University of Southampton

Faculty of Humanities

Department of English

The Revolutionary Theatres of Sir William Davenant, 1650–1667

by

Stephen Watkins

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Abstract

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Scholars of the seventeenth-century theatre frequently cite William Davenant (1606–68) as an important cultural figure. Not only was he uniquely responsible for producing plays and musical dramas during the 1650s—a period in which commercial theatre was officially prohibited—but he also established the more successful of two theatre companies at the Restoration of Charles II in 1660. His achievements in revolutionising the English stage include introducing the proscenium arch, as well as painted, perspectival scenery to the public theatres. He employed the first professional actresses. Yet, Davenant's contribution to the political and intellectual history of his moment has proven less appealing to critics, who often account for his shifting allegiances by dismissing him as a self-serving turncoat. This thesis, however, argues that Davenant's engagement with revolutionary politics is inextricably linked to his theatrical experiments. Reading the key texts of the revolutionary period—from *Gondibert* (1650) to *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* (1667)—the thesis argues that Davenant staged a series of debates about the most pressing political issues of the period, and thus appealed to a wide range of constituencies, including the Republican authorities and the Carolean elite. By situating the works within their immediate historical and political contexts, each chapter will show how Davenant conceives of his theatre as a space for exploring questions and ideas about the nature of sovereignty, of power, and of loyalty and obedience, and of how the theatre as a civic institution might serve as 'collateral help' in examining these. Rather than dismissing Davenant's work as bland and unimaginative, this thesis reveals a body of work extremely alert to political and cultural change across the 1650s and 1660s, as well as a writer adept at negotiating with the authorities to rehabilitate the theatre as a viable cultural force after a period of trauma, dislocation, and upheaval.

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Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name:	Stephen Watkins

Title of thesis:	The Revolutionary Theatres of Sir William Davenant, 1650–1667

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission

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Finally, Sarah Smyth continues to be my staunchest champion and my best friend. I could not have finished this thesis without her—and I wouldn't have wanted to try. Whatever is good in it is dedicated to her, with love.

List of Abbreviations

BL	British Library
CPW	John Milton, *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, ed. by Don M. Wolfe, 5 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953–1971)
CSP Col. 1574–1660	*Calendar of State Papers, Colonial, America and West Indies, Vol. 1 1574–1660*
CSP: Thurloe	*A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*
CSPD	*Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*
Davenant, *Works*	William Davenant, *The Works of Sir William D'avenant Knight* (London, 1673)
Dryden, *Poems*	John Dryden, *The Poems of John Dryden*, ed. by Paul Hammond and David Hopkins, 5 vols (London: Longman, 1995–2005)
Dryden, *Works*	John Dryden, *The Works of John Dryden*, gen. eds, E. N. Hooker and H. T. Swedenberg, 20 vols (Berkeley, LA and London: University of California Press, 1956–89)
Edmond	Mary Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant: Poet Laureate, Playwright, Civil War General, Restoration Theatre Manager* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987)
EEBO	*Early English Books Online*
EHR	*English Historical Review*
ELH	*English Literary History*
ELR	*English Literary Renaissance*
Evelyn, *Diary*	John Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. by E. S. de Beer, 6 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955)
Harbage	Alfred Harbage, *Sir William Davenant, Poet Venturer 1606–1668* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1935)
HJ	*Historical Journal*
HLQ	*Huntington Library Quarterly*

JCS	G. E. Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 7 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941–68)
London Stage	*The London Stage, Part 1: 1660–1700*, ed. by William Van Lennep (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965)
Nethercot	A. H. Nethercot, *Sir William D'Avenant: Poet Laureate and Playwright-Manager* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1938, rpt. 1967)
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*
PBSA	*The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*
Pepys, *Diary*	Samuel Pepys, *Diary*, ed. by Robert Latham and William Matthews, 11 vols (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1970–1983)
SEL	*SEL: Studies in English Literature 1500–1900*
Shakespeare, *Works*	William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984)
Shorter Poems	Sir William Davenant, *The Shorter Poems, and Songs from the Plays and Masques*, ed. by A. M. Gibbs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972)
Stationers' Register	*A Transcript of the Registers of the Worshipful Company of Stationers, from 1640-1708, A.D.*, 3 vols (London: s.n., 1913–14)
TN	*Theatre Notebook*
TNA	The National Archives
YES	*Yearbook of English Studies*

A Note on Texts, Dates and Spelling

Where modern scholarly editions of Davenant's texts exist, I have used them. In their absence, I have consulted the early modern quartos and folios themselves, either through EEBO or in hard copy. Texts by other writers are taken from the standard editions, unless stated otherwise in the footnotes.

All dates follow the Old Style, but the year is taken to begin on 1 January.

In presenting quotations from early modern sources, I have retained original spelling, but have normalised j/i and u/v in line with standard practice. I have also expanded abbreviations.

