have seen above, preached a sermon on this comparison in 1663, saying, “The same ground of quarrel that Cain had against his innocent brother, these *Regicides* had against their King...” (Glover 4). Of killing one’s brother, Glover later mentions, “this dies the sin of Murder of a deeper *bloud-colour* then ordinary, and leaves a double guilt upon the soul” (8).

Charles II is often compared to King David, especially in the story of his persecution by his usurping son Absalom, from whom he had to flee for a time. Writers exploit these apparent parallels in “considering the notable change of [Charles II’s] condition from one extreame to the other, from the extremity of calamity to the extremity of lustre and glory” (Hulsius 4), as one sermon described. The Oak imagery comes into play here as well, since Absalom’s death came as a result of getting entangled in the branches of a tree. In a poem called “The Oak,” John Couch writes:

When Absalom rebell’d against his King,  
An Oak betray’d him to a suffering”  
Boughs hang’d him first; then *Joabs* Dart,  
Thrice striking, wounded his perfidious Heart.  
When second CHARLES by Rebels lost the Field,  
An Oak ‘gainst Rebels was to him a Shield;  
It open’d wide, and in the Hollow where  
Once lay its Heart, the King concealed there.” (Couch 1)

The oak became a symbol of the king, and he himself was referred to at times as “The Royal Oak.” Subsequently, playwright John Dryden’s poem “Absalom and Achitophel” (1681-2) takes this usurpation as its subject, though under different circumstances.

Many pamphlets and other writings through the press were devoted entirely to these biblical parallels. The anonymous pamphlet “King Charles I His Imitation of Christ” (1660) is self-explanatory; Arise Evans’s epistle *To the Most High and Mighty Prince Charles II* (1660) compares Charles II to David (13), then gives fifteen reasons why he resembles the greatest of Hebrew kings. As might be expected, a number of these parallels, as we have already seen, were in printed versions of sermons. Simon Ford’s sermon *Parallela* (1660) makes this same connection; Clement Ellis’s “A Sermon Preached on the 29th of May” (1661) compares Charles II to both David and Jesus; and Thomas Reeve’s *England’s Backwardnesse or a Lingering Party in bringing back a lawful King* (1661) also parallels Charles II with David. By recasting the images of Charles I and II as biblical figures, authors are utilizing propagandistic literature to make it more difficult to refute or oppose the wrongfulness of the regicide and the rightness of Charles II sitting on the throne, lending both kings a credibility which makes it more difficult to question the legitimacy of their rule. These writings also ally them with a higher power whose will must have been to restore the Stuart line all along. Here hegemonic consensus is cleverly mined; after all, how wise must it be to put oneself in opposition to the Almighty?

In attempting to paint a positive picture of the restored king, it was not only necessary to rewrite certain moments in his political past; there was some reputation-mending to be done, especially as it pertained to Charles’s well-publicized sexuality. This was an especially important point to address, as it could easily undermine Charles’s hegemonic intentions by toppling the image that was being built by these works. Samuel Pepys wrote in 1663 of “the unhappy posture

of things at this time; that the king doth mind nothing but pleasures, and hates the very sight or thoughts of business. That my Lady Castlemayne rules him; who he says hath all the tricks of [erotic author] Aretin that are to be practiced to give pleasure...” (Pepys 4: 136-7). In January of 1664, Pepys heard gossip of the king:

that he doth dote upon [his favorite mistress] Mrs. Stewart only—and that to the leaving of all business in the world—and to the open slighting of the Queen. That he values not who sees him or stands by him while he dallies with her openly—and then privately in her chamber below, where the very sentries observe his going in and out—and that so commonly, that the Duke or any of the nobles, when they would ask where the King is, they will ordinarily say, “Is the King above or below?” meaning with Mrs. Stewart (5: 20-21).

Not long afterward the same man told Pepys “how the King still doth dote upon his women, even beyond all shame. And that the good Queen will of herself stop before she goes sometimes into her dressing-room, till she knows whether the King be there, for fear he should be, as she hath sometimes taken him, with Mrs. Stuart” (40). In 1665 Pepys had a conversation with another man who told him of the king and his mistresses that “the King doth spend most of his time in feeling and kissing them naked all over their bodies in bed...,” Pepys remarking to himself that “this lechery will never leave him” (6: 267).

That Charles apparently did not take others’ concerns about his actions as seriously as he might was of no help to his supporters. Of his apparent title as the father of his nation, “Charles himself allegedly remarked that ‘I believe that I am, of a good number of them’” (Qtd. in Weber 90). As Harold Weber describes, Charles’s virility as a man amounted to an “apparently paradoxical movement, from the royal phallus that signifies power to the captive penis that signifies weakness” (94).<sup>3</sup> In fact, Weber analyses an anonymous and profanely erotic closet drama, *Sodom*, modeled after the heroic plays that we will see described in Chapter 5, which mercilessly taunts Charles for his attention to mistresses rather than to his

country, a fact that ultimately feminizes the king (Weber 112-123). Charles's numerous illegitimate children also posed a problem, especially again since his queen, Catherine of Braganza, was apparently barren (Weber 90).

These were not concerns that writers were ultimately able to dispel, especially later on, owing to Charles's and his court's bawdy behavior. Writers, in order to prop up the king's image, attempted to keep his promiscuous reputation under wraps before and after the Restoration. Dauncey writes of Charles that "He is a perfect enemy to all Debauchedness" (229-30). The playwright and Civil War veteran Sir Samuel Tuke, who was exiled with Charles, wrote a short pamphlet called "A Character of Charles the Second Written by an Impartial Hand" (1660), in which he wrote, although certainly not impartially, that Charles "so naturally hates *Debauchery*..." (Tuke, "Character" 11). Tuke claims a special insight into Charles's character because he was personally with Charles in exile, and thus to preserve Charles's reputation he adds rather suspiciously that "Though I can neither impugne nor defend the constant austerity of his *Majesties* life, since it is possible that in the heats of his youth he may have rendred to the powerful charms of Beauty; yet I am certain that for many yeares he hath been so Chast and Cautious, that I have not heard the least whisper of any indecent *Gallantry*" (11). It appears here as though Tuke is aware of Charles's actions to the contrary; the king's servant must keep Charles from damaging his kingly reputation, and ruining his attempts at public consensus and therefore hegemony.

Predictably, changing or affecting public perception of the monarchy and the personality of Charles himself also means controlling opinion about its enemies, and certainly royalist writers worked very hard to turn Cromwell, all his agents, and the Parliament that waged war on the king and set the stage for Cromwell to become the *de facto* monarch, into



enemies of not only the state, but nature and God as well. We have already seen how public spectacles depicted the enemies of the Stuarts. Numerous styles of print mercilessly thundered against these supposed enemies of England. Among these ubiquitous writings, we see the enemies of the Stuarts described as “Sons of *Massacre*, who having by treachery, dissimulation, and breach of oaths...gotten into power, by their extravagant tyranny [and] almost ruined the Nation” (“Devil’s Cabinet Councell” 45). Another long book-length diatribe, entitled *Cromwell’s Bloody Slaughterhouse* (1660), rails at the regicides, “You that at best are but Gods Butchers, the unjust Executioners of his just vengeance” (9), and calls them “*Luciferian brats from Hell*” (43). Of course, Cromwell himself was a big target after his death, depicted as a “grand Imposter, and most audacious Rebel, that durst aspire from a *Brew-house* to the *Throne*, washing his accursed Hands in the Blood of his Royal Sovereign” (“The English Devil” 1). Not surprisingly in this theatrical age, Cromwell is often depicted as the tyrant king from a tragedy, with epithets such as “the Bloody Tragedy of OLIVER the *Traytor*” (6). Lighter invectives, especially ballads, often made fun of Cromwell’s large nose: “Who did not hear of Olivers Nose... / It was of the largest size as I suppose [sic]” (Miles 1).

An especially important theme in writing about royalist enemies is that they are not only traitors to the Stuarts and their kingdoms, but also to one another; this sets them in opposition to the consensus perception and personality of the king, who was being represented as having a gentle clemency and a forgiving heart. The theme of traitors’ betrayals of one another was revisited over and over in new plays from the Restoration. Not surprisingly, these episodes appeared in other forms of print as well. Cromwell’s allies were depicted as “snatching of Sugar-plums one from another” (Nedham 1). George Fox reports that the enemies of Charles “began to divide and split amongst themselves, and to betray one

another for self-ends...” (Fox 8). In Abraham Jennings’s account of the Worcester escape, he speaks of the Roundheads: “Thus did they strive to out-vie one another in dissimulation, yet durst not trust each others fidelity... Thus did the Cocks of both factions [the army and Parliament] peck at one another, and both wanting true worth in themselves, would make a Ladder of mischief to climbe up to promotion” (Jennings 45-6). In another Worcester account, John Danvers writes that “the devils playd their own parts, and quarreled within themselves for Supremacy” (Danvers 5). Thus we see again the reconstructive nature of royalist print at work as an ideological state apparatus, rebuilding and refining the images of the Stuarts and abusing their enemies.

### Pamphlet Dialogues

Having seen the ubiquity and influence of printed matter, let us now turn to a particular and popular form of print that illuminates its close kinship with plays, and which serves a very important link between printed fare and live performance: the dialogue. Sometimes called play-pamphlets or quasi-dramatic dialogues, and also published as tragicomedies, interludes, or comedies (Potter, *Secret Rites* 90), these writings used dialogue as a satirical weapon against a political enemy. That they have a great kinship with traditional plays can be seen in Lois Potter’s assertion that the best name for these writings might be “mock-heroic” (Potter, *Secret Rites* 90), which is particularly instructive given the fact that the heroic drama, as we will see in Chapter 4, was a key genre in the Restoration, especially in the few years following 1660.

The dialogue is an important genre in seventeenth-century print, not just to literary scholars, but to historians as well. Peter Burke notes importantly that “... the dialogue is too important in Renaissance culture for historians to leave to the literary critics” (Burke 1). As a prominent form of writing in the seventeenth century, “its popularity gives it a significance as a

true expression of the spirit of the times” (Crawford, “Prose Dialogue” 609). Further, as Bartholow Crawford has pointed out, the dialogue was a useful tool: “Almost never was the purpose of the dialogue anything but utilitarian. Its object, to defeat or discomfit an antagonist, might be gained in various ways, now serious, now jocular; by satire, personal or general. The aim of the political dialogue was, however, rarely deliberately artistic” (605-6). This utility speaks to its important function as an ideological state apparatus. The popularity of the form, therefore, especially in a time preceding the restoration of English theatres, aided the king greatly in his consensus and hegemonic aims.

The pamphlet dialogue “became fashionable in 1641 as a vehicle for satire and received a further injection of imaginative energies when the theatres were closed in 1642” (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 218). Given that Parliament closed the theatres in 1642, it would be very easy to assume that the pamphlet dialogue simply served as a substitute for live theatre. However, this would be an oversimplification. In the first place, these early dialogues were used by Parliament to satirize their enemies (Raymond, *Invention* 202-3). It was not until the later 1640s that these dialogues, in imitation of the venomously partisan “mercuries,” or newsbooks, of the day, became “ardently royalist” (203). Adding to this skepticism, Dale Randall writes that “one may be inclined occasionally to assign them to some segment or other of the dramatic spectrum. Probably it is best, however, to deny them any but a peripheral place, illuminating but ancillary” (Randall 53). Randall’s own moniker for these writings is “pretend plays” (53). Additionally, the dialogues usually do not contain stage directions or similar features typical of drama. Still, it is impossible to ignore the value of this particular genre (or sub-genre) of writing at a time when there was no legal theatre. The closings most certainly had an impact on the publication of these dialogues. In fact, as Lois Potter writes:

That so many of the satiric pamphlets were in dramatic form is the result of another much-disliked feature of parliamentary rule, the refusal to reopen the public theatres... Thus, on each occasion when the ordinance against stage-plays was re-imposed, royalist news pamphlets appeared in the form of miniature plays, with prologues claiming that they were offering these as alternatives to the forbidden drama. (Potter, *Secret Rites* 34)

Raymond notes that dialogues “were to some extent a continuation of pre-war theatre, rechannelled when the theatres were closed” (Raymond, *Invention* 206), and goes on to admit that “the rake characters, sexual innuendo, the writing of politics in terms of style, perhaps the triumph of wit, are antecedents of Restoration comedy” (208). On the other hand, he ultimately concludes that the pamphlets served more as a substitute for missing public performances rather than as public performances all their own (208). There is indeed little evidence that these plays were performed as live plays, but Randall does point out one ordinance from 1647 that may suggest at least some semblance of performance. This ordinance mandates the punishment for any who will “utter,” among other verbs, any pamphlet or other writing that is not licensed.

Randall explains:

The word “utter” makes people wonder if such tracts were performed... One can only suggest that if its range of reference includes audible expression, it probably does not allude solely to the performance of ballads. If it did, why not use the word *sing*? The term *ballad-singer* occurs elsewhere in the document. Perhaps, then, *utter* is meant to cover both speaking *and* singing... Whatever the case, the oral reading of unlicensed pamphlet dialogues is also prohibited after this time, perhaps suggesting that previously they had been read aloud. (Randall 63-4)

Potter agrees with Randall in that she sees no evidence that the dialogues were staged as a sort of closet drama; she does suggest that it was likely that they were not, but instead were read aloud (34). However, I would argue that this does constitute performance of a sort. The fact that dialogues could be read aloud is one of the reasons for their popularity (Burke 8), according to Burke, who also notes the importance of the performability of the dialogue: “How many Renaissance dialogues were performed in this way it is obviously impossible to say, but we do

know that the school-dialogues or ‘colloquies’ of Erasmus, Cordier and others were acted out in class, while Aretino refers to an occasion on which a dialogue by Speroni was read aloud by his friends” (8). Further, he correctly observes that “immediacy made the dialogue an appropriate medium for the presentation of controversial issues” (8). Bartholow Crawford likewise gives us an idea of the immediacy that the dialogue provides:

Here...we find the oral quality which...is itself one of the fundamental constituents of the dialogue. In its essence the dialogue is more than a contest or exchange; it is an oral contest or exchange. The speech must approximate the speech of men; the speakers must be differentiated sufficiently to give their speech the semblance of reality. Inasmuch as the period during which the style of English prose most plainly exhibits this quality is also the period of supremacy of the dialogue, a sympathetic relationship is not hard to postulate. Mutual influence there must have been. The special forms here studied may be regarded as the contribution of the dialogue, just as the dialogue itself found sustaining favor in a public tendency toward oral expression. (Crawford, “Questions” 125)

The performability of these dialogues is important to our subject because it adds yet another layer to print’s function as an ideological state apparatus, just like the drama proper. The immediacy of such works added to their readability which potentially allowed for hegemonic ideas to be disseminated directly and to larger numbers. Thus, the dialogue is a unique mode among a large number of them during the seventeenth century, and, as we will see, was a key part of Royalist consensus writing.

It seems clear that in some ways dialogic pamphlets did serve as something of a performative substitute for the much missed drama, and that the absence of professional theatre affected these writings. Certainly, writers knew that oral readings in public, even impromptu ones, would be a likely way for their messages to be broadcast, and their enemies knew this as well. Most importantly, it is easy to see that, like the other pro-Stuart writings (and of the royalist-sponsored Restoration theatre, as we will see), these royalist dialogues, started in the 1640s and revived during the Restoration, were designed to promote and spread hegemonic

consensus by transforming the images of the king and his father, and also those of his enemies.

Randall notes the prominence of consensus in dialogues:

...the quasi-dramatic form serves to sharpen the position-based satiric darts. The demand for (or assumption of) agreement rather than the invitation to thought is so pervasive in the pamphlets, in fact, that one is scarcely prepared to come across an occasional thoughtful work...By and large, the atmosphere created in the dialogues is one of hasty and harsh political and religious polemic, a realm characterized by the satiric, coarse, and comic, and often drenched with the bile of hate and frustration. (Randall 55)

In emphasizing this “assumption of agreement,” Randall captures the essence of consensus-building in such writings, demonstrating the tactic of writers to impose new perceptions of king and Restoration without considering opposition. Hegemonic consensus among Charles’s kingdoms is the most important motivation for writing these pamphlets and books, including of course, dialogues. Again, they function as hegemonic propaganda which aims to use Charles II’s early power to boost the perception and personality of the king.

Though most Restoration dialogues elevate the royals and deride the parliamentarians, the various types of dialogues are many. One curious type of dialogue is the “ghost” or “confessional” dialogue, in which the chief characters are the ghosts of dead players in the Civil War drama on the side of Protector Cromwell, sometimes paired with the ghosts of historical figures. The “villains” in these pieces—usually regicides or other enemies to Charles I’s rule and life—often confess their sins in undermining the king and his kingdoms to varying degrees.

Raymond describes the usefulness of this short-lived variety of dialogue:

Of all the farcical genres and mock-genres that were deployed to convince readers of their own interests, the ghost dialogue is an epitome. Combining elements of dramatic dialogue, news reportage, burlesque satire, exposure of secret domain and real political analysis, the ghost dialogue began in the spring of 1659 and ceased to be useful around May 1660, soon after the proclamation of Charles II. (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 253)

This particular style of dialogue, then, was designed to aid the perception of Charles II by promoting his return through the demonstration of the evils of the prior regime; it was therefore

not needed after Charles took the throne, and, no longer being useful, was discontinued as a form of propaganda. The use of ghosts in these writings serves to exonerate both Charles I and II as innocent victims of the usurpation by common men such as Cromwell, and to discredit, shame, and condemn the memory of the usurpers. Hearing or reading the actual guilty parties confess their guilt with their own mouths and the victims defend their fall adds a bit of an authentic-sounding touch to the image-altering pamphlet, and fulfill the hegemonic aim of discrediting the opposing side to elevate the king's.

Many of the ghost dialogues do this by featuring a “confessional” wherein the ghost of one of the Cromwellians confesses the sinfulness of the condemnation of the king and the regicide to the ghost of Charles I. The use of ghosts in this context suggests that there is unfinished business: the guilty must confess and the martyr Charles must personally hear it in order to reassert his rightful dominance over the perpetrator. The key enemy to discredit in this strategy was Oliver Cromwell, and to this end, three ghost dialogues, all from 1659, depict postmortem conversations between the ghosts of Oliver Cromwell and Charles I. One of these is titled *A Dialogue Betwixt The Ghosts of Charls [sic] late King of England, and Oliver the late Protector*. The author's intent in this work is to have Cromwell confess and repent of his transgressions: “O Sir, Pray forgive me,” cries Cromwell to the martyred king, “for you cannot imagine the tortures of conscience that I indure, when I call to mind all my ambitious and damnable Plots to ruine you and yours, and to set my self in your stead. It was I that laid the Plot to draw your Subjects obedience from you, under pretence of Religion and Liberty” (5). Cromwell also admits that to undo Charles “I by my own dam'd Policy and Power, broke off the treaty, and all to get the Government to my self” (5). This fulfills the important perception-aiding goal of having the enemy himself confess of his lack of right to rule. Yet perception is also

improved by explaining Charles I's shortcomings in terms that would not undermine the monarchy as a whole. Charles's mistakes in his rule are therefore limited to his own honesty (5) when all others, including Oliver himself, were somehow not playing fairly.

As should be expected, Charles II's image is also necessarily built in this work. The imagery of his Worcester escape appears here, as Oliver laments, "[My servants] would have delivered him to me, but he was too wise for them, for after the field was lost at Worcester, he with the help of one or two of his choice friends in a disguise miraculously made an escape to London, and from thence beyond the Seas, where I did use all the Plots, and Stratagems to destroy him, but all in vain" (6). Cromwell finally returns to his own self-condemnation, confessing that "now too late I find the horridness of my Crimes, by oppressing the righteous, and spilling the blood of the innocent; Oh Sir little do you think what I feel for now I find the reward of my evil doings" (7). This confessional nature of Cromwell's dialogue signals, as we saw in previous examples of royalist writing, the putting away of an unfortunate and raw period of English history and the inauguration of a new, prosperous one under Charles II, which is the most potent point here. Of course there would never be forgetting the now-martyred Charles I, but for the most part, the idea for this dialogue was to argue that Charles the younger should return, and that his doing so would bring healing to England.

*A New Conference Between the Ghosts of King Charles and Oliver Cromwell* by "Adam Wood," is another dialogue arguing the innocence of Charles I and the guilt of Cromwell, with a similar formula and the same aims of hegemonic consensus. Compared to the previous dialogue, *A New Conference* is somewhat more sympathetic to Cromwell, though the late Protector is still clearly a villain and a usurper. Here, Cromwell answers to the martyred king's criticism of the Protector's "absurd actions" by claiming that "I did no other then [sic] Imitate most of our Rank,



which, according to our Creed... A Prince or Tyrant ought never to want good Pretences, to colour the worst of Actions with” (Wood 2). Charles counters by demanding, “What dost thou Rank thyself among princes? Didst thou usurp the Kingly Office, after thou didst me that Ill Office?” (2). These are clear snipes at the usurpers’ low birth, which appear very often in writing, as we will also see in some of the plays. Cromwell realizes with reluctance that he was ruthless and evil, remarking that “I am upon confessing my villainy” (6). Charles falls back on the old Royalist position that he relied too much upon the bad counsel of rich nobles, forcing him to resort to unpopular measures to run the country.

Charles literally gets the last laugh, however. After telling Charles that his son Richard Cromwell is now the new Lord Protector, Cromwell is shocked to encounter a character describing himself as “thy Son Richard’s Genius” who reveals that Richard “is Reduced to a private Capacity, and the Long-Parliament hath again Re-assumed their Authority, and he is little better than a prisoner” (6). It becomes instantly clear that Richard will not resume his father’s greatness or his political power. At Oliver’s disappointment Charles laughs: “Ha, ha, ha! Is it come to your own door, Sir?” (7). Cromwell then washes his hands of his weak son, crying that “I ventured body and soul to get three Dominions, to leave him Lord of, and he would not sell his to keep them; he is not to be pitied” (7). The use of an allegorical character such as Richard’s Genius in conversation with two ghosts recalls a bit of the morality plays of the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance, suggesting a tale of ethics. Richard is not willing, as his father was, to resort to unethical means to retain a kingdom, which reinforces the rightness of the Stuart cause. That Charles’s death at the hands of Cromwell and others is not the end of the story in these pamphlets reflects how useful these writings could be as hegemonic propaganda.

A final dialogue between the ghosts of Cromwell and Charles I is “The Court Career, Death Shaddow’d to Life” (1659), which shows Oliver (called often by his nickname “Nol” in this work) suffering the punishments of his sins. Though the anonymous author does not use the term “ghost,” the conversation does take place after the deaths of both men. Oliver again is suffering because of his own evil deeds, and cries out to Charles, “horror, horror, despaire and horror, my sole dis-consolate consorts at my departure. O how hard a task it is for that man to die, who has no other hope then to die for ever! And such was my irreparable condition” (3). When Charles reminds him of why he has been sent to the underworld, Oliver cries, “O do not jeer me in my misery! Your piety has seated you in a Throne of glory; my tyranny has seated me in a depth of boundless infelicity” (4). Tormented by his deeds, Nol is forced to admit the great qualities of his victim. Charles shows his high morality and kindness by saying that he might help Oliver, “...though my professed enemy, if my pittie could redeem thee, or that it were lawful for me to pittie thee” (4). In his torment, Oliver is forced to admit that he betrayed his allies (6) because “a Diadem was my aim” (7). He also laments that he and his family have been reduced to their previous state of commonness: “...the memory of our Family on earth is quite razed, my posterity shamefully debased and all to their former obscurity reduced,” to which Charles replies, “This was a just judgement” (9). What Cromwell had not counted on is that, at least in this author’s mind, Charles I is a glorious martyr rather than a pitiful traitor. Again Cromwell cries, “O me! this aggravates my torments above measure, especially when I recollect my self, and reflect upon you, seated in a sphere of glory; to take a view of my misery; where I am become a spectacle to Angels in my suffering, and a reproach to men in their censuring” (10). Again, the author’s job is to justify the weakness of the former king, and here he attempts to do this through Oliver’s blaming the aristocracy: “O that the English Peerage had been indued [sic] with more

valour; so might they have clipt my wings: and staid me in my Career..." (25). Finally Charles leaves him to his suffering, telling him, "Thine actions were such strangers to all goodness, as they have estrang'd thee from all hope of happiness. Rest in thy restless condition, hapless, helpless, hopeless..." Oliver replies, "Thus must I here remain ever dying, ever living, relinquish't of all humane Society, rest of all visible comfort to Eternity" (28).

In these three dialogues, the authors have taken great care to rehabilitate the image of the usurped king, and by association, his son and heir to the throne. In so doing, they are again attempting to alter the corrupted image of Charles I (and by extension the whole of the Stuart monarchy) into one of righteousness and the result of the ill doings of others. Those who have succeeded in murdering him are no longer the ushers-in of a new and free state, but rebels without conscience who wanted nothing more than to tyrannize others and govern to their own personal ends. The metamorphosis of images here demonstrates the importance of perception of the former king as righteous and good, in order that his issue be thought of as rightful ruler, and just as importantly, descended from a noble and worthy line. The perception of Charles I, therefore, is crucial in presenting the perception of the son. These perceptions fuel the consensus argument, as well as speaking to the personality of the son, playing upon his star status as the heir to the Stuart martyr.

In addition to the dialogues already mentioned, Cromwell appears in a number of others, often with other villains; these works serve the same purpose of bringing them into disrepute. In another anonymous dialogue entitled "The World in a Maize, or, Old Olivers Gost [sic]," Cromwell's ghost appears to his son, who has lost his own position as Lord Protector. When he chastises his son for losing his position, Richard says, "I could not help it, Father, they out-witted my proceedings" (3). Richard admits that he did not want the position, in part because his father

gained it by treachery. Oliver and Richard then argue over “honour.” Oliver believes that honor, meaning in this case self-honor, comes above all else. Richard replies in verse that “...honour is but a bawble, / And to keep it is but a trouble” (4). Later, this exchange highlights the argument:

O. He that minds not honour needs not mind Conscience.  
RICH. Then we shall live without the rule of Reason.  
O. Prethee tell not me of Reason, ‘tis honour you should aym at.  
RICH. And lose my Conscience and the love of the people.  
O. Prethee *Dick* tell not me of the love of the people, ‘tis honour *Dick* ‘tis honour.  
RICH. The complaints of the Commons is great and who shall stay their cryes,  
O. The man that hath no deceit, and when he will arise. (6)

The author here depicts the supposedly weaker Richard as more honorable than his usurping father. Richard further illustrates this:

...you overpowered a King;  
From whence this mischief all this while doth spring,  
He gave the staff out of his hand tis known,  
And then at last you made the power your own,  
The people of the Land did find it so,  
From whence proceeds their misery and woe. (4)

Again, Cromwell is discredited, this time by his own son and the succeeding Lord Protector. The dialogue ends with Cromwell singing a ballad, which as we have seen is a form of the lowly, in yet another shot at the Protector’s low birth. These dialogues are not isolated works; Cromwell appears in many other dialogues as the villain,<sup>4</sup> as do other regicides and enemies of the Stuarts.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, the confessional ghost dialogues work hard to rehabilitate the image of Charles II through the figure of his father’s ghost, and also by depicting the enemies of the monarchy as traitors, usurpers, and unworthies of low social rank. Again, discrediting the former regime was of vital importance to establishing consensus, and is important in demonstrating that these works are functioning specifically as hegemonic propaganda.

## “Rump” Writings

Included among the many enemies of Charles I and II are not only individuals; a single governing body drew the ire and outrage of all royalists: the Rump Parliament. The term “Rump” refers to the Purged Parliament that condemned Charles I to the block, and therefore it was hated by many, and appeared in many writings of all types, including the dialogue. This body is important for hegemonic authors to discredit because during a lot of this press activity, it still existed. In February 1660, the news came to London that that the Rump was finally being dissolved, and that elections for a new Parliament would soon take place, in all probability paving the way for the coming of Charles II. In the wild celebration that followed, the crowd unleashed its fury on the Rump, which was largely responsible for the execution of Charles I. Pepys witnessed and described the incredible scene of rumps being roasted all over the city:

But the common joy that was everywhere to be seen! The number of bonfires, there being fourteen between St. Dunstan’s and Temple-bar. And at Strand bridge I could at one view tell 31 fires. In King-streete seven or eight; and all along burning, and roasting, and drinking for rumps—there being rumps tied upon sticks and carried up and down. The butchers at the maypole in the Strand rang a peal with their knives when they were going to sacrifice their rump. On Ludgate-hill there was one turning of the spit, that had a rump tied upon it, and another basting of it. Indeed, it was past imagination, both the greatness and the suddenness of it. At one end of the street, you would think there was a whole lane of fire, and so hot that we were fain to keep still on the further side merely for heat. (Pepys 1: 52)

John Evelyn described that “the Rump Parliament (so called as retaining some few rotten members of the other) being dissolved; and for joy whereof were many thousands of rumps roasted publicly in the streets at the bonfires this night, with ringing of bells, and universal jubilee” (Evelyn 1: 339-340). Rugg also experienced the scene, and noted that “the Rump Parliment was so hated and jeered that butchers boyes would say, Will you buy any Parlimentt rumps and kidneys? and it was a very ordnary thing to see littl children to make a fier in the streets and burne rumps” (Rugg 73). These events happened “with an enthusiasm that

commentators compared with madness” (Jenner, “Roasting” 84-5). As one historian points out, it was “possibly the greatest expression of popular rejoicing London has ever known” (Hutton, *The Restoration* 43). As Jenner points out, George Tatham depicted these goings on in his 1660 comedy, *The Rump* (Jenner, “Roasting” 86), a play that we will examine in detail later in this chapter. Another account from 1660 relates that “History cannot tell of its parallel; wise men grew mad upon it, and mad men sober; the Cryes, the Bonfires, and the sume of Rosted Rumps did quite take down the Legislative Stomach...” (Jenner, “Roasting” 72-3). This rump imagery was so pervasive, argues Jenner, that “by February 1660 rumps had become the centre of the improvisational street theatre of London politics” (90). We see this in Pepys’s account from a few days before this “Roasting of the Rump,” as the event is called. He writes that he heard “of a picture hung up at the Exchange, of a great pair of buttocks shitting of a turd into [Parliamentary naval commander John] Lawson’s mouth, and over it was writ ‘The thanks of the house.’ Boys do now cry ‘Kiss my Parliament’ instead of ‘Kiss my arse,’ so great and general a contempt is the Rump come to among all men, good and bad” (Pepys 1: 45).

It is easy to see here that the Rump, as might be expected, was the target of scathing invective from merciless royalist writers, criticized and condemned for the regicide. Thus, not surprisingly, there were many ballads, songs, and other writings which made the Rump as its subject of ridicule, in order to prop up Charles I and II. Henry Brome collected a number of these writings and published them in a large collection in 1662, under the title *Rump, an Exact Collection of the choicest Poems and Songs Relating to the Late Times*, and containing writings from 1639 to 1661. This was an expansion of his 1660 collection, *The Rump, or a collection of Songs and Ballads, made upon those who would be a Parliament...* Many of these selections had

appeared in print in shorter pamphlets or broadsides, but some had never before been published (McShane, “Roasting” 254).

Many authors who wished to support the restoration of Charles saw a perfect opportunity to push consensus ideas by abusing the Rump, and invalidating its former actions, especially the regicide. The Rump’s unfortunate nickname led to the invention of many foul epithets in print, as we saw from Pepys’s account. These types of insults made it into print in the form of poems, ballads, and other writings, many of them collected by Brome, as we have seen. The authors of these rumpish writings “were constructing an image of Royalism as popular, and the popular as Royalist” (Jenner, “Roasting” 109), in their attempts to establish consensus. A few examples appear below.

One anonymous poem reads: “IF none be offended with the Sent [sic], / Though I foul my Mouth a Ile be content, / *To* sing of the Rump of a Parliament...” (“Re-Resurrection” 16).

Another ballad, aptly titled “Bumm-fodder,” reads:

Theres a proverb come to my mind not unfit,  
When the head shal see the RUMP all be-shit,  
Sure this must prove a most lucky hit:  
*Which* [nobody can deny]

There’s another Proverb which every Noddy  
Wil jeer the *RUMP* with, and cry *Hoddy Doddy*;  
Here’s a *Parliament* all Arse and no Body,  
*Which...* (“Bumm-Fodder” 55)

Later in the same piece, the author mocks Cromwell:

Old *Noll* when we talkt of *Magna Charta*,  
Did prophecy well we should all smart-a.  
And now wee have found his *RUMPS Magna Farta*  
*Which...* (57)

Another ballad called “The Bloody Bed-roll” reads:

Oh! my *Rump*, my *Rump*, my *Rump*,  
My *Rump* smells wonderous strong,  
    The blisters rise  
    About my Thighs  
With voting here so long,  
My *Rump* is grown so sore,  
I can no longer sit,  
    Hold up thy Bum,  
    The Devil is come  
With a Plaister to cure it...(“The Bloody Bed-roll” 349)

Another poem explains of the government during the Interregnum:

The *Body* lost its form, and turn’d a *Lump*;  
Now all the *Limbs* are *Vassals* to the *Rump*,  
Which all the *Nutriture* devour’d and spent,  
Yields nothing back but stink and *excrement*,  
And all *returns* that ever this doth send us,  
Serves only to *defile* us and *offend* us...(“The New State Described” 95)

The playwright John Tatham made his feelings for the Rump known in his 1660 play, *The Rump*, but he did so also in a short “essay” called “The Character of The Rump”:

A RUMP is the hinder part of the many-headed beast, the back-door of the devil’s arse a peake, tyranny and rebellion ending in a stink, the State’s incubus, a crab Commonwealth with the but-end formost; ‘tis a town-ditch swelling above the walls, a sink taking possession of the whole house, the humours left behind after the substance of the body politic is purg’d away by the devil’s potions, the tumour of the breech, *Caninus appetitus in ano*, the epilogue grown greater than the play....(Tatham, *Dramatic Works* 287)

Other colorful anti-rump titles include “Upon the Parliament Fart” (Brome, *Rump* Part I 61-3) and “The Devills Arse a Peake: or, Satans Beastly Part, or in plain terms, Of the Posteriors and Fag-end of a Long Parliament” (Brome, *Rump* Part II 96-99).

Jenner argues of these anti-Rump writings that “the excess of the denunciation undermined its legitimacy” (118). This, however, seems doubtful, and is directly refuted by McShane (“Roasting” 264-5), who asserts that “If anything the term ‘Rump’ was helpful, rather than destructive, as it distinguished between the remnants of a parliament, men who had fallen



prey to the vice of pride and ambition, and a true or ‘free parliament’: that is, free of vested interest” (265). McShane also feels that the Rump ballads were entirely satirical and that there is no evidence that they were sung (“Roasting” 257-8), and that instead, they “were part of an orchestrated campaign by Royalist propagandists, geared towards an educated, Cavalier market; men, displaced by the Interregnum regimes, who had hoped to regain their places at the Restoration, and who could easily afford the anthologized books, effectively advertised to them through the broadside sheets...”(270). On this point, Jenner seems to have it right. While he admits that “establishing the contexts in which, and judging the extent to which, particular verses were sung or declaimed is difficult” (“Reply” 283), he provides evidence that Rump ballads may have indeed been sung:

The testimony of [a] servant, who reported that his master had taken down some scurrilous verses satirizing Cromwell after hearing a fiddler’s boy sing them in London, suggests something of the kind of material that metropolitan performers might have in their repertoire...Other scraps of evidence suggest that the ‘Rump ballads’ were not divorced from oral cultures. (“Reply” 283)

This is important discourse, because if Rump ballads were sung, then perhaps Rump dialogues could be performed, which we have said adds an extra hegemonic layer to their function as royalist propaganda.

As we saw with the discrediting of Cromwell and other regicides, the dialogue form was another effective way to abuse the Rump parliament. This was accomplished by turning the Rump into a single character, and this was done in the curious “Mistress Rump” dialogues. The personification of the Purged Parliament as a single villain had been done before the name “Rump” was adopted for the purged body. Parliament was often personified in writing as characters such as “Mister Parliament” or “Sir Pitiful Parliament” (Randall 60). A set of writings called the “Mistress Rump” dialogues are actually adapted from a set of royalist dialogues

concerning “Mistress Parliament” from 1648, written by a ghost writer (or writers) known only as “Mercurious Melancholicus.” Two of these dialogues from 1648 serve as the model for the Mistress Rump pieces: “Mistris Parliament Brought to Bed of a Monstrous Childe of Reformation” and “Mistris Parliament Presented in her Bed, After the Sore Travaile and Hard Labour Which She Endured Last Weeek [sic]...” In these dialogues, Mistress Parliament is in labor with her so-called “child of deformation,” a symbol of and play on words for governmental reformation. In her study of the Mistress Parliament dialogues, Lois Potter highly doubts that these were ever intended for production, despite the fact that they do carry a few characteristics of a play (Potter, “Mistress Parliament” 108). She does, however, refer to them as “pamphlet-plays” (108). The “Mistress Rump” dialogues clearly model themselves on the 1648 dialogues. In these Restoration comedic pieces, two of which are one-page broadsides and a third which is based on one of the broadsides and appears to have been performed at Charles II’s entry into London, depict, as do two of the 1648 dialogues, a pregnant Mrs. Rump giving birth to an illegitimate and deformed child representing governmental reformation. In these dialogues Mrs. Rump also performs something of a confessional, though at times she appears insincere and self-interested despite her guilty admissions. These blatant indictments of a perceived evil body of men which are depicted as the catalysts of regicide in the form of a theatrical piece show the affinity of print with plays, and also demonstrate the extent to which both forms served as ideological state apparatuses designed to promote consensus and instill a state of hegemony in England.

One of these Mistress Rump dialogues, a single-page broadside titled “The Life and Death of Mris. [Mistress] Rump,” features a character called The Devil’s Arse, who appears to her, calling her “a brat of my own bringing forth.” The Devil’s Arse counters her arguments that

she is “no Monster like thee” by getting her to admit to killing her king as he had Cain kill Abel, to admit that her conscience is “with the exchequer,” and by bringing out other supposedly villainous men from history including Oliver Cromwell, Colonel Pride, and Cain himself. Mrs. Rump does not “confess” in the sense of guilt, nor does she repent: “My delight’s in nothing more then [sic] Martyring Kings, and to have my hands smoaking [sic] in the blood of Princes.” She also laments that the younger Charles escaped with his life. Her punishment, says the Devil’s Arse, is to be sent to Hell, “where the black horrid excrements of all sinners may Float upon thy loathsome Soul, and smother thy loathsome Brat of cursed, Usurping and Tyrranical Reformation to Eternity, as a Revenge on thee for thy cruelty committed in thy Right and Lawful Sovereign Lord the King.” A narrative of Mrs. Rump’s demise ends the tale:

Mrs. Rump (much tortured in conscience) with her ugly, Deformed, Monstrous, and horrid Brat without a head, who had feet like a Bear, and bag at the Belly full of false Oathes, papers, and Engagements, being more Ar---- then Body, with a gashly [sic] countenance gave a terrible screek [sic], and departed the world in a flash of Lightning, and being converted to a stinking vapor vanished away, and was no more and heard of since, whereby her Funeral could not be Solemnized. (“Life and Death”)

An epilogue ends the broadside:

Cursd be the Divils A--- from whence did Spring  
This hellish Rump, to Murder Charles our King;  
Yet by his Son we shall true peace enjoy  
Singing with Eccoes loud Vive Le Roy.

Clearly here the Rump is vilified and the monarchy exalted, and those who are blamed for the miseries of the late times are sent to Hell.

A similar dialogue, titled “Mrs. Rump Brought to Bed of a Monster” depicts Mrs. Rump in labor with her “monster” of reformation. As Mrs. Rump lay in labor retching, a nurse brings forth a number of items from Mrs. Rump as she vomits, including the “innocent blood, that lay in congealed clods in my Stomack a 11 years,” “Gold, for love of which I sold my God,

murdered my King, gave away my Soul, and pulld down the gates,” “Votes, and Ordinances of my own creating, contrary to Law or Reason, made only to Keep out my King contrary to my Oath of Allegiance, and for sequestering my friends to enlarge my own Coffers,” and lastly the “damnable Declaration on you caused to be lapt up in an Oath of Abjuration against my Sovereign the King.” This image of vomiting up items of corruption was common in writing of the period (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 117; Potter, *Secret Rites* 31), and echoes the monster of reformation’s enlarged belly in the previous dialogue. The midwife, Mrs. London, comes to “laugh at thy misery,” and several others come to hear Mrs. Rump make a great Declaration in which she says, “I confess and acknowledge (but not from the bottom of my heart) that for the space of these eleven [sic] years I have been a most cruel Murderer, not onely of Bodies, but of Souls...” She goes on to make several other confessions which it is clear she does not mean. After delivering her speech, a supernatural event occurs: the “room was fill’d with smoak” and a storm arises. Mistress Rump then “brought forth an ugly deformed Monster without a Head, goggleey’d, bloody hands, growing out on both sides of its devouring panch, under the belly hung a great Bag, and the Feet were like the Feet of a Bear.” Several nurses declare the acts of the Rump null and void, and the “play” ends with an epilogue:

Rejoyce Great Brittain now, for King there’s none  
 Shall Govern thee, but Charles, and he alone  
 Will peace and plenty to this Nation bring,  
 Who is the Son of Charles thy Martyrd King...(“Mrs. Rump Brought to Bed”)

A Third Mrs. Rump dialogue, *The Famous Tragedie of the Life and Death of Mrs.*

*Rump*, is an extended form of *Mrs. Rump Brought to Bed of a Monster* (despite its similarity in title to “The Life and Death” broadside), and appears as a lengthier pamphlet rather than a single-page broadside. It appears, due to the great similarity between the two, that the broadside version was very popular, and thus was expanded. As a result, the “Tragedie” was perhaps

written for actual performance. The subtitle describes that the piece is now presented “as it was performed in a burning Stage in Westminster the 29<sup>th</sup> of May, 1660” (1). Since this was the day Charles II entered triumphantly in London on his birthday, it seems that the play might have been part of the festivities, and Charles himself could have personally seen it. If the pamphlet did indeed see performance on this day, then “The Famous Tragedie of the Life and Death of Mrs. Rump” may very well be the first of the Restoration plays, lending more credence to the idea of dialogues as performable pieces, and linking them even closer to live theatre. In any case, as in the original broadside, the main feature is the several items are brought forth from Mrs. Rump before she gives birth to her deformed brat of reformation. The fact that this dialogue was largely a reprint and expansion on another dialogue, and also is said to have been performed at Charles’s return from exile, tells us that these writings were popular and also suggests that they may have received at the very least some loose live readings. That these works were popular enough to be reprinted and expanded is strong evidence that they were effective as hegemonic tools.

Mistress Rump’s name appears in more than just the dialogues we have examined, demonstrating that such a figure was not an uncommon occurrence in print. In the anonymous “A Word For All or the Rumps Funerall Sermon,” the author compares her to a Bow:

First, a *Bow* is always crooked, so was Mrs. *Rump* of a most crooked and perverse Nature, whose Conditions you may see in our treatise called the *Rumps Character*. Secondly, a *Bow* for all tis a crooked and hurtfull Engine is many times covered with a Case of Velvet: Even so Mrs. *Rump* was cont to palliate her wicked and Devilish designs under a specious pretence of Religion and Conscience. Thirdly, a *Bow* hath Hornes at each end: so hath the *Rump* good store, though they are not visible.” (“A Word for All” A3 Verso)

The Mistress Rump dialogues, as we have seen, depict her as the mother of a deformed child of “reformation,” a monster. Births of monsters were somewhat common in printed matter.

According to Lois Potter, “The monstrous child is clearly the new religion deformed rather than

reformed, headless because it denied the king's authority, and monstrous because in its toleration of the sects it was combining a number of different beasts into one” (Potter, *Secret Rites* 145).

Potter also notes that the recurring images of things such as “monstrous pregnancy—is that they portray the subject as the victim of some external invader, welcome in some cases, feared in others, to the point where he or she virtually loses the capacity for responsible thought or action” (145). This is also a good explanation of Parliament in this context depicted as a woman, which would have been a sign of weakness. Raymond also describes the monster birth as indicative of sins:

...commonly abnormal births were presented as the consequence of the collective transgressions of a community, a parish, a religious sect, a nation...Readers were instructed to interpret birth deformities as both natural facts and divine signs of spiritual disorder...Stories of abnormal births were a vehicle for describing and exploring religious and social tensions; and prodigies often originated in communities experiencing pressure. (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 109)

Thus, the birth of Mistress Rump’s deformed child is indicative of the royalists’ view that the regicide and rule by any other than the king is sinful, disastrous, and corrupt.

The monster imagery describing the Rump appears over and over in print. In Brome’s 1662 collection, a selection called “The Parliament’s Pedigree” reads:

The *Devil* he a *Monster* got,  
Which was both strong and stout,  
This many-headed Monster  
Did strait beget a *Rout*:  
This *Rout* begat a *Parliament*,  
As *Charles* he well remembers,  
The *Parliament* got Monsters too,  
The which begot *Five Members*. (“Parliaments Pedigree” 24)

This monster is presented as having many heads, meaning that England had many people running the country, rather than the one king, which would be right and natural. Yet in many other writings, including, we may recall, the Mistress Rump dialogues, the monster has no head,

referring to the fact that the king had been removed from his place as head of the family of England and the body politic. A poem from the same collection, titled “*A Monster to be seen at Westminster*,” demonstrates this:

Within this House is to be seen  
Such a Monster as hath not been  
At any time in *England*, nay  
In *Europe, Africk, Asia*.  
‘Tis a Round body, without a Head  
Almost three years, yet not dead.  
‘Tis like that Beast I once did see,  
Whose Tayle stood where his Head should be;  
And, which was never seen before,  
Though’t want a Head, ‘thas Horns good store. (“*A Monster to be seen*,” Brome, *Rump* Part I 85)

Ballads got into the act here as well. The author of “The RUMP Carbonado’d” writes, “Lend me your ears, not cropt, and I’le sing / Of an hideous Monster, or Parliament thing, / That city and Country doth woefully wring...” (“The RUMP Carbonado’d,” Brome, *Rump* Part II 69).

“The History of the Second Death of the Rump” reads:

The Monster did come  
Of mere *Mouth* and *Bum*,  
Most cunningly thus compacted,  
That if question’d it were,  
For mischief done there,  
It might swear, ‘twas by *no body* acted. (“History of the Second Death,” Brome Part II, 129)

The seemingly ubiquitous scathing literature against the Rump is a fine example of the hegemonic discourse in print in the Restoration, through which royalists planned to promote consensus in the realm. Railing against the former regime and one of the legislative bodies that were in part responsible for the trial and execution of the king, whose image was in the process of rehabilitation was a key strategy in this discourse. Judging by the public reaction to the

Rump's dissolution, attempts at consensus in this regard seemed at the time to be paying off, though this atmosphere did not last.

### Print and Plays Connect: *Cromwell's Conspiracy* and *The Rump*

Between printed dialogues and plays for the restored theatre are yet one more bridge between the two forms: plays proper that serve the immediacy of the Restoration and which served a very important part of print. The anonymous 1660 closet drama *Cromwell's Conspiracy* recounts the events of the Civil Wars and Interregnum with the purpose of arguing Charles II's return. John Tatham's satire *The Rump* recalls the Rump writings, especially the dialogues, and the ridiculous plot is still much less bizarre and far-fetched as pamphlets such as the Mistress Rump dialogues. This play, which was actually performed in 1660, satirically recalls the events which led to the Restoration, including the corruption and fall of the Protectorate. These plays are further evidence of both print and theatre as nearly twin ISAs working to solidify Charles's return and continued rule. An analysis of these two plays will show the consensus aims of the authors and the hegemonic nature of these two near-hybrid works.

As we will see throughout this study, Restoration theatre, and that especially of the early years after Charles II took the throne, is particularly concerned with bringing up the past, even if it is a revised or distorted past, or if there are added episodes to the events. We see this in both plays and print, but most starkly in many of the dialogues, such as the ghost dialogues and Mistress Rump dialogues, which concern themselves with the aftermath of actual events. The anonymous *Cromwell's Conspiracy* is meant to be a royalist retelling of certain events of Charles I's defeat in the Civil War, his execution, and their aftermath.