Introduction

This thesis is a study of William Davenant's 'revolutionary' theatres. It examines the dramatic and pseudo-dramatic works that he wrote and produced in three different performance spaces in London between 1650 and 1667. The word 'revolutionary' used to describe this body of work plays on the three related strands that the thesis will explore in the chapters that follow. Firstly, I employ 'revolutionary' as a historical and political category: the texts I am concerned with here, from the heroic poem *Gondibert* (1650) to *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island*, performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1667, were conceived of, written, and produced during the period following the English Civil Wars (1642–8) and the execution of Charles I (1649), and/or the Restoration of Charles II in 1660. As such, they are the products of a period of intense political change, social unrest, and national soul-searching. 'The English Revolution' and its cognates, then, serve as a convenient shorthand for discussing the period of English history stretching from the start of the Civil Wars to the fall of Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, in November 1667, whose downfall was the result of the country's defeat in the Second Anglo-Dutch war, compounded by the humiliating raid on the Medway the previous June. Hyde was tasked with overseeing the war effort, and his leaving office symbolically marked an end to the volatile opening decade of the Restoration.[1] Secondly, the term 'revolutionary' captures the sense of aesthetic and theatrical innovation and experimentation that characterises Davenant's work throughout the 1650s and 1660s. Theatre historians have long recognised—as literary critics on the whole have not—that Davenant was responsible for transforming the theatrical landscape in England, establishing a form of dramaturgy that held sway until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Not only did he introduce moveable, perspective scenery and the proscenium arch to the public stage, but he also employed the first professional women to perform before paying audiences.[2] Not only

[1] For a discussion of the term 'revolution' in the context of the English Civil Wars and the 1650s, see Laura Lunger Knoppers, 'Introduction: Critical Framework and Issues', in *The Oxford Handbook of Literature and the English Revolution*, ed. by Laura Lunger Knoppers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 1–25 (pp. 4–10). For 1667, see Ronald Hutton, *The Restoration: A Political and Religious History of England and Wales, 1658–1667* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

[2] See Richard Southern, *Changeable Scenery: Its Origin and Development in the British Theatre* (London: Faber & Faber, 1952); Dawn Lewcock, *Sir William Davenant, the Court Masque, and the English Seventeenth-Century Scenic Stage, c. 1605–c. 1700* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2008); Elizabeth Howe, *The First English Actresses: Women and Drama 1660–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

that, but Davenant inaugurated an English tradition of *musical* drama, using recitative and instrumental consorts, which came to rival Italian opera and French ballet, and which paved the way for later works by Henry Purcell and others.[3]

My third meaning of 'revolutionary' is less self-evident, but in many ways it is the most important because it brings together the two shades of meaning I have already discussed, and thus strikes at the heart of my argument. Davenant's theatre, I will show, is 'revolutionary' in that it *revolves*, circles around, and returns to the same set of themes, ideas, and debates throughout the two decades under examination here.[4] As I hope will become clear, Davenant is compelled to return time and again to what seem to him the most urgent, contentious and provocative questions of his historical moment: questions about the nature of sovereignty, power, justice, and tyranny; of human nature, love and sex, and social relations; and questions about the function of the theatre itself as a way of exploring all these things. Given the upheavals and disruptions to the status quo across the 1640–70 period, and the awkward position drama and theatre held during the revolution, all this is hardly surprising.[5] As the country lurched from one regime to the next, Davenant tapped into a rich vein of material and continued to mine it for dramatic inspiration. His dramatic works ask questions that continue to be of interest and fascination whether in 1650, 1658 or 1664 precisely *because* they prove to be insoluble.

Davenant was unique in being the only playwright permitted to stage theatrical entertainments in the 1650s, and his central role in re-establishing the theatres following the Restoration in 1660 makes him a vitally important voice in the culture—one which has been mostly neglected by historians and literary critics until now.[6] His revolutionary theatre was not conceived simply as a space for light-hearted and ephemeral entertainments, although some of his contemporaries dismissed them as such at the time.[7] Rather, the dramatic works he produces during the revolutionary period are intensely invested in the politics of their immediate moments of production. They not only strive to reflect those politics back to audiences but to actively intervene in them. Having worked as a playwright and masque

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[3] Edward J. Dent, *Foundations of English Opera: A Study of Musical Drama in England During the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928), pp. 43–77; Andrew R. Walkling, *Masque and Opera in England, 1656–1688* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017).

[4] *OED*, sense 2.

[5] The standard account of the theatre during the period remains Leslie Hotson, *The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1928; rpt. 1962).

[6] For Davenant and the Restoration see, John Freehafer, 'The Formation of the London Patent Companies in 1660', *TN*, 20 (1965), 6–30.

[7] See John Evelyn's account of a trip to the Cockpit theatre, discussed below (pp. 98–99).

librettist at the courts of Charles I and Henrietta Maria in the 1630s, Davenant was well aware of the theatre's potential as a political tool. Kevin Sharpe has observed that in masques such as *Britannia Triumphans* (1638) and *Salmacida Spolia* (1640), and plays like *The Platonick Lovers* (1635) and *The Fair Favourite* (1638), Davenant provided sensitive and imaginative critiques of contemporary royal policies and behaviours under the guise of panegyric: 'For all his loyal devotion to the queen and the king', Sharpe writes, 'Davenant could write satirically of courtly fashion and critically of royal policies. Neither the man nor his plays reflects the narrow preoccupations of an isolated courtly world, but a rich variety of experience and a wide range of perspectives.'[8] My aim in this thesis is to show how Davenant developed a revolutionary theatre, itself related in important ways to the aesthetics of the Caroline masque, which was as capable as his pre-1642 work of revealing 'debate, ambiguity and anxiety' to his audiences.[9] As one of Davenant's biographers notes, from his earliest days at the Caroline court, Davenant gained 'all of the qualities and training which would logically lead to the next stage in his development as the most important and influential man of the English theatre in the seventeenth century'.[10] This thesis explores that 'next stage' of his career with the aim of demonstrating how his subtle engagement with politics informed his dramaturgical experiments.

In this introduction, I want to lay out the critical terrain in which this research is situated. There is a small body of scholarly work on Davenant, but it has been highly selective in its approach, often focussing, as Sharpe does, on one particular period or set of works, rather than taking the longer view, either by putting his diverse range of plays, poems,

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[8] Kevin Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment: The Politics of Literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 58. For the masque tradition and its engagement with contemporary politics, see Martin Butler, *The Stuart Court Masque and Political Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Rebecca Bailey, *Staging the Old Faith: Queen Henrietta Maria and the Theatre of Caroline England, 1625–1642* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), pp. 143–9; Karen Britland, *Drama at the Courts of Queen Henrietta Maria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 53–149. Most recently, Claire Jowitt has written on Davenant in the context of 1630s travel writing and politics; see her '"To Sleep, Perchance to Dream": The Politics of Travel in the 1630s', *YES*, 44 (2014), 249–64.

[9] Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment*, p. x. On the aesthetics of the masque, see Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, 2 vols (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); Stephen Orgel, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theatre in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley, LA: University of California Press, 1975); Roy Strong, *Britannia Triumphans: Inigo Jones, Rubens and Whitehall Palace* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980); John Peacock, *The Stage of Inigo Jones: The European Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). As early as 1639, Davenant had prepared to open a commercial theatre in London that would present audiences with scenic dramas in the fashion of the court masques; see John Freehafer, 'Brome, Suckling, and Davenant's Theatre Project of 1639', *Texas Studies in Language and Literature*, 10 (1968), 367–83.

[10] Nethercot, p. 168.

and masques into dialogue with each other, or by charting developments across the *longue durée* of his career. This is not to suggest, of course, that certain moments of rupture are undetectable within Davenant's career: this thesis does indeed take one such rupture—the regicide of Charles I and the political scrambling that followed—as its starting point. Here, I briefly sketch out the events that led to Davenant's remarkable transformation from the Caroline poet laureate to the so-classed republican '*master o' th' Revels*'.[11] The transition, as will become clear, was the result of both political and professional considerations. I then conclude this introduction by outlining the chapters that follow.

Critical Overview

Much of the research on the literature of the revolutionary and Restoration periods in recent years has been concerned to reassess the ways in which writers of all political stripes attempted to navigate the shifting sands of political life during this period. Scholars have been keen to show how new and developing forms of literature, such as the newsbook and the pamphlet play, enabled writers to revise, critique and debate pertinent issues, and that through such activity they might comment on, even determine, the political, social, and cultural direction of the nation.[12] David Norbrook, for example, challenges the revisionist view that 'republicanism was largely a response to, rather than a cause of, the execution of Charles I', by showing that the language of republicanism was 'a more powerful presence' in England *before* the regicide than was previously recognised.[13] Throughout his study, Norbrook is at

[11] Davenant is described as such in an anonymous satire, 'How Daphne Pays his Debts' (*c*. 1654); cited in Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, p. 142.

[12] Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England, 1640–1660* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997). See also Knoppers, 'Introduction', in *Literature and the English Revolution*, ed. by Knoppers, pp. 7–13; *Constructing Cromwell: Ceremony, Portrait and Print, 1645–1661* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Nicholas McDowell, *The English Radical Imagination: Culture, Religion, and Revolution, 1630–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641–1649* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Marcus Nevitt, *Women and the Pamphlet Culture of Revolutionary England, 1640–1660* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

[13] David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999; rpt. 2000), p. 5. See also Jonathan Scott, *Commonwealth Principles: Republican Writing of the English Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). For the revisionist position, see Kevin Sharpe, *Politics and Ideas in Early Stuart England: Essays and Studies* (London and New York: Pinter, 1983), pp. 3–71; Blair Worden, 'Milton's Republicanism and the Tyranny of Heaven', in *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, ed. by Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner, Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 225–45.

pains to demonstrate the many complex and subtle ways in which literary texts, expressing and exploring new and radical ideas, were as responsible for shaping historical developments as they were for reflecting on them. Others have taken a similar approach to 'royalist' literature, arguing that the royalist ideology, typified in the cult of Charles the Martyr, was as much a consequence of literary activity as it was a prompt for writers to put pen to paper in the first place.[14]