*Cromwell's Conspiracy*, a pre-Restoration work, actually at least partially belongs to a set of royalist writing that appeared first in the late 1640s, about the time the "Mistress Parliament" dialogues appeared (not to be confused with the later "Mistress Rump" dialogues of 1660 that are based on them). These were, as Lois Potter describes, "short satiric pamphlets in dramatic form, many of which are called tragicomedies" (Potter, *Secret Rites* 90). Potter writes that "they differ from the numerous other dialogue pamphlets of the period in that they allude to and often parody the drama," and that they are "sometimes published as 'interludes' or 'comedies'". The best term for most of them would probably be 'mock-heroic'" (90). Perhaps the most important aspect of the older works for this study is that they "usually feature caricatures of parliamentarians, either generic types or historical characters, the dramatist tends to stress their 'lowness' (and, still more, that of their wives) through bombastic parodies of tragic style" (90). One of the best known of these is "Craftie Cromwell: or, Oliver Ordering our New State. A Tragi-Comedie" (1648). This may have been a deliberate reaction to the new and more stringent "Declaration against Stage Plays, in preparation in January 1648," (Potter, *Secret Rites* 34). The author, a Mercurius Melancholicus, gives us in the subtitle a good description of what one can expect from reading it: "Wherein is discovered the trayterous undertakings and proceedings of the said Nol, and his leveling crew" (A1 Recto). This piece of closet drama chiefly endeavors to depict Cromwell as a man of low birth aspiring to positions that he has no business or right to. Interestingly, Cromwell is at one point visited by the ghost of John Pym, a leading Parliamentary leader at the time of the Civil War. He appears as a patron to Cromwell, inspiring him to bloody deeds against England (6-7).

Another similar pamphlet is "The Famous Tragedie of Charles I," which depicts the events surrounding the regicide, though the event never occurs onstage (Potter, *Secret Rites* 101).

It likewise depicts the baseness of Cromwell and his minions. Pamphlets such as these and the other dialogues were apparently models from which these new Restoration plays grew.

*Cromwell's Conspiracy* is almost certainly meant as a closet drama, owing to the anonymous authorship, its appearance in print in the Restoration year, and that there are no records of it having been performed. It is likely that any performance that might have been seen would not have been professional, or that it was performed extemporaneously. It is definitely a play, however, divided into acts and scenes, just like any other printed play of the day. The play, whose author describes himself simply as a "Person of Quality," depicts a selection of events, including the regicide and execution of other royalists, which it criticizes as the work of power-hungry usurpers who would as readily stab one another in the back as they would their royalist enemies. In this way the play works just as its cousin pamphlets do. This particular work can be absolutely said to be related to the former pamphlets of the late 1640s, since its opening scene is the same opening scene of "The Famous Tragedie of Charles I." It appears, according to Randall, that "the original author has returned to his material, rearranged some of it, and supplemented it extensively...so as to bring the work up to date as of the summer of 1660" (Randall 109).

The prologue tells us the intent of the whole document, which is to show that Cromwell was not supposed to be the leader of England, nor was he fit to do so. The author describes the evils of many men before them and then goes on to compare Cromwell to them:

Here's one outdoes them all, *Cromwel* by name,  
A man of *mean extraction*, yet whose Fame  
Hath equall'd soaring *Caesars*; if he spake,  
The well-built Pillars of Three Kingdoms shake.  
By Treachery and Guile the Crown he gain'd,  
And by the Blood of Loyalists he stain'd  
The Land; no man of any sort was free,  
Whether of Clergy or Laity;  
Nobles or commons, all was one to him:  
His Maxim was wither *I'le sink or swim*.

Long thus he domineer'd, at last he fell;  
Despairing dy'd a *Sacrifice for Hell*. (B1 Verso)

The scene which had opened “The Famous Tragedie of Charles I” is between Cromwell and preacher Hugh Peters (or Peter), a visible clergyman during the Civil Wars and Interregnum. They recognize their evil deeds, and are delighted by the prospect of doing them; Cromwell calls Peters a Devil (1) as a compliment. The two devise a plot to kill King Charles I, who Peters says “doth merit violent death, as guilty of the many thousand horrors committed, in the late most bitter warre...” (2). Cromwell bribes his fellow conspirator with gold, telling him to “Drink the Elixar [sic] of this precious Metall, ‘tis sovereign / ‘Gainst that perilous Disease call’d / Speaking truth...(2). Peters reveals his baseness through his talking of affairs and saying that “the constitution of my Body being made up of moisture and venereal Humours...” (3). Peters’ lack of honesty is also revealed as soon as Cromwell leaves; he admits what Cromwell is doing is wrong, and says, “Pardon great *Jove*, and my most gracious Prince, / Whose Virtues do deprive thee of a being (4). Yet he will go on with the plot, though he has no love for Cromwell.

In addition to hatching the plot for the king’s demise, Peters also helps Cromwell with other illicit business, wooing the wife of General Lambert for Cromwell, who accepts him almost against her will. After she agrees to Cromwell’s advances, there is a masque of dancers in the garb of Ambition, Treason, Lust, Revenge, Perjury, and Sacrilege which Cromwell and Mrs. Lambert join while Peters sings of pleasure and plunder. Of course, the plot to kill Charles I succeeds, and this play actually depicts the execution, lending more evidence to the assumption that the play was not written for performance. But before his head is cut off, Charles delivers a touching speech on the scaffold:

...I must  
Submit my self to the dispose of God,  
And since it is his pleasure I shall tast

This bitter Cup, I'll take It as I may  
And hope to find by it a happy passage  
Into those joys prepar'd for them that love  
God and observe his laws. (8)

He also forgives the executioner, who weeps.

Once the king is out of the way, Cromwell turns again to his own pleasures, insisting on maintaining his trysts with Mrs. Lambert despite her expressions of guilt. He also dreams of a throne and a crown, and his mania to become king increases. Once the title of Protector is bestowed upon him, Colonel Pride tells him, "now the Crown's your own" (14), signifying that Cromwell is the *de facto* king despite the fact that he has not formally accepted that title. Cromwell, now having come into power, is tasked with putting down rebellions against him, and he turns to the body that tried Charles I for this, the High Court of Justice. The Court brings two innocent men to trial, Sir Henry Slingsby and a preacher, Dr. Hewet, the latter of which Cromwell's daughter had tried to have set free because she loved him, but to no avail. Hewet, like Charles I, challenges the authority of the court, but they will not answer him. Further, he has been afforded no legal counsel, has not been furnished a copy of the indictment, and has been given no time to prepare a defense. Likewise, Slingsby is denied a fair trial, being rejected when he asked for a jury. Both men are sentenced to death and executed.

From this the scene shifts to Cromwell's death bed, where he is in great unrest over all he has done. His words here are reminiscent of those that he says in the confessional ghost dialogues we examined earlier in this chapter. Cromwell cries out:

I cannot any longer patient be,  
Furies do now torment me, and already  
I do begin to feel I cannot live;  
Horrors and strange amazements seize upon me,  
And now the blood that I have caus'd to flow  
From several bodies, appears all at once,  
And threaten for to drown me; Oh keep-off!

What black thing's that? Oh now I know, I know;  
Do hear me Sir, were you not Dr. *Hewet*?  
It beckons me; well, I know it was you,  
Were not you a Traytor? Look how he frowns!  
Why Dr. either you were a Traytor, or I. (E3 Recto)

Cromwell sees more of his victims, including Slingsby, and cries, "How they come tumbling from the Gallows! / Oh, oh, I feel them! hark how they lash me!" (E3 Recto). Finally he dies, after bestowing his son Richard with the title of Protector, though the citizens do not believe Richard will last. They prove prophetic, as Monk arrives to the joy of all. Monk allows for the secluded members to come in and pave the way for a free Parliament. There is unanimous joy in the streets, and the play ends with this exchange between the Lord Mayor of London and Monk:

LORD MAYOR. Hearn, Sir, dee hear the peoples gladsome voice,  
Making the earth Resound with their shrill Notes  
Of their King *Charles*, of Parliament, and *Monk*!  
Their hearts are rais'd up that ere while were sunk.  
*General Monk turns to the People, and speaks.*  
GENERAL MONK. 'Tis well done fellow-subjects, to express  
Your zeal to tru Establishment and Peace.  
Go home, Ring Bells, and make good lofty fires;  
A King you crave, you shall have your desires. (F2 Recto)

So through these works we can see that the pamphlets were only a short migration from full-fledged plays. Though a closet drama, *Cromwell's Conspiracy* shows us that a transitory work still works hegemonically for Charles II: it seeks to deride his enemies, depicting them as lecherous, power-hungry, low-born traitors and backstabbers, and also importantly shows the general joy at the prospect of a free Parliament that it is assumed will pave the way for Charles II's return. The crowd reaction at the end, then, is integral to the picture of consensus that the author tried to paint, namely that of a unanimous desire for the Restoration.

*The Rump, or, a Mirrour of the Late Times* is comparable to *Cromwell's Conspiracy* with the exception that *The Rump* was actually performed by an amateur company. Like *Cromwell's*

*Conspiracy*, *The Rump* also depicts actual people and distortions of actual events, and is similarly a Commonwealth-bashing work deriding the actions of regicides and power-hungry puritans. It first appeared “some months after the final expelling of the...Rump Parliament...in October 1659,” and “grew out of (and has many affinities with) the pamphlet satires, particularly those in dialogue form, that burgeoned during the preceding two decades” (Randall 300). It was very successful in its performance, having been performed repeatedly at a private house in 1660 and then moving to the Red Bull theatre. It was received well enough that Aphra Behn borrowed from it for her 1681 play *The Roundheads* (303). Derek Hughes reports that *The Rump* was enjoyed enough for it to be “in the ascendant” for a while (Hughes, *English Drama* 30). Yet it still holds a lot in common with the literary pamphlet plays and dialogues in its depiction of real characters and events and its blatant satire of enemies to the Crown.

Canfield is correct in his assertion that Restoration comedy begins with this play (Canfield, *Tricksters* 236); it is Restoration theatre before the Restoration took place, anticipating the event. Canfield also notes a key difference between this play and others of the era; while it anticipates the Restoration of the monarchy, there is no Restoration at the end of the play, because it had not occurred. The play merely wishes and supposes it. It remains for Charles to come in and change the course of the theatre both deliberately and by his mere presence. The play’s chief aim here is to satirize the leaders of the Commonwealth who it appears are losing power (236). Given the success of the play, the satire must have worked well. Backscheider surmises, probably correctly, that *The Rump* made people “roar with laughter” (26). She notes further that this play was part of the seemingly unanimous unrest of the day: “Just as the rowdy had pelted, spat upon, and burned effigies of Cromwell and the leaders of his government, so writers joined in the defamation and discrediting in their own ways,” including Tatham, a

supporter of Charles II (Backscheider 25). James Maidment and W.H. Logan, who edited a volume of Tatham's plays, assert that *The Rump* was an important play in its time: "That [*The Rump*] had a powerful influence in preparing the people of London for a restoration of monarchy can hardly be doubted, when the preparatory rejoicings...contemporary witnesses, are remembered" (Maidment and Logan 196).

Though *The Rump* uses real people as its characters like *Cromwell's Conspiracy*, Tatham's first edition of the play altered some of the names slightly, apparently to avoid potential retribution; however, the names are not sufficiently different enough to have fooled anyone. General Lambert, for instance, is Bertlam. Cromwell's son-in-law Charles Fleetwood is thus styled Woodfleet, and so on.

The play opens soon after Cromwell's death and Richard's installation as Lord Protector. This has created a power vacuum which many men are hoping to fill. Principal among them is Bertlam (Lambert), though he goes about making Woodfleet (Fleetwood) believe that that he, Woodfleet, should be the new Protector. Thus he covertly gets Woodfleet to dissolve the sitting parliament, or "Honest Parliament" in favor of the Rump, which as we have already seen was a vastly unpopular body by the time of the Restoration. In the tradition of the Rump-bashing we saw in printed works, a secretary named Walker exclaims, "the Rump was but a stinking Rump, and scented so ill in the nostrils of the people that they fear'd a sudden plague attended the concavity..." (Tatham 207). Further, Bertlam and his ally Lockwhite (Bulstrode Whitelock) tell each other that their oaths to Cromwell meant nothing; in fact, they cared not for the old Protector, but took oaths because it was in their best interests to do so. The real comedy begins when Lady Bertlam is introduced; she struts around expecting people to call her "Highness," as she expects her husband to be the next Protector. She and her servant Prissilla talk very much

about these expectations. Prissila is especially excited that she will no longer be a servant and will be “ladifi’d” (253).

When Cromwell’s widow hears of Lady Lambert’s rise in status, she is incensed, and engages in a heated exchange against the would-be protectoress:

LADY BERTLAM. Prethee, woman, what wouldst have?

MRS. CROMWELL. Thy husband by the throat, had I him here! and I could finde in my own heart in the meantime to claw thy eyes out, and make thee wear black patches for something, thou proud imperious slut, thou! (Tatham 219)

The rivalry between them is increased because it is implied, as we saw in *Cromwell’s Conspiracy*, that Lady Lambert had an affair with Cromwell. So while Lady Bertlam is consumed with being treated with reverence, and continually pesters her husband about being the Protector, Mrs. Cromwell is reduced to railing that her husband is dead, her son is losing his power, and her own status is sinking rapidly. To her son, who is not present in the play, she laments, “O Dick, Dick! Hadst thou had but thy father’s spirit, thy mother ne’er had come into this shame!” (220), in a blatant reference to the political and perhaps personal weakness of Richard Cromwell. She screams later to her absent son that she wishes she were dead:

Would I were dead! Nothing torments me more than that thy father, who whilst he liv’d was call’d the most serene, the most illustrious, and most puissant prince, whilst that the fawning poets’ panegyricks swell’d with ambitious epithetes, is now call’d th’ fire-brand of hell, monster of mankind, regicide, homicide, murtherer of piety, a lump of flesh sok’d in a sea of blood, traytor to God and goodness, an advancer of fiends and darkness! (224)

She becomes afraid of what will happen to her now, because she is too young to sell her body: “I was made for burthens, and am too old and ugly to cry oringes. If these trades fail me, I must turn bawd...” (224).

This play thus begins the trend of plays that depicts Mrs. Cromwell as a “crude, rustic, frumpish woman—which she appears to have been” (Backscheider 30). We also see in this



episode the ever-present royalist penchant for depicting the Roundheads as backstabbers, this time through their wives.

In a scene that we will see repeated in a later play, the men who would retain power meet to decide who is to be rewarded money for their service to the country, and predictably they greedily divide the kingdom's money between themselves and their friends, interrupted by Mrs. Bertlam's appearance to harass her husband about when she should be called "her highness", and wanting to have a say in these affairs. These events and the return of the Rump to sit in London sets people at a feeling of unease because there may be riots, which the Parliamentary soldiers are looking forward to so that they can share in the plunder and terrorize the innocent citizens. General uproar does happen and some young boys are about to riot in reflection of the peoples' desire for a free parliament when they hear they will be hanged if they continue; they therefore go away to drink the king's health.

As the audience already knows, Lady Bertlam's plans to be the Protectoress die with the Rump's return and the impending march on London by General Philagathus (Monk). Then Mrs. Cromwell has a bit of fun at her rival's expense:

MRS. CROMWELL. ...Where is that pretious bird thy husband cag'd? His wings are clipt from flying. Faith, now this comes of treachery! Had he been true to my son Dick, he might have still continued honourable, and thou a lady; and now I know not what to call thee.

LADY BERTLAM. Thy rudeness cannot move me; I impute it to thy want of breeding.

MRS CROMWELL. My want of breeding, Mrs. Mincks!

LADY BERTLAM. We cannot expect from the dunghill odorous savours. Were our affections greater than they are, they merit not half the contempt and scorn pursues thy wretched family, and the memory of thy abhorred husband. (264)

Just as the city is about to be ravaged by malcontent from its citizens, word comes that there is to be a free parliament, and the Rump is to be dissolved. This results in spontaneous outpourings of joy, and anticipation of Charles II returning to England. A group of Prentices enter, "whooping

and hollowing, with rumps of mutton on spits” (269). They drink a toast to General Philagathus and prepare to enjoy the feast, singing ballad songs and celebrating the demise of the Rump, and the promise of a free parliament that they hope will set the stage for Charles II to reclaim his throne.

The puritan would-be coterie consisting of Lambert other conspirators is thus foiled. Lady Bertlam’s maid Prissilla is reduced to “selling oranges” as a prostitute. Another servant sells pens, while another parliamentarian has the misfortune of selling printed books, including ballads, no doubt of the variety that abused the puritans of the like we have already seen. Another parliamentarian must sell turnips, and still another must mend shoes. Perhaps the funniest image is that of Mrs. Cromwell, who is looking for work as a servant, shouting out, “Oh, Dick! Dick! did ever I think to come to this! What kitchen stuffe have you, maids? Have you any kitchen stuffe, maids?” (277). This is to be interpreted of course not only as turnabout being fair play, but also as the pretentious low-born usurpers ending up back in their rightful places. This play may be said to be the epitome of consensus even before the official Restoration took place, a propagandistic piece set to begin its work before the Restoration, and to help usher it in. As Backscheider writes, many plays like this one worked “toward the same ends as the poems, prologues, masques, pageants, and plays that presented a sovereign monarch as the instrument of divine order and human happiness” (Backscheider 26). This is a good example of the advantage that Charles II had as he reentered England triumphantly in 1660, and which eroded by the mid-1660s.

It is clear to see from these two plays that the concerns of print at this time were also the concerns of the theatre. Though they can be said to be different mediums, as ideological state apparatuses they were virtual twins. This affinity continued throughout the consensus sequence.

## Royalist Print and the Failure of Consensus

Before moving to strictly dramatic examples, it is important to look closely at how printed matter eventually acknowledged the failure of the establishment of consensus, which means the failure also of print to control the people and to properly function as hegemonic tools. The calamities of the mid-1660s as well as the king's personal behavior drove many to question the regime and indeed the worthiness of the king's realm as a whole. The tradition of blaming England's misfortunes on the sins of its people, including its leadership, was a continuing occurrence in print dating back to the Civil Wars. Consensus, let alone hegemony, was not ever achieved, however it may have looked at times, even at the time of the Restoration. Buchanan Sharp identifies two types of writing against the Restoration:

The first wave of indictments reveals two substantially different kinds of opinion directed against the restored monarchy and church. One was the opinion of those who were self-conscious supporters of Puritanism or the Cromwellian regime and enemies on principle of monarchy and episcopacy. The other kind of opinion consisted of scurrilous words about the King and his family sometimes accompanied by expressions of anti-catholicism" (Sharp14).

As the reign of Charles II went on, writings made reference to many of the country's "horrid Theatre of divine Judgments," as one preacher speaking in front of Charles II put it (Sancroft 14). By the mid-1660s the presses began turning out much different products than during the early Restoration. In the anonymous book *The Plague Checkt* (1665), the author blames the calamity of plague on England, especially on her scandalous sexuality:

Shee hath Rebell'd and Sinned grievously,  
Therefore she is remov'd and made to fly:  
Her filth is in her skirts, so may she finde  
Her latter end, full little did she minde...(The Plague Checkt A1 Verso)

However, in addition to the kingdoms' sins as a whole, in the mid-1660s the blame included glaring references to the king and nobles specifically, a fact which worked to undermine the

consensus argument. As one might expect, the king was mostly criticized for the very sexuality that royalist authors had been attempting to diffuse since before the Restoration. The same author states that "...if Kings and Queens, Princes and Nobles, and Grandees of the World sin as others doe [sic], they should humble themselves, Repent, and Abase themselves before God as others ought to do..." (31). Another anonymous work, a pamphlet titled "Upon the Present Plague at London" (1665), criticizes the King specifically, and blames his sins for the plague: "That 'tis the *disdain'd Purple* calls for *blood*: / That 'tis the *darkened lustre* of a *Crown*..." (2). The author gets even more severe against Charles:

Each *Evil* is the *Kings*, in a *sick* state,  
Nor is *His* different from his *Subjects* fate;  
But what *Death* formerly, *disease* now brings,  
The *Beggars* state *Co-equal* to the *Kings*. (4)

The sin of lust, as we have seen, was particularly cited as a reason for England's suffering. London was often compared to such biblical casualties as Babylon, Nineveh, Sodom, and Gomorrah. Tower prisoner Charles Bayley's printed letter to the king, "The Causes of God's Wrath Against England" (1665) states:

...Oh that the Repentance of *Nineveh* could but yet be seen or found within my House,  
before the Anger of the Lord break forth, and there to be no remedy.  
*Sodom* and the parts adjacent thereunto, were consumed because of Lust, Idlenes  
and fullness of bread; now see whether all these things be not found within thy  
borders...why should I be blamed, for preaching Repentance unto all...? (5)

Matthew Mead's book *Solomon's Prescription For the Removal of the Pestilence* (1665) calls out the nobles for their sins: "...here give me leave sadly to lament it, *That the nobility and Gentry of our Land, the Major part of them, are arrived to such an height of Prophaneness, that they, as being by their Advancements more conspicuous than others, are most Infamous for...several Vices*" (38).

He goes on to compare them to the biblical King Ahaz (38), in perhaps a reference to his own sovereign. Thomas Salthouse's pamphlet "A Brief Discovery of the *Cause* For Which this Land Mourns" (1665) cries: "Oh, England, thy leaders have caused thee to err, and those that undertakes [sic] to instruct thee, hath a high hand in this trespass of *transporting* an innocent *people into a strange Land*, whome they cannot *convince of evil*, nor *legally convict as transgressors of any Law*, either *Spiritual* or *Temporall*..." (7).

Churchmen, whose sermons had initially lauded Charles's return, joined this criticism. Edward Stillingfleet's "Sermon Preached Before the King" (1667) is also bold in its criticism of the king's amours: "Did ever any yet imagine that the charms of beauty and allurements of lust were so irresistible, that if men knew before hand that they should surely dye in the embraces of an adulterous bed, they could not yet withstand the temptations to it?" (15).

These, along with numerous other writings critical of the king, court, and country, indicate the relatively rapid decline of the Restoration's popularity, and thus the erosion of consensus. It could no longer be argued that all were in favor of the king. Raymond explains that "The apparent consensus at the 'Restoration' of Charles II was the product of reaction against the failures of the republican regime, a dutiful optimism about the new king, and a propaganda campaign. This campaign relied on fiction as well as argument to make its point..." (Raymond, *Pamphlets* 255). The fiction that was consensus became clear as Charles II's reign continued and the newness of his Restoration wore off. His own behavior, along with all the country's calamities within a short period of time, diminished the perception that he was the upright man that authors and plays had painted him. Likewise, his power to hegemonically control the minds of the masses, the unflattering presses, and the increasingly critical plays that were being written, as we will see, was becoming very clear. His personality as celebrity, while certainly never in

danger of dying completely, was damaged by himself and the mishaps which transpired in a relatively short amount of time. Thus, as Charles was less flatteringly received, so the print ceased to flatter him; instead of an ideological state apparatus, then, writing became something else entirely, seeking to advise the king or even criticize him rather than extol his virtues. The same would also be true of the plays.

We will see in the coming pages these same concerns and subjects in the new era of Restoration theatre, including spectacles, closet dramas, adaptations and revivals, and new plays, most of them concerned (at first) with hegemonizing England by transforming Charles II and his legend. And just like the pamphlets, the play proper, which has been serving as propaganda, also began to express doubt about the effectiveness of the new king. His perception began to collapse with the onset of tragedy and calamity, as well as with the king's behavior.

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### End Notes

<sup>1</sup> Harold Weber delves deep into this issue in the second chapter of *Paper Bullets*, entitled "The Monarch's Sacred Body: The King's Evil and the Politics of Royal Healing (50-87).

<sup>2</sup> See Matthews 34-84 for the Pepys account of events as related to him by Charles II.

<sup>3</sup> Weber devotes a whole chapter to the feminization of Charles's image because of his sexual activity, and to the fact that writers had a difficult time freeing him from the negative effects of his sexual image. See "The Monarch's Profane Body," pp. 88-127.

<sup>4</sup>In "The Case is Altered, or, Dreadful News From Hell" (1660), Cromwell and his wife, both suffering in Hell, hatch a plan for him to take over the Devil's position as master there with the help of his other condemned cohorts. In "A New Meeting of Ghosts at Tyburn" (1660), Cromwell and other regicides posthumously lament their bodies being exhumed, hanged and desecrated in public. In others, Cromwell parleys with the ghosts of other corrupt sovereigns. Two examples are "A Parly Between the Ghosts of the Late Protector, and the King of Sweden, at Their Meeting in Hell" (1660) and "Hells Higher Court of Justice; or, the Triall of Three Politick Ghosts" (1661).

<sup>5</sup> See "The Most Vile and Lamentable Confession of Hugh Peters" (1660), and "Bradshaw's Ghost: Being a Dialogue Between the Said Ghost and an Apparition of the Late King Charles" (1659) for examples.

### CHAPTER 3: THE FIRST RESTORATION PERFORMANCES: ADAPTATIONS, REVIVALS, AND TRANSLATIONS

Given the “new” infusion of royalist literature, it should be no surprise that the theatre, reinstated by Charles and to a large extent controlled by the king, would reflect the same enthusiastic support of the monarchy during the Restoration. In the same way the literature of the Restoration draws on earlier traditions of literature, new Restoration theatre leaned on past traditions in its infancy. This was a necessity, as there had been no professional playwrights for nearly twenty years, and therefore, no new plays. This meant drawing on the rich tradition of Elizabethan, Jacobian (that of James I), and Caroline plays for material either ready for performance or for adaptation. There was also an interest in foreign plays translated into English. Not surprisingly, the plays that writers and managers chose for revivals and translations reflect not only the tastes of a new audience, but also Charles’s intentions to establish hegemonic consensus in the same way that he used the literature we examined in the previous chapter, namely, by fortifying his image and rising stardom. In other words, the plays in this new context identify the new theatre as an ideological state apparatus.

Because adaptations, revivals, and translations rely on existing work to entertain and inform the Restoration audience, they offer evidence over what Restoration producers needed from the plays in order to entertain the audience and to allow the plays to act specifically as royalist tools for the Restoration audience. The plays that were chosen, the specific adaptations that were made, and the choices and changes in translated plays indicate the need for works that disseminated a certain message. This is similar to the way that we saw royalist print from after the Civil Wars updated so they could act effectively as propaganda around the time of the Restoration. This chapter will take a close look at the early Restoration trend of reviving,

adapting, and translating plays for the benefit of hegemonic consensus, and take a close look at a few of the plays that were popular in this category. It will then be easier to see how the plays are in many ways an extension of printed matter, and a link between pamphleteering and authoring new plays, which I will discuss in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

Just as the royalist pamphlet tradition we examined in the last chapter had a previous tradition of activity, there had already been a tradition of reviving older plays and sometimes altering them; this practice dated from before the Civil Wars (Dobson 40). Still, there was no precedent for the types of specialized changes we see in Restoration drama (41). Because of the absence of professional playwrights, theatre managers naturally turned to existing scripts for material to put upon the boards. Thus, the vast majority of plays in the 1660s were revivals, adaptations, or translations (Dobson 41; Markley 231). One account says that of 957 recorded performances of plays between 1660 and 1700, 486 were old plays, and 473 were new (qtd. In Clark 275). Another asserts that during the season of 1659-60, there was not a single new work on the London stage; and during the first three years there were only nine new plays compared with 80 extant ones (Taylor 24). Further, only four new plays appeared during the 1661-2 season compared to 54 from revivals (Dobson 41). Clearly, the strategy and success of the plays from these first few years lay in these already existing works. Even when there were new plays, writes Gary Taylor, they were “translations or works by aristocrats who did not need to worry about supporting themselves on the profits of playmaking” (Taylor 25). The profession of playwriting, therefore, needed to be rebuilt, and this was helped along by adaptations, revivals, and translations; early in the Restoration the plays were written by aristocratic authors who stood to gain a great deal of approval from the new king through their efforts. Hence it was important to create or find older plays that were compatible with the idea of consensus, or to adapt existing



plays into something befitting the Restoration audience and more importantly the authors' support of the new king's hegemonic agenda.

As the pamphlets and celebratory spectacles have shown us, the beginning of the Restoration in terms of literature and public spectacle was first and foremost about the past; Charles and his allies needed to build up the perception and personality of the king himself as well as the monarchy. So it was also with drama. But with the theatre, the king displayed, at least at first, the power to manipulate much about the new tradition, first having revived it, and then having it controlled by people he selected. Thus, adaptations and translations, as well as certain unaltered plays, began to serve during the Restorations as propaganda designed to bring an antiquated or foreign work into a unique political function now that playhouses were being reopened. These plays were largely selected because of their potential in this regard. In manipulating past written works, writers were first obsessed, as we have seen in printed literature, with past events, specifically the Civil Wars, regicide, and Protectorate; thus they chose works that would allow the audience to recall these events, and use the past to rehabilitate the king's perception and personality. Secondly, they sought to revive a dead theatrical tradition by reviving and adapting plays from its past theatrical tradition, which helped to create new trends. Thus, Charles used his influence, or power, to manipulate which plays were seen on the stage, his producers largely choosing those which would play to the king's stardom and current popularity. This strategy would, the king and royalists hoped, curtail any thought of opposition and set up a largely free reign for Charles II.

Sandra Clark, writing of this fixation with the past, notes the importance of utilizing historical events culminating in a peaceful restoration as subject matter for plays, which became an important trend in Restoration theatre: "Though this was a very different age, audiences were

initially conscious of living in the shadow of the past, which partly accounts for the strong taste for tragicomedy with its themes of providential restoration and restitution, and also for the desire for contemporary parallels within plays” (Clark 276). According to Nancy Maguire, producers revived plays “which mirrored the prospective audience’s obsessions. In doing so, they colluded in the domestication of the events surrounding regicide and restoration” (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 120).

This obsession with the past also stretched to translations. According to Susan Staves, “Translation had a double satisfaction for a royalist writer. Not only was it relatively safe, it was proof of the essential applicability and truth of words from the past, a belief which lay behind the nostalgia for the rituals of monarchy and the Church of England” (Staves 53-4). She goes on to state that “...in catching the spirit of a work, a translator may be allowing himself not merely freedom but tendentiousness and gross inaccuracy. In its most extreme form, this can mean ignoring the literal meaning of what is there in the interest of the supposed personality of the author, perhaps imposing on him a unity and consistency which he does not in fact have” (56). As Staves suggests, translating foreign works which fit a consensus-building model or which could be adapted to that purpose lent a universal flavor to the hegemonic ideas that producers wanted to spread; that works in other languages supposedly supported the same ideas as those in English lent a more global credibility to the newness of the restored stage, thus making the hegemonic function easier. Therefore, the conclusion here is that the earliest Restoration theatre concerned the recent past and the resultant tradition shaped new genres which acted as propaganda, even if they might seem inferior to our own standards. Yet this substitute past which audiences now saw upon the stage helped direct the course of new plays by again operating as a hegemonic tool:

Only after satisfying this initial hunger for the resurrected past did [audiences] begin to ask for new plays...when the theatres reopened in 1660, actors turned naturally to the most popular, successful, and acclaimed plays of the period before 1642. This predictable procedure created an entirely false impression of the general standard of work in the earlier era. In the 1660s, for the first time, new playwrights found themselves competing not with their contemporaries but with the past and, what is worse, with an artificially selected, enthusiastically welcomed, massed anthology of the best plays of the past. (Taylor 26)

The plays that managers selected for revivals depended upon a number of factors, but the most important were that they could be used to support the new regime, and that they pleased the audience. Plays that could engage the past and cast Charles into a better light were at a premium. Certain plays which mirrored past events, could comment on oppositional forces, and/or depicted a usurped king regaining his throne were among those revivals noted in the first years of the Restoration. For example, some popular plays were the anti-puritan *Bartholomew Fair* by Ben Jonson, Shakespeare's *I Henry IV* which is about the successful defeat of a rebellion, and especially *A King and No King* by John Fletcher, about the restoration of a legitimate heir (Dobson 47-8).

Fletcher's plays (many of them developed alongside his frequent collaborator Francis Beaumont) were highly popular in the early Restoration, and their plays already had a royalist following, having appeared during the aforementioned "halcyon days" of Charles I. In fact, their works were considered to be a form of royalist propaganda because they demonstrated the "wit and verbal refinement" of the upper classes, depicting the conversation of gentlemen (Clark 284); thus, their several printed editions served as royalist weapons against the Commonwealth. Apparently some of Fletcher's plays were adapted as drolls and performed during the Interregnum, highlighting "issues to do with kingship and authority" (Clark 284). After Cromwell's death, there were at least two illegal revivals of Fletcher: *The Spanish Curate* in 1659 and *The Woman's Prize* in 1660. That Fletcher was chosen for these illicit performances

speaks to his adaptability to the Restoration audience in both content and potential to support the king. That Fletcher and Beaumont were considered during the Interregnum as royalist authors also foreshadows their use as propaganda during the Restoration.

Not surprisingly, Fletcher was by far the most revived playwright of the Restoration, ahead of Jonson and Shakespeare (Clark 275). Rothstein notes that between a sixth and a seventh of all early Restoration performances were plays by Fletcher (Rothstein, *Restoration Tragedy* 52). The plays of Fletcher were especially suitable to the Restoration stage because they did not require revision to succeed, having already functioned, as we have just seen, as royalist works during the Caroline period and the Interregnum.

Fletcher also served the Restoration audience in ways outside the political. Nancy Maguire writes that that Fletcher's plays were potential commercial successes into the newly opened theatres thanks also to their potential for spectacle, including "frequent 'breeches-parts,' formerly acted by boys...[which provided] exciting and titillating roles for the new actresses; the heroic upper plots allowed spectacular costume display, and the inserted masques provided the opportunity to use scenes and machines" (123-124). Moreover, the plays offered exciting devices which could serve dual functions as entertainment and politics, as audiences would connect the plot to Restoration events. Thus the plots contained:

...narrow escapes, constant turns and reversals, and unlikely happy endings,[which] would undoubtedly reverberate with the experience of the sixties audience. Unexpected reversals, after all, could be hardly unacceptable to theatre-goers who had lived through the tragicomic reversals of 1640-1660...Fletcher's improbable happy ending was precisely what the Restoration audience was looking for, and in a sense, what it got" (124)

Thus, as Sandra Clark points out, Fletcher and Beaumont's plays spoke to the "cultural needs of the time" (Clark 284) in part by the improbable happy ending. This point is very important to Restoration theatre. We have already seen the excitement caused by the unlikely return of

Charles II as manifested in the pamphlets and other Restoration writing. This enthusiasm with *deus ex machina* endings also reverberated in new plays, and the traditional tragedy, as we will see in the next two chapters, was eased at the end with a less-than-tragic ending. Thus the appeal of Fletcher is not difficult to see for a Restoration audience. Again, having already been utilized as a royalist mouthpiece during the troubles, Fletcher then became a usable tool for the king and Restoration, his plays serving as hegemonic tools.

The hegemonic influence of Fletcher can be seen in a number of ways. Sandra Clark tells us that the publication of his and Beaumont's folio in 1647, which was after Charles I's defeat in the Civil War and after the theatre ban, is "preserved as an important act of royalist propaganda" (Clark 284). The poet (and Restoration playwright) Edmund Waller venerates Fletcher's influence on the Restoration stage in his poem "On Mr. John Fletcher's plays":

Fletcher, to thee we do not only owe  
All our good Plays, but all those other too,  
Thy Wit repeated, does support the Stage,  
Credits the last, and entertains this Age,  
No Worthies form'd by any Muse but thine  
Could purchase Robes, to make themselves so fine. (Waller 156)

Indeed, some of Fletcher's plays seem to have been a model for many popular Restoration works, particularly the rhymed heroic plays (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 57), which we will discuss in great detail in the following chapter. Clark also notes that Fletcher and Beaumont wrote "in the heroic way," highlighting the genre's "themes of honour, nobility, self-sacrifice and the competing moral claims of love and friendship" (Clark 285). Rothstein argues that they contributed to the development of "a new kind of tragedy, first in rhyme and then in blank verse, which concentrated on moving the passions." He attributes this to the fact that there was a large group of plays from which to borrow (Rothstein, *Restoration Tragedy* 53). Clark believes that "In many ways the work of Beaumont and Fletcher...proved more congenial to the times, and in

consequence more influential as dramatic models” (275). Nancy Maguire reports that Fletcher and Beaumont’s plays were “conveniently suited to the new stage and the new gestalt,” and were “also box office attractions” (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 123). Again, it was Fletcher’s former success as a royalist author, whether he intended it or not, which allowed Restoration producers to turn easily to his plays to offer both entertainment and illusionary consensus. His plays offer a boost to Charles II’s perception, though perhaps not as blatantly as purely Restoration works did. Still, his themes and plots reverberated with the Restoration audience and the hegemonic aims of the king and court.

#### The Restoration Revival: *A King and No King*

The use of Fletcher as a Restoration propagandistic tool can be seen, for example, in one of Fletcher and Beaumont’s plays which was highly successful during the Restoration: *A King and No King*. Originally performed in 1611, this play was highly suited to the Restoration because its central character is an illegitimate king whose irrational behavior causes many problems for himself and his kingdom, and these result in the restoration of a throne to its proper heir after an unexpected reversal of fortune. In the play, Arbaces, the King of Iberia, has defeated Tigranes, king of Armenia, in single combat and taken him prisoner. Arbaces is inexplicably mentally unbalanced, going from rational to irrational in a matter of seconds. One of his Captains, Mardonius, relates that the king is “vain-glorious, and humble, and angry, and patient, and merry and dull, and joyful and sorrowful in extremity in an hour” (Beaumont and Fletcher 13). The captured rival king, Tigranes, even chastises the king on more than one occasion for being a braggart (15-16), and in one instance censures the king for alternately showing him his kingly due and then bragging about his victory: “So he has made amends now with a speech in

commendation of himself: I would not be so vain-glorious” (73). Tigranes, who in addition to scolding Arbaces refuses to marry Arbaces’s sister, is important here because he is the vanquished king who continues to behave as a true sovereign should, unlike the victorious Arbaces. Tigranes, who in Restoration revivals represents the defeated Charles I and II, will not allow Arbaces to speak to him cruelly or to treat him as any less than a legitimate king, and thus gives him a piece of his mind. When Arbaces orders him to “rule your disordered tongue, / Or I will temper it,” Tigranes answers:

Temper my tongue! such incivilities  
As these, no barbarous people ever knew:  
You break the lawes of Nature, and of Nations,  
You talk to me as if I were a prisoner  
For theft: my tongue be temper’d? I must speak  
If thunder check me, and I will. (93)

He is not finished; Tigranes later gives Arbaces another earful, accusing him of being a tyrant:

Justice, thou ought'st to give me strength enough  
To shake all these off; This is tyrannie,  
Arbaces, sutler than the burning Bulls,  
Or that fam'd Titans bed. Thou mightst as well  
Search I'th' deep of Winter through the snow  
For half starv'd people, to bring home with thee,  
To shew 'em fire, and send 'em back again,  
As use me thus. (95)

Characters such as Tigranes and outbursts such as these, which reinforce the sublime nature of kingship even in defeat, demonstrate how this earlier play could easily be made into a piece of propaganda, declaring that a king is not a common thing, adhering to a high kingly perception. This served consensus by aiding both Charles I and II’s kingly perception as well as his celebrity personality.

No one can understand Arbaces’s sudden changes in temperament and rationality, and his character seems to be a foil to the kingly image that we saw in Tigranes. His loyal captain

Mardonius experiences this erratic behavior very closely, at one moment being praised by the king as an honest and loyal captain and the next being threatened by his sovereign with death for insubordination, and back again. Arbaces praises his captain after he had already scolded him:

Alas *Mardonius*, rise you shall not kneel,  
We all are souldiers, and all venture lives:  
And where there is no difference in mens worths,  
Titles are jests, who can outvalue thee?  
*Mardonius* thou hast lov'd me, and hast wrong,  
Thy love is not rewarded, but believe  
It shall be better, more than friend in arms,  
My Father, and my Tutor, good *Mardonius*. (27)

Moments later, all this is forgotten when Mardonius tries to advise him against his great passions:

When you commend me? O that I should live  
To need such commendations: If my deeds  
Blew not my praise themselves about the earth,  
I were most wretched: spare your idle praise:  
If thou didst mean to flatter, and shouldst utter  
Words in my praise, that thou thoughtst impudence,  
My deeds should make 'em modest: when you praise I hug you? 'tis so [false], that wert  
thou worthy thou shouldst receive a death, a glorious death from me: but thou shalt  
understand thy lies, for shouldst thou praise me into Heaven, and there leave me  
intron'd, I would despise thee though as much as now, which is as much as dust because  
I see thy envie. (28)

Here, the king even switches mid-speech from poetry to prose, further indicating his volatile back-and-forth nature. Then, in the same conversation, he turns back to kindness with his captain, acknowledging Mardonius's exhortations to control his passions:

...it was nobly said, thou hast spoke truth, and boldly such a truth as might offend  
another. I have been too passionate and idle, thou shalt see a swift amendment, but I want  
those parts you praise me for: I fight for all the world? Give me a sword, and thou wilt go  
as far beyond me, as thou art beyond in years, I know thou dar'st and wilt; it troubles me  
that I should use so rough a phrase to thee, impute it to my folly, what thou wilt, so thou  
wilt par[d]on me: that thou and I should differ thus! (30)



In another inexplicable tirade, Arbaces cruelly disowns his own sister, Panthea, who had always been kind and loving to him:

Away,  
No more of this; here I pronounce him Traytor,  
The direct plotter of my death, that names  
Or thinks her for my Sister, 'tis a lie,  
The most malicious of the world, invented  
To mad your King; he that will say so next,  
Let him draw out his sword and sheath it here,  
It is a sin fully as pardonable:  
She is no kin to me, nor shall she be;  
If she were ever, I create her none:  
And which of you can question this? My power  
Is like the Sea, that is to be obey'd,  
And not disputed with: I have decreed her  
As far from having part of blood with me,  
As the nak'd *indians* ; come and answer me,  
He that is boldest now; is that my Sister?

When he changes his mind again and says Panthea is indeed his sister, an exasperated Mardonius can only reply, "Is she again? that's well" (92).

Moreover, we learn that Arbaces also has amorous feelings for his sister Panthea, and he is having a hard time casting them off. He admits to Mardonius that "I would desire her love / Lasciviously, lewdly, incestuously, / To do a sin that needs must damn us both" (116).

Incredulous, Mardonius, who in the context of the Restoration resembles the loyal and honorable General Monk, stands up to the king's admissions:

...you must understand, nothing that you can utter, can remove my love and service from my Prince. But otherwise, I think I shall not love you more. For you are sinful, and if you do this crime, you ought to have no Laws. For after this, it will be great injustice in you to punish any offender for any crime. For my self I find my heart too big: I feel I have not patience to look on whilst you run these forbidden courses. Means I have none but your favour, and I am rather glad that I shall lose 'em both together, than keep 'em with such conditions; I shall find a dwelling amongst some people, where though our Garments perhaps be courser, we shall be richer far within, and harbour no such vices in 'em: the Gods preserve you, and mend. (117-118)

Adding to the problem is Arbaces's admission to his sister that he has lustful feelings for her. Yet even more upsetting to the audience is that, after the initial shock of this revelation, Panthea admits to her brother that she believes she reciprocates his feelings, and it worries her:

If you have any mercy, let me go  
To prison, to my death, to any thing:  
I feel a sin growing upon my blood,  
Worse than all these, hotter than yours. (166)

Thus, they both decide to leave one another's company. Arbaces's passions escalate to the point that he is ready to commit incest and then end his own life: "It is resolv'd, I bare it whilst I could, I can no more, I must begin with murder of my friends, and so go on to that incestuous ravishing, and end my life and sins with a forbidden blow, upon my self" (190). In this plan he is stopped.

Again, all this behavior from a king would seem to undermine the hegemonic potential of the play. Yet throughout the play one can sense that something is amiss. Mardonius at one point foreshadows some revelation, saying, "I guess the cause I fear too right, Heaven has some secret end in't" (110).

Indeed, it turns out that Arbaces is not the legitimate king, because he is not the former king's son; he was passed off as the king from childhood by the queen, who is also not his mother, because she thought that the king was too old to have children when she married him. When the king died, Arbaces therefore, as the supposed heir, took the throne. This is apparently the reason that Arbaces's behavior is so unbalanced; he was not born to rule, and it is not in his nature. That he sits on the throne, therefore, upsets the balance of what is natural, and this imbalance manifests itself in the king's inexplicable mood swings and passions. This also explains why he has amorous feelings for Panthea, who is not really his sister, and who actually is the unlikely but legitimate child of the former king and queen. She therefore is the rightful heir

to the throne. Fletcher and Beaumont cleaned this up a bit, however, by having Arbaces and Panthea decide to marry at the end of the play, legitimizing their feelings for one another. Yet Arbaces, since he is not of the royal line, will not rule; Panthea will be the queen, and Arbaces will effectively be her royal consort.

The plot of this play is easily suitable for Restoration revival, in no small part because of its improbable ending. Arbaces is not quite a usurper; he is an imposter against his knowledge and will. Thus, he is happy when he learns the truth, because for him it explains a lot of his behavior. He calls the revelation “the happiest news that ever was heard” (206). Further, he recognizes that he was not supposed to rule, and gladly relinquishes the throne to his “sister,” ending the play by declaring, “come every one that takes delight in goodness, help to sing loud thanks for me, that I am proved no King” (212). The legitimate king Tigranes, as we have seen, is also a good princely figure even in captivity, and shows this again by making peace with Arbaces: “No, I forgive, and rejoyce more that you have found repentance, than I my liberty” (212). That he lost to a lesser man in combat is his only fault, and loss on the battlefield is a trait shared with Tigranes by both Charles I and II. It is understandable, then, how this particular plot, along with all the other aforementioned features of Fletcher and Beaumont, attracted a Restoration audience, and also producers who saw its value as propaganda that could further promote consensus by rebuilding the perception of the king without having to craft a new play.

Though Fletcher’s plays can tell us much about the new Restoration audience’s expectations, our chief focus now is on the adapted plays, since examining the adaptations can demonstrate just what changes were expected in order to make plays work for Restoration audiences, and, importantly, what additions or alterations the crown expected to aid in hegemonic consensus.

## Shakespeare in Adaptation

Once theatre managers got their hands on older scripts, many of them felt the need to make them more palatable and suitable for the Restoration audience. By looking at the changes that were made to the scripts, we can see what things in the existing scripts were deemed inappropriate or less desirable, and we can spot in the additions or alterations the sort of things that authors infused to supposedly improve upon the plays for the new audience, and what they added to invoke consensus. Before looking at the scripts in detail, it is important to note that the liberties that authors took in adapting plays do not quite constitute the same egregious act that such activity would today. Dobson asserts that there is a blurred line between “adaptations” and “revivals” in this period, because first of all it was all but impossible to perform pre-civil war plays as they were originally written, and secondly they had to be adapted to fit the new scenic standards of Restoration playhouses. Further, with women now employed as actors where they previously had not, it was deemed necessary to make alterations for female performers (Dobson 45-6). In fact, during the Restoration, playgoers and authors considered adaptations to be entirely new plays (Dobson 47; Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 125). Managers considered the plays their own property and not that of the dead authors (Dobson 47). Thus, “...the pre-war dramatic heritage was the laboratory of the Restoration stage...” and therefore adapted plays were considered to be “experiments in negotiating the political position of the restored theatres...” (48).

Dobson also notes the nature of hegemonic consensus-building in adaptations, noting that they “display an agenda as much political as literary, supplying resolutions designed to replay the most favorable version possible of the Restoration itself...Full-fledged adaptations look for the most favorable changes to the Restoration...” (49). The following section examines the

earliest adaptations of Shakespeare in order to demonstrate which kind of changes needed to be made not only to make these “antiquated” plays interesting to watch, but more importantly to initiate the consensus-building tradition that Restoration theatre was to take. The adapted scripts will show that the image, the perception of Charles was manipulated through the scripts, hence the more detailed analysis that appears here compared to Fletcher, whose plays were not altered.