These broad trends in the scholarship are reflected in more specialised work on drama, performance and theatricality. Lois Potter, Susan Wiseman, and Janet Clare have between them worked to explode the long-prevailing myths that the English Republic was wholly antagonistic and suspicious of theatrical performance, and that printed drama only ever subscribed to a royalist, aristocratic, and conservative ideology.[15] Instead, these accounts show just how vibrant, varied, and politically adventurous some of the most important dramatic texts of the 1650s could be. Each of these writers identifies Davenant as *the* central figure in the development of a revolutionary drama. Thus, I build on these critics and suggest that Davenant is in fact much more experimental in both his dramaturgy and his politics than even they have been prepared to concede. While Davenant is recognised as an innovator, his works have not been seen as the truly subtle explorations of political ideas that they are. Instead, critics tend to read into them messages and values that conform to pre-established positions. I want to argue, however, that works such as *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* (1658) and *The History of Sir Francis Drake* (1659), which were both performed at the Cockpit in Drury Lane, and which are often read as Davenant's contribution to an anti-Spanish propaganda campaign undertaken by the Cromwellian regime following the failed Western Design (1655) and the ongoing war with the Spanish over territory and trading routes in the New World, are in fact much less confident, much less partisan, in their political

[14] See Lois Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writing: Royalist Literature 1641–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Robert Wilcher, *The Writing of Royalism, 1628–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). See also James Loxley, *Royalism and Poetry in the English Civil Wars: The Drawn Sword* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997); Andrew Lacey, *The Cult of King Charles the Martyr* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2003).

[15] Lois Potter, 'The Plays and the Playwrights, 1642–60', in *The Revels History of Drama, vol. IV, 1613–1660*, ed. by Philip Edwards, G. E. Bentley, Kathleen McLuskie and Lois Potter (London: Methuen, 1981), pp. 263–304; Susan Wiseman, *Drama and Politics in the English Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Janet Clare, *The Drama of the English Republic, 1649–1660* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002); Janet Clare, 'Theatre and Commonwealth, in *The Cambridge History of British Theatre*, ed. by Jane Milling and Peter Thomson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 458–76; Janet Clare, 'Countering Anti-Theatricality', in *Literature and the English Revolution*, ed. by Knoppers, pp. 498–515. For the typical view of 1650s drama as associated mainly with royalist sympathies, see Dale B. J. Randall, *Winter Fruit: English Drama 1642–1660* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1995).

alignments than previously recognised. Wiseman, for instance, argues that Davenant's entertainments 'reinforce Cromwell's foreign policy, call up memories of a heroic Protestant past, and avoid controversial domestic issues'.[16] Such a reading, I think, misses the nuanced critique that Davenant in fact tries to articulate in his texts. As I show in Chapter 3, Davenant's Spanish entertainments are deeply engaged with domestic issues, such as the nature of Protectorate authority; it is simply that Davenant uses his scenic stage to conduct these conversations in ways that occlude the play's real targets.

There are, I think, two main reasons why Davenant remains for the most part misunderstood and neglected as a key cultural figure of the seventeenth century. The first reason is that, while he is obviously an important innovator, he is not considered to be an interesting or skilled *writer*. In his study of Restoration drama, Richard Kroll puts Davenant at the centre of his argument, insisting that the playwright

> poses something of a problem for the intellectual and cultural historian because he is a middling playwright and worse poet whose intellectual ambitions are nevertheless of the highest order: it is not for nothing that he was a personal friend of Hobbes, Milton, and Dryden. The consequence of his literary mediocrity is that scholars have tended not to read his work carefully and have almost universally failed to see how intelligent his various projects are.[17]

Davenant has proved his own worst enemy in his critical history, because while he is clearly important—'intellectually ambitious'—his seemingly poor skills as a writer have led critics to dismiss his work out of hand. While scholars have tended for the most part to see Davenant as an untalented hack, I suggest that through a careful study of his post-regicide works we can in fact discover that he is not only a theatrical experimenter but also a highly astute and sensitive reader of his political moment. That is not to suggest that all the plays and poems written in this period are masterpieces: they are not. 'No one', Kroll concedes, 'wished [*Gondibert*] longer' than it remains in unfinished form, for instance.[18]At best Davenant's revolutionary works are inconsistently successful. But the experimentation, and the ambition to explore new ideas and try out new possibilities enables us to better appreciate the subtle shifts in political culture in England as registered by an important cultural figure.

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[16] Wiseman, *Drama and Politics*, p. 151.
[17] Richard Kroll, *Restoration Drama and 'The Circle of Commerce': Tragicomedy, Politics, and Trade in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 10.
[18] Kroll, *Restoration Drama*, p. 169.

The second, more profound, problem concerns academic disciplines and periodisation. How are we to categorise the musical dramas of the 1650s? Are they dramas, masques, or operas? Do they constitute another, possibly related, form of musical theatrical entertainment altogether? These questions have long been asked of the mid-century works, and various disciplines claim them as their own, while often failing to appreciate that precisely because Davenant was experimenting with new forms of theatre, often they require an inter- or multidisciplinary approach to adequately interpret them. Literary scholars see the works as failures because the medium they analyse—language—is considered poor in comparison to other dramatic texts of the period by the likes of Shirley or Dryden. But these works were intended to be sung 'in Recitative Music'.[19] Davenant himself goes to great lengths to explain why his verse form and language choice is often unexpected and risks failure as literary art (see Chapter 1). Davenant's revolutionary theatre makes very particular demands on critics, as the texts represent a form of theatre that must be *seen* and *heard* if it is to achieve its full dramatic impact. Scenery, instrumental music, costume, choreography and blocking: these each contribute not just to the visual splendour of the productions but to their political meanings.[20]

I have attempted to overcome such methodological limitations by resisting the temptation to retrospectively place anachronistic labels onto the 1650s works, such as the masque, and thus instead argue that they occupy a much more interesting position within the development of English musical drama.[21] As we will see in Chapter 2, Davenant sometimes uses the term 'opera' to describe his own works. More often, though, he deploys some compromising descriptor, such as 'moral representation'. In the 1660s, Samuel Pepys would refer exclusively to Davenant's theatre as 'the Opera', regardless of what he was seeing, because the form was so much associated with Davenant and his company by that time. What contemporaries meant by these terms is impossible to fully reconstruct, although recently Andrew Walkling has tried to do precisely that.[22] Seventeenth-century men and women meant by 'opera', 'masque', 'moral representation', exactly whatever it was they saw in the

[19] William Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes*, in *Drama of the English Republic*, ed. by Clare, pp. 193–233 (t.p.; p. 193). Subsequent references are to this edition and given in parentheses in the text.
[20] For good discussions of these issues from a literary and musicological perspectives, see Kroll, *Restoration Drama*, pp. 188–99 and Walkling, *Masque and Opera*, pp. 161–82 respectively.
[21] Janet Clare and Rachel Willie both argue that the 1650s entertainments owe theatrical and political debts to the Caroline masques. See Clare, *Drama*, pp. 34–5; Rachel Willie, *Staging the Revolution: Drama, Reinvention and History, 1647–1672* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), pp. 80–116. Wiseman insists that ideologically at least, they are different, and so uses the term 'opera'; Wiseman, *Drama and Politics*, pp. 140–1.
[22] Walkling, *Masque and Opera*, pp. 8–24.

theatre and read in the printed quartos. It is important to recognise the fluidity and strange novelty of these emerging forms rather than subsume them back into established, comfortable but ultimately anachronistic categories.

Periodisation has proved an equally major barrier for a significant study of Davenant's work. Davenant's career, for good or ill, falls across period boundaries that have proved extremely difficult to dislodge in modern scholarship. While 1642 has been undermined as a terminal date for dramatic performance, in large part thanks to Potter, Wiseman, and Clare, critics have not had the same level of success with 1660. Scholars have tended to continue to see the 1650s as a discrete period of dramatic history: they stop short of the Restoration, and therefore often fail to trace the continuity of practices, ideas, anxieties and debates across the Rubicon of regime change. Until very recently, studies of late seventeenth-century drama and theatre continued to insist that the Restoration year was a necessary and appropriate watershed.[23] This is despite the fact that Davenant's experiments with scenic theatre during the 1650s was a direct influence on his work at Lincoln's Inn Fields in the 1660s. Things are shifting, however. Rachel Willie's account of the revolutionary drama argues that plays written and produced between the 1640s and the 1670s frequently sought to represent the Civil Wars themselves, and that Davenant's mid-1650s works function as a key milestone on the way to the Restoration; therefore, it makes sense to look at the two decades together. In a chapter on the form and function of heroic drama, for example, Willie explores Davenant's development of the genre in *The Siege of Rhodes* in 1656 and looks at how the opera was recycled during the Restoration as a spoken play.[24] In her most recent contribution to the field, meanwhile, Janet Clare has also attempted to bridge the false gap between Davenant's 1650s theatre and the early Restoration. Like Willie, she focuses her discussion on *The Siege of Rhodes*, and while she is sure to argue for the continuities in style and presentation between the Commonwealth and Restoration productions, Clare insists that Davenant 'reframed' the drama in an effort to acknowledge the changed political circumstances post-1660.[25] She argues that Davenant effected his own act

[23] For a discussion of 1660 as a viable 'line in the sand' for literary studies, see Steven N. Zwicker, 'Is There Such a Thing as Restoration Literature?', *HLQ*, 69 (2006), 425–50. Key reference works, such as *The London Stage* and *The Biographical Dictionary of Actors*, begin with 1660, even though many of the personnel involved in the Restoration theatre were involved in the pre-1642 tradition. See, for example, Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, 'New Light on English Acting Companies in 1646, 1648, and 1660', *The Review of English Studies*, NS, 42.168 (1991), 487–509.

[24] Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, 118–32.