Though not as popular as Fletcher, Shakespeare was still often revived. This of course echoes what the pamphlets and other printed works were trying to accomplish. While Shakespeare’s plays in particular were freely adapted in part because they seemed flawed and archaic to the Restoration audience (Clark 277), many of his plays did offer certain parallels of events that had happened in recent English history. In his book on adaptations of Shakespeare, Gary Taylor notes that “Restoration playwrights and audiences habitually interpreted plays in terms of contemporary politics. Many new plays depended upon implied parallels between onstage characters or events and their contemporary offstage counterparts. The same rage for parallels shaped adaptations of Shakespeare’s plays” (Taylor 23). This is certainly true of the Restoration revival of *Pericles* which was performed in 1660 before the King’s and Duke’s companies were reestablished. This unaltered production is notable for the success of a young Thomas Betterton as Pericles, though it is interesting that out of the entire Shakespeare canon, a play with as many Restoration criticisms was even selected for performance (Taylor 21-2). Taylor explains this puzzle:

...*Pericles* and its protagonist were particularly appropriate to the opening months of 1660. The play tells the story of a young and admirable ruler, unjustly driven from his country, reduced at one point to dressing in the clothes of poor fishermen, but ultimately restored to happiness and power...No audience in 1660 could have missed the relevance of...the fable as a whole, to Charles II. Even particular episodes of the play could be paralleled in the story of the ‘painful adventures’ of the newly restored monarch. (Taylor 22-3)

Taylor further explains the appeal that *Pericles* would have for an early Restoration manager, despite its critical reception as a play text:

Charles II defeated at Worcester, Pericles shipwrecked and washed ashore on the coast of Pentapolis—both look like and mix with ordinary folk; but even though the people they meet may be fooled, we know all along that they are kings, and that kings are not commoners, and that they will regain their proper wardrobe and power. Indeed, their very capacity to rise from such depths will confirm their right to govern. (23)

This early production of Shakespeare to the exclusion of other Shakespeare selections demonstrates the need for companies to choose specifically works that uplifted the king and capitalized on the present fervor among Londoners for the king's return and rule. This strategy was deliberate and continuous, as we will see presently.

Perhaps ironically, the author most associated with Restoration productions of Shakespeare is William Davenant, whose Duke's Company was granted only a few of Shakespeare's plays to perform, as most of the Bard's plays were licensed to the King's Company, whose members were considered the natural heirs to Shakespeare's Lord Chamberlain's Men/King's Men. Davenant apparently had asked for license to perform a few old plays, and he was granted only a small number of scripts deemed "disposable," a few of them by Shakespeare (Taylor 14). Once the rights to perform the scripts were secured, there was still a mandate for both new patented companies to have the old plays "reformed and made fit" (Dobson 43-44), which meant adapting them to suit the Restoration audience and politics. Davenant's adaptations quickly became well known, and his younger actors and doctored scripts, which fit the new Restoration conventions of actresses and scenery well, became renowned for their performances even more so than the King's Company. As Michael Dobson puts it, "The tradition of full-scale adaptation begins in the Restoration with Davenant's versions of Shakespeare" (44), which is a fair assessment.

Besides Davenant's skill in adapting Shakespeare to new Restoration theatrical conventions, he was also adept in adapting the plays in ways that would earn him points with the king. Importantly, Davenant had been a supporter of Cromwell, and was one of the rare legitimate composers of musical and theatrical productions while Cromwell was in power. Davenant had also been Poet Laureate as well as a writer of Stuart Court Masques during the rule of Charles I. He served as a Royalist general during the first Civil War, and was exiled in France during the beginning of the Protectorate. After his return to England he was imprisoned for a time, but thanks to some unknown intervention, his life was spared, though he spent two stints in the Tower of London (Edmond 116-122). During the Interregnum he tried to continue his theatricals publicly. His musical production *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656) was a major accomplishment and was perhaps the first opera ever performed in England. Many consider *The Siege of Rhodes* the first of the rhymed heroic plays, which, in addition to their similarities to that genre, were mostly written by playwrights who like Davenant had been loyal to both sides during England's various troubles and upheavals during the 1600s, as we will see in the following chapter. All of this explains Davenant's need, along with many other Restoration playwrights and authors, to get into the graces of the king and court, and thus he turned to crafting plays that would serve as royalist propaganda.

As we have seen, Davenant was in many ways a visionary; he understood that theatre tastes had changed and that there would be a need for spectacle; scenery and effects were needed to impress the audience (Edmond 141). Davenant's adaptations ranged from the mild to the extreme. His collaboration with Killigrew on *Othello* in October 1660, less than two months after Charles granted them a license (Edmond 145), appears to have been unaltered (Clark 275). Davenant did, however, make some minor changes to his company's production of *Hamlet* in

1661. Davenant's alterations to *Hamlet* are not sweeping by his standards. Most of his revisions, which number over "three hundred small-scale changes in wording," do not seem political (Taylor 47). Another reason he adapted the play was for length (48). It is therefore, according to Dobson, "far from being a full-scale adaptation" (Dobson 44). In fact, Davenant's note to readers in the printed version of his adaptation (1676) reads, "This play too long to be conveniently Acted, such places as might be least prejudiced to the Plot or Sense, are left out upon the Stage" (Davenant, *Hamlet* A4 Recto). Clearly Davenant wanted to adapt the play for spectacle more than anything else, and he states further in his note that he has inserted cut parts back into the text and has noted where these cuts occurred. When we look at the plot of *Hamlet*, just as with *Pericles*, it becomes easy to see why the play needs little work to make it resonate to a Restoration audience and the king; its plot deals with a usurping king who has killed the rightful monarch, and a rightful heir who endeavors to avenge his wronged father against a tyrant. In Taylor's apt description:

Davenant's company offered Restoration audiences a play about a wicked usurper who had murdered the true king and whose hypocritical prayers were gutted by his crimes. This usurper also tries to murder the old king's son, driving him out of his kingdom; but in the end that son returns and punishes the villain. In a scenario that so inevitably elicits parallels with English politics from 1642 to 1660, the hero needed to be made as straightforward, godly, and admirable as possible. (Taylor 48)

Additionally, Nancy Maguire notes that this adaptation of Shakespeare filled a great necessity for Restoration drama: "The revenge-loving theatre-goers liked to see their villains punished, and the revenge that Hamlet's ghostly father demands certainly must have pleased them" (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 121). Davenant's *Hamlet*, therefore, has been gently (by Restoration standards, at least) amended to make the hero suitable for Restoration audiences, though not by great changes or additions (Taylor 48). The alterations of the play do not seem to have impressed some of the more "refined" theatregoers, despite the obvious parallels to the present age. John



Evelyn wrote in his diary on November 26, 1661, “I saw *Hamlet Prince of Denmark* played; but now the old plays began to disgust this refined age, since his Majesty's being so long abroad” (Evelyn 1: 365). It may be for this reason that Davenant's altered version became the standard for many years. Taylor states that “For the Restoration, [actor Thomas] Betterton's *Hamlet* was *Hamlet*; the two could not be separated” (Taylor 50). After this, however, Davenant eventually turned to major changes to craft his company's repertoire.

### Davenant's *The Law Against Lovers*

If Davenant's *Hamlet* is one extreme of adaptation, then his 1662 production *The Law Against Lovers* is the other. This play combines two of Shakespeare's works, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Measure For Measure*. Davenant borrows liberally from both texts, importing sizeable chunks from both plays and adding his own (and others') text to create his finished work. In this hybrid play, it becomes more clear just what authors were doing in order to bring existing plays in line with a hegemonic consensus argument.

In Davenant's adaptation, Benedick and Beatrice from *Much Ado About Nothing* are imported into *Measure For Measure*, Benedick being the deputy Angelo's brother. There is still the banter between Benedick and Beatrice in the play, but Davenant's new dialogue is sadly not up to Shakespeare's wit. This play is a much better example of political propaganda than *Hamlet*, expressly because it was so heavily amended; essentially, Davenant has taken two existing plays, combining them into a single political piece.

Davenant's new play portrays Angelo, a man with both a self-righteous constitution and an immoral heart, as one who abuses pretended power. The Duke, who represents aspects of both Charles I and Charles II, charges Angelo, reminiscent of the puritanical Oliver Cromwell, with

the task of governing Turin while he is away. Angelo, the Cromwellian abuser of power, revives an old puritanical law, sentencing Claudio to death for impregnating Julietta, who is not yet Claudio's legal wife, but a girl who he had promised to marry and was therefore married in the eyes of most. In a classical example of the abuse of tyrannical privilege, Angelo secretly tells Claudio's sister Isabella that he will only free her brother if she sleeps with him. Of course Angelo's plans go awry when the Duke, who has been in disguise the whole time, discovers Angelo's plot and foils him. The probable reason for the combining of the two plots is that the serious "high plot" of Angelo, Claudio, and Isabella can be united with the comedic "low plot" of Beatrice and Benedick in the Fletcher and Court Masque fashion. These aspects of performance serve to bring Shakespeare up to date with Restoration fashion by recalling Caroline drama, and also to present a hegemonic discourse of flattery for the king.

Davenant's alteration of these plays really makes the result into a new play, with some of Shakespeare's language preserved. Unlike Davenant's mostly superficial changes to *Hamlet*, *The Law Against Lovers* features modifications that reveal his attempts to promote a royalist ideology, but an ideology that also absolved himself and others who had made peace with Cromwell. This will become a familiar formula as we will see in the following chapter.

Davenant also makes changes that are clearly designed to appease Charles's new Restoration court. In Shakespeare's *Measure For Measure*, Lucio describes Angelo to Isabella as "He, to give fear to use and liberty / Which have for long run by the hideous law / As mice by lions..." (Shakespeare 794). Davenant changes the line to give a nod to king and court. This time, the speaker is a character named Balthazar who speaks the following amended lines to Lucio:

LUCIO. He studies much,  
and fasts.

BALTHAZAR. To frighten Libertines (who long have scap'd,  
And silently have run by th' sleeping face  
Of hideous Law, as Mice by Lyons steal)...(Davenant, *Works* 281)

Davenant's sympathy to the libertines, "rakes" who became popular in and eventually ruled Restoration comedy in future years, shows his support of the new order. Another example of this is when the counsellor Lucio says of his missing ruler, "Th' absent Duke was a true friend to Lovers" (305), alluding to the allowance of the king for rakish behavior, and also playing against the puritanical Cromwell. In these passages Davenant participates in the Restoration penchant for making plays more personal to the audience, in this case by both expressing a sympathy to libertines and painting Angelo (Cromwell) as a man who stands against these heroes of drama and the monarchy, who are all, I might add, nobles.

The sympathy and support for monarchy, and therefore Charles II, in this play is also apparent in its handling of Angelo's abuse of power, echoing all the invective against the Commonwealth and Protectorate that we have seen in printed matter. The Cromwellian villain here tries to enforce an outdated law (not unlike that which had banned live theatre) onto good people, who pine for the absent Duke's rule. The parallels here are obvious, and clearly there was no attempt to hide or even obscure the intention. Davenant's revisions of the text reveal his attempts at drawing these parallels. His importation of the wise-yet-witty Beatrice is an effective tool in criticizing the enemies of royalism and rule without right. She exclaims, as the state of affairs in Turin, where Davenant has set the play, deteriorate, "Heaven send the good Duke here again!" (Davenant, *Works* 283). Later, she tells Benedick:

Your brother is a proper Prince! he rules  
With a rod in's hand instead of a sceptre,  
Like a country school-master in a church;  
He keeps a large palace with no attendants,  
And is fit to have none but boys for his subjects. (292)

Benedick agrees of his brother that “He surpriz’d the signet, / And counterfeited the hand” (301). Perhaps most tellingly, the Duke himself, as rightful ruler and representative of lawful and just monarchy exclaims of Angelo’s actions, “What horrid instruments are us’d by pow’r” (311), and later rails:

...Angelo, in his short government,  
Disfigur’d and disgrac’d that fair  
Resemblance which he wore of me  
By many blemishes. (322)

If there had been any doubt about Davenant’s parallels to actual events, they were dispelled by the words of a Provost, describing a Fool who had been shackled because he has “brought both sexes / Together” (305). The Provost remarks that “Mistress Mitigation gave him the livery,” to which Lucio replies, “‘Tis a villainous new disguise / For the good old cause” (305). There could have been no mistaking the reference to the Parliamentary side which opposed Charles I in the Civil War.

In a manner reflective of the ghost dialogues from Chapter 2, Angelo himself criticizes his own actions when, in an apology to Isabella, he says of the sun: “The spots in him only imagin’d be; / But all reported stains are true in me” (325). The softening of the antagonist here is an aid to another strategy of Davenant in this adaptation, that of showing the rightful ruler as merciful. By allowing Angelo to repent of his deeds, Davenant opens the door to the Duke’s forgiveness, thereby suggesting, as many Restoration playwrights did, that the King was benevolent in his Declaration of Breda and Act of Oblivion in his leniency against those, like Davenant himself, who had wavered in their support of the royalists while Cromwell was in power. We see this again near the end of the play as Benedick has been condemned for treason by rebelling against his brother Angelo. Upon hearing of this unfortunate turn of events, Beatrice cries:

I'll to the Duke! He's full of clemency;  
A Prince, who, by forgiving, does reclaim,  
And tenderly preserve for noble use,  
Many whom rigid justice, by exemplar death,  
Would make for ever useless to the world. (322)

This sentiment is echoed by the counselor Eschalus who tells the Duke:

Though your accustom'd clemency should give  
Him leave to use his eloquence in's own  
Defence, yet he would silence it, and hope  
For no relief but from your gracious mercy. (322)

The Duke then shows mercy to both Angelo and Benedick, remarking importantly in a manner that should have assuaged the fears of men like Davenant, "...in / Remembrance of your former merits I / Forget your late attempts." Overwhelmed, Angelo accepts:

Your Highness makes  
An hourly conquest of our hearts, and we  
Most humbly bow in thankfulness for your  
Continual clemency. (327)

On this point it is clear to see how the king and his presence and actions shaped the very nature of this play. Davenant's changes to these plays, it is clear, are present to imply that Charles II is the rightful and just king, propping up his image and discrediting Cromwell. Additionally, his decision to show kindness to the would-be usurper despite his acts against the state can also be interpreted to reflect Davenant's activities which flourished during the rule of Cromwell.

A couple of more subtle inserts to this play bear brief mentioning, due to their connection with certain aspects of Charles II. The first is a brief description of royalist property being rightfully redistributed, which was an important topic that will arise more fully later in the present study, and which Charles II was expected to address. Once Angelo's wicked doings have been discovered by the Duke, Eschalus tells Angelo:

My lord, I grieve to tell you, that the Duke,  
As a reward to Isabella's virtue for

Her suf'rings, has already, by his promise,  
Given her th' intended confiscation of  
Your lands and treasure.

Angelo has little choice but to reply, "'Tis righteously bestow'd" (325). This redistribution of property is of great import in early Restoration drama, and we will see blatant examples of it especially in Chapter 5.

Secondly, the fact that the Duke was in disguise would have recalled Charles II's transformed appearance examined in the previous chapter. The Duke, having removed his disguise and made everything right with his return, warns his subjects:

Think me not singular, because  
I did myself a while depose;  
For many monarchs have their thrones  
Forsaken for a cloistral life, and I,  
Perhaps, may really that habit take,  
Which I have worn but in disguise. (328)

This reference to the ruler's disguise as temporary again would have been obvious to the audience as a reinforcement that the king's changing his appearance and clothing after his defeat at Worcester was both temporary and acceptable for a king.

Davenant's free adaptation also inserted songs that were absent from the original, something that he did on more than one occasion in his adaptations. Any addition of the kind which adds so much uninterrupted new material is an apt passage for measuring current sentiment and taste, and therefore reveal the play's new role as propaganda intended to promote hegemonic consensus. Viola's interlude in Act III offers commentary on the current state of affairs under the pretender Angelo, and in the former state of England under Cromwell:

The state is now Love's foe, Love's foe;  
Has seiz'd on his Arms, his Quiver and Bow;  
Has pinioned his wings, and fetter'd his feet,  
Because he made way for lovers to meet...  
O heavens that love should be subject to law!

Lovers go woo the dead, the dead I  
Lye two in a grave, and to bed, to bed! (Davenant 294)

In this ballad that is neither Shakespeare's nor Davenant's, we see again that the pretended ruler is the enemy to happiness and libertinism, both of which Charles identified with in some form or another. Another added song, sung by Lucio in Act V, contains the same sentiments. He sings:

Our ruler has got the vertigo of State;  
The world turns round in his politic pate.  
He steers in a sea, where his course cannot last,  
And bears too much sail for the strength of  
his mast.

CHORUS. Let him plot all he can,  
Like a politic man,  
Yet love though a child may fit him.  
The small archer though blind,  
Such an arrow will find,  
As with an old trick shall hit him. (317)

As we examined in the spectacles and pamphlets, the imagery of a ship is important in showing that the former ruler, represented by Angelo in this play (and mentioned by name in the second verse of the song), did not know how to properly steer his country, with the implication that the new ruler, Charles II, is a capable captain. Like the first song, this one was also not by Shakespeare and not necessarily by Davenant, either, but its insertion served his political ends, as does his liberal adaptation of the plays. Opposed to *Hamlet*, then, *The Law Against Lovers* demonstrates how the adaptation of existing plays served to make the consensus argument, refining and resurrecting Charles II's image, as well as reaffirming his right to rule. The originals now combine into one royalist piece. The combination of these two works into one whole is instructive as to how adaptations of existing plays were used to make them suitable for use as hegemonic devices.

### Davenant's *Macbeth*

Davenant's extensive adaptation of *Macbeth* (1663) does not do quite as much surgery to Shakespeare as *The Law Against Lovers*, but it does contain numerous revisions, insertions, and alterations which are important for identifying consensus writing in the early Restoration. Davenant's version of *Macbeth* competes with Dryden's *The Tempest* (1667) for the most famous (or infamous) fiddling with Shakespeare. His full title, tellingly, is *Macbeth, a Tragaedy. With all the Alterations, Amendments, Additions, and New Songs*. The revamped title gives warning that Davenant has been startlingly liberal with the original text. Davenant altered the play a great deal, though largely staying close to the original text, or at least more so than in *The Law Against Lovers*. Yet, like *The Law Against Lovers*, Davenant's changes to the play transform it into propaganda designed to promote hegemonic consensus.

It is easy to see why *Macbeth* made an ideal adaptation for Davenant, as it centers on a usurping king who destroys many loyal subjects, including the rightful king, and is then deposed and killed by a loyal ranking officer, restoring the king's rightful heir to the throne. As Lois Potter writes, "The question whether rebellion against a tyrant can ever be justified was also the aspect of the play which most interested Davenant, though from a different point of view. As a play about darkness, witchcraft, regicide, and a monstrous birth—and a play whose one comic scene is a display of drunkenness—*Macbeth* embodies the dominant images of royalist writing" (Potter, *Secret Rites* 203). Other characteristics of Shakespeare's plot served Davenant's politics well; Macbeth is commanded by a woman, Lady Macbeth, reflective of Cromwell's wife, who, as we have seen in *The Rump*, was often depicted as the domineering shrewish wife. Macbeth's actions are guided largely by consultation with the supernatural, chiefly with the "weyward sisters," as the witches are known in the play, embellishing the witches' roles in part to invalidate



the late regime. This adaptation fits well into the typical parallel formula of Restoration drama which we will continue to see repeated. As might be guessed, the role of the deposed Duncan represents Charles I, his eldest son Malcolm represents Charles II, and Macduff represents General Monk.

Some changes Davenant made in order to wow the new Restoration audience, notably for the benefit of spectacle, which as we have seen was an important element of the restored theatre. The witches are the most prominent of these changes; they fly, and frolic around singing songs of mirth. Gone are the dark, creepy soothsayers of Shakespeare; the weyward sisters “become vaudevillians,” according to Hazelton Spencer, because “they sing, they dance, and, above all, they cavort on the ‘machines’” (172). Yet, the witches also serve the play as “warmongers,” according to Potter, who emphasizes the parallel between Cromwell the military figure and the witches. Additionally, as the long title suggests, there are songs throughout, not belonging to Shakespeare, as we saw in *The Law Against Lovers*. These songs feature new verses by the witches which Davenant took from Thomas Middleton (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 79). The witches’ first song reveals the evil nature of their plan:

3 WITCH. Ill deeds are seldom slow:  
Nor single; following crimes on former wait,  
The worst of creatures fastest propagate.  
Many more murders must this one ensue,  
As if in death were propagation too.  
2 WITCH. He will.  
1 WITCH. He shall.  
3 WITCH. He must spill much more blood:  
And become worse to make his title good.  
1 WITCH. Now, let's dance.  
2 WITCH. Agreed.  
3 WITCH. Agreed.  
4 WITCH. Agreed!

*Chorus*  
We should rejoice when good kings bleed,

When cattle die about we go,  
What then when monarchs perish should we do! (Davenant, *Macbeth* 25)

Witnessing this song are Davenant's royalist representatives in the play, Macduff and Lady Macduff, who happen upon the sisters. Macduff, horrified, exclaims, "It was an hellish song! I cannot dread / Aught that is mortal; but this is something more" (25)

The Macduffs' presence here leads us to one of Davenant's most important revisions to the play, the increased importance of the Macduffs. Both of their roles have been expanded, and they are set up as "a rival family to the Macbeths" (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 79). The meaning of these changes would have been obvious to audiences. In the Macduffs, we not only see an allegory of Monk, but we also see how Davenant uses them to embody his and others' dilemma in following the royalist cause after the Civil Wars. The Macduffs' new representation of righteousness in avenging the death of the rightful king and vanquishing the usurper demonstrates the play's new function as royalist tool, again paralleling events in the past and validating the end of the Protectorate and the restoration of Charles II. Of the Macduffs in Davenant's adaptation, Lois Potter explains that "Davenant not only enlarges the two roles with which his spectators were most likely to identify themselves, but emphasises the difficulties in their attempt to maintain their integrity in an evil world" (Potter 205). Indeed, a new scene inserted into Act III illuminates Potter's point. In the new scene, Macduff and Lady Macduff have guessed that Macbeth is the culprit behind the murder of King Duncan:

LADY MACDUFF. Ambition urg'd him to that bloody deed  
May you be never by Ambition led:  
Forbid it Heav'n, that in revenge you shou'd  
Follow a Copy that is writ in bloud.  
MACDUFF. From *Duncan's* grave, methinks, I hear a groan  
That call's a loud for justice. (30)

The two then argue, Lady Macduff concerned that the same ambition which was the downfall of Macbeth will undo her husband as well. She urges him not to rush away from her so rashly in an effort against Macbeth. Here Davenant coyly adds a scolding line towards Parliamentarians:

LADY MACDUFF: For whilst to set our fellow Subjects free  
From present Death, or future Slavery,  
You wear a Crown, not by your Title due,  
Defence in them, is an Offence in you;  
That Deed's unlawful though it cost no Blood,  
In which you'll be at best unjustly Good.  
You, by your Pitty which for us you plead,  
Weave but ambition of a finer thread. (30-1)

Lady Macduff's warning is perhaps also a caution or at least a lesson to those who might think about returning to a government without monarchy; it is in any case clearly a line with little use to anyone not living in the English Restoration. Potter sums up the dilemma outlined by Davenant in the play regarding vacillating loyalties:

...the play's treatment of the Macduffs emphasises rather than taking for granted the moral choices forced on them by their situation. The scene which must have been most agonisingly relevant to many members of its Restoration audience was the new one...entirely in heroic couplets, where Macduff and his wife debate what he should do about Macbeth's usurpation... Lady Macduff fears that her husband may be guilty himself of ambition without realising it...For that majority of Davenant's audience who had been quiescent under Cromwell, this argument externalises an inner conflict which badly needed ventilating. In this respect, his *Macbeth* is a forerunner of those heroic plays. (Potter 206)

Indeed, the scene is written in heroic couplets—lines in iambic pentameter produced in continuous rhyming couplets—which both demonstrates the growing interest in this type of verse on the stage and foreshadows the largely self-defending and royalist rhymed heroic plays made popular by Orrery and Dryden, which will be discussed in great detail in the following chapter.

A second new scene between the Macduffs, also in heroic verse (37-8), details how Macduff underestimates Macbeth's cruelty, opting to flee Scotland after being branded a traitor and to leave his wife there because he believes the king will not hurt his family.

Another added scene interestingly contrasts the usurper's wife Lady Macbeth with the loyal noble's wife Lady Macduff. The contrast between the Macduffs regarding the gains of war is clear. After Lady Macduff shares a palpable fear of her husband going to war, the following exchange occurs:

LADY MACBETH. Although his safety has not power enough to put  
Your doubts to flight, Yet the bright glories which  
He gained in battle might dispel these clouds.  
LADY MACDUFF. The world mistakes the glories gained in war,  
Thinking their lustre true; alas! they are  
But comets, vapours! By some men exhal'd  
From others' blood, and kindled in the region  
Of popular applause, in which they live  
Awhile, then vanish: and, the very breath  
Which first inflam'd them, blows them out agen. (10)

Clearly the spoils and glories of war are depicted by Davenant through Lady Macduff as dangerous and potentially damaging to a peaceful kingdom. Potter again sums up the importance of this exchange:

The contrast between the two women's language reflects their contrasting moral values. Lady Macbeth shares the parliamentary contempt for romantic figurativeness, pretending to take literally her companion's clichéd image of the divided soul. The contrast sharpens as she learns that her companion is still under the influence of past fears even though she has learnt that Macduff is safe, and that the thought of 'the bright glories which / He gain'd in battle' ...gives her no pleasure. (Potter, *Secret Rites* 204)

Sandra Clark explains that Lady Macbeth's role was expanded "partly to create a greater symmetry of plot, so that the Macduffs can be developed as a virtuous couple in contrast to the Macbeths, but also to make a better part for the actress" (Clark 280), both of which suit the early Restoration plays well.

Still, unlike in Shakespeare, Davenant's Lady Macbeth shows more grief in Duncan's death before she goes mad. In the following exchange from a new scene, she claims to see Duncan's ghost following her everywhere, and tries to further advise Macbeth:

LADY MACBETH. You may in peace resign the ill-gain'd crown.

Why should you labour still to be unjust?

There has been too much blood already spilt.

Make not the subjects victims to your guilt.

MACBETH. Can you think that a crime which you did once

Provoke me to commit? Had not your breath

Blown my ambition up into a flame

Duncan had yet been living.

LADY MACBETH. You were a man,

And by the charter of your sex you shou'd

Have govern'd me: there was more crime in you

When you obey'd my councils, than I contracted

By my giving it. Resign your Kingdom now,

And with your crown put off your guilt.

MACBETH. Resign the crown! and with it both our lives?

I must have better counsellors.

LADY MACBETH. What, your witches?

Curse on your messengers of hell. Their breath

Infected first my breast; see me no more.

As King your crown sits heavy on your head,

But heavier on my heart. I have had too much

Of Kings already. See, the ghost again. (49)

So Davenant here has shown Macbeth as even weaker in character and mettle than in the original; he refuses to listen to reason after taking his wife's ill counsel earlier, and she chastises him for it with her own mouth. Again we see the theme of bad counsel arise, and then of refusing to listen to good counsel when it is finally offered. The fact that Lady Macbeth further emasculates her husband for his lack of manly deeds and his consorting with hags goes to the trend for depicting Cromwell as ruled by his own wife, which we shall see subsequently.

Davenant's amendments are also highly evident in his ending of this adaptation. After Macduff (Monk) slays Macbeth (Cromwell), it is important that he presents the new king Malcolm (Charles II) not with Macbeth's head, as in Shakespeare, but with his sword. This is a show of Restoration decorum (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 79), but also a direct reference to Monk, without whom Charles could not have regained his throne so easily, and who Charles

honored with a Dukedom once his crown was secure. This becomes clearer as Macduff, not Malcolm, utters the altered last lines of the play:

So may kind fortune crown your reign with peace,  
As it has crown'd your armies with success;  
And may the people's prayers still wait on you,  
As all their curses did Macbeth pursue.  
His vice shall make your virtue shine more bright,  
As a fair day succeeds a stormy Night. (60)

Lois Potter explains that the significance of these lines is that they are Macduff's, "whose role at this point becomes obviously reminiscent of General Monk's. It is he, and not Malcolm or the saintly Duncan, who provides the play's chief contrast to Macbeth" (Potter 204). I would add to this, however, that Malcolm's (Charles's) role and importance as rightful sovereign is not diminished; Davenant has him command his men:

Drag his body hence, and let it Hang upon  
A Pinnacle in *Dunsinane*, to shew  
To shew to future Ages what to those is due,  
Who others Right, by Lawless Power pursue. (60)

These new lines show the resolve of the new king; Davenant could not and would not depict his king as weak or inferior even to a tyrant-slayer like Macduff. His words are certainly a chilling recollection of the exhumation and display of Cromwell's and other regicides' remains in England. The ending is therefore charged with emotion and played to the audience's recent experience, thus promoting a feigned unanimity and attempted hegemony.

There are also a few smaller moments in the play worth examining for Davenant's strategy of consensus adaptation. One is the likening to Duncan's younger son Donalbain to the Duke of York; both Malcolm and Donalbain had to flee their realm, as Charles and James had. Remembering that Davenant was the head of the Duke's Company, it was prudent to honor him as well, especially since he was the immediate heir to the throne. Thus, Davenant's new words

for Donalbain, explaining his and Malcolm's present dangers. He tells Lenox, "My interest is grafted into his, / And cannot grow without it" (54). Davenant also finds the opportunity to promote the prevailing nationalistic fervor. Prince Malcolm says of England. "How much we are / Obligated to England, which like a kind neighbor / Lifts us up when we are fal'n below / Our own recovery" (55). Almost certainly this is meant to promote harmony between Charles's two crowns, the lack of which had been a major catalyst for the Civil Wars that deposed and ended the life of Charles I. Lastly, among the many obvious allusions to Cromwell as Macbeth, and perhaps more importantly the enemy to peace and righteousness, is Macduff's command to Macbeth during their climactic battle:

Then yield thyself a prisoner, to be led about  
The world and gazed on as a monster, a monster  
More deform'd than e'er ambition fram'd,  
Or tyranny could shape. (45)

This recalls the monster imagery that appears in the pamphlets, and here the image is transferred to the live stage.

Davenant's sentiments in these alterations are obvious; he seeks to elevate both his new sovereign, who he had never wanted to forsake, and also himself, for making peace with Cromwell, as had so many others. Davenant's *Macbeth* is one of the most striking examples of hegemonic consensus writing in the early Restoration. It is, however, important to note that while Davenant supported the kingship of Charles II, he was not necessarily promoting divine right. For one thing, it would be difficult for him to do so, given his activities in the later years of the Interregnum. More importantly, however, is the fact that the most conservative ideals of divine right had perished with the loss of the Civil Wars and the regicide. Few would have seriously considered a migration from the Protectorate to absolutism. Lois Potter argues as much in her analysis of the play, iterating that "Its very language works against such a reading.

Davenant's alterations undoubtedly make the play more explicitly political, but they also remove from regicide much of the imagery of sacrilege and damnation" (205). She further emphasizes this point by writing that "The play, ultimately, justifies both those who act and those who merely wait for the prophecies to be fulfilled [as had Davenant]. What it does *not* justify is Divine Right; Macbeth, as the final words make clear, is not a fiend from hell, but a man who has pursued others' Right, by Lawless Power" (207). Davenant's tactics of defending his own actions which seemed to contradict his apparent royalism became a growing trend in early Restoration theatre, and one that we will see more of in the following pages.

#### Early Restoration Translations: *The Adventures of Five Hours*

Certainly Shakespeare and other English writers were not the only authors to be adapted. Foreign plays were also translated and revised for the same reasons that English plays were adapted: for the hegemonic purposes of showing a sense of consensus. Perhaps the most famous of these early Restoration translations is *The Adventures of Five Hours* by Sir Samuel Tuke, who, as we saw in the previous chapter, spent time in exile with Charles II and wrote a short "character" in 1660 of Charles in support of his inheriting the crown. Tuke's play, an adaptation of *Los empeños de seis horas*, which was at that time presumed to be by Calderón, but more likely by Antonio Coello (Loftis 7), was one of the most popular plays of the early Restoration, with an impressive run of thirteen performances (Hume 23). Tuke stayed close to the original in his translation, putting the play in five acts instead of the original three, breaking up long speeches that were common in Spanish *comedias*, and adding a love affair between servants, a new opening scene, and an expanded closing scene, among a few other changes (Loftis 77). The play is difficult to categorize, as it contains elements found in both comedy and in serious drama.



Robert Hume asserts that if comedy could be about gentry, or tragedy could end well, this play would be the result (Hume 181). Nancy Maguire notes that because the play's subject matter deals with honor, especially among the elite, and because the rhyming couplets that can be found in parts of the play, it anticipates the rhymed heroic play (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 64), which is the subject of the next chapter. In any event, *The Adventures of Five Hours* is clearly a royalist work by a man who had always been loyal to Charles, even going into exile with him. This play promotes the consensus argument somewhat less obviously than the previous adaptations we have looked at, but it is there. *The Adventures of Five Hours*, according to Derek Hughes, portrays not a restored king but a celebration of the "triumph of justice and reason over barbarous irrationality, one element in Tuke's modifications of his source being an added emphasis on the destructiveness of irrationality and the controlling power of reason and justice..." (Hughes; "Adaptations" 38-9). The irrationality is that of the regicide and the Interregnum leaders; the justice and reason refers of course to the restored king and court. An interesting aspect of this well-attended play, which most of the popular plays of the 1660s resembled (Hume 249), is that apparently Charles II essentially commissioned Tuke to write the play. Tuke remarks in the prologue written especially for performance at court:

So th' Author seeing his decaying Light,  
And therefore thinking to retire from sight,  
Was hindred [sic] by a Ray from th' upper Sphere,  
Just at that time he thought to disappear,  
He chanc'd to hear his Majesty say  
He lik'd this Plot: he staid; and writ the Play;  
So should Obsequious Subjects catch the Minds  
Of Princes...(Tuke, *Adventures* 4)

Thus, as James Loftis points out, "The circumstances surrounding Tuke's writing of *The Adventures* provide a reminder of the importance of the king's exile in introducing the Spanish plays to England" (Loftis 75). It also reminds us of the power and influence that Charles held

over those loyal to him, being able to commission plays. Additionally, that Charles apparently asked Tuke to write the play speaks to its usefulness as propaganda, since it is doubtful that Charles would have asked him specifically to write the play if it did not serve as a hegemonic vehicle.

Tuke's play is important as propaganda in that it is "a courtier's play, royalist in frequent innuendo" (Loftis 75). The plot centers around Spanish couples striving to be with who they desire, despite the machinations of those who would keep them apart from one another because of the antagonists' old fashioned ideals. In this aspect the play resembles Davenant's *The Law Against Lovers*. This certainly would have appealed to the new court of Charles II, with its libertine ideals and virile king, despite what Tuke had tried to convince people of earlier.<sup>1</sup> The antagonist and enemy to freedom is Don Henrique, who wants his sister Portia to marry Don Antonio Pimentel, who she has never met. Henrique is himself in love with a woman named Camilla. Portia has no desire to marry Henrique; she is in love with a man named Octavio, an exile himself because he killed one of Henrique's friends in self-defense. Likewise, Camilla has met and become enamored with a handsome man whose name she does not know. This turns out to be Antonio, who had also fallen in love with Camilla at first sight and has no real desire to wed a stranger. The plot is further complicated when Antonio has a crisis of honor, forced to choose between preserving the honor of Henrique, his soon-to-be (he thinks) brother-in-law, and Octavio, the man Henrique wants dead, but who Antonio has in the past fought beside in battle and is his friend. These themes of honor to fellow gentlemen will be very prominent especially in the heroic drama, the subject of the next chapter. Even more of a dilemma for Antonio is that he believes that Camilla, the nameless woman he had fallen in love with earlier, is Portia, his fiancée, and therefore these thoughts lead him to believe that Octavio is also his rival. So he

alternately fights alongside Octavio while dueling his friend in private for his own honor. While these events may seem to be comic, they really embody the Restoration fixation with ruling-class honor which, as we will see in subsequent chapters, dominates the sympathetic characters who represent the ruling class. Antonio's honor is impeccable; he explains, "Honor's my Standard; and 'tis true, that I / Had rather Fall, than Blush for Victory" (Tuke 34). Later he explains his feelings of honor to his friend and rival:

ANTONIO. [The court of Henrique] is no place for men of my Moralitie.  
I have been taught, *Octavio*, to Deserve,  
But not to Seek Reward; that does prophane  
The Dignity of Virtue; if Princes  
For their own Interests will not advance  
Deserving Subjects, they must raise Themselves  
By a brave Contempt of Fortune.  
OCTAVIO. I'm glad to find you in some Seeds yet left  
Of th' Antient Virtue; may the Fruit produce  
Fit to Illustrate, and Instruct the Age. (Tuke, *Adventures* 12)

There is clearly here a desire to return to the aforementioned "halcyon days" of the Caroline court, but with a taste of the new style of the inimitable "It" king with his sexual prowess. That Charles commissioned Tuke to translate and adapt the play makes the point that much stronger; the old virtues of the Caroline court are extolled, and the return to these honorable values indicates that this play operates, like the others, as a propagandistic tool.

Antonio's honor is further tested, and he demonstrates his honor by abruptly breaking away from his fight against his friend and rival Octavio in order to protect him from Henrique's wrath, and in the process he impresses Henrique's comrade:

ANTONIO. *Henrique*, 'tis true; but finding in my breast  
An equal strife 'twixt Honor, and Revenge;  
I do in just compliance with them both  
Preserve him from your Rage, to Fall by mine.  
CARLOS. Brave Man, how Nicely he does Honor weigh! (39)

In opposition to Antonio and Octavio who both symbolize the righteous, honorable, and desirable representatives of the new court is Henrique, who embodies the old-fashioned, constrictive ideals of the puritans and detractors of the Carolean court. Arranging marriages and attempting to carry out bloody revenge on innocent victims, Henrique must in the end concede the loss of the object of affection to the dashing Antonio, and his sister to Octavio, the righteous killer of his friend. And yet, perhaps surprisingly, he grudgingly yields his desires to the victors, negating the need for a full-scale conflict:

I must consent, I see, or worse will follow.  
“He is a Fool who thinks by Force, or Skill  
“To turn the Current of a Woman’s Will.  
Since fair *Camilla* is *Antonio’s* Lot,  
I *Porcia* yield to *Don Antonios* Friend.  
Our Strength, and wisdom must submit to Fate.  
Stript of my Love, I will put off my Hate. (40)

By having Henrique accept his defeat, albeit less than gracefully, Tuke conveys the ever-important idea that a return to hostilities would be a wrong course, and that his adversaries must be allowed to win. A peaceful resolution again suggests the clemency of Charles. Tuke furthers the task of repudiating the puritanical former leaders of England with an interesting exchange between two servants:

GERALDO. What a Gods name could come into the Heads  
Of this People, to make them Rebell?  
ERNESTO. Why Religion, that came into their Heads, a Gods name.  
GERARDO. But what a Devil made the Noble-men Rebel?  
ERNESTO. Why that which made the Devil himself Rebel,  
Ambition.

Applied to the recent days and years of the realm, this is an obvious allusion to the so-called “late troubles” of the Civil Wars and Interregnum, where the puritan morals of the Commonwealth and Protectorate were widely known and enforced. Henrique embodies these laws, not dissimilar to Davenant’s Antonio in *The Law Against Lovers*, who must accept defeat

in the face of righteousness. This is another example of the royalist work discrediting the former regime, thereby elevating the king.

Obviously, to make a happy ending, the two amorous couples end up happily with one another, and the tyrannical Henrique must cut his losses and live with defeat. While the idea of clear one-to-one relationships between real people and characters in *The Adventures of Five Hours* would be overreaching, it is still evident that there are striking similarities to past events and figures. The exiled and disguised Octavio shares much in common with Charles II, and the overbearing Henrique is representative of the perception many held of Cromwell and his associates. Even Antonio, whose intervention allows Octavio to escape the wrath of Henrique, bears a striking similarity to Monk. Regardless of the exactness of these relationships, *The Adventures of Five Hours* was a fitting source for Charles's consensus-building endeavors for the stage, arguing in favor of court manners and nobility that was a remnant of Charles I and which Charles II sought to recover and make his own. The play therefore worked, as did print, to solidify the king's perception and personality by exercising his power over the authors to determine what they wrote. That Charles personally picked out the play for translation/adaptation and performance by one of his and his father's loyal soldiers is even further evidence of the significance of this play to the endeavors of consensus. That it was one of the most popular plays of this early period of Restoration theatre is even more evidence of the attractiveness of plays that carried obvious parallels to English political history. This makes such works effective as hegemonic devices, and is another example of Restoration consensus writing in the service of the new king. Translations of foreign works were then another way to promote consensus during the Restoration.

### Katherine Phillips's *Pompey*

In addition to Spanish influence, the French style, especially that of Corneille, influenced Restoration figures to translate works from France. That Charles II's influence is paramount in translations of French plays is obvious, as he spent much of his exile in France, and viewed the plays there. Though Loftis may disagree, Maguire states that "Without a doubt, the French provided the strongest foreign sources" (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 54). Certainly, when looking at Restoration translations of French plays, with their poetic style of Alexandrines, it is easy to see their influence on new Restoration plays, especially rhymed heroic plays. Roger Boyle, the first Earl of Orrery, helped make the rhymed heroic play successful, and it appears clear that Corneille was a major contributor to his design. This becomes even clearer when considering that Orrery revered Katherine Phillips' translation of Corneille's *La Mort de Pompée*, which he personally urged her to finish, and saw produced in Dublin in February of 1663 (Lynch 116-117). Anne Russell interestingly observes that "Orrery and his circle may have been interested in Philips's translation partly because the play represents transitions in government amid conflicts of allegiance" (Russell 307), which doubly demonstrates its importance. Orrery would have been sensitive to the utility of such a play, since, as we will see at length in Chapter 4, his allegiances fluctuated with the times. This, along with certain printed matter and plays such as the heroic drama, reinforce the continued theme of authors who needed to improve their own images with the new king, since they had not opposed Cromwell.

Phillips's translation will be the subject of the final study in this chapter. This work, published in 1663, is concurrent with another translation of the same play in 1664 by Edmond Waller. Although Phillips's version deviates further from the original, and practically all noteworthy passages from the second translation are nearly identical to Phillips's, still it is clear

that the two are not collaborative. Maguire agrees on this point (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 67).

The fact that there were two translations of this work published at nearly the same time speaks to its adaptability to the Restoration audience, and especially to historical events which we have seen echoed in the many plays of this period. Russell notes that the two productions show “the suggestiveness of these narratives of the Roman civil wars for analyzing the political situation shortly after the Restoration...” (303). This play is also important in considering the fact that “Analogies between the Roman civil wars and the English civil wars were frequently invoked by participants from both Royalist and Parliamentary sides” (Russell 302). Thus, depending on the spin, the play could serve as propaganda for either side. In this case, again the play in translation becomes propaganda promoting hegemonic consensus for the king.

Despite the play’s name, the character of Pompey does not appear onstage. The plot centers around Ptolemy, king of Egypt, and his sister, Cleopatra, who are at odds over what to do about Pompey, who, exiled from Rome, is pursued by Caesar and begging for asylum in Egypt. Following the advice of his counselors, Ptolemy decides to have Pompey killed in order to bolster his own political position. He hopes to cater to Caesar, the stronger power, despite the fact that Pompey’s father was largely responsible for Ptolemy having the crown. This is also important because as long as Pompey stays alive, there is a chance that Ptolemy’s sister, Cleopatra, will be able to share the Egyptian throne since Pompey is aware that she has a claim to half the throne, being the bearer of their father’s will stipulating this. Ptolemy’s following the advice of his counselors backfires when Caesar, rendered here as a sympathetic and heroic character despite his pursuit of Pompey, looks at Ptolemy with disdain because of his lack of honor and at Cleopatra with affection, despite the fact that he has a wife. Ptolemy again shows

his lack of honor when, after Caesar admonishes the killing of Pompey, Ptolemy tries to rebel against him and have him killed. When this fails, Caesar still promises Cleopatra he will spare Ptolemy out of his love for her. Yet Ptolemy dies anyway, not knowing that he would be spared, and running away on a ship which capsizes, proving his cowardice and his unworthiness to live.

Many passages from this play detail why it fits so well with this period in England, and demonstrate the remarkable similarities and themes that Restoration audiences found prominent in plays, much like Davenant's *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, and Tuke's *Adventures of Five Hours*, among others.

There has been much written about the political intentions of Phillips's translation (Russell 303-6), a good deal of which has to do with the extent that the play is intentionally allegorical, especially with the figures of Charles I and II (Russell 307). Russell believes that Phillips's politics were not necessarily strictly royalist, especially considering the fact that the characters' real-life parallels are at times "confusing and unstable" (318). Yet when we consider that the play is not a seminal work but a translation, it should be relatively easy to conclude that the play was not chosen because it offered a one-to-one allegory or fit the Restoration sentiments exactly. How could it, given the play's foreign origins? Rather, the play was chosen because it worked well, if not seamlessly, with Restoration politics, and therefore it was a work promoting the appearance of consensus. It did this by depicting the ill-advised king, by depicting a horrible regicide as a great tragic event, and extolling the virtue and honor of rightful kings. These elements are clearly in place to reconstruct the perception and personality of the king. The adaptability of the play to the recent past meant that *Pompey* lent itself well to adaptation in this period, as did Davenant's adaptations of Shakespeare. The play's apparent lack of high popularity at court (Russell 301) may be due to the fact that some of the allegory is problematic,



rather than because Phillips was trying to make some specific critique of the new regime. In fact, Russell admits that the Phillips text of *Pompey* was “in demand,” and by certain nobles (319). Further, it should be pointed out that Phillips’s association with the Earl of Orrery strongly suggests her royalist leanings. We will see much of Orrery’s royalism and theatrical works in the following chapter. Phillips’ royalism is also strongly suggested by the fact that she sent a copy of the play to the Duchess of York and later to King Charles (Russell 299). It is therefore reasonably safe to conclude that Phillips was contributing to consensus in the performing and publication of *Pompey*, and not writing her translation as a “skeptical and ironic” treatment of the Restoration (321). However, even if the play can be said to critique the restored monarchy, these critiques still align themselves with the consensus sequence, since by 1663, when the play was first produced, many authors, as we will see more clearly in the next chapters, began to stop writing plays as propaganda, but as gentle criticisms or manuals of advice to the king. It is possible in any case that criticism of Phillips’s translation may have been tied to the existence of another more popular version, or the fact that the plot of the original play makes it difficult to reconcile all of the problematic parallels in a way befitting the Restoration politics (Russell 320).

A prevailing theme in Phillips’ *Pompey* is of course that of the dishonorable and conniving king, Ptolemy. While not exactly a usurper or illegitimate ruler, he does break what should ideally be obligatory bonds with Pompey’s family, and tries to wrest the whole of the Egyptian crown from Cleopatra, despite the fact that she has a legitimate claim to a share of the Egyptian throne. He is also a first-generation ruler in a new dynasty. Yet repeated throughout the play are the instances of Ptolemy’s listening to bad counsel, a trait we have already seen in this and the previous chapter, and which is, of course, most indicative of the figure of Charles I. We see that Ptolemy’s troubles, including his death, might have been averted had he listened to

better advice. This is easily recognizable as Ptolemy is deciding whether or not to kill Pompey. His advisor Photinus says, “When things, Sir, are determin’d by the sword, / Justice is nothing but an empty word” (Phillips 2). Later he states:

’Tis not a States-man’s Virtue to be just  
When Right and Wrong are in the Ballance lay’d,  
The Interest of Kingdoms is betray’d,  
Extremest Rigour is the Right of Kings,  
When Timorous Equity their Ruine brings,  
Who fears a Crime shall ever be affraid,  
But hee’ll rule all who all things dares invade,  
Who Dangerous Virtue, as Disgrace, does shun,  
And to an Useful Crime as swiftly run. (4)

This opinion is opposed by another adviser but supported by a third, which allows Ptolemy to side with the majority and have Pompey killed, despite Cleopatra’s warning that “...*Photin* and his Crew / Have with their wicked Counsels poyson’d you” (8). Still, Ptolemy listens to his men, declaring to Photinus later in the play that “O thy Advice my greatest Comfort brings, / A prudent Councillour’s the bliss of Kings” (23). Cleopatra seems to be the only one in her kingdom who sees the dangers of her brother’s access to bad counsel, and notes, much like Sir Samuel Tuke’s apology of Charles II’s sexual behavior in exile earlier,<sup>2</sup> that kings typically can master their passions, but not ill counsel:

This to their high extraction Princes shew,  
That by th’ assistance of their Royal Blood  
Their Passions are more easily subdu’d.  
Their honour still the Victory will have;  
And whilst they trust themselves, they still are brave;  
All the disorders which in Kings we see,  
To others Counsels must imputed be.  
This is th’ cause of *Pompey*’s ruine Deem;  
The King would help, but *Photin* murders him.  
Whose Counsel hath his Masters faith o’ rethrown,  
Which still had sway’d, had he obscur’d his own. (13)

Yet Ptolemy is too interested in consolidating his own power to listen to the one who might yet prevent his own political collapse. This is the trait of a man who is not meant to rule, and therefore will be removed from his lofty position before the play's end.

Restoration audiences also would have noted the horror at the willful killing of a king, especially a former ally, for political purposes. In the play, the murder takes place offstage, and must be reported by an eyewitness. The report is that, like Charles I, Pompey died bravely. One of Cleopatra's men relates, "I saw the greatest Mortal lose his Breath, / And though a sad [sic], I saw a glorious Death" (15). He tells also of the people's horror at the sight of this foul deed as well as that of Pompey's head being taken to Ptolemy: "The trembling People turned away their eyes" (18). Again this conjures up the images in plays and print of the pious and brave martyr who has thrown off the guise of the defeated and gone, as Charles said at his own execution, to an incorruptible crown.

The fixation on crowns also leads us to another recognizable theme in this play, namely that of virtuous and honorable rulers. Ptolemy, as we have seen, is the example of one who abuses his power, while Pompey, Cleopatra, and even Caesar are the positive examples of virtuous rule. Cleopatra admits that "I have Ambition, but it is confin'd, / It may surprize my Soul; but nev'r blind...I know my Reach, and shall not that exceed" (20). Even in her wooing of the married Caesar she is wary of being too drunk with power as to lose her honor:

I have Ambition, and bee't good or ill,  
It is the only Sovereign of my Will.  
And 'tis this Noble Passion, sure, or none,  
A Princess may without a Blemish own.  
But yet with Glory I would it enflame,  
Nor would buy greatness with the loss of Fame,  
For I the brightest Crown can scorn to touch,  
When 'tis attended with the least Reproach...(14)

The bulk of the praise, however, goes to Caesar, who defends Pompey's death, despite the fact that Pompey is his enemy. His character reminds us in a way of Monk, who until he decided to march upon London was essentially a general of the Protectorate, and therefore the supposed enemy to any future Restoration. Upon hearing of Pompey's death, according to Cleopatra's witness, Caesar wept:

Though he loves Power, yet he Treason hates,  
Himself he judges, on himself debates,  
Each Joy and Grief at reasons bar appears,  
At length resolv'd, he first let fall some Tears...(26)

Caesar later lectures Ptolemy on the evil of his actions: "What right had you to that Illustrious Life? / Who that rich Blood to wash your hands allow'd, / That to the meanest Roman should have bow'd ?" (27). He then orders Ptolemy to build altars in honor of the fallen Pompey: "To the great *Pompey* Altars now erect, / And to him pay, as to the Gods, Respect. / By Sacrifices your Offence expel..." (30). Caesar goes even further, showing kindness even to Pompey's widow, returning Pompey's ashes to her and vowing to take revenge on his murderers.

Thus, it is easy to see the appeal of Corneille's play to the Restoration writers, managers, and actors. The play seems made for the Restoration decade in that it promotes an idea of what true kingship is, and how heroism and honor, which were the supposed traits of both Charles I and II in consensus-building literature, permeate upright and legitimate rulers. What is especially revealing, however, just as we saw with Davenant's adaptations of Shakespeare, are the bits of the play that Phillips has added independently. According to the introduction in the printed version of the text, the changes are minimal:

...the hand that did it is responsible for nothing  
but the English, and the Songs between the  
Acts, which were added only to lengthen  
the Play, and make it fitter for the Stage,

when those that could not be resisted were  
resolved to have it acted...(A2 Recto)

However, in addition to the new songs, which cannot be treated lightly as additions to the text, there are an original prologue and epilogue. Phillips's prologue is especially striking, because unlike the concurrent translation, it talks about civil war in its very first lines: "The mighty Rivals, whose destructive Rage / Did the whole World in Civil Arms engage..." (A3 Recto). The epilogue makes an allusion to Caesar as a martyr. The actor speaks:

Yet at your Feet, *Caesar's* content to bow,  
And *Pompey*, never truly great till now:  
Who does your Praise and kinder Votes prefer.  
Before th' applause of his own Theatre...(62)

At the beginning of Phillips's translation proper, is a significant scene of the imagery of civil war, with lines spoken by Ptolemy. The equivalent does not exist in the other translation. The picture of civil war is horrific:

Fate hath declar'd her self, and we may see  
Th' Intrigue of th' great Rivals Destiny:  
That quarrel which did all the Gods divide,  
*Pharsalia* hath the Honour to decide.  
Whose Rivers swelling with new bloody Tides  
(Sent thither from so many Parricides)  
The Horror of torn Ensigns, Chariots, Shields,  
Spread in Confusion o're th' infected Fields;  
Those Slaughter'd heaps whose shades no rest obtain'd  
By Nature to their own revenge constrain'd,  
(Their Putrefactions seeming to Revive  
The War with those that do remain alive,)  
Are Dreadful rules by which the Sword thinks fit,  
*Pompey* to cast, and *Caesar* to acquit. (1)

Clearly the raw imagery here is designed to play on the memories and emotions of a Restoration audience, as so many other plays and writings did, and persuade the audience to conclude that civil war should not again ravage the realm. In short, the king should be allowed to remain, and as a result, England will be rewarded with peace and plenty.

However, the most striking additions that Phillips made to *Pompey* are the songs that she inserted between each of the acts. Like those of Davenant's plays, we can look at these additions to determine how the author sought to reflect the Restoration sentiment and address the ideas of consensus. The song between Acts One and Two shows the importance of the pleasures of the court. Here it is in its entirety:

Since Affairs of the State are already decreed,  
Make room for Affairs of the Court,  
Employment and Pleasure each other succeed,  
Because they each other support.  
Were Princes confin'd .  
From slackening their Mind,  
When by Care it is rusted and Curl'd.  
A Crown would appear  
Too heavy to wear  
And no man would govern the World.

If the Gods themselves who have power enough.  
In the diversions are various, and oft.  
Since the business of Kings is Angry and rough  
Their intervals ought to be soft.  
Were Princes confin'd, &c.

To our Monarch we owe whatsoer'e we enjoy  
And no grateful Subjects were those,  
Who would not the safety, he gives them, employ  
To contribute to his repose.  
Were Princes confin'd, &c. (11-12)

The song is then followed by a dance by gypsies. This song's addition signifies the lightness and carefree nature of a restored state free of the political upheaval and suffering described in the play. Thus here the play serves as a reminder of calamities past but also supposed present and prophesied future bliss, which again we saw prevalent in printed literature, and which worked as a deterrent to any who might oppose the king.

The second song, appearing between Acts Two and Three, is sung by Egyptian priests. The end of their song echoes the play's emphasis on honor and counsel:

But Pompey's head's a rate too dear,  
For by that impious price,  
The Godless Noble will appear  
Than do's the sacrifice.

If Justice be a thing divine,  
The Gods should it maintain,  
For us t' attempt what they decline,  
Would be as rash as vain.

Chorus.  
How desperate is our princes fate?  
What hazard doe's he run?  
He must be wicked to be great,  
Or to be just, undone. (24)

Again we see the theme of bad and usurped (at least in part, in this play) position as unworthy to rule.

The new song between Acts Three and Four would possibly have roused the most sympathy from a Restoration audience. Here the ghost of Pompey (Charles I) visits his widow, Cornelia, to comfort her. Putting this in the context of the current day, we can see the intent; below are a few stanzas:

Behold the Man thou lov'dst before,  
Pure streams have wash'd away his Gore,  
And Pompey now shall bleed no more.

By Death My Glory I resume;  
For 'twould have been a harsher Doom,  
T' outlive the Liberty of Rome.

By me her doubtfull fortune try'd,  
Falling, bequeaths my Fame this Pride,  
I for it liv'd, and with it Dy'd.

Nor shal I my Vengeance be withstood  
Or unattended with a Flood,  
Of Roman and Egyptian Blood. (35)

This is truly a hearkening back to the Caroline “halcyon days” of supposed bliss, as though the spirit of Charles I was appearing to his still-living queen to comfort her and let her know that his death was not in vain. The fact that Henrietta Maria was indeed still living gives this passage even more power and immediacy, playing on the emotions of the audience, as well as those of the royal family.

The song between Acts Four and Five is sung by Cleopatra, who is struggling with the conflict between her love of Caesar and her own honor as a monarch:

What is the charm of being Great;  
Which oft is gain'd and lost with Sin,  
Or if w'attain a Royal seat,  
With guiltless steps what do we win,  
  
Though Love does all the heart subdue;  
With gentle, but resistless sway,  
Yet Honour must that govern too:  
And when thus Honour wins the Day,  
Love overcomes the bravest way. (49)

Honor in rulers, as we have seen and will continue to see throughout print and plays in this period, is of great importance to consensus writing. The idea is that kings have a right to rule by the virtue of their position, and that it is an inherent trait. Ptolemy is a slight exception to this idea, but he himself commits regicide and tries to usurp Cleopatra's portion of the throne. Besides, his claim to the crown is somewhat dubious, as it was arranged by Pompey's father. The play as Phillips has rendered it is concerned with right to rule, and would seem to be arguing in favor of the king, meaning the play is working as propaganda.

The final song ends the show after Act Five, and again the priests sing the song, revering Cleopatra's ascension to the throne, and of course by extension, Charles II. It is again very reminiscent of the printed matter that lauded the Restoration:



Ascend a Throne Great Queen! to you  
By Nature, and by Fortune due;  
And let the world adore

One who Ambition could withstand,  
Subdue Revenge, and Love command,  
On Honour's single score. (60)

The ending chorus begins with a nod to the past strife of civil war: "Then after all the Blood that's shed, / Let's right the living and the dead..." (61). The play then concludes with a masque danced before Caesar and Cleopatra, and written by John Ogilby, known for his masques and of course the published entertainment at Charles II's coronation. This scene certainly evokes the Restoration, as does the whole translation. The romance between Cleopatra and Caesar reinforces the argument that Caesar is the rightful ruler, and here he unites the kingdom through his romance with Cleopatra. The rightful rulers, then, are those who have been born to rule, like Charles II, and this translation of Corneille's play promotes the consensus of that argument.

Adaptations, revivals, and translations were, as we have seen, prevalent in the Restoration, but the earliest years of the Restoration were inundated with them. Playwrights of this period had to make these plays palatable to the new audience, but also they serve themselves to flatter the king and fortify his image, his perception and personality. As Charles II's perception and person were on the rise at the beginning of the Restoration, his power was that of reinstating and to an extent controlling the new playhouses. Thus, the hegemonic consensus here in these revivals, adaptations, and translations is that the Restoration is good and the sentiments that these plays shared with the early Restoration printed matter bear this out. Since these adaptations, revivals, and translations gave way to original plays that imitated many of the conventions of these older plays, it can be said that these alterations and revivals were successful

in promoting consensus, and were effective in utilizing the theatre as an ideological state apparatus.

However, as we saw in the previous chapter with print, the honeymoon gradually ended as the Restoration moved into the mid-1660s, prompting the consensus writing to erode as the decade moved forward; thus, hegemony could not be achieved. This can be seen in the original plays that began to appear in the first years of the Restoration compared to those that became prevalent in mid-decade. Chapter 4 will detail this in the rhymed heroic plays of Orrery and Dryden, while Chapter 5 will demonstrate this in the comic plays of the early-to-mid 1660s.

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#### End Notes

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 2 p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 2 p. 65.

## CHAPTER 4: CONSENSUS AND THE RHYMED HEROIC PLAY

In keeping with the revisionist history supported by the printed pamphlets and broadsides discussed in Chapter 2 and the adaptations, revivals, and translations examined in Chapter 3, the new plays reflected these same royalist themes, indicating the perception, power, and personality of the king. Not surprisingly, the new plays of the Restoration lacked seasoned authors; those who had never written before had yet to hone their talents. Experienced writers such as theatre managers Davenant and Killigrew had written very little during the interregnum, and they had been stifled by Parliamentary regulations. Nor were they, as Fisk has explained, artistic choices on the part of the king as much as they were political ones to run the theatres. After Charles returned and declared that he wanted to bring back the theatre, there was no shortage of would-be playwrights rushing to fill the vacuum created by a lack of state-supported theatre for nearly twenty years. Naturally, some of Charles's most ardent advocates became the decade's first new playwrights. In addition to the likes of Tuke and Davenant, there were others; this new generation of playwrights resembled European royal families in that they had extensive family connections.

The scope of this chapter will begin our investigation of the attempt at consensus on new drama, specifically, the serious forms of theatre known as the rhymed heroic play. If the ideas disseminated in the new plays took root, they would go far towards achieving the hegemony that Charles sought. It would be difficult to call these serious forms of Restoration drama "tragedies," in the traditional sense. A true definition for the genre (or genres) of Restoration "tragedy" proves elusive, because while the plays contain easily recognizable elements, they are often implemented in a way that makes definition problematic. Many authors such as J. Douglas Canfield and Eric Rothstein continue to refer to Restoration "tragedy." For Nancy Maguire, all

plays serious or otherwise which are not strictly comedy are “tragicomedy,” because for her, the form is neither tragedy nor comedy (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 52); instead it is tragedy with a happy ending (35-37). For the purposes of this work, I shall adopt Robert Hume’s nomenclature of “serious drama” to describe that Restoration drama which is not explicitly and intentionally comedic.

Categorizing serious drama in the Restoration is difficult because it defies the traditional sense of tragedy by employing a less-than-tragic ending. As for why, one need look no further than the difficulties and tragedy of the two decades preceding the Restoration and the consensus politics that fueled the nation in 1660. We saw already in the previous chapter that a key reason that Fletcher was popular was because of his reversals away from the tragic and toward a happy ending; the same is true of the new plays.

According to Douglas Canfield, serious drama seeks “primarily to legitimate the aristocracy’s natural right to rule states through the heroes that its genealogy guarantees” (Canfield, *Heroes and States* 199); I would add to this that Charles II was the face of the aristocracy, and as we shall see, is the chief embodiment of the heroes that Canfield describes in these plays. Capturing closely the political nature of early Restoration theatre, Maguire states convincingly that serious drama (or tragicomedy, to use her term) was a blatant “propaganda tool” of the Restoration, in addition to a way to assuage a sense of sorrow and guilt after a series of wars and conflicts which featured the execution of the current king’s father (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 36). As a result, “the Restoration propaganda machine relentlessly exploited the guilt association with the act of regicide” (6), which we have already witnessed in the printing presses. This “rewriting” of tragedy is responsible for the tone of the majority of plays during the Restoration era. The message, we will recall, is that Charles II has come to bring

healing to a wounded nation and usher in a new era of peace and prosperity. We have seen that to an extent in adaptations, revivals, and translations, and in great detail in print. We shall witness it full force in the new plays.

The new plays, like the adaptations, etc. had done, demonstrate varying degrees of thinly-veiled allegory or parallel plots to recent history. Thus, many plots deal with revolution, usurpation, and restoration, in order to further legitimate the new king and alienate the old regime. Maguire suggests that these plays act as “psychotherapy” (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 108), serving as a reaction to the “successive shocks of civil wars, usurpation, regicide, commonwealth, protectorate, and the rule of the army” (107). Indeed, early serious drama served a number of functions, all encompassed by the persona of the King, whether the intended result was to flatter, protect, advise, or to beg forgiveness of Charles.

All of these elements are evident in one of the earliest and most intriguing serious forms of Restoration drama, the rhymed heroic play. The current chapter will investigate in great detail this peculiar serious dramatic form, which offered an outlet for new playwrights to demonstrate their allegiance while absolving them of the past indiscretions of support of, or at least tacit coexistence with, Oliver Cromwell, of which they were guilty. Support for the King was vital to this genre, and its chief two authors, Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery and John Dryden, also emphasized the King’s forgiveness for past changes of allegiance. Taken as a group, these plays show a sycophantic attachment to the King gradually tempered by gentle criticism and advice as England’s troubles worsened, and as Charles’s reputation flagged. They began, however, as a specialized tool for building consensus.

## The Rhymed Heroic Plays of Orrery and Dryden

Having seen the type of serious closet drama that overflowed from the pamphleteering of Chapter 2, we turn now to the drama proper, and specifically the rhymed heroic play. This subset of serious drama may be the first “new” form of drama in the Restoration, though it was inspired by a number of set conventions. Originally set down by Roger Boyle, the first Earl of Orrery, and further developed by John Dryden, the rhymed heroic play was the most obviously allegorical form of serious theatre in the early Restoration. There is little discernible attempt in many of these plays, especially the earliest ones, to hide parallels to the Interregnum and Restoration, and the authors’ blatant desire to support Charles and his new regime are its most obvious features, even if some of the finer points can only be guessed at. There has been much critical debate over the meaning and appeal of the rhymed heroic play, especially given its typically bombastic rant and self-sacrificing hyper-heroic characters and situations. Yet the fact that these plays were successful for a time can be seen in the form’s adoption by Dryden, the Poet Laureate and probably the most recognizable name among Restoration playwrights. There is also evidence in that many of these plays were revived throughout the Restoration, and that the style was successfully burlesqued in the Duke of Buckingham’s *The Rehearsal* (1671) once the genre became established. Though the form was relatively short-lived, and had died out by the end of the 1670s, it was indeed a popular dramatic style until dissatisfaction with Charles along with its rigid conventions, caused it to die out. Therefore this genre more than any other best mirrors the consensus sequence, since it fizzled as a hegemonic tool as confidence in the king diminished.

In the same way that the serious form of drama defies easy categorization, the rhymed heroic play also escapes a common name. Variouslly calle “heroic masque” (Canfield, (*Heroes and States* 6; Staves 51) or “rhymed heroic masque” (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 2)

among other names, critics generally engage this genre by its two most distinguishing characteristics, that it appears in rhymed couplets (or Alexandrines) and the “heroic” nature of its characters and plots, which feature acts of unbelievable self-sacrifice and moral character beyond those of the average heroic figure.

The rhymed heroic play is not in any real sense a “new” genre; it has many influences and origins, including the Caroline plays of John Fletcher and Francis Beaumont, with its highly honorable heroes and happy endings, the Homeric epic, the chivalric romance, contemporary French drama (notably Corneille), Shakespeare, and court masques. Much of the scholarship on this genre, while interested in the style’s origin, seems to ignore or greatly diminish the fact that it existed to support the new king’s consensus politics. What is intrinsic to these plays is that Charles himself can be in a literal sense credited with the creation of Restoration rhymed heroic drama, and that the plays overwhelmingly supported the consensus, as we have already seen in the printed work, adaptations, and revivals during the early part of the 1660s, and which we will also see in the comedy. The figure or perception of the king is obvious in the plays, and rightful rulers possess a humble yet noble character rarely seen. These characters serve to boost Charles I and II’s images, as well as to keep the latter fashionable, boosting his personality. The fact that Charles is the legendary and possible actual inspiration for the genre speaks to his power to control the theatre, and tells us that this is the archetypal theatrical propaganda tool for the establishment of hegemony.

Heroic style, verse, spectacle, and Platonic romance are certainly important, but I submit that these are subservient to the fact that rhymed heroic plays are opaque attempts by the authors to support Charles’s hegemonic ideology, and for them to implant themselves into visible and prosperous roles in the new order. In fact, it is likely not coincidental that the most visible

authors of the rhymed heroic play, Orrery and Dryden, had both been supporters of Cromwell at one time during the Interregnum. Thus, in addition to serving the ideological needs of Charles II, these authors used the plays to exonerate themselves of participation in the usurping regime, most notably by inventing good characters who mirror the dilemma of whether or not to give service to a usurper. These characters actually embody the authors themselves, as we shall see. As the Restoration decade wore on, these authors also used their plays as tools of warning and advice for their monarch who was quickly falling afoul of popular opinion.

The political nature of the rhymed heroic play can be seen most obviously in its plots which parallel the civil wars, Interregnum, and/or Restoration to varying degrees. Besides plays that directly depict historical events and feature historical characters by name, these plays are the closest in this period to historical retellings, though with a clearly royalist agenda. Just as in the tracts, broadsides, ballads, and other writings, these plays seek to rewrite history while predicting (or hoping for) the future. The audience would have easily recognized the deliberate parallels to their own time. Besides the specific events, the characters in the plays “constitute one stage of the culture’s gradual assimilation of the civil war experience” (Staves 51) as well. Reflecting the intention of the authors to depict the ideal subjects (and importantly to explain the shifting of the authors’ allegiances, especially Orrery), Susan Staves adds that in the plays “Much concern is lavished upon noble-minded subjects who wish to preserve their honor intact under such difficult conditions” (51). Nancy Maguire likewise presents a variously discernible pattern of characters in what she dubs the “repetitive plot schema” of many Restoration serious dramas, particularly seen in the rhymed heroic play: “a usurper (Cromwell) overcomes the rightful king (Charles I); then, a king-restoring general (Monk), after defeating the usurper, restores the rightful king (Charles II)” (*Regicide and Restoration* 48). Many other critics choose not to emphasize these



close parallels as integral, perhaps because they seem so obvious as to preclude explanation or extensive analysis, or perhaps because they do not see the connections as central to the effect and meaning of the plays. In any case, they generally do not deny the plays' royalist intentions. Douglas Canfield writes that the heroic playwrights made the plays "as a celebration of the king's restoration" while adding that they are "reinscribing across the pages of a disintegrating cultural scripture of the chivalric code which had underwritten aristocratic society for centuries." These plays, like the chivalric code, "portrayed the aristocracy as naturally superior, born and bred and divinely appointed (if not anointed) to rule" (Canfield, *Heroes and States* 6). This is indicative of the hegemonic ideology of the ruling class in the Restoration.

The enemies of these romances and plays, writes Canfield, are "self-interested statesmen and unruly mobs, who might mouth the rhetoric of rights but who simply desired power through revolt and usurpation" (6). Susan Owen also notes that the plays are "explicitly royalist in intention," citing the king's personal involvement in the writing of some of them (Owen 127), an indicator of the power element of consensus. Like Canfield, Eugene M. Waith sees the origin of heroic plays in epic and chivalric romances, and while he (mistakenly, I would argue) does not treat the royalist nature of this drama, he tells us that heroic drama has an emphasis on "greatness rather than error" (Waith 3), taking the term "greatness" from perhaps the grandfather of the heroic play, William Davenant (1). Despite Waith's omission of royalist intentions, he does place the emphasis on the inherent positive outlook which Charles and his authors sought to spread. In other words, these plays function as propaganda to aid Charles in his hegemonic aims.

Besides the tedious rhyming couplets, these heroic plays, as their name suggests, feature heroes and heroines set apart by the nearly superhuman quality of their character and virtue. One recurring criticism of the rhymed heroic play is that its heroes and heroines are so unselfish and

self-sacrificing as to be entirely unbelievable. This is, to be fair, an accurate description. Staves writes that the rhymed heroic play “indulges in a fantasy of pure honor while simultaneously acknowledging such honor to be impossible” (Staves 51-52). This may be somewhat overstated in that it does not seem likely that especially Dryden thought such heroism was impossible, but it does highlight the inherent pickle that authors such as Dryden and Orrery found themselves in when faced with the fact that they had supported and even served Cromwell, and now intended to serve the king. Some of these heroes, as we will see, did find themselves in an untenable position where they had to choose between two entirely noble courses, much to their lamentation.

Usually these difficult choices were between the honor of love and the duty of obedience to the legitimate king. These choices are compounded by such things as the king being the hero’s rival for a heroine’s hand, the hero not being of the proper station, or, perhaps most importantly, not knowing whether or not they should obey or follow a usurper. Especially in Orrery’s case, these situations dealt with the difficulty the authors found themselves in because of their inconsistent loyalties. It would seem that the truly heroic character in the Restoration would have no difficulty in choosing the king over one’s object of affection. Yet given these authors’ potentially incriminating pasts, the romantic relationships (and attraction toward a person whose heroic nature usually equals that of the sovereign) often serve as the foil to unquestioned obedience. It is easy to see how this can be, for in some cases, as we will see, the monarch himself has encouraged the hero to think of himself first, although such a thing could never really happen; the true hero always sacrifices his own feelings for the interests of his king, though he is usually rewarded well for his sacrifice. These character conundrums really serve as messages to Charles not to condemn or judge them for their actions when he was out of power.

This is indicative of Charles's power of influence over authors in the early Restoration, and further evidence that these plays were shaped by the king's hegemonic interests.

Perhaps another reason that the heroic character is able to consider choosing his own interests over the king is that the Platonic nature of these relationships stems from the former court of Charles and Henrietta Maria, which constitutes the rehabilitation of the kingly image we have discussed throughout this work. Eugene Waith notes that the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher reflected the refined and mannerly tastes of Court, on which Charles I's Queen and Charles II's mother Henrietta Maria was a major influence (161-62). William Clark, who compiled and edited an excellent two-volume collection of Orrery's plays, writes that "The roots of [heroic] sentiment extend back into the reign of Charles I when the *précieuse* and Platonic conventions of Henrietta Marias's court began to breed absurdly exaggerated notion of love and honor" (Clark 63). According to Tracey Tomlinson, Orrery's plays deal with issues of "love, honor, and friendship that were a deliberate attempt to revive the culture of the Caroline court" (561). The influence of Caroline court drama is well documented.<sup>1</sup>

These conventions which drew on the former popularity of the Caroline court and Fletcher's drama led to the early popularity of the rhymed heroic play. As we saw in the introduction, Hume's argument is that even though Restoration plays contain social and political commentary, and reflect the philosophy of the time, in essence they are mostly for entertainment, not deep meaning (Hume 30). This point helps us understand that political manipulation was not enough to establish consensus; these playwrights had to appeal to Restoration tastes, not just Charles's. Or rather, they had to *adapt* Charles's wishes for consensus theatre to the predilections of the audience, so they combined the rhetoric and the French style of rhyme with familiar and

popular dramatic elements from before the closings. William Clark adeptly illustrates the form's great popularity thus:

By the beginning of Charles II's reign the alluring brilliance of imaginary male and female heroes, who were glorious embodiments of a conventionalized virtue, had quite captivated the fancy of the fashionable world in England...The heroic movement in England should be said, therefore, to have developed as a pleasurable, artistic pose that at last became a deep infection. (Clark 64)

The audiences seemed to be drawn to the heroes in these plays, the best of whom found themselves in an ethical dilemma, allowing for their true honor to shine. As we will see, it is important, though not definitive, to examine the fates of the characters in order to interpret the play's intent and meaning. The outcome of the plot and characters in the early 1660s best demonstrates what the status quo should look like, and as confidence in Charles waned, tends to show more examples of what can happen to a corrupt, reckless, or irresponsible society due to the behavior of its king and/or subjects as consensus erodes. Besides the fact that serious plays in the early Restoration rarely have a truly sad ending, the nature of the happy endings in the rhymed heroic plays is also important. Deserving heroes and heroines, representing royalists and sometimes the royals themselves, who manage virtue and self-sacrifice, will always prevail in the end, even if their wishes are not fully granted. "However beleaguered," writes Douglas Canfield, "the heroes and heroines of these [plays] are vindicated; right finally makes might" (*Heroes and States* 6). The heroes are often nearly flawless, and it is the villains who represent the whole of the evil (Wheatley 74), though the nature of the evil varies from Orrery to Dryden. The unimpeachable (and often unrealistic) character of these heroes and heroines usually drives the story, and the plays run with "the premise that all nobility have great souls capable of great passion" (Canfield, *Heroes and States* 60). Thanks to their exemplary character, these nobles often lose their possessions and their happiness, only to be rewarded at the end thanks to an

improbable reversal. The opposite is true of the dissenters and usurpers of the plays, as the pamphlets and printed tracts in Chapter 2 suggest. The usurpers often subvert one another, commit treasonous acts even against allies or family members, and prove to be lecherous souls. All these things served largely to further the hegemonic aims of Charles II's regime. However, by 1665, these polar types moved closer to one another, graying the area between true hero and the villain, reflecting a lack of confidence in the current ruling class, and indicating the impending failure of consensus.

Again, it bears repeating that the authors of the rhymed heroic play, especially Orrery, use these types to inject themselves and their ideas into the characters and the narratives, making the drama more than a political commentary, but also turning it into a somewhat autobiographical acquittal for the authors. Thus, the heroes' ethical binds preclude them from easy choices, but their ultimate sacrifices make them worthy of reward. As Waith observes, the heroic authors' strategy was to put the characters "in exquisite dilemmas where their principles will be tested and where, as often as not, they must make painful choices between such values as love and religion or friendship and patriotism" (Waith 161). Likewise, Staves reports that both Dryden and Orrery create problems for their heroic characters and they have to work through them (66). This autobiographical trait of the rhymed heroic plays is especially inherent in the plays of Orrery, to which we now turn.

#### The Early Heroic Plays of Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery

William Clark, one of Orrery's few biographers, notes quite correctly that "A full appreciation...of the diversified forms of that extraordinary theatrical mushroom, the heroic play, cannot well be gained without some acquaintance with the peculiar achievements of the

Earl of Orrery.” Clark goes on also to admit that his plays exhibit “qualities of extreme inferiority” (96). Yet, true as this is, Waith hits the mark when he observes that “the importance of Lord Orrery’s plays to dramatic history is out of proportion to their intrinsic worth” (Waith 199). Indeed, as much or more than any other dramatist Orrery deserves the distinction of developing the rhymed heroic play, and, at the instigation of Charles II, for turning it into a fashion, albeit relatively briefly. He has been credited by some (including myself) for inventing the genre, and by others for evolving it to fit the needs of the early Restoration (and of himself). Orrery is a complex individual, and his drama, though not by any means sublime or even very technically adept, reveals much about sentiments of his own and perhaps others who had served Oliver Cromwell and were now looking to attain favor with the new king. Orrery, however, is especially fascinating as an author because he was “virtually unique in acting as a personal friend and advisor both to Oliver Cromwell and to Charles II” (Tomlinson 560), a distinction no other dramatist, even Davenant, could claim.

Orrery’s plays are filled with anxieties and obsessions concerning his behavior during the Interregnum. Not only was Orrery (or Lord Broghill, as was his title before the Restoration) in the dedicated service of Oliver Crowell and his sons Henry and Richard, he became a very trusted advisor, ally, and political figure to these enemies of the royal family. He served as a general in his native Ireland against the Irish rebels, as an MP for Cork, and was appointed by Cromwell as President of the Council in Scotland, for which “he evidently won the regard of the Scots by his conduct in office” (Clark 17). After this he returned to the Commons where he served as “one of Cromwell’s advisers” (Lynch 88). There is also a remarkable account (variously related) that on one occasion he personally saved Cromwell from a would-be assassin (Clark 19; Lynch 92). Further, he befriended Cromwell’s sons Henry and Richard, and attempted

to help the latter solidify his position as Lord Protector after his father died. For this he was nearly arrested after Richard's "enforced abdication" (Lynch 97).

But perhaps the most shocking acts of this aristocrat occurred in 1657, when he was a leading proponent of the "Humble Petition and Advice," which offered Cromwell the crown. Orrery argued in favor of this action "with eloquence and vigor" (Lynch 89). When Cromwell declined, Broghill held a private meeting with the Protector, urging him to match his daughter Frances with the exiled Charles (Lynch 89-90; Clark 18-19), which Cromwell again refused, reportedly saying, "The king can never forgive his father's blood" (qtd. in Clark 19), and demonstrating a guilt which "lay so heavily upon him" (qtd. in Lynch 90). Apparently this meeting was initiated by Broghill of his own accord (Clark 18). Clark describes Roger Boyle's seemingly inexplicable dual loyalties, asserting that "A genuine regard for Cromwell and a selfish ambition for power and position combined to dictate a constant loyalty in view of the gratifying patronage he received from high Puritan circles in general" (19).

Given these facts, how can Orrery's relative success as a pro-Charles playwright be explained? The plays tell us a great deal. Both of Orrery's modern biographers (as do the contemporary ones) maintain that Orrery was always a royalist at heart. Lynch argues that during his service to Cromwell, "privately and discreetly, [Orrery] labored for the Royalist cause" (71), and that evidence exists that Orrery "had been nursing Royalist hopes, and that the King's party believed that he might be persuaded to abandon Cromwell" (74). Clark, too, argues this point strongly. He believes that Orrery's time as a young man residing in London and being exposed to court and the art of men like Davenant and possibly Dryden (11) was integral to his artistic and political development:

The personal associations he formed, the social atmosphere he breathed, permanently determined his mental outlook and cultural tastes. Royalist sympathies, and the literary

predilections which went with that political alignment, became ingrained in him for all time. (12)

Eustace Budgell, in his memoirs of the Boyle family, believes that Orrery “was by Principle inclined to the Royal Party, but overcome at last by the many Favours conferred upon him by *Cromwell*, (who seldom failed of gaining those he condescended to court), he zealously attached himself to the Interests and Service of the Protector” (Budgell 62). Budgell also cites Boyle’s former chaplain and biographer Thomas Morrice in asserting that Orrery “kept up a *constant* Correspondence with King Charles the Second during his Exile” (62). These convictions by those who have studied Orrery most closely—that he was an ardent Royalist who also happened to be a political opportunist—can be explained largely by the way that Cromwell “recruited” Orrery into his service. According to Morrice, after Charles I was executed, Broghill was preparing to use his Irish army to help the younger Charles. Before that could happen, however, Cromwell came to him and, armed with some intercepted incriminating letters written by Boyle, asked him to become a general and fight the Irish rebels in Ireland only. Forced to make a split-second decision, Boyle decided to take Cromwell up on his offer, since he would only be fighting Irish Catholic rebels (he was a protestant), and he would not be required to swear allegiance to Cromwell (Lynch 70-72; Clark 21). Boyle showed such acumen in everything Cromwell asked of him that Cromwell eventually held him “in high esteem” (Clark 19). Thus, we might attribute Orrery’s actions in changing his allegiance throughout these crises to Orrery’s “singular adaptability to altered conditions” (104). Ironically, Orrery proved to be more prosperous under Cromwell than under Charles II (Lynch 127); Charles II did not apparently find as many uses for the man whom he created Earl as had the Protector. This may be due to his inconstancy, or because of his advancing years and bad health due to gout. It could also be because of Charles II’s relative poverty compared to Cromwell’s, or indeed it might be



attributable to the fact that, as this work has repeatedly shown, that Charles simply did not give enough thought to such things. In any case, Charles's lack of constant duty for Orrery, combined with the latter's immobility at times of gout, allowed him the leisure to compose his plays.

What probably saved Orrery's future was the fact that after Richard Cromwell was no longer in the picture, Orrery actively worked to bring Charles out of exile. After Charles successfully took the throne, he remembered this loyalty and created Boyle the Earl of Orrery. The new Earl served as an MP for Arundel in 1664 and as a member of his Privy Council in 1665. Yet Orrery still had to live with the stigma of having not only supported the late Lord Protector, but also having been one of the Protector's trusted advisors and an advocate to Cromwell's taking the crown for himself. Orrery, whose anxiety over this sequence of events appears in great quantity in his plays, had to defend himself in 1669 against a charge for treason based on some of his actions, which he successfully dispatched (Lynch 137-40). Still, the king supported him, and they were very close (Lynch 121, 141).

This intimacy with Charles II led to Orrery's crafting of heroic plays. According to his chaplain Morrice, Orrery began writing them as a result of a lively dispute late in 1660 between himself, the king, and a number of Charles II's other favorites, including King's Company manager Thomas Killigrew. Many of the king's loyal men had been exiled with him in France, and they enjoyed the rhyming "Alexandrine" verse of the French drama. When the conversation turned to whether English plays could be made in rhyme, Orrery said it could be done, and Charles "commanded his lordship to employ some of his leisure that way, which my lord readily did" (qtd. in Clark 23). Orrery himself recalled: "When I had the Honnor, & unhappyness the Last Time to Kiss his majts hande, he Commanded me, to write a Play for Him...I Presumed to lay at his majts Feet, a Trage-Comedi, All in Ten Feet verse, & Ryme. I writt it, in that

manner...because I found his mag<sup>ty</sup> Relish'd rather, the French Fassion of Playes, then the English..." (qtd. in Clark 23). Thus, Orrery began the task of authoring a "new" style of play; this gave him the opportunity to obey the king's command, flatter His Majesty with overtures of divine right kingship, spread the message of consensus by giving Charles a new medium through which to solidify his rule, and not least to give himself a chance to exorcize the demons of his past.

The rhymed heroic play did just that for Orrery. Susan Staves observes that "One function of the heroic romance seems to have been to assuage the guilt of the postwar generation over its abandonment of the legitimate monarch" (110), and Orrery heads the short list in this regard. Recurring themes in his plays include civil war, usurpation, succession, revenge, and jealousy (Maguire 174). These images "reveal Orrery's preoccupation with memories of the 'one Action' which forever wounded his 'past Fame'" (Lynch 159). Maguire says that he used his plays, which she calls "rhymed heroic apology," as a form of rehabilitation and to "work through his own personal and political conflicts, particularly his obsession with the execution of Charles I" (166), and thus his plays are "autobiographical pageants—romanticized, guilt-ridden interpretations of Orrery's career" (164). Derek Hughes writes that Orrery's plays were "a public therapy and atonement for his record of service under the rebellious regime," and that he was "less concerned to analyse the past as to exorcize it" (Hughes, *English Drama* 32).

Again, through these sentiments of regret and anxiety, and yet peppered with undying devotion to the king, Orrery's plays tell us a great deal. Orrery expressed the same ideas that appear in his plays when he delivered a speech to the Duke of Ormonde in professing his allegiance to the Duke and Charles II. He asked the Duke to "pass by what wee did when wee were not our selves, and to accept of what we now doe when wee are our selves...We need all

your goodness to forgett the ill that is past, and all yo<sup>r</sup> abilities to act the good which is to come” (qtd. in Lynch 116). Thus, reflective of this attitude, Orrery’s dramatic heroes often find themselves in virtually impossible situations where they must make difficult choices, none of which is a desirable option. In so doing he attempts to exonerate himself of treason, and alleviate his “desire for self-justification” (Staves 53). In his plays, he also gently seeks to advise the king on certain things, especially beginning about the middle of the 1660s, when perception of the king and kingdom were declining. These conventions in the new genre show how writing a play inspired by consensus-building depended directly on the past and future actions of the king (in deciding whether to believe the excuses set forth in the plays and other works), and in the king’s personally commissioning a new genre, and in Orrery’s work in elevating his sovereign’s perception. As we will see, the establishing of this new style of play would have injected great life into the establishment of consensus in England.

### Orrery’s *The Generall*

Orrery’s first written play is almost certainly *The Generall*. He possibly wrote it as early as 1661 (Clark 28), and it appears to have been performed in Dublin under the title of *Altemera* at a banquet in October of 1662, and perhaps publicly shortly thereafter, and again at the Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin in February of 1663 (Lynch 117-18). The play, therefore, is considered by many to be the first Restoration rhymed heroic play<sup>2</sup>, making it a “new dramatic type” of drama (Clark 30). It was produced in London in September of 1664, making it the second of Orrery’s plays produced there, though he had written it first. This play is a close allegory of the restoration itself, though not so close as to have exact character-to-character relationships and exact parallel historical events. However, this play is easily Orrery’s closest play to an exact

allegory, which serves multiple functions. One is that it gives Orrery a chance to defend his past actions, as we have seen above; another is that it “highlights the military and political crisis of 1659 and responds to much of the political propaganda then in circulation” (Maguire 172) discussed in Chapter 2, and it “dramatizes this anti-Cromwell and pro-Stuart Restoration propaganda” (172). Thus, it is an extension of the virulent pamphleteering and propagandizing of this period, and therefore, it is blatant consensus writing with hegemonic aspirations.

In *The Generall*, a Sicilian King and general (Oliver Cromwell) has usurped the throne from Evinder (Charles I), who died in battle. The new King has imprisoned Evinder’s son, Melizer (Charles II), in order to have the throne for himself. The plot revolves around a beloved general, Clorimun (George Monk/Orrery), who must choose between obedience to his rightful king or the *de facto* king, and, in a separate quandary, whether or not to preserve the life and safety of his rival Lucidor. Lucidor has earned the love of the incomparable Altemera, who respects Clorimun greatly but is in love with Lucidor. The parallels are very easy to detect, and would have undoubtedly been obvious to the Restoration audience. Orrery himself appears in the guise of two characters. One is the general himself, who also represents Monk in terms of the timeline of events, but resembles Orrery himself in his ethical and ideological quandaries regarding who to serve. Orrery himself was a general, and like Clorimun, he seeks honor and glory for himself. The second Orrery character is Thrasolin, one of the other army commanders who like Clorimun must justify a measure of disobedience against the king, though his methods are a bit more devious. These two characters embody the decisions that Orrery made after the Civil Wars in supporting Cromwell and his sons.

Immediately in the play Orrery establishes the evil nature of the King and his usurpation, voiced by the King’s own army commanders:

...the man who rules us now  
Is both a Tirant and usurper too,  
For when *Evinder* with fight did fall,  
The Monster was the Armies Generall,  
And when the Royall *Melizer* hee shou'd  
Have Crown'd as being first Prince of the bloud,  
Hee siez'd on him, and by his boundless pow'r  
Made him close prisoner in the fatall Tower...(Orrery, "The Generall" 110)

Further, the King has "Declar'd that his only sonne, young *Altimast* [Richard Cromwell], / Shou'd marry our faire princesse *Rosocleere*, / Who is to our true king th' undoubted heire" (110), in a scheme to ensure the continuation of his own illegitimate royal line. This of course echoes the scheme which Orrery supported to marry Cromwell's daughter to the future Charles II. This does not happen in the play, as *Altimast* has disappeared and the popular general *Clorimun* was sent away from his army. Still, these commanders find it difficult to reconcile going against even a usurper. *Thrasolin*, the Orrery clone and a loyal officer to the usurper King, also hopes for the restoration of *Melizer* as the legitimate heir, and actively works to bring about the rightful king's return. He is not above questionably dishonorable means to bring it about; he tells the army that General *Clorimun* has been condemned by the King to die, causing them to mutiny. One of the other commanders tells him that "The End is Noble though the way bee nott," but *Thrasolin* replies that the end justifies the means, and though regrettable, his actions were more honorable than a formal plot (111). *Clorimun* himself questions *Thrasolin*, saying, "My Joys, like theirs [his soldiers] Shou'd now have been sublime, / had they not brought mee to them by a crime" (118). This is such an important moment because essentially Orrery, present in both characters, here speaks to himself, displaying the conflicted nature of his predicament. *Thrasolin* further manipulates the general by appealing to *Clorimun*'s sense of love and honor, arguing that his rival for *Altemera*'s hand will get all the glory in the war if he does not fight.

Twice now Thrasolin has used trickery to achieve his ends, yet he does because it will avoid rebellion, which Orrery wants to depict as wrong under any circumstances.

The crafting of the hero as a worthy figure demonstrates the rhymed heroic play as a calculated royalist hegemonic tool, as the heroes not only show their ultimate loyalty, but their brave and self-denying character. Clorimun, as this play's hero, must overcome a gut-wrenching decision. He must either please his beloved Altemera and save his rival Lucidor from a death sentence handed down by the King, or allow him to die only to earn his love's scorn and likely her own death. His situation, typical of this genre, is untenable; he cannot disobey his King, nor can he say no to the woman he loves. Complicating matters further is that the prisoner is his opponent for Altemera's hand and the King is a usurper. What shapes Clorimun's decision is the combination of heroic device and political posturing which recur in Orrery's plays. Altemera's tells Clorimun that "Hee who his Mistresse favour cannot get / Ought to be pleas'd that hee does merit itt" (131). Orrery here uses Clorimun's affection for Altemera to absolve himself of his loyalty to Cromwell. Though Clorimun knows that it is a "double ruine" to "loose at once my Mistresse and my King," he admits that "noe duty nor revenge must stand / In Competition with her least Command" (132). Again, he hopes to merit what he cannot have: "I'll save my Rivall and make her confesse / 'Tis I deserve what hee does but possesse" (133). This he does at the last possible moment, doing so openly when he could have protected himself and concealed his disobedience to the King. He explains this decision to Altemera:

What's duty to obey 'tis sinn to hide.  
I'll make it to the world and you appeare,  
To serve you is my glory, not my feare.  
I to retirement know the way againe,  
And there I'll waite till *Melizer* does Reigne,  
Whose Virtues are soe great, his right soe good,  
Hee should bee King by choice as well as bloud. (134-5)

Thus, Orrery shows Clorimun's unbridled honor and self-sacrifice, delighting the audience with the catharsis of an unrequited lover, and depicting (nonviolent) defiance of a king, and justifying it upon the grounds of the King's illegitimacy. When she suggests to him that he should lead his army against the usurper, his honor will not allow him:

Justice herselfe wou'd blush, shou'd shee receive  
A right which treachery does to her give,  
And virtuous *Melizer* wou'd never owne  
From falsehood the possession of the Throne.  
Disgrace I feare lesse than to be unjust.  
'Tis such to take and then betray a trust.  
Though I my power and *Melizer* esteeme,  
Yet I love honour more than power or him.  
Next to your favour, what I covett most  
Is to restore to him that Crowne bee lost. (135)

Clearly, Restoration, Orrery implies, would have been dishonorable had it been accomplished by treachery, and that the rightful king, Melizer, would not have accepted such a base scenario.

Thus Orrery justifies his actions in serving Cromwell, implying that Charles could not and should not have regained the throne in such a base manner. These moments of decision, reflective of the attempted rehabilitation of Orrery's image and reputation, help demonstrate the rhymed heroic play as propaganda which allows the author and any audience members who shared his inconstancy to grieve their decision, even if they have justified it somehow. The consensus conclusion of such problems is that the king deserved support all along.

The aftermath of Clorimun's actions sets the table for another Orrerian device, that of advising Charles II through the action of the play; thus the plot of the play is directly shaped by the king's actions, perception, and image. We see here that by advising Charles II, the author indicates even in this blatantly royalist play that there is some uncertainty in Charles's rule, which foreshadows the collapse of consensus.

When the King resolves to execute Clorimun for treachery, he allows Altimera, whom he wants for himself, to talk him out of it. This vice of allowing others, especially women, to influence one's judgment, common among villains in the heroic plays, leads the King to ignore his advisor's counsel to leave Altimera alone. These moments in the play constitute warnings to Charles II to beware the trappings and influence of beautiful women (something the young King was already noted for), and to listen to sound advice, which many believed was something Charles I failed to do, leading to his own deposition and death.