[25] Janet Clare, 'Acts of Oblivion: Reframing Drama, 1649–65', in *From Republic to Restoration: Departures and Legacies*, ed. by Janet Clare (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), pp. 147–67.

of 'oblivion' in the new paratexts attached to the printed edition of the play, which attempted to erase the memory of the 1650s performances, so that the Restoration might be hailed as the true beginning of heroic drama. Clare's central concern in her essay is to suggest that while there are clear connections between Davenant 1650s operas and his Restoration plays, he nevertheless wanted to downplay his earlier activities in public. With the likes of Henry Herbert, now reinstalled as Master of the Revels, calling attention to Davenant's troubling past in an attempt to undermine the playwright's claims to a theatrical monopoly, it was important for Davenant to distance himself from the Cromwellian regime.[26]

The retrospective division of historical time into discrete units of study has thus profoundly distorted our appreciation of the cultural and political dynamics of mid- to late-seventeenth-century drama; following the contours of Davenant's own life and career allows us to overcome boundaries like 1660 which have been artificially and retrospectively imposed by scholars, as Willie and Clare have started to do. This is not to suggest, of course, that the men and women who lived during the revolutionary decades did not themselves understand certain moments as pivotal and direction-changing watersheds. The execution of the King in January 1649 is a good example where it seems a rupture or trauma did occur that changed the way people related to their earlier experiences and histories.[27] Thomas Fairfax, for instance, wished that the 'Fatal Day' might be 'blotted' out and forgotten from historical memory, while Andrew Marvell later described the terror which confronted the 'architects' of the regicide, who momentarily betrayed a flicker of regret about what they had done: 'A bleeding head, where they begun, | Did fright the architects to run'.[28] However, I do not see 1660 as such an insuperable barrier. We can gain more from charting Davenant's work across this divide than by maintaining the division.

Related to the problem of periodisation is that of selective, rather than comprehensive, analysis. Willie and Clare in order to make their points about the continuities shared between Davenant's 1650s and 1660s works focus on *The Siege of Rhodes*, a text that was reused and

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[26] For Herbert's hostility towards Davenant at the Restoration, accusing the poet of serving as 'Master of the Revells to Oliver the Tyrant', see N. W. Bawcutt, ed., *The Control and Censorship of Caroline Drama: The Records of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels 1623–73* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 264.

[27] See Nancy Klein Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration: English Tragicomedy, 1660–1671* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[28] Thomas Fairfax, 'On the Fatal Day, Jan. 30 1649', in Bodleian MS Fairfax 40, p. 600; Andrew Marvell, 'An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland', in *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. by Nigel Smith (London: Routledge, 2003; rpt. 2007), pp. 267–79, l. 70. Royalist elegy frequently pointed to the momentousness of the execution; see Potter, *Secret Rites*, pp. 184–93; Wilcher, *The Writing of Royalism*, pp. 287–307; Lacey, *King Charles the Martyr*, pp. 76–128.

adapted, and that has a connection to a vibrant and popular genre of the Restoration: heroic drama. But this represents just one facet of Davenant's Restoration output. He also wrote a number of Shakespearean adaptations as well as other original works. The Shakespeare adaptations are frequently discussed, but always in isolation from Davenant's other writings, and usually with an emphasis on the changes made to Shakespeare's texts, rather than as independent texts with their own meanings, audiences, and histories.[29] This is where my thesis contributes most to our understanding of Davenant's revolutionary career: by putting the two most famous and popular Shakespeare adaptions into dialogue with the 1650s operas, we can see just how Davenant develops as a playwright and as a political commentator across the revolutionary period in a number of different forms and genres.

In his preface to the printed edition of *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* (1670), John Dryden celebrates the ingenious literary creativity of his late friend, Davenant. A playwright and theatre practitioner with over forty years' experience, Davenant was, Dryden tells us, 'a man of quick and piercing imagination'. He enjoyed 'so quick a fancy, that nothing was propos'd to him, on which he could not suddenly produce a thought extreamly pleasant and surprizing'. As Davenant's mind was unique and far-reaching, so 'likewise were the products of it remote and new'. 'I am satisfy'd,' Dryden concludes, 'I could never have receiv'd so much honour […] as I shall from the joining my imperfections with the merit and name of *Shakespear* and Sir *William D'avenant*'.[30]

This thesis broadly agrees with Dryden and investigates Davenant's dramatic writings across a period of political and cultural instability and crisis, asking how it was that he managed time and again to negotiate successfully the complex political demands of subsequent regimes, all the while pursuing his ambitions of innovating and transforming the forms and genres of English drama. The originality of the thesis lies in its bridging the period

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[29] See, for instance, Hazelton Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved: The Restoration Versions in Quarto and on the Stage* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927); G. C. D. Odell, *Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving*, 2 vols (London: Constable, 1920), I, pp. 24–36; Mongi Raddadi, *Davenant's Adaptations of Shakespeare* (Uppsala: Studia Anglistica Upsaliensis, 1979); Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660-1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1990); Jack Lynch, *Becoming Shakespeare: The Unlikely Afterlife that Turned a Provincial Playwright into the Bard* (New York: Walker & Company, 2007). For an overview of Davenant's deleterious reputation in the scholarly literature, see Barbara A. Murray, *Restoration Shakespeare: Viewing the Voice* (London: Associated University Presses, 2001), especially the extensive notes to pp. 37–88.

[30] William Davenant and John Dryden, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island*, in *Shakespeare Made Fit: Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare*, ed. by Sandra Clark (London: J. M. Dent, 1997), pp. 79–185 (p. 84); italics reversed. Subsequent references are to this edition and given in parentheses in the text.

and genre divisions that have persisted in so much of the existing criticism. No previous study of Davenant has looked at his experiment to reinvent drama in heroic stanzas in *Gondibert* with the 1650s operas or the Restoration adaptations of Shakespeare. For instance, Richard Kroll has sought to reconstruct Davenant's intellectual and literary contexts in order to say something about the politics laying behind *Gondibert* and the 1650s operas, but he fails to consider the specific reading and performance contexts of the works—how, say, performances at Rutland House differed from those at the Cockpit—and he appears remarkably unconcerned about how the particular nature of the different spaces in which Davenant's theatrical productions were staged impacted their reception. On the other hand, scholars like Andrew Walkling have painstakingly reconstructed through archival work the performance conditions of the mid-century operas. Walkling offers a musicological perspective on the ways that *The Siege of Rhodes* would have played out at Rutland House and the Cockpit; however, he resists linking up the performative with the political, and stops short of offering literary interpretations based on his sophisticated performance analyses. Nor does he attempt to investigate Davenant's development as a writer and theatre manager, or his engagement with contemporary politics. My thesis attempts to do precisely this by insisting that we look at the site-specific nature of Davenant's works and extrapolating from this performance context the kinds of political and cultural messages encoded in therein. Another valuable aspect of the thesis is that is looks beyond the specific period unit of 'the Protectorate' or 'the Restoration', and charts themes and ideas across the entire revolutionary period in order to track changes and continuities. Neither Walkling nor Kroll, Davenant two most recent commentators, both to discuss the adaptations of Shakespeare in relation to the mid-century operas, and only Kroll discusses *Gondibert*, but does not read it—as I do—as an attempt to reinvent drama in the context of the prohibition on playing that remained official policy throughout the late 1640s and early 1650s. The proceeding chapters situate Davenant's post-regicide works in their immediate historical, political and theatrical contexts, offering a fresh understanding of Davenant's part in the cultural evolution of the various regimes under which he found himself working. The figure that emerges is one who reacts to the changing circumstances around him with tact and integrity, as well as pragmatism.

Before outlining each chapter, I want to explore Davenant's activities immediately before and after the regicide of 1649. As we have seen, unlike the Restoration, the execution of Charles I constituted a huge rupture for many, Davenant included. Davenant had been a royalist informer and messenger during the Civil Wars and was unofficially at least, the poet

laureate.[31] But the death of the King caused Davenant to reassess his political sensibilities: he eventually switched his allegiances and became reconciled to the Commonwealth. It was this shift in priorities that enabled Davenant to take up the theatre again in 1656. In what follows, I take a biographically-inflected approach to Davenant's works in order to examine the mechanisms by which he altered his political identity and was able to begin fashioning himself as a republican playwright. Such an approach will foreshadow the chapters on Davenant's works to follow. In each, I situate the operas and plays under discussion within their immediate historical and political contexts, teasing out their details to build up a picture of Davenant reacting and responding to the subtle, mutable dynamics of mid-century politics.

'Upon that Memorable Scene': Regicide, Rupture, and Allegiance Switching

Davenant was in Paris when the axe fell on the royal neck outside the Banqueting House of Whitehall Palace on a cold January day in 1649. Not present to witness 'that Memorable Scene',[32] he nevertheless felt its effects profoundly. He had been part of Queen Henrietta Maria's makeshift court at St-Germain-en-Laye, and thereafter at the Louvre, since 1646, under the watchful eye of his long-time friends Henry Jermyn and Endymion Porter.[33] It was while in exile with the queen that Davenant began thinking about his new poetic project, *Gondibert*, and set about composing the *Preface* to it. I will discuss the texts themselves more fully in Chapter 1; for now, I want to focus on the context in which they were written and published.

Thomas Hobbes was also in Paris during this period, and evidently struck up a friendship with Davenant. They shared ideas and conversation, even commenting on drafts of each other's current work (Hobbes was completing *Leviathan*, which would appear in Paris four months after *Gondibert* hit the bookstalls in London in January 1651).[34] Davenant writes

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[31] Edmond, pp. 73–4.

[32] Marvell, 'An Horatian Ode', l. 57.

[33] Edmond, pp. 87–102; Nethercot, pp. 234–50. For a study of this royalist milieu on the continent, see Timothy Raylor, 'Exiles, Expatriates and Travellers: Towards a Cultural and Intellectual History of the English Abroad, 1640–1660', in *Literatures of Exile in the English Revolution and its Aftermath, 1640–1690*, ed. by Philip Major (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 15–43.