Orrery also demonstrates to Charles II the dangers of despotism; the Sicilian King's unjust and self-serving behavior is exposed when the King's commanders decide to mutiny against the King because of his actions against Clorimun. Melizer, the true king, still in captivity, has offered, a la Breda, to forgive those who help him. The usurper has also changed his mind about killing Clorimun; any ideas of true honor have been warped by his lust and desire for power. He proves this by telling Altemera that he will rape her if she does not agree to be his. Rather than let her "virtue" be stained (140-1), she asks her waiting woman, Candaces, to bring her some poison to kill herself. Dying, Altemera begs the King to restore Melizer to the throne; only now is he truly repentant, but since doing that will not save her life, he refuses, and she dies. In what Orrery depicts as a cowardly move, he is ready to kill himself, but the true king Melizer, who has been freed by the rogue soldiers, stops him, telling him that "Thy deaths a debt my hand alone must pay" (151). Showing matchless honor and gallantry, Melizer dismisses his soldiers:

Retire, I say. His Guilty sword I slight.  
A tyrant never a true King cou'd fight,  
Nor is he fitt a Kingdome to Command,  
Who feares a sword in any single hand...  
For hee that once a Monnarch's crowne did weare  
Should not die by an Executioner,  
And hee who on my Throne did dare to stand  
Ought to receive his death from my owne hand. (152)



The usurper is amazed at Melizer's unimpeachable character:

This Hightned gallantry which thou dost show  
Wounds mee much deeper than thy sword can doe,  
And makes me more to grieve that I withstood  
Thy virtuous title than thy right of bloud. (152-3)

Inevitably, they fight, and Melizer kills the usurper, declaring, "Dye both forgiven and forgotten too" (153). Thrasolin, the second Orrery character, commends the new king: "'Twas to your hand this Justice, S<sup>r</sup>, was due. / A true Kings virtue did dissence such light, / That 'twas too glittering for a tyrants sight" (153). In a very fortuitous gesture, Melizer tells the commanders who set him at liberty:

...it is to...thee  
I owe my freedome and my victorie.  
My minde will never bee at any ease  
Till my returne has paid your services. (153)

Clearly, again Orrery references Breda. To have this repeated is important because it reinforces the forgiveness of the king, from which Orrery is personally benefiting, and in a way asks for further recognition for himself.

This would seem to be a fitting end to the play, but these troubled times necessitate a non-tragic ending, as we have discussed. Thus, in the fifth act, Altemera comes back to life, a la Juliet, after Clorimun has saved Lucidor from her servant woman, Candaces, who turns out to be the usurper's son, [Richard Cromwell] in disguise. Candaces, now depicted as a cross-dresser and a coward, in a base act of treachery, had let the rivals hear rumors about one another because he was in love with Altimera himself, and gave her a poison which only simulated death. Altimera, wounded while trying to break up a duel between Clorimun and Lucidor, will not let her wound be treated until Clorimun gives his consent that she marry Lucidor, even though she does not need it. Clorimun, forced to endure yet another excruciating decision, must give it if his

status as hero is to remain intact, and the play ends with a third instance of the rightful king declaring forgiveness for those who served the usurper: “Past faults I’le never to Remembrance bring, / For which the word I give you of your king” (163). Clorimun is sent in glory to another war, and he declares that he will now fight for glory and honor and fame (which Orrery clearly hoped for himself, if not on the battlefield). One of the last passages of the play again advises Charles against war on English soil. Clorimun, about to lead his army in another war, says that “Warr begets Crymes, as Crymes does warr beget.” Thrasolin replies, “Nothing to Souldiers can more wish’d for come, / Than to have Warrs abroad and peace at home” (164).

Besides Orrery’s energetic work in *The Generall* to present his position, absolve himself of wrongdoing, and prelude his intended future success, he focuses on the pervasive issue of love and honor, which, along with the spectacle and the rhyming couplets, are devices intended to entice the Restoration audience and give them a familiar element to enjoy within his story. The Caroline Platonic virtues of Henrietta Maria, who did not die until 1669, attracted the audience. William Clark says that in this play the heroes and heroine are exalted “beyond and conceptions of virtue entertained by his English predecessors in the drama. The underlying motif of *The Generall* is the sentiment of admiration for the paragons of virtuous love, Clorimun and Altemera” (67). Combined with the allegorical characters and story, the play is, therefore, “a dramatic interpretation, with romantic additions, of Orrery’s diversified career” (Lynch 152).

There are, from these observations, multiple ways in which Orrery crafts this play as an tool to achieve a hegemonic consensus: first, he tries to exonerate himself of wrongdoing (and therefore everyone who had done as he did), directly appealing to the king; second, he attempts to show recent historical events onstage to present the triumphal return of Charles as well as the king’s bravery and character; and third, he brings back elements of Caroline drama, such as the

masque and the Caroline elements of “Platonic love cult” inspired by Henrietta Maria,<sup>3</sup> which hearkened back to the halcyon days of Charles I, rehabilitating the former king’s image also by having that king die in battle before the play begins. These devices work together to show that Charles II’s presence had everything to do with the creation of this play, including asking Orrery to write it, and appearing allegorically in the play as a triumphant and respectable character. This helped disseminate the consensus ideas that would, the king hoped, solidify his hold on the throne.

### *The History of Henry the Fifth*

Orrery’s second play, a tragicomedy, appears to have been lost, and was apparently never performed (Lynch 147-48; Clark 104). His third play, and the first to appear in London, was *The History of Henry the Fifth*, performed for the first time on or around August 13, 1664 at Lincoln’s Inn Fields (Lynch 150). Orrery had written *The Generall* for the king, and thus it was performed by Killigrew’s King’s Company. According to Orrery, William Davenant asked him to compose another for the Duke’s Company: “...my old frend Will: D’Avenant, apperd soe Displeased his Company mist [*The Generall*]; That noethinge would Reconcile me to him; but to write another purposely for him...” (qtd. in Clark 25). *Henry the Fifth* was this play, and it coincided with Orrery’s visit from Ireland, and may account for the fact that both it and *The Generall* were performed by rival companies within a month of one another (Clark 37). It was also Orrery’s first play to deal with an explicitly English subject in the plot.

It would seem that no expense was spared in the staging of the play. John Downes, the king’s prompter, reported that “This Play was Splendidly Cloath’d: The King, in the Duke of York’s Coronation Suit: Owen Tudor, in King Charle’s: Duke of Burgundy, in the Lord of

Oxford's, and the rest all New. It was Excellently Perform'd, and Acted 10 Days Successively" (Downes 27-8). That the actors were able to wear the coronation attire of King Charles and the Duke of York indicates the royalist nature of the play, while the comparatively long run demonstrates its popularity. Pepys saw the play on August 13 and wrote, "And to the new play at the Dukes house, of *Henery the 5th*—a most noble play, written by my Lord Orrery; wherein Baterton, Harris, and Ianthes parts<sup>4</sup> are most incomparably wrote and done, and the whole play the most full of heighth and raptures of wit and sense that ever I heard..." (Pepys 5: 240).

In many ways, this play is more of the same as appears in *The Generall*, with Orrery using the play to explain his changing of allegiances, only this time the "Orrery" character, embodied by Owen Tudor, finds himself in an even more difficult (and absurd) predicament than Clorimun of *The Generall*. The play's technical merits are better, as Orrery's verse had become more polished (Clark 75). The plot, not to be confused with Shakespeare's treatment of the same subject, has very little dramatic action, and revolves around several historical fictions. The play's male protagonists, King Henry V and Owen Tudor, are much like Lucidor and Clorimun in *The Generall*, except that in this case the two are best friends in love with the same woman, Princess Katherine, the heroine of the play. Henry, representative of Charles II, is a much more central character than Melizer in *The Generall*, and appears onstage as the very epitome of the heroic king: handsome, brave, virtuous, honorable, and kind. Tudor is also all of these things, except that he does not wear a crown, which of course puts him at a disadvantage to the king for Princess Katherine's affections. *Henry the Fifth* moves a bit further away from "exact" relationships than *The Generall*, but it is clear that Henry represents Charles II, and that Tudor is Monk/Orrery, comparable to Clorimun. There is no single clear-cut usurper; the play involves King Henry asserting his hereditary right over France. The king of France, Charles VI, is

conspicuously absent from this text, and thus the “usurpers” are the Queen and more visibly her son, the Dauphin, an inept and conniving young character. Again there is a great emphasis on Platonic love, this time between Tudor and Katherine, and in the friendship between Tudor and Henry. Orrery’s decision to use English legend for his plot reveals his desire to treat his subject more personally than he had in *The Generall*.

The play begins just before the battle of Agincourt; once the battle has taken place, the French worry about what will happen if Henry takes the French throne. Before we see very much of Henry at all, the Queen doubts the young king’s youth and courage, but the Duke of Burgundy seems to know better, describing both the central character of the play and Charles II, after whom he is modeled:

QUEEN. France justly might the *English* valour dread,  
Were it again by that Great Monarch [Henry’s father, Henry IV here an allusion to Charles I] led;  
We fear him less who now that Crown does wear,  
His wildness, not his courage, brings him here.  
BURGUNDY: Whilst his prodigious Father was alive,  
Some youthful signs of wildness he did give;  
But when he early on the Throne was plac’d,  
A Kingly Soul his Royal Title grac’d;  
And then whatever mis-becoming thing  
Liv’d in the Prince, was buried in the King;  
Nought should in us low thoughts of him perswade...(Orrery, “History” 173)

This passage so early in the play serves to diffuse doubts, as Orrery had in *The Generall*, and that other writers such as Samuel Tuke had also expressed in print, that people might have of the virile king’s reputation; this again is reflective of writers like Tuke, who took care to explain Charles’s youthful indiscretions earlier.<sup>5</sup> Also, Orrery attempts to gently warn Charles that his behavior, especially his famous amours, were under scrutiny.

Palpable is the French depiction of English courage, especially Henry’s, in the battle despite the fact that Henry’s forces had been decimated by disease:

...Fame can want no theam when she does sing  
Of *English* Swords led by an *English* King;  
Nor was he only in the Battel known  
By his bright Armour, which like lightning shone;  
But did with nobler marks his Valour grace,  
Still being seen where foremost danger was. (174)

We again see the personal courage of the king in battle, as also appears in new accounts of Charles II's actions at Worcester. In this play, the king's vaor is expressed in Henry's one-on-one combat with the French champion, Alanson: "But though *Alanson* did stupendious things, / A Subjects Sword could not resist a Kings" (175). The English victory was so incredible that the English took more French prisoners than there were soldiers in the English army (176). Henry also gave many of the French officers mercy, in another reference to the clemency of Charles II. Right away we see Orrery's flattery of King Henry, showing his courage, valor, and honor, again building up the image of Charles II.

Henry's best friend Owen Tudor had likewise distinguished himself in the battle, saving the life of French princess Katherine, with whom he has fallen in love. However, she rejected him because he was not a royal, though she admits later that she wishes he were. Both French princesses admit that Henry has a legitimate claim to the throne, which is important because they are the prime candidates to marry the princes and produce heirs to the royal line. This is just one of the irresolvable problems that the heroic Tudor, just like Clorimun, encounters; he learns that Henry too is infatuated with Princess Katherine, partly due to Tudor's flattering descriptions of her. Tudor warns that "Loves heat [will] make Glories flame expire," and Henry argues, "No, *Tudor*, it will rather raise it higher" (182). In an unfortunate turn for Tudor, Henry asks him as his best and most trusted friend, to woo Katherine for him. Left alone, Tudor (Orrery) laments his predicament:

Was ever such a Curse impos'd by Fate?  
 His favour wounds much deeper than his hate.  
 I must unworthy or else wretched prove,  
 Be false to Honour or else false to Love:  
 To which of both shall I precedence give?  
 I'm kill'd by this, by that unfit to live;  
 But stay! why should not I, even I alone,  
 Raise Love and Honour to a height unknown?  
 If, for his sake, my passion I forego,  
 In that great Act I pay him all I owe:  
 Who for his King against his Love does act  
 Pays Debts much greater than he can contract.  
 Nor are these all th' advantages will flow  
 From that great action I intend to do.  
 If I her right above my Love prefer,  
 In that, by losing, I shall merit her.  
 And to obtain, not merit her, will prove  
 Less than to lose her and deserve her Love.  
 'Tis worthy of my flame, and of her eyes,  
 To make love be to love a sacrifice. (184)

Again, the recurring heroic theme here is that Tudor (Orrery) will merit by his self-sacrifice what he cannot have. Of course, the audience would have known that Tudor, though clearly the protagonist, could not successfully rival a king. Nor would Katherine, by her own admission, allow it. Thus, again the hero finds himself in an impossible situation where no decision comes easily or without some form of pain or regret. This again highlights the difficulty of Orrery's position as he sought to build up his own image in addition to the king's.

Predictably, Katherine reveals to the audience that she is inclined to accept Henry, due to his glory and virtue, despite the fact that she "must be false to *France*, or false to [Henry]" (193). However, Katherine admits that her father's claim as King of France may not be legitimate and that keeping it would be dishonorable; thus, Henry is even more drawn to her. The Dauphin, threatened by Henry's potential match with his sister, attacks Henry and loses, but is spared by Henry at Katherine's request. From this point, the Dauphin cannot help but admit his adversary's

honor and worthiness, and this makes his own shame, as the would-be usurper, all the more palpable. All this augments Katherine's feelings for Henry:

If you were gone, I'de to my self confess  
Such vertue and respect you did express,  
That what I thought an Age had not the power  
To act in me, you acted in one hour. (197)

Even the Dauphin, in his shame, has to admit that "though he be my Foe, / Yet he has still most gen'rously been so" (198). Despite this, however, the Dauphin plots to have Henry assassinated.

Henry demonstrates his royal honor again once he learns of Tudor's agonizing position; in an impressive (or unbelievable) display of self-denial, Henry will not allow Tudor to end his suit; instead, he vows to be Tudor's advocate to Katherine, since Tudor had done the same for him, promising to "gibe her then such Charactres of thee / As shall out-speak what thou hast said of me" (210). Of course, what is understood by the audience but ignored by the characters is that Henry is risking nothing, since he is the King, and therefore cannot be outrivaled by a lesser man, though Tudor can still "out-honor" Henry, since there are no spoils in the play that achieving that distinction would gain. Just like Clorimun, the hero must count on his honor to save him in this situation.

We see again, as in print and *The Generall*, the effects of treachery within the realm. As the villain in this play, the Dauphin commits many treacherous acts, as did the King in *The Generall*. These actions convince some of the French to side with Henry if he will take care of the Dauphin and keep him from inheriting the French crown. He agrees to do so at the head of his own troops, because "My Duty else she [Katherine] might in question bring" (199), which impresses the French even more. The Dauphin's treachery is compounded by Orrery in that even the Church gets involved in condemning his actions, and in naming Henry as the rightful heir. A



constable remarks, “All hate a Prince who violates his Faith” (217), in perhaps another coded message to Charles.

During all this activity, Henry finds time to advance Tudor’s suit to Katherine, but she is somewhat surprisingly dismissive of Tudor because of his reluctance in going against Henry, even with his king’s permission:

He who resigns his Love, though for his King,  
Does, as he is a Lover, a low thing:  
But, as a Subject, a high Crime does do;  
Being at once, Subject and Rebel too:  
For, whilst to Regal pow’r he does submit,  
He casts off Love, a greater pow’r than it. (218)

This courtly romance of the rhymed heroic play further deepens Tudor’s inescapable position; Katherine’s accusations, though clearly not meant to demean him as a person, still lowers him in her own esteem: “But justly I admire how you can prove / So true to Friendship and so false to love...(218 At the same time, according to Katherine, to look this gift horse in the mouth is not becoming a man like Tudor: “Your King does give you a brave Rivals leave; / But you seem loth that license to receive...” (218). Considering that earlier in the play she told Tudor that he should not pursue her in the first place because she is a princess, this seems a bit more than a person should be expected to endure. Again, as a hero should do, Tudor hopes that by giving Katherine up, he will deserve her. Tudor points this out in a snippet of their exchange:

PRINCESS KATHERINE. At once you my disdain, and pardon have.  
TUDOR. But why should you disdain that which to you  
Obedience shews, to him my Duty too?  
PRINCESS KATHERINE. It is a Duty he will not receive.  
TUDOR. But you, to love you, have deny'd me leave.  
PRINCESS KATHERINE. He who makes love at a true Lovers height  
Does ne're ask leave, but takes it as his right.  
TUDOR. Have you design'd in what you'd have me do  
To make me lose my King and Mistress too?  
In losing of the last I'm so accurst  
As you'l in pity let me keep the first.

PRINCESS KATHERINE. I'de have you, Sir, in that which I intend,  
 Express that you did merit such a Friend:  
 I would have had you too, to let him see  
 That you were not unworthy to love me.  
 But, making such an ill Retreat, you seem  
 No more to merit bravely me, or him.  
 What greater thing or meaner could you do  
 Than dare at once to love and quit me too?  
 I would have had you like your self appear,  
 And not with Friendships name disguise your fear.  
 Nor tell him he to your respect does owe  
 That which alone my justice does bestow.  
 I would have had you nobly fall by it,  
 And not thus meanly, uncompell'd, submit. (219)

This is the nature of what the heroic protagonist has to endure, which Tudor does. Tudor eventually gets Katherine's admiration and respect, but far more importantly, he earns the admiration and respect of his king, which, of course, is the whole point:

KING. Whilst, *Tudor*, you for me your claim deny,  
 I gain the Field, and you the Victory:  
 Your's is the Nobler, mine the happier share,  
 I'm the oblig'd, but you th' obliger are.  
 PRINCESS KATHERINE. In leaving me, as worthy of your Friend,  
 You to the utmost rate my worth commend.  
 Whilst with that value I to him am brought,  
 You shew a Friendship worthy to be sought.  
 Be but my Friend, as you to him have been,  
 Letting out Love to keep your Friendship in,  
 And make forsaken Love contented seem,  
 Then I'll your Friendship, Sir, like Love esteem. (219)

Of course, Katherine reveals to Henry that his love "has conquer'd me" (220). As little consolation as it is to Tudor, it is still something of a moral victory, who will be raised in esteem, even if his hopes of love are dashed. By extension, Orrery hopes to earn this kind of respect and admiration from his King, and in writing of it, he elevates both Charles and himself. By being a part of the ISA of new Restoration theatre, Orrery hopes therefore to be highly esteemed and to render moot his actions during the interregnum.

Now that a match between Henry and Katherine seems likely, it falls to the French to loosen their objections to Henry's rule, especially after the Dauphin's conduct. Much like Richard Cromwell, the Queen agrees to take a large compensation to allow Henry a regency until the current king dies, and then assume the crown of France. This becomes a moot point, however, when in a typical reversal it is revealed at Henry's coronation that through a rather fortuitous records check, the Dauphin, who has fled, is not the heir to France at all, but Charles of Valois, and therefore not royalty. So Orrery here was very careful to leave the sitting French king out of the story, so that there is no rebellion against a reigning king, and his heir turns out not to be the legitimate heir. Thus, Orrery may safely depict an overthrow and certain treacherous deeds. These devices preserve the mystique and majesty of royalty while also depicting English nationalism and superiority. Therefore, the play may end with Henry ready to marry Katherine, his brother Bedford about to marry Anne, and the Dauphin about to be pursued by Henry for his crimes.

The chief protagonist in *Henry the Fifth* is Owen Tudor, and therefore by extension, Orrery, which is similar to *The Generall*. Though in the end he loses his suit, Tudor "wins" in the big scene where he and Henry are "vying to outdo each other in generosity and renunciation," as Eugene Waith describes it (Waith 202).

Another victory that might not have escaped a knowledgeable audience member is what happened historically after the distorted events in the play. After Henry V's premature death, Owen Tudor secretly married the former Queen Catherine of Valois (the Princess Katherine of this play), and they bore four children, one of which was Jasper, Earl of Pembroke and father to the founder of the Tudor dynasty, Henry VII (Meyer 36-37, 41). Charles II's own Stuart dynasty's line came to power through Henry VII's daughter Margaret Tudor, who was the

grandmother of Mary, Queen of Scots (Meyer 369). Mary's son was Charles's grandfather and the first Stuart king, James I (478). Thus, Owen Tudor is the long-term winner, in that his issue will eventually inherit the English throne. Since Orrery's Tudor represents Orrery himself, this would be a prognostication of sorts for great things in the future for the Earl.

Another fact worth reporting on this issue is that Thomas Betterton and his wife, Mary Saunderson Betterton, played the roles of Owen Tudor and Princess Katherine, which foreshadows the characters' eventual marriage after Henry V's death. This combined with the Tudor line's eventual inheriting of the English throne may indicate a case of "deferred victory" (Tomlinson 567-68) for Tudor, meaning that he will be the father of both the Tudor and Stuart dynasties. Thus, it could be said that both Orrery and Charles are winners here, since the Orrerian character, embodied by Owen Tudor, fathers the Tudor and thus the Stuart dynasty, of which Charles II was the third king.

It is important to note that despite the play's role as propaganda, the author continues to use his plays to "advise" the king on things that would perhaps not be welcome in the real world. As we have seen, Orrery in the play gently chastised Charles for his scandalous reputation as a philanderer by showing the concern that the Queen and Burgundy had for Henry invading and taking the throne. Another clever thing that Orrery does in this play is to advise Charles on foreign policy. In Act V, Henry tells his brother, the Duke of Bedford (and therefore by extension James, Duke of York, who also was, importantly, the Lord High Admiral):

That Prince, whose Flags are bow'd to on the Seas,  
Of all Kings shores, keeps in his hand the Keys:  
No King can him, he may all Kings invade;  
And on his Will depends their Peace and Trade.  
Trade, which does Kings and Subjects wealth increase;  
Trade, which more necessary is than Peace.  
If the Worlds trade may to our hand be brought,  
Though purchas'd by a War, 'tis cheaply bought.

He who an Island rules and not the Sea,  
Is not a King, and may a Pris'ner be. (211-12)

According to Tracey E. Tomlinson, who calls Orrery's plays "history plays," "In reasserting Charles's ceremonial claim to the throne of France even as Louis XIV was forcing him to forgo it, Boyle's play patently urges the king to pursue an aggressive policy against France and to reassert England's threatened sphere of influence" (Tomlinson 568). Given this passage, it appears certain that Orrery, the old general, is using a revered moment in English history to urge Charles to go to war.<sup>6</sup> *Henry the Fifth* continues Orrery's attempts to posture himself within Charles's graces and to use history and flattery to please. Taken together with *The Generall*, *The History of Henry the Fifth* continues the mode of hegemonic consensus that the rhymed heroic play was designed for, rehabilitating the image of the author and elevating the king as the consummate prince, worthy to rule. But as Orrery continued to write, his plays reflected more and more the eroding confidence in the king.

#### Consensus Cracks in *Mustapha*

As we have seen, as the 1660s moved on, there was more discontent with Charles II and his reign. As such, the theatre that had been so supportive of Charles was still loyal to him, especially from a man like Orrery, but there was much unrest and uncertainty, as we saw in Chapter 2. Even the ever-sycophantic Earl of Orrery could not avoid airing his concerns in his last play before the plague, *Mustapha*. Derek Hughes is correct in his assertion that *Mustapha*'s plot seems to "reflect the perceptions not of 1660 but 1665" (Hughes, *English Drama* 43), meaning that the newness and exciting nature of the Restoration was now over and reality had set in. Perhaps because of this, or because it was closest to a genuine tragedy that Orrery would ever get, or because this was a bit of a change for him, *Mustapha* was Orrery's best-received play

(Lynch 153), and lasted for around twenty years after its initial run. Clark reports that “Of all Orrery plays it was easily the most popular stage piece and hence the most memorable to his contemporaries” (Clark 228). The play is a very good gauge of temperament at the time of the theatre closings, as this is the last play produced before the plague forced the theatres to close, and it was also the first to be acted after the plague and great fire (Lynch 175-76), which is also a testament to its popularity. King Charles especially liked it, for when he first saw the play, he immediately had John Webb, the best scenic designer at the time, design a production for Whitehall Palace, which apparently was presented on October 18, 1666 (Clark 227). John Evelyn saw this production, and his remarks also call attention to the disgruntled feelings in London at the time:

This night was acted my Lord Broghill’s tragedy, called *Mustapha*, before their Majesties at Court, at which I was present...I was invited by my Lord Chamberlain to see this tragedy, exceedingly well written, though in my mind I did not approve of any such pastime in a time of such judgments and calamities. (Evelyn 2: 19)

Indeed, Evelyn disapproved of the Restoration stage in general due to the effects it had on people of high rank, especially the king, to whom he only dares allude in the following:

...[I] very seldom going to the public theatres for many reasons now, as they were abused to an atheistical liberty; foul and undecent women now (and never till now) permitted to appear and act, who inflaming several young noblemen and gallants, became their misses, and to some, their wives. Witness the Earl of Oxford, Sir R. Howard, Prince Rupert, the Earl of Dorset, and another greater person than any of them, who fell into their snares, to the reproach of their noble families, and ruin of both body and soul. (19)

Evelyn here refers to the affairs that Charles and the other men who appear in this passage as dupes for the tempting stage actress as especially dangerous for this time in history. Much was amiss in London at this time: the day after Pepys himself saw *Mustapha*, he reports, was a fast day for the war against the Dutch (Pepys 6: 73), and just over a week later, in a conversation with Pepys and Monk (now the Duke of Albermarle), the Lord Treasurer exclaimed that no one

would lend money to the king (Pepys was an official for the Royal Navy), asking, “Why will they not trust the King as well as Oliver? Why do our prizes come to nothing, that yielded so much heretofore?” (78). Similar discontent shows itself in *Mustapha*, though it still has the familiar heroic relationships, friendships, and a love triangle, that puts characters in moral confusion. It also remains supportive of monarchy. Yet its status as royalist propaganda is questionable as consensus has now begun to fail.

Orrery’s characters are now far less recognizable as symbols of real people. It seems clear that the Sultan, Solyman, is King Charles, though he is now far from the dashing and brave hero of *Henry the Fifth*, and *Mustapha* appears to be Orrery himself. There is no restoration or similar acquisition of land or title for the principal characters, but more loss than anything, indicating that consensus is failing and that the rhymed heroic play is becoming far less effective as propaganda.

Like Davenant’s *Siege of Rhodes* during the Protectorate, this play depicts the Turks against the Christian Hungarians. The Hungarians have recently lost their king, and are now ruled by his queen, Isabella, with her infant son as her heir. *Mustapha* makes great leaps from Orrery’s previous plays in that this is the closest of his offerings to traditional tragedy, and it goes much further in depicting the dangers and consequences of foolish rule, especially in listening to bad counsel, which indicates the failure of consensus. From the beginning, Sultan Solyman is besieged by bad advice from his viziers Rustan and Phrrhus. Solyman, having conquered the Hungarians to his own glory, nevertheless feels for the plight of the Christian queen and her son, causing him to balk at taking the city of Buda(pest). Yet Rustan tells him:

None but the Conquer’d should have sence of shame:  
Shall shows of Vertue darken your bright Fame?  
Success does cover all the crimes of War,  
And Fame and Vertue still consistent are. (230)

Solyman privately doubts his advisors, collectively known as the Divan (representing the Rump Parliament, it would seem), and tells the audience that “*Divans* like Common-wealths regard not fame, / Disdaining honour they can feel no shame...” (231); so there is still the defense of Charles I, even with the diminishing morals of the kingly character. Also taking counsel, this time from a Cardinal, is Isabella, the Hungarian queen. The Cardinal urges her, since her city is surrounded, to make a present of her infant son and the crown jewels to the Sultan’s wife, Roxolana, who may spare the boy. The Queen is only persuaded after a long argument, saying that it is dishonorable to take such measures, and that it is worse to merit death than to die (232), a parallel of the deserving merit we have seen already in both Orrery plays thus far. The Cardinal tells her that it is better “To dye a Martyr than to live a King” (233). It is not nearly so clear what Orrery is trying to say about this advice, since going to Roxolana does achieve the desired effect.

The title character, Mustapha, is the Sultan’s heir, and Mustapha’s half-brother and best friend Zanger is second in line. Their bonds of friendship, though they are only half-brothers, are so strong that they have agreed to dispense with the Turkish custom of the firstborn killing his younger brothers, who would rival his rule. Zanger promises that if any harm were to come to Mustapha, that will also be his death sentence. Mustapha especially feels it is not worth a throne to lose a friend like Zanger, and that friendship is stronger than blood (235). Mustapha also declares the danger of bad advisors:

Councils dare do worse than their Monarchs dare;  
For where in evil many bear a share,  
They hardly count, when they divide the guilt,  
A drop for each, through streams of blood were spilt. (236)

Roxolana, Solyman’s wife, also worries about the Divan’s actions, compared with the noble sultan’s:



The grave *Divan* in ruining their Foes  
Are not concern'd when they may honour lose,  
Because it most reflects on future fame,  
But they seek present safety though with shame. (237)

She is even ready to have Rustan strangled until someone intervenes. Rustan had advised her to kill the infant king once he was sent to her, which she refused. These preoccupations with counsel reflect the fact that Charles was taking harsh criticism from those around him, as we saw in the introduction. Many believed that his preoccupations with pleasure and listening to the wrong people were causing the nation to collapse; certainly the hegemonic consensus that Charles had been building was on the verge of collapse, even if his crown was not.

Only something godly and pure, it seems, can pull Solyman out of the pit of bad counsel. When Solyman is ready to heed wicked advice by sacrificing the child, he sees the regal Christian face of the baby and changes his mind:

Nay, bring him near, his motion has a grace;  
And I perceive a promise in his face,  
That he'll perform what he declares in show  
If destiny will give him leave to grow. (240)

This is indicative of the sentiments of kingship still prevalent in Orrery, though his confidence in the king has clearly been stained.

Though Solyman is afraid the boy will grow up and take his revenge, Roxolana's entreaties persuade Solyman to give in. Orrery may be commenting here on Charles being ruled by the many women in his life, but it is doubtful that he would be sanctioning the death of a legitimate king. Still, throughout the play, Solyman unwisely listens to too many others, allowing them to negatively influence his own judgment.

Indeed, Rustan and Pyrrhus turn out to be the villains in the play, discussing the follies of friendship and declaring that it is a "mere name" which means nothing (244); they also discuss

plans to make Solyman jealous of his older son by praising the boy's generalship, prompting the sultan to take action against his own son. This plan swiftly starts to materialize. Roxolana actually supports this plan, because Zanger, and not Mustapha, is her son, and she knows that according to tradition, Zanger will be doomed as soon as Mustapha takes power. She is unaware of the brothers' vow to one another. Also unbeknownst to Roxolana is the fact that Zanger has fallen in love with Isabella, the captive Hungarian queen who has become her friend. Amazed by the heroic qualities of Isabella, Zanger feels that his own mother does not merit the Christian crown. Mustapha warns his younger brother against loving an enemy and a Christian, but Zanger is too deep in love to change his mind.

Predictably complicating matters, Mustapha himself falls in love with Isabella at first sight in this version of the Orrerian love triangle. This leads to the great argument scene, with Zanger saying he saw her first, and Mustapha arguing that he loves best and most. Like Tudor, Zanger cannot win; his brother is the heir to the throne and therefore must get his wish in Orrery's play. Mustapha seems truly unhappy that his brother is his rival, but he says that his love is so strong that he cannot break off his suit. Again, Caroline courtly romance is stronger than friendship, even if friendship is stronger than blood.

Things are compounded by the fact that Solyman, hearing his counselors' praise for Mustapha, has ordered him to faraway Persia to head the army there, which is effectively an exile. Roxolana's feelings for her own blood prompt her to help poison Solyman's mind against Mustapha. She pretends to be unhappy about her stepson being sent away, and when the Sultan sees Roxolana praising Mustapha, his jealousy escalates, and he becomes more determined than ever to mask Mustapha's virtue so that it does not outshine his own. Cleverly, Roxolana says that if Mustapha is a traitor, as Solyman has allowed himself to believe, he should not keep him alive.

If not, Mustapha should stay. She reasons that “His Exile is too little or too much” (261), knowing that Solyman will decide to kill Mustapha. Again we see the complication of an otherwise good leader being led by the influence of a woman, which, as we heard from contemporary accounts in the introduction, was a trait that many people perceived and criticized in Charles II.

As the King did in *Henry the Fifth*, Mustapha out of honor becomes Zanger’s advocate, asking Isabella to accept his brother if she cannot accept him. Zanger is touched by this, exclaiming that “Friendship till now did ne’re so high ascend / As to endure a Rival in a Friend” (264). He then echoes Mustapha’s sentiment, arguing his brother’s virtues. They renew their vows to one another, Mustapha to let Zanger rule with him, and Zanger to kill himself should Mustapha die.

The theme of good council continues on both sides of the conflict. Isabella receives council from her Cardinal to woo one of the brothers, because it will preserve their state. Isabella is torn because she admires both brothers, but had planned to go to a convent to live out her life. She feels that it is dishonorable to go out of mourning only to take a heathen husband, and does not trust the Cardinal’s advice, saying privately that “He would, bold with Ambition, lead through all / The dark and crooked walks where Serpents crawl” (267). She does not know what to do because “All our guides dispute which is the way” (268). Further, Roxolana asks her to pretend to love Mustapha, because then perhaps Zanger will not be inclined to take his own life (she is now aware of the brothers’ vow to one another), but will perhaps, she implies, be willing to engage in behavior, perhaps civil war or assassination, to go against his rival. Isabella finds this type of heathen politics deplorable. Yet Roxolana does try to give her good advice, and it appears that through this speech Orrery is warning Charles:

Now, Madam, you may counsel take of me,  
But should from Subjects counsel still be free.  
We, but in asking it from Subjects, give  
Much more of value than we can receive.  
We give our secrets to them, which, when known,  
May make their int'rest greater than our own.  
By counsel men perswade or else direct;  
Direction like appointment we suspect:  
And even perswasion does the Throne invade;  
For Slaves may govern whom they can perswade.  
Advise your self and boldly then proceed;  
Counsel must yield to courage and to speed. (272)

As if this is not enough for Isabella, the Cardinal urges her to leave, but she has given her word to Roxolana that she will stay for the time being, in order to protect her infant son. The Cardinal is unhappy with her, chiding that “Unhappy is the Minister of State / Whom for successful council you despise.” Yet she is still not convinced:

Our greatest Counc'lours think we are unjust.  
When our least thoughts are hidden from their trust;  
And till (by knowing th' utmost that we know)  
Those restless Counc'lours may our Rulers grow;  
They do not love us, and they sullen seem;  
But after, care not, though we love not them. (274)

Again the theme of good counsel exists to advise Charles perhaps to follow his own kingly judgment before listening to others, including the Catholic church, since Charles did not show the same hostility to Roman Catholicism as Orrery and most of England did.

Repeatedly Orrery infuses the theme of counsel into the play. Solyman has ordered, thanks to the persuasion of Roxolana, that Mustapha stay, and his troops all rejoice. Through Rustan, who is taking advantage of this situation, Orrery now debates the Machiavellian merits of rule. Solyman argues that “By fear Usurpers should their pow'r sustain; / But a true Prince chiefly by love should reign” (275). Rustan, however, tries to convince him that the Machiavellian way is best:

Yet wisest Monarchs by success have prov'd  
That [it] is safer to be fear'd than lov'd.  
For Subjects, as they please, their love dispense,  
But alwaies fear, as it does please the Prince. (275)

Solyman stays his hand for now, but he is clearly upset by the attention heaped upon his son and heir. Once Mustapha learns that his stepmother has conspired against his life, Zanger begs him to run away. Mustapha refuses, saying that it would be a cowardly act to do so. Mustapha tries to get Zanger to dissolve his vow and spare his own life, but Zanger will not. Eventually Roxolana, Rustan, and Pyrrhus manage to convince Solyman that Mustapha is a traitor, and that he must be summoned and killed. Mustapha and Zanger both suspect this, but Mustapha is undeterred; he will face his father: "Rather than duty lose, I'll lose my life" (V. ii. 82). He seems convinced that only his death will prove his innocence. Once he is sentenced by his father, Mustapha asks only that his own men kill him. Only one man volunteers and then after killing him takes his own life. True to his vow, Zanger kills himself after convincing his father that he was the victim of bad counsel:

By all the duty to a Father due,  
And to our Prophet, *Mustapha* was true;  
True as your Viziers have been false and wrought  
You into wrong suggestions of his fault. (286)

Dying, Zanger begs his father to free Isabella and her son, and to restore the crown to them, which the sultan does. Realizing he has been duped, Solyman now has to live with the fact that his own bad judgment and jealousy, along with allowing himself to be swayed by evil advisors, among them a conniving woman, have caused the death of both his sons and heirs. Worse, Mustapha's murder has caused civil war; Mustapha's troops have rebelled, and Solyman himself had to put the rebellion down. The Eunuch Achmat tells of the terrible calamity of civil war:

When rumour (swift, though it flies low) had spread  
Through all our Camp that *Mustapha* was dead,

And that his Friends, who had that battel fought,  
Were only for his safety hither brought,  
Then the Victorious threw their Arms away,  
And wept for those whom they did lately slay.  
Some, who had kill'd their Sons, more tears did shed  
For their own guilt, than that their Sons were dead;  
Guilt wrought by Fate, which had their valour mov'd  
Against that Prince whom they for valour lov'd. (298)

Though he still supports Charles unequivocally, Orrery is quite convinced that bloody civil war could ensue if Charles listens to bad counsel and chooses not to attend to affairs of state like a responsible king, which it is clear he was not doing. This is a far cry from the sycophantic attitude that he took in *The Generall* and *Henry the Fifth*, and indicates that Charles II is not attending to his duties as king, which could lead to rebellion and civil war. It had not been forgotten that a very strong belief among the royalist English was that Charles I had only been killed because he too chose to listen to bad counsel. Orrery also plays well on the still-extant fear that civil war would reappear in England, and thus Charles, while still enjoying the support of men like Orrery, has clearly lost his hold on consensus writing and therefore, hegemony.

Orrery has one more lesson to repeat, and that related again to counsel, this time again to that of women; the lesson is that of not letting one's lust rule one's actions. Solyman, having learned this agonizing lesson, says:

Thy progress, Love, was long, but it shall end.  
By Beauty (which does even the wise delude)  
The valiant ever soonest are subdu'd.  
'Tis nature's snare, and in defiance laid;  
For when least hidden we are most betray'd.  
Beauties fair hand has many a mighty name  
Too foully blotted in the Book of Fame.  
Accursed Beauty! 'tis at last to thee  
That Famous Chiefs have ow'd their infamie.  
Oh what has it not done, and may do still? (298-9)

He chastises his wife:

But yet the blood by your ambition spilt,  
Cries out so loud 'gainst your audacious guilt  
That now my People, Armies, and the State,  
Behold your Beauty with malicious hate:  
And no expedient e're can satisfie  
The justice they expect unless you dye. (300)

Yet still in his weakness for his wife, and against his better judgment, Solyman spares

Roxolana's life, though he had Rustan and Pyrrhus killed. Of his weakness in this regard, he asks himself:

Oh why did Heav'n such perfect beauty make,  
Yet let such beauteous things perfection lack?  
Love against Justice in my bosom strives,  
Let Justice pardon Love what Love forgives. (303)

Having decided to banish Roxolana, and left to ponder his misdeeds and weakness, Solyman closes the play with another impassioned speech:

Farewel for ever, and to Love farewell  
I'll lock my Bosom up where Love did well;  
I will to Beauty ever shut my eyes,  
And be no more a Captive by surprize:  
But Oh how little I esteem a Throne,  
When Love, the Ornament of Pow'r, is gone! (304)

It could not have been lost on the audience that this message of the folly of letting one's sexual urges rule one's responsibility. Given the open nature of Charles's affairs, such as that with Lady Castlemaine, and his illegitimate children, such as Lady Castlemaine's son the Duke of Monmouth, this was a widespread concern shared by Orrery, and such a fear that even sycophants such as he felt it necessary to put it in a public forum.

Again, Charles is directly controlling the theatre; only this time it is not as the controller of the theatrical ISA. Instead, his attempts at hegemony through consensus writing have fallen victim to his neglect of state affairs to the preference of sexual ones. Thus, Solyman's character

is a long way from Melizer of *The Generall*, who vanquished his foe and ruled in peace thereafter, or Henry V, whose fierce friendship and fiercer bravery permeated the pages of *Henry the Fifth*. Solyman is the embodiment of the legitimate king who refuses to listen to reason, turning instead to immoral advisors and the desires of the flesh to make his decisions. These ill choices lead Solyman's kingdom to ruin, resulting in civil war and the destruction of both his heirs. Thus, this later play from the mid-1660s demonstrates the evolution of even the most Royalist of the writers of the rhymed heroic play through the consensus sequence, moving from near apology to overt criticism of his monarch, even if he still supported his sovereign. There can be no mistaking this migration as the breakdown of consensus and the failure of the rhymed heroic play to be an effective consensus tool.

### Dryden Takes up the Mantle

John Dryden is the second writer of rhymed heroic plays, and was easily more popular and lasting than Orrery. Dryden wrote many types of plays over a number of years, and is probably the most recognizable dramatist of the early Restoration. In his heroic plays, Dryden is both a great emulator of Orrery and a contrast, though I would argue that the similarities between the two are greater than most critics recognize. This is because the emphasis of Dryden's plays, while more politically sophisticated and somewhat less conservative, still support the king and monarchy above all, despite the fact that even the "good" heroes, including kings, in these plays show more faults, and that interpreting Dryden is a bit more tricky overall.

Much of what is similar with the two authors of rhymed heroic plays begins with the fact that like Orrery, Dryden had the arduous task of vindicating himself as a former friend of the Protectorate. He had a lot to atone for after also supporting Oliver Cromwell. Evidence of his



allegiance to the former Protector had already appeared in works such as “Heroique Stanza’s [sic], Consecrated to the Glorious Memory of his most serene and Renowned Highnesse OLIVER late *LORD PROTECTOR* of this Common-Wealth, &c.” (1659), in which he said of Cromwell that:

His Grandeur he deriv’d from Heav’n alone,  
For he was great e’er Fortune made him so;  
And Warr’s [sic] like mists that rise against the Sunne  
Made him but the greater seem, not greater grow.” (Dryden, *Poems* 7)

In this poem he also made mention of Cromwell’s regal qualities and implied that Cromwell might have been king:

No borrow’d Bay’s [sic] his *Temples* did adorne,  
But to our *Crown* he did fresh *Jewells* bring,  
Nor was his Vertue poyson’d soon as born  
With the too early thoughts of being King. (7)

In addition to his praise of the Protector’s power and splendor, Dryden also compared Cromwell favorably to the previous monarchy:

11

Our former Cheifs like sticklers of the Warre  
First sought t’ inflame the Parties, then to poise;  
The quarrel lov’d, but did the cause abhorre,  
And did not strike to hurt but make a noise.

12

Warre our consumption was their gainfull trade,  
We inward bled whilst they prolong’d our pain:  
He fought to end our fighting, and assaid  
To stanch the blood by breathing of the vein. (8)

This unquestioned support of Cromwell meant that when the Protectorate collapsed, Dryden was in a bit of a spot, and had to decide whether or not to reverse his field. By 1661 Dryden had indeed changed his tune (or at least re-vacillated). His “To His Sacred Majesty, a Panegyrick on His Coronation” to Charles II in 1661 demonstrates this change of heart:

Thus (Royall Sir) to see you landed here  
 Was cause enough of triumph for a year  
 .....  
 But this untainted year is all your own,  
 Your glory's [sic] may without our crimes be shown.  
 .....  
 Now our sad ruines are remov'd from sight,  
 The season too comes fraught with new delight;  
 Time seems not beneath his years to stoop  
 Nor do his wings with sickly feathers droop:  
 Soft western winds waft ore the gaudy bring  
 And open Scenes of flow'rs and blossoms bring  
 To grace this happy day, while you appear  
 Not King of us alone but of the year. (*Poems* 25)

This is reflective of much of the royalist literature we examined in Chapter 2, which lauded the king and supported his return, acting as hegemonic tools in support of consensus. Much as Orrery had done, Dryden in his panegyric dwells on the forgiveness of his new sovereign, hoping for a measure of Charles's clemency:

Among our crimes oblivion may be set,  
 But 'tis our Kings perfection to forget.  
 Virtues unknown to these rough Northern climes  
 From milder heavn's you bring, without their crimes:  
 Your calmnesse does no after storms provide,  
 Nor seeming patience mortal anger hide. (27)

Perhaps because of his usefulness in crafting propaganda, Dryden succeeded in winning the favor of Charles II during the Restoration decade and became Poet Laureate in 1670.

As a talented poet, Dryden made use of a great opportunity to do as Orrery and others had done, and participate in the consensus playwriting of the early Restoration. However, unlike Orrery, Dryden had a difficult time reconciling himself to writing rhymed heroic verse in his plays, as it appears he did not care for the form. But it was the commercial need for the rhymed heroic play that encouraged him to write it rather than the more classical drama he preferred.

This is contradictory to what Dryden himself wrote. In the preface to his rhymed heroic play *The Conquest of Granada* he says:

WHETHER heroic verse ought to be admitted into serious plays is not now to be disputed: 'tis already in possession of the stage; and I dare confidently affirm that very few tragedies, in this age, shall be received without it. All the arguments which are formed against it can amount to no more than this, that it is not so near conversation as prose, and therefore not so natural. But it is very clear to all who understand poetry, that serious plays ought not to imitate conversation too nearly. If nothing were to be raised above that level, the foundation of poetry would be destroyed. (Dryden, *Dramatic Essays* 87)

Yet later in the essay he admits that he is driven in this opinion by what others say: "... I have modelled my heroic plays by the rules of an heroic poem. And if that be the most noble, the most pleasant, and the most instructive way of writing in verse, and withal the highest pattern of human life, as all poets have agreed, I shall need no other argument to justify my choice in this imitation" (91). Here Dryden admits the influence of others in adopting the heroic style, suggesting that it is not necessarily his choice.

Further, many authors, as we will see below, doubted Dryden's praise for Orrery's verse as genuine, and thus he may have been pretending to support the Earl and thus the genre. Also, the fact that Dryden abandoned the form once it was no longer in fashion, and that he wrote serious works in forms besides the rhymed heroic play suggests that his choice was based on popularity, entertainment value, and his desire to elevate his own standing by taking part in hegemonic writing of theatre for Charles II. Nancy Maguire also informs us that "For his entire professional life, [Dryden] struggled between a love for classical drama and the commercial need for tragicomedy" (Maguire; Fisk 100). Remembering that for Maguire all Restoration forms of theatre that are not expressly comedy are tragicomedy, this includes the rhymed heroic play. Though Maguire also infers that Dryden may have also liked the tragicomic form, the fact again that Dryden chose not to continue with it once it diminished strongly suggests that his conflict

was indeed, as Maguire suggests, between his preference for classical drama and the need to be commercially successful. The requirement, therefore, for Dryden to adopt this popular form, commissioned by Charles II himself and initiated by Orrery, speaks again to Dryden's rhymed heroic plays as pieces of royalist propaganda in line with Orrery's which served the same ends. Charles II (by way of Orrery) had established the popular vogue with his rhymed plays, and it made sense for Dryden to use Orrery as a model. In some ways, Dryden was in a more serious situation than Orrery, because he did not have a noble pedigree to support him, nor did he have the influence at court or experience as a statesman or army officer that Orrery had. What he did have was a suspect family. His father had supposedly been a "committee-man," involved in the sequestration of royalist estates; his grandfather had refused a forced loan to Charles I, and his cousin had been Chamberlain to Cromwell and had served at Charles I's trial as a judge (Maguire 33). Thus it was a shrewd move on Dryden's part when he dedicated his non-heroic play *The Rival Ladies* (1664) to Orrery. Dryden compliments the Earl, writing that Orrery's enemies consider it "a Crime for a Man of business to Write so well" (Dryden, *Dramatic Works* 134). Dryden also tells Orrery of his dramatic characters:

They are moved (if I may dare say so) like the Rational Creatures of the Almighty Poet, who walk at Liberty, in their own Opinion, because their Fetters are Invincible [sic]: when indeed the Prison of their Will, is the more sure for being large: and instead of an absolute Power over their Actions, they have only a wretched Desire of doing that, which they cannot choose but do. (135)

There is much skepticism over whether Dryden was being genuine in his praise here (Hughes, *English Drama* 42), and this seems fair, as Orrery's characters as described here are locked into a destiny, whereas, as we will see, Dryden's characters, while similar to a degree, seem to have brought on their fates themselves. In fact, many critics agree that Dryden was less than genuine in his praise for Orrery's plays.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Dryden does admit some apprehension in embracing

this form: “But I fear least defending the receiv’d words, I shall be accus’d for following the New way, I mean, of writing Scenes in Verse” (135). In any case, Dryden decided to copy Orrery’s newly established fashion, spurred on by Charles’s great influence. Indeed, the best evidence that Dryden was highly interested in fad and fashion in his drama comes from Dryden’s own pen. In his “A Defence of an Essay of Dramatic Poesy” (1668), Dryden, in his remarks on verse, says that “I am satisfied, if it cause delight: for delight is the chief, if not the only, end of poesy: instruction can be admitted but in the second place; for poesy only instructs as it delights” (*Dramatic Essays* 62), meaning he wanted the audience to enjoy his plays. Given the fact that there was a penchant for the rhymed heroic play, we can conclude that Dryden, based on this writing, would be willing to write in this popular form. Later he writes, “I confess my chief endeavors are to delight the age in which I live” (64), and still later he tells us that “To please the people ought to be the poet’s aim, because plays are made for their delight...” (67). Thus, if we are to take Dryden at his word in 1668, it should come as no surprise that he would follow fashion, even if the rhymed heroic play was not something that he would have written otherwise, except to please the king.

Still, this poses the question of how deeply his ideology would be ingrained in his dramas, given these remarks. For in consistently treating such themes, as Orrery did, of obedience to the sovereign, avoiding rebellion, impeaching usurpation, and nobly coping with untenable situations as a subject, Dryden may seem to be contradicting his stance of pleasing the audience first. However, this can be fairly simply explained. First, Dryden is using his skills at delighting the audience to his advantage in following a theatrical trend in order to absolve his name from shame or disgrace, and to flatter the king. Dryden admits in his essay “Of Heroic Plays” (1672) that the French dramatists “contented to show you what men of great spirits would

certainly do when they were provoked, not what they were obliged to do by the strict rules of moral virtue.” He prefers his own characters to those of the French, who are “weighed by drachms and scruples” (*Dramatic Essays* 93). And he adds in “Defense of an Essay...” that “Poesy must resemble natural truth, but it must *be* ethical” (68). Hume asserts that Dryden writes both to please himself and to cater to audience taste (Hume 30). Thus, though Dryden is primarily interested in pleasing his audience (for indeed, without an audience, no message would be heard), yet he claims he is bound to present ethics and moral virtue, which in his case has much to say about keeping Charles safely on the throne, and also trying to improve the King’s questionable behavior. These are essentially the same motivations as Orrery’s, which is to say that he chose to aid Charles by participating in the ideological state apparatus of the theatre but also offering his advice and endeavoring to bolster his own image.

Despite these similarities to Orrery, Dryden is a good bit more difficult to interpret. His plots and characters are more complex, and lend themselves far less than Orrery to exact parallels. Still, many of the same ingredients appear in Dryden which concern England’s late troubles and the state of the country at that time: rebellion and usurpation, civil war, monarchy, and restoration. In addition, many of the heroes find themselves faced with difficult moral choices not only between love and honor, as in Orrery, but also, as many critics have noted, between whether to take up arms against a usurper or not, which had only been touched upon in Orrery.

Critics do not exactly agree on the level of ease in interpreting of Dryden. Robert Hume believes that “When Dryden wants to be particular politically, his intention is not easily mistaken” (233). On the other hand, Anne Barbeau asserts that “A more elusive and complex figure than Dryden in English literature is difficult to find.” She claims that he is perhaps most

elusive “in his early dramatic and nondramatic poetry” (Barbeau 1, 20-21). Hume argues that Dryden’s heroic plays are not, as Barbeau suggests, devoid of passion and chiefly political and moral works (Hume 188-89). Barbeau sees the rhymed heroic plays as being plays of “ideas” with an almost mathematical “design” concerning human nature (4). Derek Hughes describes the plays as “humane, intelligent, and subtle studies of the disparity between Herculean aspiration and human reality” (Hughes, *Dryden’s Heroic Plays* 1-2). Regardless of these individual opinions and many others, three elements in the heroic plays of Dryden seem inescapable: that Dryden supported the authority of the monarchy, that he abhorred the idea of armed rebellion, and that he sought to advise Charles against behavior that was detrimental to a kingly image and to peace in the realm. All of these things are indicative of the consensus cycle we have been examining, and also of the fact that the political situation, centering around Charles II, drove Dryden’s plays. Dryden opted to write in support of the popular theatre that Charles wanted to see performed, and therefore he participated in the hegemonic literature of consensus; yet the license he took to advise the king against ill judgment as sovereign anticipates the end of the consensus experiment.

As we have seen, Orrery focused very much on these same things, though his motives are more transparent. The skill and complexity of both authors’ plays and their ideas certainly separate them, but in these first years of the Restoration, both authors were similarly concerned with consensus politics, but with a twist near the 1665 closings.

Dryden differs from Orrery somewhat starkly in that he appears to comment directly on the government of social contract, especially when he disagrees with the monarch or even when the ruler is clearly in the wrong, such as a usurper. This appears to be a direct commentary on Charles’s behavior and the trials of the nation. Barbeau, as many other writers have done, spends

much of her book describing and interpreting the presence and meaning of Hobbesian philosophy in the plays of Dryden. Ultimately she concludes that Hobbes, with his conviction that the monarch is sovereign thanks to a social contract with his subjects, and that civil law is to be obeyed above all (30), is less Dryden's model than is Thomas Filmer, who believed that historical precedent (mostly Biblical) showed that it was one's moral obligation to obey the ruler, and that one should disagree with the sovereign only passively, even if to do so meant imprisonment or some other punishment (40-41). She asserts, as do many others, that Hobbes's words inhabit the mouths of Dryden's villains for the most part.<sup>8</sup> Yet these differences, though important, do not seem so significant when the reader takes into consideration the fact that in either, obedience to the king is required, and armed rebellion must be avoided.<sup>9</sup> These are basic consensus ideas, concerned with the avoidance of Charles's removal as king. It should not be lost on the reader of these plays that in the philosophy of both Hobbes and Filmer, allegiance to a usurper can under certain circumstances be legitimate, thus justifying Dryden's loyalty to the Protector, and later to the King. All these elements are why, not unlike Orrery, certain of Dryden's heroes face situations that put them in precarious positions. Again, the emphasis on types of government in Dryden reflects the very perception, power, and personality of the king, and thus his rhymed heroic plays are part of hegemonic consensus, though at this point the consensus was clearly weakening. Charles II was still the single most influential figure affecting Restoration theatre, even if it was in ways he had not intended.

To these concerns must be added the important factor of Dryden's attempt, like Orrery's, to advise Charles on his conduct, particularly his many public affairs with women and his illegitimate children. This is the chief subject of Alex Garganigo's essay on women in Dryden's heroic plays. Garganigo may overreach in asserting that "Dryden articulated and managed...



anxieties over women's influence by downplaying women's threat to the (male) body politic" (483), but he is very convincing in his addressing of the fears that Charles injected into the realm with his behavior, eliciting worries that "women have emasculated the Court's men" (484), particularly the King. Dryden imitates Orrery, argues Garganigo, in showing the importance of bonds between heroic men, but departs from plays like *The Generall* and *Henry the Fifth* in demonstrating that women do have courtly influence, though not always in a positive way. Indeed, we saw Orrery in *Mustapha* departing from his earlier models, which were presented after Dryden's early plays established this device (488). Thus, Garganigo argues, Dryden's heroic plays are largely attempts "to manage the problems of debauchery and transgressive court women (498), and to serve as "a kind of public relations campaign for the Restoration Court" (487), though despite Garganigo's assertions it seems doubtful that Dryden's first motive was the handling of court women, especially given his precarious position.

A crucial point that Garganigo points to is that the myriad national disasters that befell the country in the mid-1660s were widely considered to be heavenly retribution for Court licentiousness. As we have already seen, many pamphlets, sermons, and other works made this connection as well. Garganigo rightly points out that "detractors blamed everything from fire, plague, and war defeat on the Court's debauchery and laxity, representing the Court's men as emasculated by the decidedly unheroic sports of adulterous love, and therefore as utterly negligent and incompetent in affairs of state" (484); we have seen numerous examples of this in the present work.

Garganigo also mentions the feelings about "the naval disasters of 1665-67 as divine punishment for the Court's licentiousness..." (485). Indeed, Dryden engages these same issues in his poem *Annus Mirabilis*, in which Dryden attempts to salvage the king and realm's

catastrophic year 1666 from dangerous invective by depicting the naval war against the Dutch as a heroic victory. In the poem, Charles II humbly prays:

Be thou my judge, with what unwearied care  
I since have labour'd for my people's good;  
To bind the bruises of a civil war,  
And stop the issues of their wasting blood.

Thou who hast taught me to forgive the ill,  
And recompense, as friends, the good misled;  
If mercy be a precept of thy will,  
Return that mercy on thy servant's head.

Or if my heedless youth has stepp'd astray,  
Too soon forgetful of thy gracious hand;  
On me alone thy just displeasure lay,  
But take thy judgments from this mourning land.

We all have sinn'd, and thou hast laid us low,  
As humble earth from whence at first we came:  
Like flying shades before the clouds we show,  
And shrink like parchment in consuming flame.

O let it be enough what thou hast done;  
When spotted Deaths ran arm'd through every street,  
With poison'd darts which not the good could shun,  
The speedy could out-fly, or valiant meet.

The living few, and frequent funerals then,  
Proclaim'd thy wrath on this forsaken place;  
And now those few who are return'd again,  
Thy searching judgments to their dwellings trace. (Dryden, *Poems* 98-99)

Given Dryden's words in this poem, it and the plays can easily be considered as damage control, which speaks to their status as consensus writings. The plays also serve an advisory function, giving serious advice to the king, which Orrery had begun about the same time Dryden was writing his plays. We will see this in analyses of Dryden's first two rhymed heroic plays, *The Indian Queene*, written in collaboration with his brother-in-law Sir Robert Howard, and its sequel, *The Indian Emperour*, his first solo effort on this genre.

### Dryden Tries the Heroic Play: *The Indian Queene*

*The Indian Queene* (1664), Dryden's first heroic play, was a collaborative effort with Sir Robert Howard, his brother-in-law. Maguire says that the play was "obviously" written for the king (69), though she gives sole credit for the play to Howard. Many consider this play to be the first rhymed heroic play (Maguire 69, 95), though that distinction, as we have mentioned, must go to Orrery's *The Generall*. However, *The Indian Queene* does have the honor of being "the first Restoration tragedy in heroic couplets to be acted in London" (Lynch 172). The play takes place in the Americas during a war between the Peruvians and Mexicans. Much like Orrery's *Henry the Fifth* and especially *Mustapha*, *The Indian Queene* features unclear roles as to which characters embody which political figures. Anne Barbeau admits that there are suggestions of "a few parallels between the events of Dryden's first heroic play and contemporary British history," though she believes it is "futile to look for one-to-one relationships," instead, showing a universal "pattern of history, a process, a formula for change" in which "Dryden makes a universal statement about rebellions, usurpations, and restorations" (80). Dryden's position, she writes, is a "detached stance" (80). In making these assertions, Barbeau ignores the fact that in the very act of using contemporary parallels regarding the current sitting king, and using a genre which was essentially commissioned by Charles himself, Dryden is precluding himself from any detachment. It is not unlikely, especially given his connections to Hobbes and others, that Dryden was revealing political truths as he saw them, but to claim that he is stating these truths independent of England's current situation excepting a few familiar references is to ignore the very intention of these plays. Dryden was simply using a pattern that the King had wished to have on the boards, to demonstrate his support of the sitting monarch and advise him of his *specific* transgressions. Again, he was participating in the hegemonic discourse of the rhymed

heroic play while using his position to better the kingdom by offering advice. As we saw with adapted and translated plays, there need not be obvious one-to-one relationships in order for Dryden's plays to be effective allegory, and therefore reflective of consensus.

*The Indian Queene*, acted by the King's Company, was mounted "on a scale of the greatest possible magnificence; special scenery was painted; original and elaborate effects were devised; all costumes were new made of the richest material; and in fine no expense was grudged to display the golden splendours of a legendary Peru and a fabled Mexico" (Summers 203). Evelyn said it was "a tragedy well written, so beautiful with rich scenes as the like had never been seen here, or haply (except rarely) elsewhere on a mercenary theatre" (Evelyn 1: 385). Pepys also noted that the play was renowned for its spectacle (Pepys 5: 28-29), and when he saw it himself, he confessed that it "is a most pleasant show and beyond my expectation," though he cared not for the rhyming couplets (33).

*The Indian Queene* begins with a celebration of the Peruvian victory against the Empire of Mexico, and the protagonist, Montezuma, a foreigner to Peru and of unknown origin, has led the Peruvians in a victorious campaign against the Mexicans. As a reward, the Ynca (Inca) of Peru says he will reward Montezuma with whatever he wants. Montezuma asks for the hand of Orazia, the Ynca's daughter. The Ynca backtracks, and says he will not allow the marriage; Montezuma, being a foreigner, cannot taint royal blood through this match. Emotions run high, and Montezuma counters the Ynca's denials and threats of death with his intentions to join the Mexican army against him. The Mexican prince, Acasis, taken captive by Montezuma, urges him to stay and not to besmirch his honor, and even in heroic play fashion rejects Montezuma's offer of freedom because he believes that Montezuma's actions are wrong. He tells Montezuma, "...though you change your side, / I as a Prisoner, am by Honour tied" (Dryden, "The Indian

Queen” 211). He then upbraids Montezuma: “Thy virtue seems but thy revenges slave: / If such injustice shou’d my Honour stain, / My aid would prove my Nations loss, not gain (211). The Ynca is impressed with Acasis and tries to reward the young prince:

Thou brave young man, that hast thy years outdone,  
And, losing Liberty, hast Honour won,  
I must myself thy Honour's Rival make,  
And give that freedom, which thou wo'dst not take. (212)

Acasis is thankful, and even promises to protect the Inca and Orazia against Montezuma should the latter attack them. Thus the captive (and son of a usurper, no less) proves himself worthier than the king or the celebrated general. Both Montezuma and the Ynca’s problems begin here because they cannot control their emotions and passions, a precursor to the rest of the play. Montezuma here reflects Orrery’s sentiments in *Mustapha*, where Montezuma, reflective in part of Charles II, as we will see as the plot unfolds, refuses to master his passions. The Ynca is also unrelenting in his own attitude, perhaps also warning Charles against similar actions.

Clearly, Acasis did not inherit his honor from his mother, Zempoalla; when this usurping queen of Mexico first appears, she admits this fact:

He was my brother, yet I scorn’d to pay  
Nature’s mean debts, but he threw those bonds away;  
When his own Issue did my hopes remove,  
Not only from his Empire, but his Love. (213-14)

Her lover, Traxalla, who helped her kill the former king, admits:

I did not feel Remorse to see his Blood  
Flow from the spring of life into a flood;  
Nor did it look like Treason, since to me  
You were a Sovereign much more great than he. (213)

Here the villains proclaim that they had the right to decide whether their sovereign was a good ruler and deserved the throne. Clearly, Dryden rejects this idea; the legitimate king should rule. Both Zempoalla and Traxalla are overjoyed when they hear that Montezuma wants to defect to

their side. When he does, he defeats the Peruvians and captures Orazia and the Ynca, who continues his scorn against his former general:

Thou are but grown a Rebel by success,  
And I that scorn'd *Orazia* shou'd be ty'd  
To thee my slave, must now esteem thee less:  
Rebellion is a greater guilt than Pride. (216)

Montezuma counters with advice of his own, saying that "Princes see others faults but not their own" (216). Here the two noble men both practice hypocrisy, demonstrating the dangers of unjust arbitrary rule. Montezuma becomes the ally of usurpers out of spite and anger, and the Ynca as prisoner continues to scorn Montezuma.

Acasis, our example of true honor, has become friends with Montezuma, and reveals his distaste at becoming prince through his mother's usurpation; he is especially disgusted with Traxalla, the "monster" who "shares the guilt and throne" (220). Acasis, perhaps not surprisingly, also reveals to Montezuma that he too loves Orazia, revealing the love triangle so prevalent rhymed heroic plays. As the exemplary hero, Acasis saves Montezuma after both heroes are captured; as Traxalla is about to kill Montezuma, Acasis swears he will kill himself if this happens. To complicate matters, just before Zempoalla orders Traxalla to kill Montezuma, she realizes that she is attracted to her captive (revealed in an aside), and thus spares him. Acasis asks her to return Orazia and the Ynca to Montezuma and spare them all, but she attributes Acasis's compassion for the immaturity of youth:

Honour is but an itch in youthful blood,  
Of doing acts extravagantly good;  
We call that virtue, which is only heat  
That reigns in youth, till age finds out the cheat. (226)

Zempoalla here accuses her son of immaturity for an act which she herself has committed by falling for Montezuma and allowing this to interfere with her judgment. Typically, Dryden's

villains allow their passions to rule them, which becomes their downfall<sup>10</sup>, and this is again part of the lesson for Charles, whose passions have caused many to scorn him. This is also of course a trait in Monteuma. Traxalla embodies this as well in falling for Orazia.

Thus, as in *Mustapha*, and the myriad printed tracts, the usurpers turn against one another, reminding us that rebels cannot and should not rule. Zempoalla threatens to kill Orazia so that she can have Montezuma, but Traxalla counters by threatening to kill Montezuma if she does this. These passions burn in the villains, who, despite good council, refuse to put aside their own selfish feelings, unlike Acasis and Orrerian heroes who practice immense self-sacrifice. Again, the two embattled usurpers betray one another; Traxalla means for Orazia to submit to him or else watch Montezuma die. Montezuma heroically asks for death, but Zempoalla melodramatically interposes and threatens to kill Orazia if Traxalla harms Montezuma. Montezuma also refuses to save himself, rejecting her advances.

Acasis, defying his mother, sets Montezuma and Orazia free. Taking a cue from Clorimun and Altimast in *The Generall*, Montezuma and Acasis, now even in their debts to one another, agree to fight for Orazia's hand, though neither wants to kill the other. Here it is Montezuma who finds himself in the hero's predicament:

Oh Tyrant Love, how cruel are thy Laws!  
I forfeit Friendship, or betray thy Cause.  
That Person whom I wou'd defend from all  
The World, that Person by my hand must fall. (234)

They fight, and Acasis is wounded, though not mortally. Before the fight can go further, Orazia stops them, and begs Acasis to give her up, lest he die; he feels he will die either way. Zempoalla and Traxalla interrupt them and seize Montezuma, and Orazia offers herself as a prisoner so that she can die with Montezuma. Zempoalla orders them to be executed immediately. Acasis vows:

I'll quench your thirst with Blood, and will destroy  
My self, and with myself, your cruel joy.  
Now *Montezuma* since *Orazia* dyes,  
I'll fall before thee, the first Sacrifice;  
My title in her death shall exceed thine,  
As much as, in her life, thy hopes did mine:  
And when with our mix'd blood the Altar's dy'd,  
Then our new Title let the Gods decide. (236)

As in *Orrery*, *Acasis* means at least to deserve the girl if he cannot have her. As he stands in defiance of his mother at the execution, *Acasis* charges his own mother with treachery and usurpation:

Dar'st thou, who didst thy Princes life betray,  
Once name that duty, thou hast thrown away:  
Like thy injustice to this stranger shown,  
To, tax him with a guilt, that is thy own? (240)

In utter despair that he could not save them, *Acasis* stabs himself. When *Zempoalla* asks why he calls *Orazia's* name as he is dying she reminds him, "I am thy mother," he tells her,

No, you are my shame,  
That blood is shed that you had title in,  
And with your title may it end your sin:  
Unhappy Prince [the *Ynca*], you may forgive me now  
Thus bleeding for my mothers cruel vow. (241)

This is reminiscent of *Zanger's* sacrifice in *Mustapha* in his refusing to reap the benefits of a treacherous act, and demonstrates again the evils of usurpation. Honor in the usurper's offspring here outweighs that of the *Ynca* and *Montezuma*, presumably good men.

*Acasis's* act delays the executions just long enough; the Mexicans are under attack by forces led by the rightful queen, *Amexia*, who has told all that *Montezuma* is her long lost son. *Zempoalla* cannot bear that she loved her rival's son, and stabs herself as well, but not before freeing *Montezuma*, who valiantly kills *Traxalla*, who had drawn his sword on him: "So may all Rebels dye: / This end has treason joyn'd with cruelty" (250).



Montezuma learns from Garucca, Amexia's faithful servant, that "You are the issue of our murdered King, / Sent by that Traytor to his blest abode, / Whom, to be made a King, he made a God" (243). Montezuma then, reflective of Breda, offers forgiveness and life to Zempoalla, who refuses his offer by killing herself. As a reward for his valor, the Empress offers Orazia to Montezuma. The Ynca can no longer refuse on his previous grounds, nor does he want to, since Montezuma is a legitimate prince.

Though not revealed until the last moment, Montezuma is of noble and royal blood. This revelation explains a number of things: Montezuma's acts of nobility; his victory twice in single combat, defeating the heroic Acasis and the more heavily armed Traxalla; and his getting the royal princess in the end. Acasis, though of more honorable character than his rival Montezuma, never has a chance as the son of a usurper. His status as the issue of treachery also results in his death. If he cannot live, Zempoalla and Traxalla, as traitors, must also die. Montezuma's nobility also gives him an excuse for his questionable actions (such as turning traitor against the Ynca). However, Dryden differs from Orrery in demonstrating the collapse of consensus, even more so than in *Mustapha*. Montezuma, who has been the rightful king all along, allows his own desires and emotions to overtake him, and refuses to listen to good advice. He is not even as righteous a man as the martyred Acasis, the son of traitors. Therefore, this play is a clear warning to Charles that kings, if allowing their passions to rule them, can go wrong, suggesting that Charles can afford to work harder to preserve his reputation.

The similarities, however, between *The Indian Queene* and Orrery's plays are easily identifiable. The usurper is vanquished, the rightful queen and her heir are restored, and rebellion, excepting that by the rightful heirs, is put down, or reversed by the union by marriage of the two tribes. Also, especially like *Mustapha*, which debuted months after this play, Dryden

can advise Charles against allowing his passions to rule his behavior; by revealing Montezuma's true identity at the end, this temporary lapse is a trait belonging to the King only in retrospect, rather than the audience actively knowing that the King was committing these acts. Still, despite its similarities with Orrery, *The Indian Queene* goes further than any of Orrery's plays in demonstrating the failure of consensus, and the increasing ineffectiveness of the rhymed heroic play to act as royalist propaganda.

This can be seen also in the clear penchant for true villains to unsuccessfully avoid becoming slave to their passions, which is something which appears sparingly in Orrery, notably with the King in *The Generall*, and in a limited way afterwards, with Solyman in *Mustapha*. Many scholars have noted this similar trend in Dryden's heroic plays,<sup>11</sup> but Derek Hughes perhaps sums it up best: "Each of [Dryden's] plays suggests that dedication to passion is enslavement to mortality. That all who seek divinity in the pursuit of passion are, by a tragic paradox, merely strengthening their bondage to change and death" (*Dryden's Heroic Plays* 11). This trait can be seen in both the usurpers and in the rightful rulers, suggesting consensus. Thus Dryden is expanding on an issue that Orrery had introduced, yet not emphasized in his advice to the King: that "the tyranny of a king is a direct cause of anarchy in the state (80). This is really one of the chief points of emphasis that Barbeau seems to undervalue to the primacy of philosophical and political influence of Dryden's plays.

Thus, *The Indian Queene* served essentially the same functions as Orrery's plays, depicting the nobility and heroism of the rulers and backing up monarchical right, though with more emphasis on such issues as the dangers of civil war and armed rebellion. It also falls more into line with *Mustapha*, which again displays the erosion of the effectiveness of royalist propaganda in the Restoration. This can be seen in the criticism/advising of Charles, especially in

his well-publicized affairs. This may be because the play came at a time when many of Charles's actions in this regard were held up to public scrutiny. This public exposure of Charles's amours was the source of much gossip, and ironically one of these instances occurred at his attendance at *The Indian Queen* near the end of January 1664. According to Pepys, he heard the episode thus:

... the King, coming the other day to his Theatre to see *The Indian Queene* (which he commends for a very fine thing), my Lady Castlemaine was in the next box before he came; and leaning over other ladies awhile to whisper to the King, she rose out of the box and went into the King's and sat herself on the King's right hand, between the King and the Duke of Yorke—which, he swears put the King himself, as well as everybody else, out of countenance, and believes that she did it only to show the world that she is not out of favour yet—as was believed. (Pepys 5: 33)

Clearly, the pulse of the day was moving quickly away from May of 1660, and both Orrery's and Dryden's plays of the mid-1660s reflect this feeling of fear and anxiety that the King was not handling himself in a way that promoted the country's well-being, and thus Charles's tools of hegemony ceased to be such. This situation only worsened as the plague spread to London. *The Indian Queene* is indicative of the tenuous support that Charles's authors lent him, and the waning strength of that support, especially compared with Orrery's earlier plays. Consensus is now cracking, and hegemonic discourse has given way to questions and advice.

### *The Indian Emperour*

Dryden's final heroic play before the plague forced the theatres to close was his sequel to *The Indian Queen*, called *The Indian Emperour* (1665). A solo effort by Dryden, the play was apparently attended often by the King (Summers 251), and was revived several times. Pepys saw it multiple times, though apparently not during its first run. The play was also apparently popular at court, as was the heroic genre in general. Dryden's later dedication of the play, addressed to the Duchess of Monmouth, wife to the King's eldest illegitimate son, relates:

The favour which Heroick Plays have lately found upon our Theaters has been wholly derive'd to them from the countenance and approbation they have receiv'd at Court. The most eminent persons for Wit and Honour in the Royal Circle having so far ownd them, that they have judg'd no way so fit as Verse to entertain a Noble Audience, or to express a noble passion. (Dryden, *The Dramatic Works*, 271)

Indeed, a very revealing anecdote about the Court's fondness of this play has been passed down to us by Pepys, in a somewhat surprising account that he heard in 1668 about during a performance of *The Indian Emperour* that members of King Charles's Court acted. Pepys himself was not present, but apparently the members of Court, including spectator King Charles himself, embodied some of the very problems that Dryden (and others) illuminates in his plays, particularly the rhymed heroic plays. Pepys's account goes thus:

...there they fell to discourse of the last night's work at Court, where the ladies and Duke of Monmouth and others acted *The Indian Emperour*—wherein they told me these things most remarkable:...That she did sit near the players of the Duke's house; among the rest, Mis [Mary "Moll"] Davis, who is the most impertinent slut she says in the world, and the more, now the King doth show her countenance and is reckoned his mistress, even to the scorn of the whole world, the King gazing on her, and my Lady Castlemayne being melancholy and out of humour, all the play, not smiling once. (Pepys 9: 23-24)

Given the themes of this play and the rest of the heroic plays of this era, it would seem that, as Dryden asserted in his "Defence," which ironically accompanied the printed edition of *The Indian Emperour*, entertainment was the chief value of these plays at least certainly to the Court, which apparently ignored the warnings of writers such as Dryden and Orrery. And these warnings were apparently needed but unheeded, as Charles's actions toward Moll Davis attest, as related by Pepys:

The King, it seems, hath given her a ring of 700*l*, which she shows to everybody, and owns that the King did give it her. And he hath furnished a house for her in Suffolke-Street most richly for her, which is a most infinite shame. It seems she is a bastard of Collonell Howard, my Lord Barkshire, and that he do pimp to her for the King, and hath got her for him. (24)

The fact that Pepys supported the King yet wrote these things, albeit in his personal diary, is further testament to the general unrest around the kingdom, sentiments that Dryden addresses in *The Indian Emperour*. The play is even less decipherable than *The Indian Queen*, possibly in order to create plausible deniability in its questioning of the king's behavior. Orrery, a confirmed Royalist, essentially did the same thing with *Mustapha* through Solyman. Likewise, Montezuma, still a protagonist in *The Indian Emperour*, does not explicitly serve as the Charles II figure, as he had in *The Indian Queen*. However, since Montezuma *had* served at least a portion of that function in the previous play, the theatre-going audience would still have an association of that character with Charles, especially since Montezuma was the son of the deposed and martyred king, and had been restored. That the play was so well attended by the King and that there was even a Court performance of it suggests that Dryden succeeded in covering his tracks, though it apparently did little to squelch any doubts about the King's character or persuade him to change his habits.

Yet the play could not all be criticism. Nancy Maguire notes that Dryden, even though he was evolving even further away from unquestioned consensus, still tries to fulfill the heroic play's function of exonerating himself and supporting the King's right to rule. She says that Dryden is "Assuring the King and theatre audience that it was 'they' who broke the code—not himself and other contrite and converted Royalists..." (*Regicide and Restoration* 197). Yet times were beginning to get desperate. Indeed, Derek Hughes and Nancy Maguire agree that this play is the most "pessimistic" of all the heroic plays (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 197; Hughes, *Dryden's Heroic Plays* 58), thanks to the souring perception of the king which was only getting worse. Thus Montezuma, whose faults were clearly on display in *The Indian Queen*, seems to double those follies in *The Indian Emperour*.

Maguire also posits that Dryden attempted to “both please the King and to promote himself by creating a monarchical myth” in showing the late “Indian Queen’s bastard children as prime marriage candidates.” By doing this, Maguire theorizes, Dryden was capitalizing on the attention put upon the Duke of Monmouth (Maguire 195-96), whose wife, as we have seen, was the recipient of Dryden’s dedication of the play. Since Charles’s queen, Catherine of Braganza, was apparently barren, Monmouth was a potential heir to the throne for a king with no legitimate children. It seems more probable, however, that Dryden was warning against such mixing, not necessarily because of the traditional view that such mixing was degrading to kingly blood, but because his obedience to his own passion and other choices leads in this play to more civil war and destruction than even appears in *The Indian Queene*. Thus, Dryden is still writing consensus plots to help keep Charles on the throne, but the hegemonic message no longer remains.

*The Indian Emperour’s* plot, it must be cautioned, is complex and convoluted. It concerns Cortez’s invasion of Montezuma’s empire. Orazia, Montezuma’s wife and the Ynca’s daughter from the previous play, has died and Montezuma holds a ceremony where the noble men of the empire will choose their wives. Montezuma wishes to remarry, and he surprisingly chooses Almeria, the illegitimate daughter of the dead usurpers Zempoalla and Traxalla. She shuns this proposal, as Montezuma was in her view the architect of both her parents’ deaths. Almeria’s sister, Alibech, and especially her brother, Orbellan, urge her not to spurn the king—Alibech because it would “please our Mothers Ghost that you succeed / To all the glories of her Rivals Bed” (Dryden, *The Dramatic Works* 279), and Orbellan because it allow Almeria to be “the lasting torment of his [Montezuma’s] life” (280). Alibech’s refusal is transparent and saucy:

...I’le not flatter this tempestuous King;  
But work his stubborn soul a nobler way,  
And, if he love, I’le force him to obey.  
[To Montezuma] I take this Garland, not as given by you,

But as my merit and my beautys due.  
As for the Crown that you, my slave, possess,  
To share it with you would but make me less. (280-281)

Montezuma however chooses not to punish these remarks, allowing such insubordination from the spawn of usurpers to go unpunished. His countenancing of insubordination is a foretaste of his actions which will allow the destruction of his kingdom.

Montezuma's eldest son Odmar also goes against reason as he chooses Alibech, Almeria's sister, but his younger brother Guyomar wants her, too. In a scene astonishingly reminiscent of the argument between Orrery's characters Mustapha and Zanger, they argue over who saw her first and who loves her more. Alibech finally tells them that time will reveal which of the two she will marry. Orbellan, the son of Zempoalla and Traxalla, sheepishly tells Montezuma that he wants to marry Montezuma's daughter, Cydaria, who responds coldly to the prospect, as he is the son of usurpers. She appears here to be the only one who sees the danger inherent in matching with the heirs of traitors. Yet, though he chafes at the idea, Montezuma urges her to accept, which makes sense given that the Ynca had tried to refuse to let him marry Orazia, and that he himself wants to marry Almeria. Odmar thinks that Orbellan's match with his sister is a bad idea, but Montezuma will not hear such treacherous talk, though he allowed Almeria to speak even more saucily to him. Cydaria refuses Orbellan's hand, but before any more can be said, news comes that they are under attack from the Indian allies of the newly-arrived Spanish conquistadores. This scene of matching begins to reveal the problem of this play as potential royalist propaganda; some legitimate rulers and their children are willing to marry the children of usurpers, and vice versa. Given Charles's consorting with many women, and fathering their children where he could not produce an heir with his own queen, the conclusion

here is that Dryden is setting up the fall of a kingdom by beginning with ill matches that the audience would detect immediately as ill-advised.

When Cortez landed, his orders were that there was to be no attack until Montezuma refused to be friends, so the battle stops. Cortez's "friendship" terms include the demand of Montezuma's homage to Charles V of Spain, and the Indians' conversion to (Catholic) Christianity. Montezuma refuses, maintaining that his crown is "absolute, and holds of none. / I cannot in a base subjection live" (287). It becomes clear that there will be a war, but Cortez's discovery of Cydaria's beauty and her obvious attraction to him will clearly complicate events. Cydaria's affection for Cortez is another curiosity; Dryden depicts it as honorable, perhaps because in contrast to Montezuma, Cortez is the greatest hero of the play. Cydaria is certainly, along with her brother Guyomar, the most level-headed of the young lovers.

As mentioned above, it becomes clear that Cortez, while not the one central character, is actually crafted by Dryden as a hero, even on a par with Montezuma, and in some ways superior. No more do we see the "repetitive plot schema" explained by Maguire in which one-to-one relationships are clear. This general, reminiscent of Monk, will prove to be easily the most heroic between himself and Montezuma. Yet because of this, there has to be an ambiguity as to which characters resemble who, or the play could not be produced, due to its subversive nature. Thus the increasing ambiguity in character relationships to real figures. So therefore Cortez cannot be said to be Monk, though many traits are there. Cortez is, however, the soldier of a European king, which would not have been lost on the audience.

When Cortez and Cydaria discover their love for one another, she and Alibech urge him to stop the war against Montezuma:

CORTEZ. If for my self to Conquer here I came,  
You might perhaps my actions justly blame:



Now I am sent, and am not to dispute  
 My Princes orders, but to execute.  
 ALIBECH. He who his Prince so blindly does obey,  
 To keep his Faith his Vertue throws away.  
 CORTEZ. Monarchs may err, but should each private breast  
 Judge their ill Acts, they would dispute their best.  
 CYDARIA. Then all your care is for your Prince I see,  
 Your truth to him out-weighs your love to me;  
 You may so cruel to deny me prove,  
 But never after that pretend to love.  
 CORTEZ. Command my Life, and I will soon obey,  
 To save my Honour I my Blood will pay. (292)

Cortez's talk of honor here is clearly that of a heroic character, as is Cydaria's. Dryden deals with a very sticky situation here. The heroic character here wishes to follow his sovereign's commands without question, though unlike Orrery he outwardly and explicitly in the dialogue admits the fallibility of kings. Whether he agrees or not with his king (also named Charles, coincidentally) is of no consequence; Cortez clearly believes he should keep any objections to himself. Thus, Dryden gives his unequivocal support to the King's sovereignty while acknowledging his faults, and he cleverly does it within the familiar pattern of the heroic romance with its now-familiar heroic debate between love and honor. But Cydaria's pleas give him pause. Cortez's recognizable heroic dilemma compounds when he calls off the war because of Cydaria's wishes:

Honour, be gone, what are thou but a breath?  
 I'll live, proud of my infamy and shame,  
 Grac'd with no Triumph but a Lovers name;  
 Men can but say Love did his reason blind,  
 And Love's the noblest frailty of the mind. (293)

Cortez, though shown already as a great and honorable hero, casts off his honor for love, and it will cost him eventually.

Unfortunately, despite Cortez's order to cease fire, the attack has already begun. Noting the Orrerian excuse for disobedience, which is love, it appears that Dryden's excuse is showing

how one's passions, especially in a prince, can lead to destruction, while Orrery employed it to show that disobedience can be something other than treason, and that honorable, too.

The rival brothers Guyomar and Odmar have their own honor to prove, having learned from Alibech that she loves one and hates the other. She says she will accept the suit of the brother who is most courageous and successful in battle, and never reveal which of the two she loves. The test for each comes when when Montezuma and Alibech are pursued by Cortez's men; Odmar chooses to save Alibech ("I'll follow Love."); Guyomar chooses to save his father ("I'll follow piety") (295).

Cortez's army is victorious, though because of his love for Cydaria, he vows to her that he will make no further terms than he had made before the battle. After a tearful scene with her wherein she doubts his love for her, he proves it by freeing her brother Guyomar, who was captured saving his father. Guyomar, a heroic character in his own right, is awestruck by the honor and courage of his captor, praising him and calling him "Son of the Sun, my Fetters cannot be / But Glorious for me, since put on by thee" (298), further solidifying Cortez's status as hero. Guyomar agrees to take Cortez's terms back to Montezuma. Once he does, he is the only one who feels Montezuma should accept the terms, esteeming Cortez highly. His relationship with Cortez is reminiscent of Montezuma's with Acasis in *The Indian Queen*, as mutually respecting foes. Refusing Cortez's terms, Alibech is highly interested in fighting the Spanish, and she persuades her brother Orbellan to sneak into Cortez's camp and kill him. Though Orbellan does not like the baseness of the act, Alibech reminds him that Cortez is his rival for Cydaria and that "daring Courage makes ill actions good, / 'Tis foolish pity spares a Rivals blood" (302). Guyomar overhears the conversation and resolves to help his new friend. This he does, by sending a warning to Cortez, who captures Orbellan, then spares him. But once he escorts his

rival out of the Spanish camp, he gives Orbellan a sword and says, “I sav’d your Life, now keep it if you can, / *Cydaria* shall be for the bravest Man” (304). He wounds Orbellan in the hand, but lets him go anyway, even though Orbellan will not give *Cydaria* up. Cortez feels fettered by his own honor: “Unlucky Honour that controuls’t my will! / Why have I vanquish’d, since I must not Kill?” (305). Fate intervenes, giving Cortez another chance to fight Orbellan, and this time he kills Orbellan, but is himself captured.

A debate over honor ensues; Almeria thinks Cortez should die for killing her brother, but he argues that under rules of war he cannot be harmed (curiously, it appears that all the Indians understand the “rules” of warfare despite the fact that they have never seen foreigners). Now Montezuma is in the familiar difficulty of having to choose between honoring the woman he loves and following the rules of honor and sparing the man who had done the same for him: “How Gratitude and Love divide my breast! / Both ways alike my Soul is robb’d of rest” (308). He ends up acting the tyrant as he chooses his passions over honor and decides to kill Cortez. This is another rash choice that will set tragic events in motion. By following his passions and not his honor, Montezuma, the hero from *The Indian Queen* and the legitimate ruler of his kingdom, will set his kingdom in harm’s way.

This begins when Guyomar intervenes with the execution, giving Cortez his sword; thus, the son proves worthier than the father, who is ready to kill his own son for treachery, despite his own dishonorable actions. Montezuma’s other son Odmar steps in, telling him that his brother was only preventing his father from doing wrong, and further, “He is my Rival, but his Death would be / For him too glorious, and too base for me” (308). Guyomar means to die honorably, and seeing this, Cortez returns the sword to Montezuma, asking only that his own death be soon and swift, so that he does not have to see *Cydaria* weep any longer. Amidst all this, Montezuma

finally grants Cortez a stay of two days, after which, he tells Almeria, he will kill Cortez if she still wants him to. Montezuma here makes some attempt at the appearance of honor, but he is and will remain slave to his own lusts.

Not willing to wait for two days, Almeria decides to kill Cortez in his cell, before Montezuma can change his mind again. But when she sees that Cortez does not fear her, she exclaims, “I cannot kill thee, sure thou bear’st some Charm, / Or some Divinity holds back my Arm” (310). Several times she is ready to strike, but cannot kill him; she finds herself infatuated with the defenseless hero, even though he will not renounce his love to Cydaria.

Alibech too wants the fighting to end; the besieged Indians are starving, and she beseeches Guyomar to end the war by freeing Cortez. Even though he loves and respects Cortez, he will not betray his father and king, nor his honor:

I to do this! I, whom you once thought brave,  
To sell my Countrey, and my King Enslave?  
All I have done by one foul act deface,  
And yield my right to you, by turning base?  
What more could *Odmар* wish that I should do  
To lose your Love, then you persuade me to?  
No, Madam, no, I never can commit  
A deed so ill, nor can you suffer it... (314)

Alibech says that she will ask Odmар instead, but still Guyomar refuses. She then argues that kings are not to be obeyed if they are wrong, but importantly, he warns against this:

ALIBECH: When Kings grow stubborn, slothful, or unwise,  
Each private man for public good should rise.  
GUYOMAR: Take heed, Fair Maid, how Monarchs you accuse:  
Such reasons none but impious Rebels use:  
Those who to Empire by dark paths aspire,  
Still plead a call to what they most desire;  
But Kings by free consent their Kingdoms take,  
Strict as those Sacred Ties which Nuptials make;  
And what e’re faults in Princes time reveal,  
None can be Judge where can be no Appeal. (314)

Here again appears Hobbes's (or Filmer's) argument against questioning the sovereign, which surely would have attracted Charles, despite the obvious warnings and criticisms in the play that Dryden threw in his direction, and which are implied in that exchange. It seems that there is a dual message here: one is that rulers should be honorable and just, forsaking their own lusts and pleasures for the good of the realm; the second is that to take up arms against the legitimate king, even a tyrant, will result in internal destruction. We must count on our rulers, therefore, to be wise and honorable. The message is that Charles II is not a good king, but that rebellion against him is not an option. So this play, then, while clearly royalist, only halfway supports the king, and thus renders it impotent as a royalist propagandistic piece.

Guyomar denies Alibech's request "with a Bleeding Heart," and he adds that "'Tis hard with me whatever choice I make; / I must not merit you, or must forsake" (315), reciting the familiar heroic lines. True to her word, Alibech does make the request of Odmar, who agrees immediately, and Alibech makes note of this, revealing to the audience that Guyomar has always had her heart, and she notes that in Odmar's haste, and "granting me so soon. / He has the merit of the gift undone" (316). Guyomar has refused his passion, and Odmar has embraced it. We will see that this course of actions leads to tragedy for the kingdom.

Guyomar, still the loyal soldier, leads his men in a desperate attack against Cortez's men, which surprises the Spanish. Cortez's lieutenants, who were cavorting with Indian women and taken by surprise, are captured. Montezuma proclaims after the victory that Guyomar shall marry Alibech, but she chides Montezuma because he wants to kill and sacrifice the Spanish the following day. Guyomar's new fame and reward incenses Odmar, who cannot control his passions:

I feel a strange Temptation in my will  
To do an action, great at once and ill:

Vertue ill treated, from my Soul is fled;  
I by Revenge and Love am wholly led:  
Yet Conscience would against my rage Rebel—  
—Conscience, the foolish pride of doing well!  
Sink Empire, Father Perish, Brother Fall,  
Revenge does more then recompence you all. (318)

Therefore, succumbing to his emotions, Odmar offers to free the prisoners that evening and give them weapons so they can wreak havoc upon his people. He asks only for the hand of the woman he loves, and does not name her. Vazquez, one of the prisoners, asks also to have one woman he has noticed, to which Odmar agrees.

Also unable to control her feelings is Almeria, who goes again to Cortez in prison to try to woo him. He will not relent, though he shows his Platonic devotion to her by kissing her hand. Cydaria, seeing this and believing him to be in love with Almeria, cries out, while Almeria plays along. Almeria tries to kill Cydaria, but Cortez saves her and instead Almeria accidentally stabs Cortez, though not fatally. Almeria tries to kill herself like her mother did, but Cortez stops her. Cortez's men, newly freed by Odmar, come to let him out, and he takes Cydaria to a tower to keep her safe, and asks his other man, Pizarro, to watch her, but Pizarro tells the audience that he will instead leave his post and share in the plunder.

After freeing Cortez's men, Odmar captures Guyomar and Alibech. However, Vasquez stops Odmar from killing them because Alibech is the woman he had said he wanted. Odmar refuses, because she of course is the woman he intends to marry and they fight, Odmar falling. Guyomar fights Vasquez to avenge his brother (though not without sportingly allowing Vasquez a moment to rest), and kills Vasquez. The true heroic brother thus remains, his rivals slain, leaving him a clear path to the woman he loves, because he has never wavered in his devotion and honor.

As this is happening, Montezuma has been captured and is tortured by a priest because he will not convert to Catholicism; before Montezuma can be killed, Cortez arrives and sets him free. Cortez chastises the priest for his actions, calling priests, “You Enemies of Crowns” (330), which is instructive, given the fact that Charles was famously tolerant of Catholics (and that his brother was not far away from publicly converting). Once Montezuma is free, Alibech tricks him into getting Cydaria to open the door to her secure tower, and she forces herself inside with Cydaria and closes all the gates. At this, Montezuma kills himself, since his beloved Alibech plans to kill his daughter. Before the tower doors can be breached by Cortez’s men, Almeria stabs Cydaria and then herself. Cydaria’s wound, however, is not mortal. Unexpectedly, Almeria, daughter of two traitors, is repentant at the end, kind to Cortez and Cydaria and somewhat blessing their eventual union. Cortez finds in his heroic nature to give her kind words as she dies. Guyomar is released, and he and Alibech, now left with no real home, will travel to the north to be and love together, after burying Montezuma.

Clearly, this play defies simple description or interpretation, and is difficult even to summarize. Looking at the rare deaths on the Restoration stage, this one compares with *Mustapha*, though the deaths in this play are deserved by treachery or some other failing, while the righteous survive, if wounded at times. The exemplary characters in the play begin with Cortez (who recovers from his non-heroic acts with only a non-fatal wound), who conquers the Indians, chastises his own people when they fail to act honorably, and displays courage even in the face of death. There is also Guyomar, who honorably obeys his father over his passions, acquits himself with distinction on the battlefield, and also avenges his brother, though a traitor and rival. Note that as in *Orrery*, such heroes get the girl, and Guyomar and Cortez each receive their object of affection. These two women, Alibech and Cydaria, also are the exemplary

heroines who get their just desserts at the end of the play because of their heroic and virtuous behavior. Thus, deserving couples, never part of a usurpation, end up together. It should be noted that Cydaria did go against her father in loving Cortez, but as he is one of the virtuous, she too receives only a non-fatal wound.

By contrast, many characters act as arbiters of cowardice, indiscretion, and civil war, such as Montezuma, Orbellan, Odmar, and Alibech. One of the clearest points identified by many scholars is that Dryden is clear in his assertion that excess of passion and enslavement to feelings such as lust and jealousy leads to civil war and death. We see this over and over in *The Indian Emperour*. The theme of peaceful allegiance to the rightful ruler is still prevalent, though with a good dose of advice and guidance for the king. Almeria, taking her parents' cue and serving to betray a king, allows this to happen, as do Orbellan, the brother of Almeria, and Odmar, Montezuma's own son. Perhaps the biggest example of this is Montezuma himself, whose many indiscretions lead to his own death, and also perhaps to the fierce rivalry between his two sons. Cortez allows his passions to rule his judgment as well, though presumably because of his untainted love for Cydaria, the legitimate daughter of Montezuma. He is eventually able to recover his senses and still get the girl. It is in these "villainous" characters, many scholars have noted, that Hobbes's philosophy lies; they allow their position as rulers to upset their judgment.<sup>12</sup> One thing that can be said is that compared to the plays of Orrery, where the "sidekick" has the issues of loving another who he cannot have, and sacrifices them for the best of the kingdom because of honor, the love predicament transfers in Dryden to the ruler himself. This ruler allows his love to *negatively* influence the kingdom, even if the kings are inherently good men and legitimate monarchs. This is an important point in showing that Charles did indeed, by his behavior, influence the evolution of the rhymed heroic play as his attempted control of the ISA



of theatre diminished. Because of his own public shortcomings, Charles has now unwittingly initiated the mutation of the rhymed heroic play from propagandistic tool to cautionary tale.

Aside from entertaining the audience, the play again appears to be a warning to Charles not to allow his own lust get in the way of his character and ability to govern, and simultaneously a warning to subjects not to consider rebellion or treachery, because civil war is an evil that Dryden does not want to see repeated, and treachery leads to civil war. We see the depiction of these dangers with this play in early 1665, and in Orrery's *Mustapha* later that year; fears and concerns about the country's well-being and questions about Charles's ability to rule and live conscientiously seem to be mounting. These later plays, while certainly critical of Charles, work also to attempt to support the King's right to rule without rebellion.

Thus, the trend of consensus theatre acting as Ideological State Apparatus abruptly ended with the plague forcing the closings after *Mustapha*. By this time the King himself had personally established a fashion with the rhymed heroic play, and his actions and attitudes had forced the evolution of that genre to a guarded criticism, though it still supported his sovereignty. The "It King" still controlled the theatre, both intentionally and accidentally, though his attempts at hegemonic consensus were clearly failing.

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#### End Notes

<sup>1</sup> For examples, see Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 3 for her first detailed description of "tragicomedy" coming from the Fletcher tradition, and her mention of the Caroline court in Fisk, *Cambridge Companion* 88; Hume mentions Fletcher's influence (193, 233-4); and Lynch talks about Henrietta Maria's influence in Orrery's plays (171). Clark mentions Caroline court influence in Orrery's *The Generall* (28); Rothstein talks about Fletcher's influence in detail (55-59).

<sup>2</sup> See Clark 30, Lynch 169, Maguire 62, 95-6.

<sup>3</sup> See Clark 29, 69-70; Lynch 171, 192-3; Hughes, *Dryden's Heroic Plays* 5-11 for more full explanations of this sentiment.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Betterton played Owen Tudor, his wife Mary Saunderson Betterton (who Pepys calls "Ianthé" because she played that part in Davenant's *The Siege of Rhodes*, played Princess Katherine, and Henry Harris played Henry V

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(Avery 79).

<sup>5</sup> See Chapter 2 p. 65.

<sup>6</sup> For more on Orrery's persuasion of Charles in this play, see pages 563-70 of Tomlinson's essay, "The Restoration English History Plays of Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery."

<sup>7</sup> Some examples are Derek Hughes, in which he examines the fact that scholars are "reluctant" to take Dryden's praise "at face value" (*English Drama* 42-43); he also mentions that Dryden eventually "reacted vigorously against the Orrery model" (454); Clark (39). Of the authors examined in this chapter, only Lynch seems to imply that Dryden was sincere (170).

<sup>8</sup> See Hume 199; Barbeau 25, 39; Fujimura 39.

<sup>9</sup> For more on Hobbes's philosophy in Dryden's plays, see Barbeau, especially pages 25-54, Fujimura, "The Appeal of Dryden's Heroic Plays," Hughes, *English Drama* 12-13, 199.

<sup>10</sup> See Barbeau 71-72; Hughes, *Dryden's Heroic Plays* 11, 23-28; Garganigo.

<sup>11</sup> See Hughes, *Dryden's Heroic Plays* 11, 25-28, 37, 46, 56 and *English Drama* 46-50; Fujimura, "The Appeal of Dryden's Heroic Plays"; Garganigo; Barbeau 4, 15, 67-76; 87-88; Maguire 197 for a few examples.

<sup>12</sup> See Hume 199; Barbeau 25-40 (See especially 25-27); Fujimura, "The Appeal of Dryden's Heroic Plays." 39.

## CHAPTER 5: CONSENSUS AND COMEDY: LAUGHTER AND “LOVE” IN THE THEATRE OF CONSENSUS

Though the rhymed heroic play is a specifically hegemonic genre tailored to the monarchical needs of Charles II, other new plays demonstrate the consensus cycle of the Restoration. The previous chapter identified a serious form of Restoration drama, and by contrast this chapter is concerned with how comedies were also propaganda. An examination of three comedies, which use the comedic form to establish consensus, but as a whole eventually fail to do so, will show similar results to those found in the print and rhymed heroic plays: that Charles II specifically through his own personal and political doings, often not intended, shaped the very nature of the theatre and set the stage for the more “productive” and certainly more popular and visible Restoration theatre that we see in anthologies and occasional revivals today.

Comedy in the Restoration mirrored the conduct and perception, as well as the personality, of Charles II even, as we have seen, before the Restoration itself. Yet it did so in different ways, such as focusing less on the “good” characters who represent royalist ideology, and more on satirizing the base character of the usurpers. There is, as will become clear, a good bit of satire in the new comedies, and it has the same goals as the serious forms of theatre: to hegemonically project the illusion of consensus, until it ultimately breaks down, and authors cease to write plays for the specific reason to use them as royalist propaganda in support of Charles II, and more for the purposes of entertaining the audience.

The hegemonic aspect of early Restoration comedy is apparent in its themes. Canfield’s study of Restoration comedy reveals that comedies are concerned largely with the reclaiming of estates by those who the authors intimated should rightfully occupy them, meaning the aristocracy. The recovery of these estates is, Canfield asserts, akin to the recovery of England

itself (Canfield, *Tricksters* 2). To reacquire this coveted property, Canfield notes, is to turn to tricksters who have to resort to defeating the wrongful possessors of these estates to reclaim what is rightfully theirs (6). This is reflective of the playwrights and others who we have seen tried to seize the opportunity to thrive and in some instances rehabilitate their images through service to the king and his consensus. It is also indicative of the fact that the plays are, like the other early plays, consensus-building tools at work, or at least they were at the beginning of the Restoration. Further, Canfield also notes that bodies are at stake; the sexy bodies of even aged Cavaliers are triumphant over the comedic silliness of the puritanical thieves who would retain ill-gotten property to which they have no ideological right. This is also significant in the contested ground of the women's bodies which are the key in some instances to obtaining the rightful estate through marriage (2). Susan Owen would seem to agree with Canfield's emphasis on the contest over rightful ownership of that which will maintain power and prestige: "What is at stake in these plays is a property. The satire of upstart Puritans has a bitter edge because they have expropriated the estates of the loyal but impoverished Cavalier heroes" (Owen 126). Tatham's *The Rump*, which we discussed in Chapter 2, is a fine example of this satire depicting the struggle over property, including eligible women. Since, as we have seen, Charles II's body and personal image, or personality, was of such importance in the alternate veneration and derision of his kingship, it appears that this idea of property and bodies as the locus of contention reinforces the idea that Charles, through the attempted and eventually unsuccessful consensus, is as much the center of Restoration comedy as he was the serious forms. The main difference is that he does not personally appear as an allegorical character. Yet the events of his life and reign do just as much to affect the plots and devices of comedy.

To further illustrate this point, we can again examine the plays' abuse of the enemies of king and court; we have seen it already in the print, and in some instances in the serious plays with usurpers, such as *The Generall*, *The Indian Queene*, and *Cromwell's Conspiracy*. In the comedies, these threats to what should be the established order are, as Canfield points out, tricked into losing their enemies' estates, which they have attained by treachery. He says that these tricksters "inherit the estate that is the material base of power that undergirds English patriarchal aristocracy," noting also that the trickery itself and the ability to choose in marriage presents no threat in these instances to the aristocracy (Canfield, *Tricksters* 73). Aparna Dharwadker notes that "The gulling and cuckolding of cits by witty gallants is a plot formula devised to contain a more unmanageable threat—the growing power of capital and its quest for autonomy in a society ideologically recommitted to the values of inherited rank and wealth" (Dharwadker 151). Paula Backscheider also notes the treatment of the villains, especially early in comedy: "To read the drama performed in the first two years [of the Restoration] is to be struck by the reiteration of the base motives of characters easily identified with members of the Committee of Safety, of the condemnation of their destructive jealousies and crass ambitions, and of the deliberate portrayal of them as without intelligence, depth, vision, and concern for the people" (Backscheider 26). The projection of these base values in enemies to the monarchy were reintroduced by Charles and his supporters simply by his Restoration. Given this emphasis of plays on wealth and control, we can see propaganda at work in comedy, giving the appearance of a consensus concerning the king's restoration.

As we have seen, Charles's behavior and personality greatly influenced the behavior of court and also therefore had a great bearing on what many people thought of both. This of course is reflected in the new comedy of the Restoration. Laura Rosenthal notes that "Particularly in the

early part of the Restoration, Charles II and the court culture influenced the kinds of masculinity displayed on stage. Charles's philandering became legendary and acquiring mistresses fashionable...Courtiers imitated their king, and the plays themselves featured plots around male rakishness. Rakes on stage sometimes flattered the king and his court by representing royalist men as sexually desirable..." (Rosenthal 96). This libertinism, though eventually scorned by many of Charles's subjects, was, perhaps surprisingly, a hit on the stage. Canfield agrees, stating that "It is part of the mystique of Stuart ideology that these libertine rakes, whose ethos is the antithesis of traditional sexual morality, are so attractive, so vital that they are not only worth trying to *save* in a social if not a religious sense but indeed are necessary for the infusion of their energy into the very bloodlines of aristocratic families" (Canfield, *Tricksters* 40). This accounts for the survival and thriving of such characters even after the political disasters Charles endured in the 1660s. Rosenthal addresses this problem, asserting that rakes were not necessarily positive because of the behavior of king and court that we have already discussed, especially after the Restoration decade. Thus, argues Rosenthal, "Male sexual prowess sometimes became a metaphor for effective political or masculine authority in general, but this relationship was often illustrated through impotence, cuckoldry, and other forms of sexual failure" (96). As Charles's reign went on, "Restoration drama—especially comedy—defined masculinity primarily through sexuality; masculine types are generally sexual types" (97). This can again be attributed first to Charles's sexual appetite, which we have seen was formidable, but also due to his ineffectual rule in terms of state affairs. Again, the king determined the course of theatre through his actions (and at times, inaction).

### *Sodom*: Criticism of Charles II in Closet Drama

A stark example of this concern, or perhaps more appropriately, ire, with Charles's actions, especially his sexual exploits, may be found in a certain graphically sexual closet drama, probably from the 1670s. The anonymous play *Sodom*, possibly by the Earl of Rochester, illuminates in shocking detail just how Charles's bawdy behavior affected the kingdom. The fact that these concerns were manifested in the drama (and print, where this play found its audience), an apparatus which helped the king to build and maintain his power, perception, and personality, is also instructive as to the absolute failure of consensus, and an example of an extreme culmination of the consensus cycle, hence its inclusion here despite the late date of composition. This play is hard to categorize, as it at once mocks the heroic play and also deals with some serious political matters; yet I put it here because it is a satire of the kingdom being run down by the uncontrollable sexuality of its monarch, and because it comments in the most transparent way possible on the failure of Charles's hegemonic endeavors to take root. The play, which would have been far too vulgar to appear onstage, was nevertheless "widely known and circulated in manuscript" (Novak 59). *Sodom* revolves around a mock-heroic king, Bolloxinian, representative in no uncertain terms of Charles II. Joseph Roach argues that "Nowhere was [Charles II] more disturbingly yet tellingly effigied than by his obscene proxy, Bolloxinian" (Roach 66). The king of the play is ridiculously and flamboyantly over the top, yet his function as a proxy for Charles II is unmistakable.

It is fitting that such a play mocking the king and court is written in a parody of that symbol of kingly consensus, the rhymed heroic play. The play calls itself a "debauch'd *heroic* piece" (Weber 113), and actually satirizes a speech from Dryden's popular 1670 heroic play *The Conquest of Granada* (113). The parodying of this royalist style makes sense in terms of the

sexuality being exposed here, because of the lovers' "pure" love in the heroic plays: "it was the job of the parodist to mock such a solemn treatment of love by creating a world of orgiastic sex" (Novak 60). Additionally, it employs a burlesque of an explicitly royalist style of drama to undermine consensus and hegemony, thereby acting as a counter-hegemonic device. It does so quite graphically and effectively, and illuminates a very serious point.

In the play, the king Bolloxinian is happy to proclaim that he rules his kingdom through his own sexual appetite, bragging that "in the Zenith of my Lust I reign," and that "My Pintle only shall my scepter be; / My Laws shall act more pleasure than command / And with my Prick, I'll govern all the land" (Qtd. in Weber 113). Thus, he, and therefore Charles, is depicted as a "king who insists that political power can be understood and expressed only as a manifestation of his royal phallus, the male organ that generates and sustains the patriarchal structures of society" (114). Having oversexed himself on women, Bolloxinian declares not only that he will turn to homosexual sex, but he proclaims also that this change will be for all the men of the kingdom. This is not to suggest that the author was charging that Charles II was homosexual, but that, as Jessica Munns describes, "he is given over to sexual excess and also sterile where he ought to propagate—the marriage bed" (Munns 115-16). This is instructive, given that it was the queen, not Charles, who was barren. Charles himself had no problem fathering children—they were simply all with other women—which is the point. His marriage's failure to produce legitimate issue is therefore compounded by the existence of many illegitimate children from his numerous affairs. Harold Weber, who has treated this play very closely, aptly describes the meaning behind Bolloxinian's conversion:

In imagining a world in which the king insists on the legitimacy of buggery, the play suggests just how unsettling were perceptions of Charles's sexual irresponsibility. The play subverts his power not because it necessarily takes seriously the charge that he enjoyed men, but because the act of imagining such a "world turned upside down"



reveals the tremendous gulf between the dreams and ideals of Stuart absolutism and the doubts and fears generated by the king himself. *Sodom* may be understood as an inverted and perverse masque, in which the royal presence assures not order, harmony, and proper perspective but chaos and discord; the king becomes the symbol not of order's triumph, but of its defeat, his erotic obsessions responsible for the nation's destruction in a climactic sexual apocalypse. (Weber 116)

Indeed, the very existence of this play, with its shocking sexual acts onstage and sexually vulgar language throughout, depicts the real fears and concerns that Charles's activities incited. Thus, the appearance of this play, the extreme of the anti-consensus work; it is a counter-hegemonic piece that renders all previous royalist plays as sterile as Charles's marriage bed.

Bolloxinian boldly accepts the change in sexual preference. Yet, the absence of any homosexual acts onstage suggests that a potentially deadly problem in the kingdom is that through too much or misappropriated masculine activity, Charles is actually feminizing himself and therefore the court and kingdom. An important example of this in the play is that Bolloxinian chooses not to go to war when he should: he "has no use for war, all his interest wrapped up in the soft peace that allows him to pursue his sexual desires" (120). This is a key point, since the success of hegemonic consensus for Charles would have allowed for freedom to pursue his own desires, whatever they might be; and we are well aware that many of them concerned his sexual desires. The resistance to this attitude of the king's in *Sodom*, then, is a testament to the failure of consensus for Charles and the turning of theatre partly in directions that he never intended, though it continued in part to support some of his values and certainly himself as king.

Weber also outlines another motivation for Bolloxinian's turning the kingdom to buggery, which is to remove women, whose unfortunate power poses a danger to the kingdom: "male power can assert itself fully only by eliminating the seductive and dangerous female body that can control and compel male desire" (117). Therefore, "By elevating buggery at the expense of conventional heterosexual sex, the play can remove women from the sexual economy of the

kingdom” (119). This paradox appears at first to undermine the play, but it actually makes sense. Women have power over the king and court in a way that makes the men ineffective as leaders and examples to the country. Therefore, the women are removed; yet the adherence to homosexuality in the play still demonstrates the feminization of the nation despite the casting off of the women. The point is that, as Weber concludes, Bolloxionian, or Charles, “‘spent’ his erotic and political capital, his sexual extravagance degrading his masculine authority and making him...less than a woman, impotent, sterile, effeminate, homosexual” (125). The women of the play, having had sex taken away from them, are rendered powerless, having to resort to objects and animals to try to slake their desires, but those are not adequate (the women do not ever consider one another as potential partners).

Bolloxianian’s actions eventually lead to a terrible plague of venereal disease attacking the realm:

The heavy symptoms have infected all,  
I now may call it epidemical.  
Men’s pricks are eaten of the secret parts  
Of women, wither’d and despairing heart  
The children harbor mournful discontents,  
Complaining sorely of their fundaments.  
The old do curse and envy those that swive;  
Some fuck and bugger, tho they stink alive. (Qtd. in Weber 121)

At the end of the play the king ignores his doctor’s command to return to heterosexual sex, which should relieve the plague; but instead “fiery demons announce the sexual apocalypse” that Sodom must now endure (122).

*Sodom*, then, is an excellent example of how Charles II “made his kingship a symbol not of an ordered and potent strength, but of a chaotic, frightening, and corrupting sexual weakness (125) by the end of the consensus cycle. This is exactly what we see, although not in so many stark images and not yet to the extent as would happen in the future for Charles, in the plays of

the early Restoration. Charles cannot produce hegemony because of his own failings in addition to the other calamities that befell England, and therefore plays no longer have the responsibility to act as hegemonic propaganda, though they seemed to work for Charles at first.

Because of the tarnished reputation of the king in many circles, as outlined in *Sodom* and in other written materials we have analyzed in this work, the ruse of consensus was not to last.

As Derek Hughes describes:

...drama hymning the glories of 1660 could not continue indefinitely amidst the growing public disrepute of the royal brothers' lifestyle, the tension between the King and the Cavalier Parliament, the grievances of royalists unable to recover estates which they had sold to pay fines imposed during the Interregnum, and the disasters of plague, fire, and humiliation in the Dutch War. Indeed, even Orrery and Sir Robert Howard did not long retain the pure optimism of *The Generall* and *The Committee*." (Hughes, *English Drama* 43)

We will see, therefore, as we did in the serious forms of early Restoration drama, that eventually comedy did reflect the decline of the confidence in the king's morals and values, while using his virility and star status to make the plays popular. This is an intricate balance that propelled comedy to great heights in the 1670s, though the later comedy also drew lots of criticism for its bawdy nature at times. Therefore, Restoration comedy attempted to establish consensus through its emphasis on the sexiness of Cavaliers and the women they pursued, and by satirizing the behavior of the king's enemies; yet some of these same values also undermined consensus, which demonstrates the ultimate failure of the hegemony that consensus tried to establish. Canfield aptly describes this paradox, noting that trickery in the plays also works to hurt the Stuart cause:

Restoration comedy both underwrites and undercuts the ideology of English late-feudal aristocracy. It underwrites it by socializing the great energy of its rebellious gay-couple tricksters into marriages that build estates and by disciplining its class enemies through in-your-face, often sexual aggression...also...indirectly by satirizing the decadence of its own class, its falling away from old standards, its treatment of women...[It] undercuts by trickery that reveals seams in its supposedly seamless garment and that creates spaces in

the margins for the dispossessed, whose disruptive energy it celebrates. (Canfield, *Tricksters* 249)

We will see the complicated nature of this consensus failure in the following pages.

### Social Comedy and the Consensus Sequence

The remainder of this chapter will examine three early Restoration comedies, *The Committee* by Sir Robert Howard, *Cutter of Coleman Street* by Abraham Cowley, and *The Old Troop* by John Lacy, to again show the evolution of the consensus efforts and failure of that consensus to establish consensual hegemony. *The Committee* (1662) is a fabulous example of the continuation of the themes introduced by *The Rump*, satirizing the Puritans and extoling the inherent virtues of the king-supporting Cavaliers. *Cutter of Coleman Street* (1663) also satirizes the old regime, but also shows the not-so-neat restoration of property to Cavaliers who have to resort to some base actions to regain their property. *The Old Troop* (1664 or 1665), set during the English Civil War, problematizes the Cavalier cause further, again using satire to depict the inadequacy of the Roundheads, but also showing a lot of unseemly behavior by the king's soldiers and men.

All three of these plays are categorized by Canfield as “social comedy,” which he says “socializes threats to the ruling class” through competing classes or wrongful resistance to aristocratic control of property, and resolving this by bringing attractive young couples together for this purpose (Canfield, *Tricksters* 1-2). Social comedy therefore “socializes threats to the dominant aristocracy and reaffirms its patriarchal order by absorbing the vital energy of its youth and satirizing those who stand in their way” (31). Also, he notes, “Most Restoration social comedy portrays...rebels [against the “sexual political economy” that embodies the Stuart hegemony], who resist the marriages necessary to sustain the system but conclude in those

marriages after all—albeit with some freedom of choice within class” (31). These social comedies show in miniature the overall idea that Charles was using comedy for his own hegemonic purposes, but that this gradually backfired on him, as it became more and more evident that a new English “Golden Age” was not upon the realm.

#### Comedy as Royalist Propaganda: Robert Howard’s *The Committee*

During the first decade of the Restoration, “royalist satirists looked back on the evil days of the interregnum to see villainous puritans invariably justifying the most transparent perjuries with Jesuitical casuistry and noble cavaliers heroically refusing to take the Solemn League and Covenant” (Staves 203). Sir Robert Howard’s *The Committee* is a good example of this. The play is an attack on Puritans “for the immediate gratification of the victorious Royalists” (Corman 58). The play is set during the Interregnum, though it is not clear exactly when, and so the “king” mentioned in the play could be either Charles I or II. Sir Robert Howard had received the king’s favor and “no doubt in 1662 the majority of the audience still felt sympathy enough for the restored monarch to cheer” the deeds of the displaced Cavaliers (206).

The “Committee” of the title is the Committee of Sequestrations, which seized the lands of “Royalists, suspected Papists, and critics of the Puritan state. Once their land was seized, estate-owners would have to ‘compound’ for it, paying the Committee up to two-thirds the estate’s value to reclaim it.” This was complicated by having the estate owners swear to the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643, in which they had to pledge to “support and further the reformed Protestant religion and seek out and put on trial any non-supporter” (Canfield, *Broadview Anthology* 473). Howard was actually on the royal Commission for Concealed Lands which helped to “recover” the king’s lands, (Backscheider 56), which may have been an

inspiration for his authoring the play. So the existence of a play which expressly depicts the reclamation of illegally confiscated royal and aristocratic lands is ideal for Charles's hegemonic strategy.

*The Committee* juxtaposes impoverished Cavalier Colonels Blunt and Careless against the ascendant Day family, formerly low-class Puritans who aspire to be more than they were born. The Days represent the Cromwells, which would have been obvious to an audience. Mr. Day is the chairman of the Committee of Sequestrations, and is painfully deferent to his wife, whose character works as the "boss" of the family, and orders her husband around in all affairs. We have already seen her parodied in *The Rump*, and she is in many ways the same domineering figure we saw in Tatham's work, only this time she has a live husband to order around. Mrs. Day is also the author of her and her husband's plot to increase their own family's importance, very similar to Lady Bertlam of *The Rump* in this regard. In fact, it appears that Lady Bertlam could be the inspiration of this character even more so than Mrs. Cromwell from the same play, which we will see.

The Days' witless son Abel represents the weak Richard Cromwell, and in this play he is depicted as a dithering idiot whose prospects his parents are hoping to improve by marrying him to Arbella, the orphan daughter of a Cavalier. The Committee has seized the deceased man's lands, and she may maintain them only by marrying Abel, but she would rather do anything than marry the inept son of the Days and fall under their control, along with her estate. On the other side, the marriage would protect the Days from being accused of illegally seizing her estate, which they have indeed done. These events lead us to the well-documented hegemonic strategy of discrediting the authors of the regicide and Interregnum, a common consensus device, as we have seen.

The Days' devious plans are to use the Committee to enrich themselves, which by itself is easy, since the Committee members sit around dividing up estates among themselves and their friends. This is depicted in a scene very reminiscent to that of *The Rump* where Bertlam and his cronies are doing practically the same thing in dividing up the kingdom's riches. In *The Committee*, Mrs. Day even appears, trying to oversee things, just as Lady Bertlam had done in *The Rump*, which leads one to believe that Tatham's play may have been a model for Howard in constructing *The Committee*.

Mrs. Day has furthered hers and her husbands' plan for self-elevation by forging a letter from the King (either Charles I or II; is unclear) that they show to the Committee and say they have rejected. In theory, therefore, they will be rewarded for their staunch adherence to the "righteous" side and for rejecting potential riches that might have been theirs had any such plot to restore the king been successful. We see the villainous, base nature of the Puritan faux-rulers here, the author again elevating the king's perception by degrading that of his enemies.

In contrast, the Cavaliers will have nothing to do with such treachery, willing to give up all for their honor and their king. In demonstration of their fierce loyalty to the crown, former royalist officers from the Civil War Colonels Blunt and Careless appear before the Committee and are prepared to buy their estates back, but they will not act as traitors to their king by taking the Solemn League and Covenant; therefore they stand to lose their property. This noble act in the very face of the Puritans earns them the respect of Arbella and also Ruth, the Days' daughter; both ladies are in attendance at the proceedings, and they note the mens' resolve and attractiveness:

COLONEL BLUNT. The day may come when those that suffer for their consciences and honor may be rewarded.

MR. DAY. Aye, aye, you make an idol of that honor.

COLONEL BLUNT. Our worships, then, are different. You make that your idol which brings your interest. We can obey that which bids us lose it.

ARBELLA. Brave gentlemen.

RUTH. I stare at 'em till my eyes ache...(490)

The Cavaliers continue their refusals to betray their ideals, and Ruth tells her friend, “S’life Arbella, we’ll have these two men. There are not two such again to be had for love nor money” (491). The inference is that these aristocratic men have inherently more mettle than their Puritan enemies, who serve only themselves.

The two Cavaliers, against their wills, find themselves attracted to the ladies as well, Careless to Ruth, and Blunt to Arbella. But the mens’ affections turn out to be natural and fortuitous, since Arbella’s father was a Cavalier, and it will turn out that Ruth is only the Days’ ward, and that her father was also a Cavalier. When he died, they essentially raised her to have her estate. Thus, the matches with these Cavaliers will not only be acceptable, but ideal, recalling the coincidental ending of *A King and No King*, in which Arbaces’ love of his own “sister” is explained by the plot twist of his not being the true heir, and Panthea therefore being not his real sister. As Canfield and others have noted, then, property and women’s bodies are the focal point of this play’s protagonists. This is a further example of the comedy functioning as propaganda, glorifying properly-gained wealth and the right lineage of marriage as the prerequisite of possessing such treasures, but also praising the denial of such things for the good of the royalist cause.

Unlike the Cavaliers, the Days, like all Puritans in these plays, have elevated themselves by deceit and swindling. Mrs. Day, it turns out, was Careless’s father’s kitchen maid, as he reports when he recognizes her. She pretends not to recognize him, and he chastises her, “Lord, Lord, you are horrible forgetful; pride comes with godliness and good clothes” (500). As in *The Rump*, the low-born cannot hide their inherent foolery, try as they might; neither can the



highborn Colonels and Ruth and Arbella hide their own high-born status, which applies especially to Ruth, who is not aware of her true lineage. This explains why Blunt and Careless fall for the ladies; they are naturally attracted to the nobility of aristocratic ladies, even if they are not aware who the women are. Thus, there is a clear separation made between those born to rule and those created to be ruled over: surely a hegemonic idea worthy of such a royalist play.

Before the Days can carry out their plan to have Abel married to Arbella, she and Ruth find papers belonging to the Days, including the forged letter from the king, and some letters from Mr. Day's mistresses who want money for his illegitimate children. Once this scandalous information comes out, including proof that the Days are passing Ruth off as their own daughter so they can have her estate, the Days are forced to let both ladies marry. Again we see the scandalous nature of the regicides in print and theatre, with illicit activity covering the veneer of piety. The Days get 500 pounds out of the deal, and thus the married couples will not tell what the Days have done. As a bonus for the audience, the Days are forced to dance to a Cavalier song, and in the last lines of the play, Careless gives Day the advice, "If you will have good luck in everything, / Turn Cavalier and cry, 'God bless the King'" (525). This dance, argues Canfield, "means not only the restoration of estates to their proper aristocrats but also the very code of word-as-bond that solidifies the orderly transmission of power and property through marriage" (Canfield, *Tricksters* 10). The puritans' servant Obadiah also is persuaded earlier in the play to sing Cavalier songs, owing to the fact that the servant Teague gets him drunk; the trend of having enemies of the king sing Cavalier songs is a device that demonstrates the "right" nature of the king, and which will be repeated, as we will see.

The end of *The Committee* is the signal of what Charles has (hopefully) brought about: a return to the days where loyalty to the aristocracy and royalty would (supposedly) be rewarded,

something that Restoration playwrights surely hoped for. This happy ending ushers out the old world which has usurped an older, more perfect one and replaced it with the ideal monarchy model. Or, as Derek Hughes describes it, “This natural, benevolent hierarchy of protection and dependence represents the old world which has been temporarily violated by the rapacious and self-serving reign of parvenus” (Hughes, *English Drama* 31). The Days’ behavior is that of trying to be like their predecessors, but they take the Covenant, and are forgers and thieves (32), far worse than anything the Cavaliers ever were. Moreover, they clearly do not know how to behave as part of the ruling class, and therefore they make a blunder of it, turning themselves into fools in the process. This new order was no better than the abolished monarchy, and in fact less desirable than the old. The play’s plot then anticipates highly the reestablishment of the Stuart line.

*The Commitee* also begins the trend of “featuring witty women rebellious against the tyranny of sexual guardianship, only to have the threats disappear when the women marry men with not only the right stuff but the right class credentials” (Canfield, *Tricksters* 67). In an unlikely turn of events, the young ladies Ruth and Arbella marry their handsome older Cavaliers, with their property falling into the proper aristocratic hands, to their own delight. In fact, it is easy to see that Ruth does not belong to the Day family, even before she knows she is from a Cavalier line; she does not act like the others, and in fact, her birth name is actually Annice, rather than the puritan-sounding Ruth. Backscheider points this out as well, noting that in the play Ruth feels the Cavalier inside herself before it is discovered that she is one (Backscheider 60). This implies again that there is something about the Cavalier, a high-born manner and grace, that the Days and others who would usurp the positions of the legitimate rulers, especially the

king, could never have. Hence again the hegemonic idea of the king and aristocracy being born to rule.

*The Committee* also introduces the first of the 1660s “sympathetic, low-class tricksters who infuse this comedy with a remarkable, boisterous folk energy that explodes on the stage and threatens to take over entire plays” (Canfield, *Tricksters* 159). The embodiment of this character in *The Committee* is the Irishman Teague (or Teg), whose silly antics provide many comic moments, and potentially steal the show. In one very funny scene, Teague steals a copy of the Solemn League and Covenant from a bookstore so that his master Colonel Careless will not have to “take” the Covenant himself. Another key moment is the scene in which Teague is supposed to deliver a message to Mrs. Day, but cannot stop laughing anytime he tries to call her “ladyship” (496), because he knows she used to be a kitchen maid, and he thinks her demands of deference are silly. He is so tickled that he cannot deliver the message, unable to take the committee-man’s wife seriously at all. This scene is important politically because, in the basest insult, even a low-born Irishman may dare to disrespect the Parliamentarians, who until the end have the political power. Canfield argues that with the character of Teague, Howard could be also inviting the Irish into loyalty to the king after they were brutally subdued by Cromwell (Canfield, *Tricksters* 162).

*The Committee* projects an entirely pro-Stuart ideology, and therefore brings its hegemonic function into line with early “tragedies” such as *The Generall*, *Henry the Fifth*, and *Cromwell’s Conspiracy*. It makes a clear separation between the former regime and the new one, asserting again the villainy of the usurpers and regicides, as well as the righteousness (and sexiness) of the king’s side. The jovial ending also implies the return to the “halcyon days” of Charles I, when things were, according to royalists, much better. This comedic example of pure

propaganda, therefore, is consensus writing at its most pure, though consensus was not nearly as strong as it appeared, as we shall see.

### Abraham Cowley's *Cutter of Coleman Street*

Abraham Cowley's *Cutter of Coleman Street* appeared in 1663, and like *The Committee* depicted the languishing plight of a former Cavalier, but with a few key differences. Although successful, the play's "failure to associate suffering loyalty with 'exemplary virtue' provoked indignation" (Hughes *English Drama* 30), and thus shows the cracking of the hegemonic royalist image. Cowley was criticized for his depiction of royalists, particularly a former Cavalier officer, as flawed, which was a departure from the plays like *The Committee*, in which Colonels Careless and Blunt are exemplary in their virtue. In his preface to the play, Cowley wrote:

The first clamour which some malicious persons raised, and made a great noise with was, That it was a piece intended for abuse and Satyre against the King's party. Good God! The King's Party? After having served it twenty years during all the time of their misfortunes and afflictions, I must be a very rash and impudent person if I chose out that of their Restitution to begin a Quarrel with them. (Cowley 175)

Cowley was a supporter of the Stuarts, but after the Restoration he had a harder time of it than men like Robert Howard, Dryden, Davenant, and Orrery. Although "a former royalist agent," Cowley "was certainly ignored at the Restoration, and complained of this, but he had abandoned his cause to write praises of Cromwell" (Hutton, *The Restoration* 137; *Charles II* 144), and perhaps for this reason he was not given the attention that others did, despite their own praises of Cromwell.

In perhaps demonstrating the lack of confidence in the king and court that was then growing, Cowley depicts royalist soldiers in the play as opportunists. In the prologue he explains this decision further:

...the representation I say of these as Pretended Officers of the Royal Army, was made for no other purpose but to show the World, that the vices and extravagancies imputed vulgarly to the Cavaliers, were really committed by Aliens who only usurped that name, and endeavoured to cover the reproach of their indegency or Infamy of their Actions with so honourable a Title. (Cowley175)

Thus, according to the author, *Cutter* is part of the consensus movement; though the play's subject matter suggests that though Cowley was a supporter of the king, it also suggests that corruption exists in the king's party and name, even if this was not his intention. Additionally, we have seen that many people assumed that Cowley's intention was to criticize the king's allies, which tells us that royalists sensed a threat to their hegemony. Even the simple idea that the theatre, which was an ideological state apparatus, could undermine the king's hegemonic aspirations, damaged the consensus argument, as the criticism of the play demonstrates.

In *Cutter of Coleman Street*, we see many of the same themes that Robert Howard had written in *The Committee*, and the chief concern here is again marriage and property; there are three initial plots to procure property and status. First, Truman Junior wants to marry Lucia, the daughter of impoverished Cavalier Colonel Jolly, but his father Truman Senior wants him to marry Tabitha, the daughter of the widow Barebottle, because the widow is rich and Jolly, though a Cavalier, is poor. Junior regards this situation as treachery like that of the Civil War:

Though I to have this Dung-hill an Estate  
Have done a Crime like theirs,  
Who have abjur'd their King for the same cause,  
I will not yet, like them, persue the guilt,  
And in thy place. *Lucia* my lawful Soverain,  
Set up a low and scandalous Usurper! (Cowley 180)

He regrets having promised not to speak to or look upon Lucia, just as those who took an oath against the exiled king. He considers this a breach of his own honor to have done so, displaying the sense of honor that we have so often encountered in the Restoration drama.

In the second plot to gain property, Colonel Jolly, a former Cavalier and uncle to Lucia, had his estate sequestered and it was purchased by the widow Barebottle's deceased husband, Fear-the-Lord Barebottle. This is an obvious allusion to Praisegod Barebones, a former soap-boiler and part of the Fifth Monarchists, religious zealots not unlike Puritans who had not supported the monarchy, and a number of whom had sat on the High Court of Justice which condemned Charles I. Jolly plans to get his estate back by marrying the widow, but she is resistant to the idea because he is not "True Rich and Counterfeit Godly" like her (Cowley 180). Jolly is willing to pair with a religious zealot in this instance, where in *The Committee* Colonels Blunt and Careless were not. This demonstrates a migration of sorts away from honor, though Jolly was not so dishonorable as to preserve his estate by taking the Covenant. This willingness to consort with the enemy, as it were, may indicate a move away from the drama as propaganda.

In the third case of recovering property and status, Jolly is the caretaker of his own niece, Aurelia, and he enlists Cutter and Worm, two men pretending to have been Cavaliers on many battlefields, including Worcester, to pretend to be gentlemen and compete with one another for Aurelia's affections in return for some, but not all, of the money her father left him for her care. He does this so that he does not have to give up all of the money, which he is apparently living on. If she marries on her own, he has to give up the whole estate, but if the plan works, Cutter and Worm have agreed to let him have some of the money that they would receive. Jolly says that if he loses his hold on Aurelia's money, "I ha' nothing to do but live by Plots for the King, or at least be hang'd by 'em" (180). He does not wish these impostors Cutter and Worm upon his own niece, but he is trying to look out foremost for his own interests as well as those of his daughter Aurelia. Again in opposition to *The Committee*, Jolly is not above tricks to regain what he lost, or even making up for his loss by conniving for what belongs to someone else. This is

not a particularly positive commentary for Cowley to make for Cavaliers, though the audience would have been aware that all would end desirably for the Colonel and his family. Still, it is a departure from plays like *The Committee* and *The Rump*, both of which work one-sidedly as royalist propaganda. In *Cutter*, we begin to see the disintegration of consensus, and as a result it is royalist tool with certain important flaws, though it is still clearly a royalist play. Jolly at one point does admit that he regrets to resort to trickery, remarking that “‘Tis a hard case to wrong my pretty Niece: but unless I get this wicked Widow, I and my daughter must starve else; and that’s harder yet; Necessity is, as I take it, Fatality, and that will excuse all things” (181). Indeed, he could do worse to his niece, because she is only entitled to 1000 pounds if she marries against his will, but he is only asking Cutter and Worm for 1000 of the 5000 her father bequeathed. He is also going to let her choose between them, though the choice is admittedly not a savory one, both Cutter and Worm being dishonest fools.

Comically, the two servants prove this point, undoing one another by abusing each other to Lucia with actual truths until she is frustrated and incensed by their deceit and baseness. Their behavior reminds us of Abel in *The Committee*, who also does not know how to woo such a lady above his station. Again, the predenders have no idea how to truly act as Cavaliers; they only set themselves up as objects of ridicule.

Alone, Lucia laments the coming of these times without a proper ruling class and monarchy:

Go cursed race, which stick your crimes  
Upon the Honorable Cause and Party;  
And to the Noble Loyal Sufferers,  
A worser suffering add of Hate and Infamy.  
Go to the Robbers and the Parricides,  
And fix your Spots upon their Painted Vizards,  
Not on the native face of Innocence.  
‘Tis you retard that Industry by which

Our Country would recover from this sickness;  
Which, whilst it fears th' eruption of such Ulcers,  
Keeps a Disease tormenting it within,  
But if kind Heav'n please to restore our Health,  
When once the great Physician shall return,  
He quickly will I hope restore our beauty. (183)

These are certainly royalist sentiments, designed to promote the rightness of the royalty and aristocracy, and the depravity of Cavalier enemies. This also speaks to the play as a royalist device, but some of it is undermined by the actions of Jolly, and to a lesser degree, Cutter and Worm, who are only pretended Cavaliers.

A new plot is hatched when Aurelia finds out that Lucia has been “seeing” Truman Junior, though she wears a veil and communicates with him by writing so that he will not break his oath not to see or talk to her. As it turns out, the rich and foppish Puny also wants to marry Lucia, and enlists Aurelia’s help to do it.

In a counterplot, Lucia and Truman Junior have devised a plan to give Jolly a “poison” which will make him think he is dying and with his dying breath therefore give them permission to marry; however, he discovers the plot, thanks to Aurelia, Cutter and Worm, who have been spying on the couple. Indignant, Jolly, still ill from the poison, engages in a drinking game and sings Cavalier songs against the Protector: “A Pox on the Poll of the Politique Noll...” etc. (188). This Cavalier is evidently made of a strong will and body. Jolly decides to pretend that he has actually been poisoned and very near death so that no one can fault him for anything he does to Lucia and Truman Junior. He tells Aurelia that he now wants Lucia to marry the fop Puny because she will forfeit to her uncle most of her money but would not have any need of it, since Puny is rich. Jolly is also going to use pity for his being “near death” to pretend to convert so that he may marry the widow Barebones. Aurelia, however, does not want her father to marry this pious woman whose position was gotten by parricide, saying that “I’d rather patiently lose my



Estate for ever, than take't again with her" (189), but, consistent with his attitude over the entire play, Jolly insists. This is also consistent with Restoration characters such as Montezuma and others, who, against the advice of others, continue on their own course to follow their own desires. The difference here is that Jolly is a Cavalier, and therefore the author has no room for denying what side the character represents. However, since this play is a comedy, the effect is somewhat different, though still instructive in demonstrating a royalist willing to compromise his honor to some degree in favor of regaining his estate.

Aurelia says that one reason she does not want her father to marry the widow is that she is afraid that the widow and her daughter will ban the likes of Fletcher and Jonson in the house, which to her is obviously worse than forfeiting the whole estate. These royalist playwrights are therefore comically set up in opposition to the likes of Fifth Monarchists, making them a natural enemy to the monarchy. Again the obsession with who possesses and controls estates, and therefore England, dominates the comedy, and the fact that certain royalist authors such as playwrights will be barred from Jolly's estate, makes Jolly's potential match a perilous one. Aurelia's distaste for her father's match shows some real honor as the daughter of the Cavalier, but her father, the Cavalier, does not follow suit. But, as we will see, the Cavalier's daughter is also not above dishonesty and trickery herself.

The plot thickens when she appears veiled before Truman and he thinks she is Lucia. Aurelia gives him a letter asking him to wait for her so that she can come to him and sleep with him. Now that he thinks Lucia is devoid of honor and chastity, he no longer wants to marry her. Aurelia then tricks the fop Puny into thinking that she plans to marry Truman while she is in disguise and that Lucia will be veiled as well, and marry Puny; her plot is to get into Puny's substantial estate by pretending to be Lucia so that the wealthy fop will marry her instead. So

there are limits also to how much Aurelia will endure before she herself resorts to trickery to get someone else's estate, despite the fact that she had chastised her father for trickery himself. The difference is that she is willing to ally herself with a fop, and not with an enemy to the crown.

Jolly's plans to marry the widow are going well, but he is not enjoying consorting with such a pious wench as she. He says, "I believe really that true Devotion is a great Pleasure, but 'tis a damn'd constraint and drudgery methinks, this Dissimulation of it. I wonder how the new Saints can endure it, to be always at the work, Day and Night Acting; But great Gain makes every thing seem easie..." (190). His assumption that all this pious behavior in his enemies is a sham is instructive. He assumes that even Fifth Monarchists have dirty secrets: "...they have, I suppose, good Lusty Recreations in private" (190). Now that he may end up with his estate back and his niece may marry Puny, Jolly suggests to Cutter that he pretend to convert too so that he can marry Tabitha, the widow's daughter. This upsets Truman Senior, who wanted his own son to marry into Tabitha's fortune, and he threatens to reveal Jolly's cavalierism to the Protector. Jolly then proposes that Truman Junior instead marry Aurelia and thus receive the fortune that Jolly will soon secure back from the widow.

Aurelia has executed her plan, and everyone including Puny believes that Lucia has married him. This crushes Truman Junior, but makes Jolly happy, since he gets her estate now in addition to the widow's. The problem is that Lucia herself says she is not aware that she has been married at all, despite Puny's trying to remind her that they had married and afterwards slept together.

Cutter's plan to fool the widow and her daughter has gone well; he fools them both into believing his own conversion, proclaiming that miracles "are not ceas'd" in this supposed "wicked age of Cavalierism," as Jolly describes it in his pretenses, "nor shall they cease till the

Monarchy be establish'd" (193). While he may mean the Fifth Monarchy, and the widow and Tabitha are meant to take it that way, the audience would understand this to mean the Restoration of the Stuart Monarchy.

Now that he believes that his love is married to another man, Truman Junior agrees to marry Aurelia, because since he cannot have Lucia he might as well keep his father's estate. Now that Jolly is about to marry the widow and get his own estate back, he tells Puny that he will not give him any of Lucia's money because he does not need it, the fop being already rich. This backfires when Puny says that therefore she will get nothing from him, and will have to work, and that he will go through legal channels to get his money from Jolly. Worm is also angry at Jolly because since Cutter is now working to become Tabitha's husband, now he, Worm, has no marriage prospects. Therefore he will have revenge on Jolly by pretending to be Jolly's brother who went to Africa and died there, and Puny will act like the brother's companion John. They plan to get Jolly's estate from him as the supposed heirs. They execute their plan, and are so convincing that Jolly cannot tell who they are or whether they are pretending or not. To find out, he tells two of his servants who knew his brother to play the same two parts, and the plot is revealed and foiled rather comically.

Meanwhile, Cutter has successfully married Tabitha and acquired her part of the estate. He has been saying that he has had visions from God that tell him what to do, which fools the pious girl and her mother. Tabitha begins to worry that he will "turn Cavalier" and she does not know what to do. He answers her:

What shalt thou do? why, thou shalt dance, and Sing, and Drink, and be Merry; thou shalt go with thy Hair Curl'd. and thy Brests open thou shalt wear fine black Stars upon thy Face, and Bobs in thy Ears bigger than bouncing Pears; Nay, if thou dost begin but to look rustily—I'll ha'thee Paint thy self, like the Whore o' *Babylon*. (200)

Like the simple servant Obadiah in *The Committee*, Tabitha will be wooed by these Cavalier delights. Cutter, who in this play serves as the loveable low “Teague” character that we first witnessed in *The Committee*, forces Tabitha to drink by threatening to take her to the opera if she does not. When she is sufficiently inebriated, which is not very long afterward, she gets even more feisty, crying out, “A fig for my mother; I’ll be a Mother my self shortly; Come Duckling, shall we go home?” (201), revealing that beneath her supposed chaste outer shell, Tabitha has a wilder nature. This brings her character somewhat in line with that of the pious Cromwell in *Cromwell’s Conspiracy* and Day from *The Committee*, whose illicit affairs are well-documented in those works. Though Tabitha is not having an extramarital affair, her similar untamed nature in this regard is revealed with a little drink. This reversal of attitude occurs despite the fact that Tabitha is one of the “enemy,” and is matched with Cutter, a Cavalier ally. This pairing is acceptable, however, since Cutter is not a gentleman or a real Cavalier either. The royalist ideology is comically validated with Tabitha, by having her “converted” to the Cavalier way of thinking (and strong drink), just like the end of *The Committee*.

As should be expected, everything turns out “right” in the end. Truman Junior had asked Aurelia to wear a veil in the wedding, and as it turns out, Lucia is the one who unveils and everyone is surprised. Truman Senior is furious but it comes out that Aurelia is the one who married Puny and that it was she who slept with him, not Lucia. Now that the Cavalier Jolly’s fortunes have turned around, he gives the whole dowry to Puny, and Truman Senior softens, since his new daughter-in-law Lucia is back into a wealthy family.

Cowley’s epilogue that he wrote especially for performance at court reveals the concern he had for the reception of his play. It is addressed directly to the King:

The Madness of your People, and the Rage  
You’ve seen too long upon the Publique Stage.

'Tis time at last (great Sir) 'tis time to see  
 Their Tragique Follies brought to Comedy.  
 If any blame the Lowness of our Scene,  
 We humbly think some Persons there have been  
 On the World's Theatre not long ago,  
 Much more too High, than here they are too Low.  
 And well we know that Comedy of old,  
 Did her Plebian rank with so much Honour hold,  
 That it appear'd not then too Base or Light,  
 For the base *Scipio*'s hand to Write.  
 How e'er, if such mean Persons seem too rude,  
 When into Royal presence they intrude,  
 Yet we shall hope a pardon to receive  
 From you, a Prince so practic'd to forgive;  
 A Prince, who with th' applause of Earth and Heaven,  
 The Rudeness of the Vulgar has Forgiven. (204)

Here Cowley is justifying his "low" writing by saying that his play is making fun of royalist enemies. This worked well for entertainment purposes, but not as a hegemonic device of royalism.

This play, which was put on the boards after Charles's reputation began to wane, contains plenty of support for his return, and gladness for it, yet not the same overwhelming support for the king and especially old Cavaliers that *The Committee* had. This can be best seen in Jolly and his daughter's willingness to resort to dishonesty and trickery to recover their former wealth. Thus we have come a good way since *The Committee*, when the Cavaliers refused to commit acts of treachery, even if they did not mean them, against the king and aristocracy. This change of character in Cavaliers can be attributed, as we saw in serious forms, to the waning of consensus and the diminishing of the court reputation, modeled especially by the king himself. The royalist play has begun to waver as a hegemonic device, and as we can see with the criticism of the author over the play. Hegemony's future failure can thus be seen in this play as consensus writing breaks down.

John Lacy's *The Old Troop*

Further in this vein is John Lacy's *The Old Troop*, which was performed for the first time either in 1664 or early 1665. This is one of the rare plays of the period where royalists are ever presented badly (Staves 41). Though *Cutter of Coleman Street* had done this to an extent, Lacy's play takes Cavalier corruption much further. Set during the first Civil War, the play depicts royalist soldiers, even officers, plundering innocent people and not paying a lot of attention to fighting the parliamentary forces. One of their number admits to his fellow soldiers that "It is a joyful thing when brethren plunder together in unity" (134). These officers have names that reflect their thieving ways, such as the "Plunder-Master General" and "Flea-Flint" and "Ferret-Farm." Flea-Flint tells the rest of them that "we have all arrived at excellent nicknames, to say truth, according to our several degrees and ways of plundering" (134). They all joke about how they ride out of the ranks before the battle is joined to protect themselves and their plunder from harm. The depiction of these soldiers ravaging the countryside and neglecting their martial duties had the potential of dredging up past hurts for the English. This grim situation is, however, "filtered through... folk humor that makes [the play] endurable even through its outrageousness" (Canfield, *Tricksters* 173). Pepys saw a revival of the play in 1668 and noted that it was "mighty merry" and that the King and Duke were present (Pepys 9: 270). Since, as we have seen extensively, Pepys was so critical of the king, it stands to reason that he would have mentioned it in his diary if he thought that the content of the play was amiss or against the king. And apparently, the king did enjoy the play (Hughes, *English Drama* 57), despite the fact that it discredits some of the idealized representations of the Restoration (56). Therefore, it stands to reason that it is a royalist play, though like *Cutter of Coleman Street*, it presents problems by

opening the door for criticism. In other words, it is not nearly the solid propaganda tool that plays like *The Rump* and *The Committee* are.

One of the elements in *The Old Troop* that softens the blow against the officers is that they are actually former “tatter’d musketeers” who have plundered officers’ uniforms and used them to pass as gentleman officers (Lacy 132), thereby absolving the ruling class of the wrongdoing of these low men. This is an important point in this play, since to work as a hegemonic device, the play must not depict legitimate aristocrats as petty thieves or miscreants. This is like Cutter and Worm, who only pretended to have been Cavalier veterans of the Civil War, and whose actions therefore are not a complete undermining of royalist ideology. While this is an important point to the plot, the fact that men in the king’s army were ruining people by knavery is still somewhat serious business, despite the comic nature of the play and its royalist resolution.

In addition to the plot detailing the troop’s fleecing the people, much of the play deals with the prostitute, Dol, who is pregnant and planning on accusing everyone in the troop to be the father, so that she can extort money from each man. Of course, no one wants to admit to being the father of her child, though it could literally be any of them, and just about each man admits that he has slept with her at some point.

The plot takes off when a man named Tom Tell-Troth comes to the troop and tells them that he intends to join their ranks from the Parliament side. When asked why he would cross over and thus betray the parliamentary forces, he says he left them “Because I liked ‘em not” (137). He also admits he has no love for the king, but he comes “to see fashions” and because his commander is a hypocrite: “He cannot endure to plunder, but, in a godly manner, he will take all he can lay his hands on” (137). When the troop asks Tom if he will fight for them out of love and

kindness to the king, he says: “No; I’ll fight for him as all men fight for kings—partly for love, partly for my own ends. I’ll fight bravely for a battle or two, then beg an old house to made a garrison of, grow rich, consequently a coward, and then, let the dog bite the bear, or the bear the dog, I’ll make my own peace, I warrant you; and, in short, this is my business hither” (137). The fact that a key figure against the Parliamentary army and for the royalist cause is a turncoat and part of the traitor army who also has no love for the king is also problematic for the royalist cause, for which the play is supposed to be working. Clearly, this garrison is the place to be if one happens to be a thief or turncoat, and wants to plunder innocent others with impunity. However, Tom is taken with the legitimate royalist officer Captain Honor, who tells him that he has a good cause to fight for and that there are some honest men in the troop, if not all. Tom admits that neither side is really honest; he tells the Captain that “you have faults, but the other [side] great wickedness” (140). The scales are thus tipped in favor of the king’s soldiers, if only a little.

The troop’s feigned Lieutenant has agreed to help Dol get money from every man in the troop, because it will also make him rich. But who she really wants to marry her is the French cook, Monsieur Raggou, who was probably written by Lacy for himself to play (Canfield, *Tricksters* 173), as he was known as the “greatest comic actor of his time in England,” and it was he who had played Teague in *The Committee* (162). His character, Raggou, is a perfect scoundrel, but loveable at the same time. The audience can like him because for all his roguery he is a confirmed royalist (at one point he tricks a country bumpkin into admitting his parliamentary allegiance), and because his outrageous behavior and dialect make his antics worth the viewing. He refuses to buy certain new clothing to replace his old disgusting articles, especially when some of his clothes would not even be visible. He also has been known to



plunder food and to conceal it in his sleeves, which further soils his clothing. As a royalist, however, he does not cut nearly as handsome a figure as Blunt and Careless. He is, after all, only a cook.

Another popular feature of Restoration comedy in this play is the famous “breeches” role, where a female character played by a woman disguises herself as a man. The breeches role in *The Old Troop* is that of Biddy, who the troop Cornet has promised to marry but not until they try to swindle Dol of all the money she plans to extort from all the men. Biddy will pretend to be a man and to marry Dol, and when they go to the marriage bed, Dol will know she has been swindled, and she will lose all her money. The Lieutenant who has been helping Dol in her swindling of the men has been recruited by the Cornet to help them. Dol is initially fooled by the ruse.

If these are members of the “good” side, the play is somewhat therefore marred by all this deceit, even if it is for comedic effect and the audience was laughing. To counterbalance this roguery, the Parliamentary army must be even worse, and in this play, they are as treacherous and greedy as they are in the other comedies we have seen thus far. Tell-Troth falls to telling the Captain all about the Parliamentary army’s shady activities, preaching to the people to give money to their cause and then keeping it for themselves:

They are form’d to a new stamp of villany, the last impression—that which put the devil into a cold sweat. Take the wickedest and worst reputed men you have, and turn them loose to plunder, and I defy ‘em to make the tithe o’ th’ spoil these hypocrites have done!...Malice cannot lay ‘em open. They lecture it thrice a week, and summon the country to come in. They that refuse, they take their goods and leave ‘em ne’er a groat; and then they say they took but their own, for the good creature is the inheritance of the people of God. (152)

The Captain has bigger problems than the behavior of the Roundheads, when he learns that his men are about to desert because Dol is trying to get money from them all. The Captain tries to

learn who the father of her child is, but Dol says it is the troop's child. When, exasperated, the Captain cries, "Was ever such a slut heard of?" she replies, "I desire your worship to believe me in one thing. Truly, Captain, and as Gad's my comfort, I have been as true and faithful a woman to the troop, as ever wife was to a husband, Captain" (155). He finds that he cannot argue, for he knows this to be true. Again, the king's men, though treated in a light and comic scene, have not a lot to testify to their right to victory at this point, which may be a point Lacy was trying to emphasize. This demonstration of the degenerate morals of the king's army is yet another way in which the hegemony of plays is crumbling after the initial excitement of the Restoration.

We can see this point go further in the play's plot. The troop's most vile act, although very funny to an audience, occurs when the whole group of officers, along with Raggou, shakes down a town in probably the best known scene of the play. When they ask the women of the town for provisions, the women say they have nothing. The men then respond by asking the women to bring children to them since they can be eaten; this is only a bit of fun, but the women are convinced the soldiers are serious. One woman actually does bring children that do not belong to her, but a quick-thinking Raggou declares that since they are twins they cannot be eaten because it is against the law (174). Then the women of the town begin to bring all the provisions they have for the men to take, afraid that the soldiers will eat their children. These men have the women cursing the Cavaliers as "hellish cavaliering devils" (172). Perhaps Lacy is attributing the loss of support in the war, and even the war itself, to a small number of rogues who did not belong to the ruling class but commanded soldiers. In any case, it is a risky proposition for Lacy to bring up, and dangerous to the business of consensus-building. The play may work well as entertainment, but as political propaganda, it is not as effective as earlier plays, such as *The Rump* and *The Committee*, further indicating the erosion of consensus.

The troop, like the puritans, will even turn on a member of their own ranks. They hatch a new plot for their own gain, this time against Raggou. The “officers” want to keep their plunder operation going, but they are afraid the Captain will catch them. Therefore, they will frame Raggou for it by dressing as he does. They also plan to frame the cook as a traitor by planting a letter in his pocket showing that he is communicating with the enemy. This could get him executed, but they seem not to care about this, just their own coffers. The plan works well at first; Ferret-Farm reports of the citizens that “...our comfort is they know us not, but cry out of a Frenchman, with two coat sleeves stuffed like two country bag-puddings.” The Lieutenant tells Flea-Flint, however, how Raggou has outsmarted them all using the same trick: “This cunning rogue has crossbit you all. He has been plundering as he went to make his quarters, and in a buff coat too; for here is a dozen fellows at my quarter, and they all describe a rogue so like thee that I protest thou wilt suffer for it. Nay, the rogue called himself Flea-Flint too!” (175). The troop uses its second plan against Raggou and plants the forged letter on him; the Lieutenant, who could remove Raggou by hanging him for treason instead will let him run away, telling Raggou to take care he does not get caught. This is but little comfort for a man he knows is innocent of treason. While on the run, Raggou tricks a puppeteer into switching clothes with him. He is forced to do the puppet show a couple of times to maintain his disguise, and then exchanges clothes with Flea-Flint who does not recognize him. This causes Flea-Flint to be arrested, the constables mistaking him for Raggou because he is now wearing the puppeteer’s clothes which Raggou had been wearing. They ask him whether he wants to be hanged or plundered; Flea-Flint says he will be hanged, and that no one will ever plunder him. They therefore agree to hang and then plunder him, though of course this never happens. The fact that Raggou, though a sloppy, ridiculous, fool of a man, has outsmarted the other imposters is important because he seems to be the only

royalist among them, discounting the honorable Captain. On the other hand, the fact that he is so ridiculous and comical does not quite flatter the king or his cause. This double-edged sword again makes the play's utility as an ideological state apparatus problematic.

In the midst of all this is the salvation of the play: the further revelation that the Parliamentary side is far worse than the Cavaliers. We can see here the same criticism that Robert Howard showed of the Puritans in *The Committee*. Captain Holdforth of the Parliament forces admits the false piety with which his side, who are all low-born, operates: "What an everlasting cheat is reformation and false doctrine! It has raised us from cobblers to commanders." His companion, Captain Tubtext, replies, "There is no other way to raise rebellion but by religion," to which they all laugh (180). Indeed, as we have seen, the chief way they get money from the towns is from making big sermons that compel women to give their money, which is taken not for God but to enrich the Parliamentary officers. They also tout religion as a way to get into women's beds, owing to the large number of pregnant women around. They also talk of deserting their own garrison to make away with all the wealth they have gathered by treachery, and they show Tell-Troth a letter detailing their plans to take the garrison's wealth and leave them to the enemy, as long as they get safe conduct to their own houses with their money. Tell-Troth is aghast at their lack of honor, and shows the letter to the Cavalier Captain. The corrupt Governor, who has been a Parliamentary ally, proposes that the Roundhead army get the people's riches under the pretense that they are protecting them from the Cavaliers, and says that he will give those riches and what they have already taken to the Cavaliers in exchange for allowing the Roundhead officers to get home with their own plunder. This is hard for the Captain to agree to because it means that the Captain would have to give up a victory and break his word to the other side, and to allow these commanders to get away with stealing from the people. Yet

he resolves to do it through his Lieutenant so his own honor is not besmirched. The Governor is taken prisoner for his part in trying to swindle his people, and some of the officers are rounded up, as well as their plunder.

Further outlining the roguery of the Parliamentary soldiers is that their Captain Tubtext is taken in bed with two sisters, both of whom he has impregnated. Oddly, the Cavalier Captain, with the rest of the former plundering troop, scare him with a muzzled bear that they set loose upon him and then they capture him in his fear and shame. Tubtext indignantly claims that he is not ashamed, that he is “past repentance;” this exposes him as a “Blasphemous rogue” (199).

The plunder that would have gone with the Roundheads is now in Cavalier hands. The Captain addresses the country gentlemen who had sided with and been swindled by the Roundheads:

Gentlemen, ‘tis not unknown how publicly you have appeared against your Prince, and how secure you thought yourselves under the protection of these hypocrites. But, to show you what rogues they are, all the wealth that you brought hither to be secured from us, they would have made conditions to have marched away with, and so cheated the whole country !...there’s reformation for you! (201)

The Captain tells them then that all the property is therefore the King’s. The gentlemen give it freely, as well as their lives. The Captain responds:

CAPTAIN. Although the wealth that’s here be great, and the King’s wants require it, yet, to show that he had rather have his subjects’ hearts than money, he has commissioned me to return every man his own again.  
1 GENTLEMAN. Sir, this gracious act of the King, and your readiness to perform it, shall turn us all faithful subjects to the extent of our lives and fortunes.  
CAPTAIN. Now, you deserve his mercy. (201)

Thus, even though Charles I ended up losing the war, this play portrays him as willing to risk defeat when he could have used the money to defeat the enemy; yet out of love for his subjects he chooses not to further hurt them, despite their inconstancy and the fact that he had every right

to their possessions. Veneration of the king's giving and noble heart is part of what makes the play acceptable for a Restoration audience, despite the audacious acts of the Cavaliers.

In a lighter moment at the end of the play comes the obligatory marriage scene, versions of which we have seen in the previous two comedies of this chapter. The plot against Dol for Biddy to marry her is similar to the wedding proceedings in *Cutter of Coleman Street*. Biddy has been married and exclaims the trick against Dol as a success, but it was actually Tell-Troth, her old lover, in disguise, and not Dol. Now that Dol has no husband still, they all agree that she should marry Raggou, and she will.

The play ends on a very Cavalier note, with the Captain lecturing the Lieutenant on the merits of treating the King's subjects more civilly. The play ends with this exchange, after the Captain declares that all the country people shall have their property back:

CAPTAIN....Tomorrow, sirs, summon in the country, and every man shall have his right.

ALL. God bless the King, and all his good soldiers!

CAPTAIN. You see, Lieutenant, how with good usage the people return to their loyalty. I know you are a brave fellow; but you have been to blame in the country, and that dis-serves your Prince more than your courage can recompense.

LIEUTENANT. Sir, you shall never have occasion to say this again.

CAPTAIN. I believe you; and I wish that the great timber, the pieces of state, that lie betwixt the King and subjects—

I wish that they would take a hint from hence,

To keep the people's hearts close to their Prince! (206)

The play thus ends on a happy note with the Cavalier "officers" who had been stealing learn their lesson and agree to no longer steal from the innocent people. It is therefore an apology of sorts for the conduct of soldiers during the war, attributing such activities to a few rogues who are not part of the aristocracy that should have really led the army. It is also a neat resolution to the problematic rendering of the king's soldiers throughout the play. The play also is an apology for the loss of the Civil War, giving the King's magnanimity as a potential reason for losing. This serves to rehabilitate the King's image, as well as his army, for the war that lost him his head and

also resulted in his son having to escape into exile. The play also “proves” that monarchy is the desired form of government, for look what happens to the country when it is left to those who are not bred to rule. *The Old Troop* is therefore a reaffirmation of the person, power, and perception of the king, only removed one generation; the son inherits these qualities through the father. Its function is clearly to work as a tool for the king.

Yet, the fact that the Cavaliers are not altogether virtuous, brave, and witty, as they had been in *The Committee*, tells us that, as we saw in the serious drama, the image of the king was failing him, and that the former image of unanimity for him and his return was breaking down. Cavalier soldiers steal from the people and get away with it in the end. Raggou is a ridiculous man. Further, the troop makes no apology about their relations with a prostitute, caring only that they do not get saddled with the responsibility of being branded the father of her child. Only Raggou will accept this. In this way Raggou is oddly similar to Charles II, willing to accept his illegitimate children, and also a fun-loving, often ridiculous figure who seems to care mostly about his own pleasures, whatever they are. He is also willing to participate in the rest of the troop’s thieving activities. Though the troop agrees at the end to stop stealing, they are not punished at all for the damage that they have already done, much less for the cowardice they have routinely demonstrated on the battlefield, caring only about their plunder and not the king’s rights. From a distance, then, this comedy, while certainly funny, is still a somewhat serious indictment to the image of the king, though not intentionally. The comedy of the mid-1660s therefore no longer serves effectively as royalist propaganda, though it appears Lacy did intend it to be so.

Comedy too thus reflected the very personality and perception of Charles II in the sequence of apparent consensus, decline of consensus, and failure of consensus. And while the

“legitimate” plays would never starkly oppose Charles, which would not have worked for the careers of the playwrights or their companies’ box office receipts even if they wanted to oppose him, they do demonstrate the waning image of great support for the king, which would continue through the next decade. Comedies especially got bawdier in parallel with the continued debauched activity of the king and court. Charles the man was still shaping the theatre single-handedly with his actions and image.



## CONCLUSION: CHARLES II AND RESTORATION THEATRE

Charles II is and was a polarizing figure. On one hand, he was a charming man who could disarm people with his manner and grace. Tall and larger than life, he sometimes inspired awe, and no doubt envy, to some who wished to have the charisma and desirability that he possessed. On the other hand, his actions often suggest that he was an extremely selfish person, even by monarchical standards. He did not seem to have any scruples when it came to his extramarital affairs, nor did he seem to mind that his queen and even his mistresses at times were humiliated by his actions. We have seen from firsthand accounts how word got around that he and many members of court were engaging in behavior many thought were detrimental to the nation, and that he often seemed to ignore affairs of state because of his own cares. Richard Ollard captures this contradictory view of the king quite well:

Historians have in the past and do at this moment differ widely in their estimate of him, not only as a King, but as to what sort of man he was. Charles II was the best of company, gay, carefree, pleasure-loving, tolerant. He possessed the wit and charm of Falstaff without his contemptible grossness. No wonder that he should be the first choice of every woman since his time (including, it has been alleged, though on no discernible authority, Queen Victoria) invited to pick an English monarch to sit next to at dinner. The image has, if anything, expanded in its own warmth. (20)

Likewise, Ronald Hutton describes the dual nature of the king quite well:

On the one hand, a Cromwellian spy could describe Charles's entourage as full of drunkenness, fornication, and adultery. On the other, a radical Protestant visionary who crossed from England to harangue the King noted that religious services were held twice daily in the royal presence, with the chaplains choosing different psalms and prayers for each. Both views can be substantiated. (Hutton, *Charles II* 122)

This double identity of Charles II begs the question of why so many seemed to support the Restoration of the Stuart dynasty. It appears that despite the many faults of the Stuart king, they did. Tim Harris reminds us that "It is usually argued that Londoners of all ranks welcomed back

the king in the spring of 1660 with positive enthusiasm” and that “Most historians agree with the view that there was an extensive popular support for the return of the monarchy in 1659-60” (Harris, *London Crowds* 36). Hutton gives us more insight on the appeal of the Restoration king, especially early in his reign, explaining that “He was the playboy monarch, naughty but nice, the hero of all who prized urbanity, tolerance, good humour, and the pursuit of pleasure above the more earnest, sober, or martial virtues” (Hutton, *Charles II* 446). Charles’s star power, through which he gave himself the playboy image, backfired on his hegemonic aims, as we have seen. Yet, as Hutton has described, his image had a lot to do with his appeal. Regardless of which Charles may be the “true” Charles (and it is probably both), these perceptions influenced a lot of things during his reign, which did not end until 1685.

Charles and royalists who wished to see him remain on the throne were wise to use any public means possible to promote consensus. There were a number of rituals, including print, theatre, and spectacles like the rump roastings and the coronation procession, that wise royalists latched to that could serve this aim. Anna Keay describes the importance of such devices:

In Charles II’s hands the rituals of monarchy flourished—promoted, overseen and shaped by the king himself. Far from being fossilized remains of an old world order, these ceremonial occasions were dynamic events carefully shaped to the king’s own advantage. Through them, he asserted the strength of the English monarchy, bound his people to him and projected an often dazzling image of his own sovereignty, and as such they served as powerful weapons in his own political struggles. (Keay 209)

These weapons could be effective in raising royalist sentiment, at least in the first years after the Restoration.

This study has looked particularly at the literary influence of print and theatre during the early reign of Charles II as collaborating ideological state apparatuses on early Restoration England as a failed attempt at establishing hegemonic consensus on the English subjects. That the Restoration theatre is indeed a full-fledged ISA is in little doubt. Backscheider writes that

during “periods of renegotiation,” such as the Restoration, “many components of society and most discourses necessarily become hegemonic apparatuses” (xii). This description would include both print and theatre, as well as public spectacles (1-2), which we examined most closely in the Introduction. Backscheider also explains why Charles and those who worked toward his interests felt that England was ripe for hegemonic control, and why it was somewhat successful at first. It seems that there was a lot of contention because there was a lack of a consensus opinion:

A major reason for social turmoil and the numerous expressions of disquiet was this lack of a dominant ideology or even of an established hegemony. As Gramsci noted, ruling bodies almost universally depend upon consent to their ‘intellectual and moral leadership.’ When this consent is received and as long as it is maintained, a nation usually experiences both internal peace and peace of mind, for the people feel that they are in harmony with ‘the way the world is...’ (Backscheider 35)

This is the kind of atmosphere that Charles and royalists sought to promote in England. Douglas Canfield has shown that “Restoration theaters were indeed state apparatuses,” since they fulfilled an “official discourse,” or “hegemonic ideology” and, as Deborah Payne Fisk has pointed out, Charles II’s “patentees were political, not artistic, appointments” (Canfield, *Heroes and States* 3). Canfield also blatantly states that in general “The theater is a powerful ideological state apparatus for the production of hegemonic ideology” (Canfield, *Heroes and States* 200). As this hegemonic ideology pertains to the Restoration, we can identify its source, taking the idea of consensus writing as hegemonic practice in the utilization of plays and print as ISAs and putting it squarely onto the restored king himself. As we have seen, the uniqueness of this particular moment in history, coupled with a boom in the relatively new medium of print and the restoration also of the popular entertainment of theatre, made such indoctrination possible. Unfortunately for Charles and his royalist allies, however, Charles did not ultimately succeed

due to circumstances beyond his control, combined with his own failures in effectively steering the country's affairs.

I have endeavored thus to establish that Charles II, far more than any other figure, through both word and deed, with deliberate choices as well as incidental actions devoid of consideration for the stage, nearly single-handedly drove the theatre forward. When we read plays from the Restoration, we are reading plays that are the result of Charles II's influence, brought about largely by his attempts at consensus. When we see a Restoration play revived upon the stage, what we see is in some way an echo of the perception, power, and personality of this single individual. Restoration theatre is therefore the theatre of Charles II, not merely because he brought the stage back from puritan purgatory, but because he shaped it directly, even if he did so in ways he did not intend, almost as much as if he had written the plays himself.

But Charles did not write the plays. The Restoration playwrights especially in the first few years, as we have seen, sought to flatter the king and feed upon his hegemonic aspirations and thereby increase their own importance under the restored crown. They also in many cases tried to exonerate themselves for supporting or at least thriving under the Protectorate. Anna Keay illuminates this fact:

To some extent it was the characteristic of the first years of any reign, but in this case many of those who now courted the king had spurned him in the preceding decades. Most, from European princes to the English gentry, had ground to make up with Charles II. There was, too, a national hunger for stability, which manifested itself in almost unprecedented enthusiasm for monarchy in general, and for this monarch in particular. (Keay 94)

This need for peace, as Backscheider has called a lack of hegemonic ideology, largely drove the Restoration. Certain key Restoration playwrights embody this need to cozy up to the new king perfectly. William Davenant, one of the two Restoration patentees, made peace with Cromwell and in fact flourished artistically under the Protectorate. Orrery served Cromwell as a general

and also flourished in the Commonwealth and Protectorate in other important posts. He also tried to arrange a marriage between the Protector and Charles II's sister, and attempted to persuade Cromwell to take the crown. Dryden had been a supporter of Cromwell, and had written panegyrics to him upon his death. Therefore these men and others willingly participated in the king's hegemonic aims, either because they believed in that ideology or because to do so would rescue them from the doldrums of humiliation for supporting the interregnum governments.

Some authors, such as Dryden, were willing to write plays in styles that they did not necessarily prefer. Robert Hume writes of this fact that "all who hoped to succeed commercially had to adapt to the entertainment demands of the theatre. Dryden is a prime example of this pressure: he almost always writes to please himself, but he is not working in a vacuum and his is acutely aware of audience taste" (Hume 30). The fact that authors wanted to flatter Charles and that they were even willing at times, as Dryden was, to write in forms that they did not necessarily choose, speaks to the heavy influence of the king upon Restoration theatre, and also to the playwrights, at least at first, as willing participants in utilizing the plays as propaganda. This was the essence of consensus writing; whether playwrights or pamphleteers wanted to or not, they were engaged to elevate the king and to help keep him on the throne. They were there to help him maintain his superstar status. Never mind that initially this status was gained largely because the nation was unhappy with the Protectorate and the various tugs-of-war that had occurred between remnants of the Protectorate after Cromwell's death, or that much of the nation was still uneasy with the regicide and Civil Wars that they wanted something more familiar and stable. The point was that Charles had that power by whatever means, and a seeming majority wanted him to have it. Thus, it served the playwrights, pamphleteers, civic officials, and others to aid Charles in his aim to find ways to construct works as propaganda tools and put them into

effect, so that a consensus would be perceived by the people, resulting in the nation falling under hegemony. If this could be achieved, the architects of this intended hegemony stood to improve their standing with the king even more. Some had already succeeded in getting into the king's good graces. Davenant became the manager of the Duke's Company; Orrery was created an Earl, which helped give him the opportunity to write plays; Dryden became Poet Laureate.

We are able to talk about great spectacles, booms in print, and politically charged plays in the early Restoration because Charles began his reign from a position of advantage and strength. In some ways he maintained that strength to the end of his reign; this is no small accomplishment, given the fact that his brother James II lasted only three short years before he was essentially forced out, and that the Stuart line was never restored. Yet insofar as Restoration theatre is concerned, Charles controlled it not only by his attempts to bring about a hegemonic consensus by using plays as propaganda, but also by events he was responsible for and some he was not, leading to the failure of those plays to solidify that consensus.

I have hoped to show that consensus, or the writers' attempts in that endeavor, consisted of how people perceived the king due to his actions, words, or rumor (perception); how Charles took a personal interest in shaping the theatre, commissioning plays, patronizing playwrights, and attending their works frequently in the playhouses and at Court (power); and how his celebrity status made him a centerpiece of the plays, even symbolically (personality). Eventually, however, the restored king's image and status could not save his attempts at consensus from ultimately failing; indeed, it was ironically these very things that caused the failure of consensus, and thus it was never established.

## Consensus Failure and Print

The fact that print enjoyed a great boom during the momentous events of the seventeenth century is providential to a work such as this, which seeks to identify literature and spectacle as ideological state apparatuses and to show how they failed during the Restoration. That pamphlets follow a similar pattern as plays reveals that the consensus sequence is not tied to plays alone; therefore a number of propagandistic works experienced the same cycle, and plays are not simply isolated events which reflected Charles II. Also important is the fact that many pamphlet authors patterned their works after dramatic writings, using the dialogue form to infuse an immediacy into their literature, as well as using the dramatic style to create closet drama. Works like the ghost dialogues were popular for passing judgment upon the regicides and their successors, while at the same time rehabilitating the personas of both Charles I and Charles II. These endeavors led to more dramatic pieces such as the Mistress Rump dialogues, which resembled traditional plays even more. “Mrs. Rump Brought to Bed of a Monster” features a prologue and an epilogue, which are both staples of published plays, and were routinely performed on the stage with the play. “The Life and Death of Mrs. Rump” introduces itself with a description of “The Names of the chief Actors, in this Tragical Scene” before the characters begin to speak. “Mrs. Rump Brought to Bed of a Monster” was expanded and republished as a short play, “The Famous Tragedie of the Life and Death of Mrs. Rump,” and according to its title page was “presented on a burning stage” the day that Charles made his long-awaited return to England in May of 1660. It also contains a list of characters and retains its prologue and epilogue. These pieces are a testament to the dramatic form as an enhancement to print as a form of propaganda. Zygmunt Hubner illuminates the attraction for the spoken word as a form of ISA:

The printed word can at most arouse individual emotions, but the spoken word can incite collective emotions that are something more than the sum total of their parts...Moreover, in the theater the performer's interpretation can bring out meanings that may have escaped the censor's eye, and the emotional coloration provided by the actor affects the audience directly, beyond the control of reason. (Hubner 29).

Though of course there was no censor for royalists to subvert, Hubner captures the importance of the spoken word as an advantage over mere print. Thus, printed pamphlets such as these could be made more effective if pushed further into the realm of the closet drama. For example, *Craftie Cromwell* of the late 1640s endeavored to show the depravity of the Protector far before his death and even before he became Lord Protector. *Cromwell's Conspiracy*, a revised version of that play, aroused emotions by actually depicting the regicide and the execution of other innocents. It also painted Cromwell, ironically, as a lecherous man on the inside, though pious on the outside, in his affair with Lambert's wife. The 1670s satire *Sodom* sought to use shocking language and plot to take Charles II to task for his faults, particularly that of his famous sexual appetite for desirable women of all ranks. In his decree to practice and promote only homosexual sex, Bolloxinian, or Charles, brings his realm into utter ruin, unable to reproduce and infecting all with disease. The women who were the former objects of his lust have apparently worn him out, and must now be useless to the kingdom, whereas they were overused by Bolloxinian and his court before. In short, the king, charged with the safety and prosperity of his realm, has feminized his kingdom, bringing it to destruction, as it was feared Charles was doing.

The Restoration pamphlet plays worked effectively as propaganda, as we can see given their sheer volume and the fact that the dialogue was continually used, even during the Interregnum. *Sodom* is proof of the dramatic medium and print as failure to promote consensus and function as propaganda. The audacity of the work and the fact that it had a readership is very



good evidence that Charles no longer had a hold on either medium as he had at the beginning of his reign.

This tradition of closet drama no doubt led to plays like Tatham's satire *The Rump*, which reads much like a pamphlet with its overblown Puritan characters such as Lady Bertlam and Mrs. Cromwell, but was actually performed by an amateur company. The play, like *Cromwell's Conspiracy*, depicts actual events coupled with comedic scenes featuring Charles's enemies being ridiculous and sinful. Both plays also praise the impending Restoration.

The affinity that print and theatre shared is not hard to detect; that authors employed both the dialogue and dramatic form to pursue their hegemonic aims speaks to the accessibility and familiarity of the dialogue, and the influence of the spoken word on consensus writing. Even if pamphlets and tracts were not expressly to be read aloud, there was always this possibility, and the pamphlets could reach a much wider audience in this way than other types of writing could.

### Consensus and Ideological State Apparatus

The English subjects' perception of Charles II improved dramatically after the death of Oliver Cromwell, aided in no small way by printed matter disseminated almost immediately thereafter, and continuing to and after the Restoration. This rehabilitation of the king's image, which necessarily included that of his condemned father, was integral to the formation of hegemony. Paula Backscheider notes that "Charles's primary efforts were concentrated upon reclaiming English history" (34). The theatre continued this tradition as the two mediums worked together in a number of ways. At times print and the theatre are nearly indistinguishable. All we need do is look at the sheer volume of pro-Charles print to see what forces were at work: everything from biographies to elegies, poems, ballads, sermons, and more, worked to strengthen

Charles's position in his newly regained realm. When we compare the theatre to these writings, the themes and concerns are the same, whether they are discrediting the Cromwells and others through satire in *The Rump* and *The Committee*, or showing the defeat of tyrants, such as in *The Generall* and *The Indian Queene*, or depicting the restoration of the rightful ruler, as in *The History of Henry the Fifth* and *The Indian Queene*. The pamphlets also showed the erosion of consensus, such as in the critical sermons and *Sodom*, as did plays such as *Mustapha* and *The Indian Emperour*.

The king's image was modified in print by spectacles and exciting biographical accounts which flattered him and his father, as we observed in the coronation procession and the many panegyrics, ballads, poems, and biographies. The revised Worcester escape narratives played a key role in reversing the perception of the king, endeavoring to demonstrate that the kingly nature of Charles II was not at all diminished by his defeat and retreat, but that these events actually proved his worthiness. The ghost dialogues served expressly to vilify the enemies of the king and to demonstrate the upright and kingly nature of both Charles I and II. Further, the Mistress Rump dialogues continued to depict the oppressive nature of the king's enemies, showing the horror of a kingdom without a head (or with too many). *Cromwell's Conspiracy* depicted versions of actual events to show that Charles I was wrongfully executed and that a conspiracy of evil dispatched him and exiled his son. All these images serve to reclaim the king's failed image and turn it into one that seemed sure to welcome the English into a new Golden Age of prosperity and peace within the realm.

Plays too demonstrated the need to solidify the monarch's image, including both Charles I and II; they did this very publicly, akin to large spectacles:

At the same time that Charles made London the stage for a giant, protracted public masque, these plays were contributing to the establishment of Charles and his authority.

Notably, these disparate genres, crude satire, comedy, and tragedy—united to celebrate the king's return as the reestablishment of natural order and the harbinger of personal and national well-being. (Backscheider 30)

Producers first chose many plays for revival that rebuilt the king's image. Fletcher and Beaumont's plays, in addition to being suitable for Restoration stage conventions, often employed reversals that turned a potentially bad ending into a good one. Plays such as their *A King and No King* depicted an illegitimate and erratic ruler making a mess of his reign, and ended with the rightful heir, Panthea, being identified and sitting on the throne as the rightful ruler. Plays like Shakespeare's *Pericles* and *Hamlet* were revived because of their depiction of wrongfully usurped kings, and the recognition of these wrongs and, at least in part, the righting of these usurpations. Pericles was restored to the throne, and Hamlet's usurper was killed. Identifying useful existing plays and putting them onstage were very important to influencing the perception of Charles II as the rightful ruler, and of warning the people that any other outcome would result in disaster.

Adaptations of existing plays served the same capacity, except that they were altered to further these aims more directly. Davenant's *Macbeth* demonstrates the need to manipulate the storyline in order to bring it into more of a parallel with historical events. Thus, Macbeth is more of a villain and the Macduffs are expanded to show their likeness to Monk and his wife. Malcolm's role has also been altered in order to better depict him as Charles II. Davenant's *The Law Against Lovers* combines two Shakespeare plots to show more comically that Cromwell was the enemy to true love and desire, and that the wrong person ruling ends up in disaster and abuse. Only the restoration of order by the rightful ruler can make things right again. Translated plays such as Philips' version of Corneille's *Pompey* could take foreign works dealing with usurpation and tailor them to Restoration sentiments, as Phillips did with her songs in between the acts.

New plays also reflected these image-restoring sentiments. The new rhymed heroic play took this as one of its chief functions, as Orrery and Dryden sought to rehabilitate their own images in addition to the king's. The rightful king is restored thanks in part to a loyal general in Orrery's *The Generall*, and in his *Henry the Fifth*, the king wins his battles against France and becomes the "rightful ruler" of that realm as well. In *The Generall*, the rightful king personally dispatches the usurper, while in *Henry the Fifth*, the king gets the princess and wins the war. In Dryden's *The Indian Queene*, the long-lost and exiled ruler who has overthrown the usurpers turns out to be the protagonist, Montezuma. These obvious allusions to the Civil Wars, Interregnum, and Restoration celebrate the return of the king and of the just and rightful order, demonstrating to spectators and to readers of the printed plays that order has been restored. The message is that this new Golden Age, if the people allow it to continue, will bring unprecedented happiness and serenity to England, which has had to suffer without it for so long. Playing upon these emotions was an important part of consensus and hegemony.

Comedies also rebuilt the king's image. Robert Howard's *The Committee* shows royalists as sexy and volatile, and their female counterparts as beautiful, virtuous, and loyal. Comedies are a large part of where we see the propping up of the Stuarts by debasing their enemies.

Backscheider also makes this point:

To read the drama performed in the first two years is to be struck by the reiteration of the base motives of characters easily identified with members of the Committee of safety, of the condemnation of their destructive jealousies and crass ambitions, and of the deliberate portrayal of them as without intelligence, depth, vision, and concern for the people.  
(Backscheider 26)

The enemies of the king in these plays are deceitful and treacherous, even toward one another. At the end of *The Committee*, even the legalistic and puritanical Day family is singing Cavalier songs. *Cutter of Coleman Street* depicts the tricks of the Cavaliers to earn back their rightful

estates in times of destitution, and winning because of their rightful loyalties. Cavalier songs sung by the opposition, in this case the Fifth Monarchist Tabitha, appear here as well.

These styles, genres, plots, and patterns depict the new perception of King Charles II, transformed from a pitiful, defeated man into a triumphant, clever, and God-appointed ruler whose destiny was always to sit on the English throne. His Restoration had to be popular in order to be successful, and support for the king needed to continue if Charles II was to remain as king and also rule in the fashion that he wanted to. Thus, the reforming of his image was absolutely essential for his continued rule. These writings and spectacles at first effectively worked as propaganda designed to keep him there, and to form the illusion of hegemonic consensus.

In addition to the perception of the king, this work has shown also that consensus also includes the power of the king. As the person whose decree and patents set legal Restoration theatre in motion, Charles could call many of the shots. As such, the reopening of the theatres was “an unmitigated victory yell” for the royalists, thanks in part to its propaganda value (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 3). As Hubner observes, theatre is “easier to manipulate” than some other institutions, because it is “rarely self-sufficient, and whoever provides the money has by the very nature of things the right to make demands. It is little wonder then that in the course of its history the theater has more often served those in power than the poor and downtrodden” (Hubner 6). Though Charles was not particularly wealthy as a king, he did provide the means for theatre, and this was an important part of his power.

Charles was able to control, especially early in his reign, many aspects of the theatre. First, he made Davenant and Killigrew managers of the new companies; as Deborah Payne Fisk informed us, neither man was a “theatre man” before 1642, and Davenant had been somewhat loyal to Cromwell despite having been a royalist general. Thus, there was a modicum of control

that Charles could exercise over both companies. Charles also could and did suggest ideas for plays. We have seen that according to Orrery himself, Charles suggested that he write in the heroic style, and thus perhaps “commissioned” the beginning of the vogue for rhymed heroic plays. The king also suggested to Samuel Tuke that he write a translation of *The Adventures of Five Hours*, a play that was very popular and which featured the upright and proper men getting the girl and property.

Charles also exercised a power over the playwriting profession by establishing a coterie of high-ranking authors, many of them related to one another. For example, the co-authors of *The Indian Queene*, John Dryden and Sir Robert Howard, were brothers-in-law. A number of Howard’s brothers were also playwrights, and Orrery’s wife Margaret was a Howard, cousin to Sir Robert and his brothers. Other writers, such as Davenant and Sir Samuel Tuke, had been royalist officers. Such a group would be easier to influence than playwrights of a more middle-class station, first because they stood to gain or retain the most as the ruling class if the king remained on the throne, and secondly because hand-picked people were far more likely, if only out of gratitude, to do what the king wanted. The fact that the business of producing plays was in many ways a family business also contributed to what was essentially a stacked deck favoring Charles II. Thus, Charles’s power of influence over the medium and its producers was a shrewd move on his part.

Besides the family ties and theatrical appointments, we have also seen Charles’s power in his attempts to control seditious books by way of the 1662 Licensing Act. Charles also appointed Roger L’Estrange at this time to search out seditious writing against the king and his new government. L’Estrange became known later in Charles’s reign for his own pamphlet and periodical writing in favor of the king, including supporting the royalist Tory party with his own

periodical, *The Observer*, and occasionally writing pamphlets, including dialogues, which served to aid the king especially during crises like the Exclusion Crisis and Popish Plot.<sup>1</sup> All these devices demonstrate the most tangible ways that Charles went about exercising his influence and prerogatives as king to establish perceived consensus so that he could produce hegemony.

In addition to the perception and power of the king, we have observed the personality of the king. This was his status as a celebrity that became a force as soon as it became possible for his Restoration to occur. According to Nancy Maguire, “The very personality of the new King fostered the pragmatism of the new political theory,” and “From the beginning, the playwrights had used theatre to shore up a *de facto* monarchy which masqueraded as divine-right kingship...” (Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration* 11). The very popularity of the king with It, as Joseph Roach’s book tells us, could be used to invent new ways to construct propaganda for the promotion of hegemony. Roach himself notes the theatre as one of these devices, commenting that “Charles II...made attending the theaters, which he also had patented under his own and his brother’s titles, one of the hallmarks of his reign, along with the prominent display of his other appetites. Given the tabloid-like scrutiny of his personal affairs, it could be argued that the last sacred king was also the first modern head of state, at least on the score of flagrant public intimacy” (Roach 30).

Once Charles knew he could use this celebrity standing, his men went to work exploiting it. The Worcester narratives for example worked very hard to augment Charles’s star status, turning him into a valiant warrior and a cunning escape artist. The coronation procession treated him as nearly godlike, in the fashion of Stuart court masques which venerated the images of his

father and mother allegorically as gods. The allegorical characters who address Charles in the procession also give him deference and reverence.

Charles's celebrity is also clearly in the plays. This is best seen in *Henry the Fifth*, in Orrery's depiction of the king as the famous Henry V himself. We may recall that Henry not only defeats an army far greater in number than his, but wins the respect and love of the French Princess Katherine, and even resolves to act as the advocate of his friend Owen Tudor for her hand, forsaking his own claim. We also see the veneration of Charles II specifically in some plays. *Cutter of Coleman Street* and *The Committee* depict royalists who, out of loyalty, are impoverished and hopeful for a reversal in fortune for the king as well as themselves, although *The Committee* could refer to either Charles I or Charles II. *The Rump* and *Cromwell's Conspiracy* also represent the joy at the potential coming of the king with Monk's march into London, while *The Rump* especially depicts the wild celebratory nature of the "Roasting of the Rump."

Thus, the literary and theatrical traditions of the years surrounding the Restoration are evidence of an attempted tradition of consensus that, Charles and his royalist contingent hoped, would create a hegemonic atmosphere of control which was thought necessary for Charles to avoid another rebellion, and also to be king as he saw fit, cultivating his own interests.

#### Disaster and Debauchery: The Collapse of Consensus

We have also seen that despite these efforts, which at first seemed to be effective, consensus writing failed to establish hegemony, because the plays and pamphlets ceased to work as effective propaganda. We see this breakdown beginning within three years of the Restoration. Tim Harris explains this rather quick swing away from favor thus: "Support for the new king was



for many conditional. Charles was welcomed in the belief that only he could solve specific grievances, and his failure to do so soon led to disillusionment. But what needs to be stressed is that different people had very different expectations of the Restoration...(Harris, *London Crowds* 37). Therefore, as Backscheider relates, while Charles was attempting to rewrite history, “the foundation of imperial England was already being laid, and [royalists’] lack of appreciation and respect for the changes and ambitions that had shaped the minds of many subjects led to conflict, and resentment that began to break out in communities throughout the nation that colored many contemporary plays” (Backscheider 34).

In print, some writings and especially sermons demonstrated this increasing lack of confidence in Charles II’s rule. Preachers had lauded the return of the king early in the reign, such as Simon Ford’s *Parallela* (1660), Clement Ellis’s “A Sermon Preached on the 29th of May” (1661), and Thomas Reeve’s *England’s Backwardnesse or a Lingerin Party in bringing back a lawful King* (1661), which all compare Charles I and/or Charles II with biblical characters such as Christ and King David. Yet within a few years, churchmen begin to charge the king with sinful behavior from the pulpit and the press, such as Edward Stillingfleet’s “Sermon Preached Before the King” (1667), which we may remember chastised the king for his affairs. Other sermons lamented the ill fortune in the form of numerous disasters that tormented the nation: “The rejoicing of the sermons of 1660-2 gave way, within two or three years, to sermons appalled by the profligacy and moral degeneration of the nation despite its having enjoyed the great mercy of the Restoration” (Keeble 166).

Disaffection with the Restoration also appears in the literature which laments the Great Fire, the outbreak of plague, and the unfortunate Dutch wars, which many believed was a sign

from above that the nation was being punished for its great wickedness. Anna Keay describes this disillusionment:

...the events of [the 1660s]—natural disasters, national disgrace and the conversion of the heir to the throne—had a sobering effect on king and court. The salad days of the Restoration had passed and, behind the rouge and the revelry, court life became a more serious business. While Charles II had always taken great care with the most formal ritual occasions—such as receiving royal diplomats or touching for the king’s evil—the atmosphere of his court in general was jovial, sometimes even decadent... (Keay 171)

Printed matter such as *The Plague Checkt* (1665), “Upon the Present Plague at London” (1665), and *Solomon’s Prescription For the Removal of the Pestilence* (1665) all blame the nation’s sinfulness, including the king’s, for the plague. Works like *Sodom* and “The Causes of God’s Wrath Against England” (1665) specifically blame debauchery for England’s suffering. The author of this sinful atmosphere was thought by many to be none other than its sovereign, and thus the hegemonic devices Charles had cooked up could no longer work as he intended.

The plays followed suit; even the sycophantic rhymed heroic play showed anxiety with Charles. Orrery’s *Mustapha* especially did this, through the character of Solyman, whose jealousy of his son and willingness to be influenced by a woman resulted in both his sons’ deaths. Dryden’s *The Indian Emperour* did the same, showing Montezuma as being led by his selfish desires to marry his enemies’ offspring, out of his own lust. In comedy, we have seen especially how in *The Old Troop* there are some concerns with the king’s soldiers not behaving as they should, being willing, like the Parliamentarians in the play, to fleece the people out of their possessions, and all consorting with a prostitute who seeks in return to blackmail them all. Again closet drama got into the act in the 1670s with the shocking *Sodom*, which expressed a profound lack of respect for the king’s behavior, and rather explicitly exposed his penchant for sexual mischief. Richard Ollard makes a fitting conclusion for how all this occurred: “Charles I brought disaster on his realm by asserting too high a view of his rights and duties. Charles II by

his frivolity and idleness exposed the country to disgrace and humiliation” (Ollard 19). Indeed, these are some of the biggest traits that Charles II is known for historically. This legacy, however, helped to form the future of Restoration drama throughout and beyond his reign.

### Final Thoughts

This study has tried to demonstrate the defining influence of Charles II on Restoration theatre by examining his intentions of instilling hegemony over his subjects in England by establishing a consensus of thought among them. That Charles’s actions in controlling the theatre as an ideological state apparatus, and his actions (and inaction at times) in seeking to fulfill his own personal desires had such a defining impact on the establishment of Restoration theatre sheds a new light on this period in the theatre’s history. That one man, not a playwright, could so fully influence the immediate and future direction of a traditionally popular form of entertainment opens avenues of investigation that may continue the present study beyond and before the Restoration. Perhaps an expanded analysis will reveal that more rulers or governing bodies have a defining influence on the theatre, as well as other art forms, or that they have more of a direct influence on the theatre than previously supposed. Such a potential pattern of influence would most certainly alter some traditional notions about play construction as hegemonic vehicle or as some other revealing apparatus. Perhaps such a revelation would help us as theatre scholars and practitioners to learn more about the nature of live and printed plays, and about their potential to influence and to reveal our own era. At the very least, I believe this work has revealed a serious emphasis of one man’s influence on the Restoration theatre, one that has remained squarely in front of us since the seventeenth century, which hopefully will prompt

Restoration scholars to probe these and later works for more evidence of Charles II's direct influence on theatre and other literature of the age.

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#### End Notes

<sup>1</sup> For more on L'Estrange's career, see Hinds. A couple of L'Estrange's Exclusion Crisis Pamphlets are "Citt and Bumpkin, in a Dialogue Over a Pot of Ale, Concerning Matters of Religion and Government," and "Citt and Bumpkin, or, A Learned Discourse upon swearing and Lying And other Laudable Qualities tending to a Thorow Reformation. The Second Part." Sandwiched between these two pamphlets is the anonymous Whig pamphlet "Crackfart and Tony; or, Knave and Fool: in a Dialogue over a Dish of Coffee, Concerning Matters of Religion and Government," which is a direct response to "Citt and Bumpkin," and to which "The Second Part" is a response. All these works were printed in 1680.

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## VITA

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Christopher has taught a number of college courses at Louisiana State, Indiana University, Samford University, and the University of Montevallo. The courses he has taught include Acting I and II, Introduction to Theatre, Dramatic Literature, Script Analysis, and Renaissance Theatre, and he has experience with both traditional and nontraditional students. On the secondary school level he has taught theatre, history, English, and Speech. Christopher has been a member of a number of organizations, including Phi Kappa Phi, Mid-America Theatre Conference, the South Central Modern Language Association, and the Graduate Theatre Organization at Louisiana State, of which he served twice as president. He hopes to continue his research and creative interests professionally at a college or university.