[34] *Gondibert* was initially entered in the Stationers' Register on behalf of Thomas Newcombe on 7 November 1650, but was re-entered, with rights to it transferred to John Holden, on 17 March 1651 (*Stationers' Register*, I, pp. 354, 363). In his copy of this text, George Thomason has struck out the title-page's date of '1651' and written instead 'Jan. 1650', meaning January 1650/1 (BL, E.782).

in the *Preface* attached to the printed edition of *Gondibert* of how Hobbes gave 'daylie examination'[35] to the poem, while Hobbes generously acknowledges Davenant's perusal of his own writing: 'I have used your Judgment no lesse in many thinges of mine, which coming to light will thereby appeare the better' (*Answer*, 54).[36] Hobbes's ideas about all manner of things, from political allegiance to poetic technique, would be crucial to Davenant's thinking, both in this poem and in later works.[37]

Having spent the intervening months at the French court, writing, conversing, and pursuing appropriately courtly activities, in September 1649, Davenant was offered the post of Treasurer of Virginia in America by Charles II.[38] However, this was hardly a promotion for the royalist servant: the poet's standing among colleagues had been somewhat tarnished due to his alignment in the later 1640s with religious Independents, and Charles clearly wanted him out of the way as the exiled prince set about cosying up to the Scottish Presbyterians in the hope of overthrowing the Independents who held power in Westminster.[39] Unable to contest the decision, Davenant prepared to leave for America, publishing his *Preface*, along with Hobbes's *Answer* and poems by his friends and fellow

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[35] William Davenant, *Sir William Davenant's Gondibert*, ed. by David F. Gladish (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 3. *Gondibert* and 'The Author's Preface to his Much Honor'd Friend, M. Hobbes' (hereafter *Preface*) enjoy rather cavalier textual histories. The *Preface*, along with *The Answer of Mr. Hobbes to Sir Will. Davenant's Preface before Gondibert* (hereafter *Answer*), was initially printed in Paris by Mathieu Guillemot as a stand-alone edition, in anticipation of the poem itself. It was published twice: once, in 1650, as *The Preface to Gondibert* in octavo, and again, in the same year, as *A Discourse upon Gondibert* in duodecimo; the latter was possibly printed in London rather than Paris. *Gondibert* was first published in London in early 1651. A second printing appeared later that year. The satirical *Certain Verses Written by Severall of the Authors Friends: to Be Reprinted with the Second Edition of Gondibert*, appeared in 1653. The seventh canto of Book III was published posthumously in 1685. Subsequent references to the *Preface*, *Gondibert*, Hobbes's *Answer*, and *Certain Verses* are to Gladish's edition and given in parentheses, with verse references to Book, Canto, and Verse.

[36] Richard Hillyer questions the veracity of Hobbes's 'daylie examination', arguing that he was under intense pressure to complete *Leviathan* and had little time for anything else during these months; see *Hobbes and His Poetic Contemporaries: Cultural Transmission in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 19. On Hobbes's punishing writing schedule over the winter of 1650–1, see Richard Tuck, *Hobbes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 27.

[37] See Kroll, *Restoration Drama*, pp. 93–204. For Davenant's influence on Hobbes, see Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 332–3; Keith Thomas, 'The Social Origins of Hobbes's Political Thought', in *Hobbes Studies*, ed. K. C. Brown (Oxford: Blackwell, 1965), pp. 185–236 (pp. 208–11).

[38] Edmond, p. 103.

[39] See Niall Allsopp, 'Turncoat Poets of the English Revolution' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, Oriel College, 2015), pp. 29–30. I am grateful to Dr Allsopp for sharing a copy of his thesis with me. In 1645, Davenant was part of a delegation to persuade Charles I to affect an alliance with the Solemn League and Covenant, which came to nothing. Edward Hyde, writing years later, describes how Charles 'was transported with so much indignation' at Davenant's mention of the Church 'slightingly'. See Edward Hyde, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, ed. by William Dunn Macray, 6 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888), IV, p. 206.

exiles Abraham Cowley and Edmund Waller, from Paris.[40] The publication of *Gondibert* itself, he tells us, had to wait 'till I can send it […] from *America*' (p. 44). Certainly, the first two books were complete by the time Davenant left the Louvre, and Book III seems to have existed in draft form, although it evidently required further revision.[41] He believed he could finish it during his trip to the New World.

From Paris, Davenant sailed to Jersey and while there was informed that the terms of his mission had altered since he left France: now he was to travel to Maryland, not Virginia, and take up the role of Lieutenant-General, replacing a religious pragmatist and Republican sympathiser, Cecilius Calvert, Lord Baltimore.[42] In the end, a third commission was dispatched from Breda (where Charles was then in exile), appointing Davenant as a member of the Council of Virginia, under Sir William Berkeley, with orders to build fortifications 'for the better suppressing of such of Our subjects as shall at any time rebel against Us or Our Royal Governor there'.[43] Davenant never received this commission, however: by the time it was dispatched, his journey to America had been curtailed. In a moment of bathos, Davenant never made it past the English Channel. At some point between 4 and 8 May his ship was captured by the Parliamentarian Captain John Green, commander of the *Fortune*, just off the coast of the Isle of Wight. He was taken to Cowes Castle, where Colonel Syndenham was tasked with keeping this 'active enemy to the commonwealth, until further order'.[44] News of Davenant's capture was slow to reach the continent. Charles's orders from Breda concerning the Council post were issued in June, almost a whole month *after* Davenant's imprisonment. Edward Hyde, who shared rooms with Davenant during the early 1620s at the Middle Temple, wrote to a mutual acquaintance, Abraham Cowley, on 12 July from Madrid, asking after his old friend: 'I am exceedingly afflicted for the misfortune of poore will Davenant. I beseech you let me know what is become of him, for I heare no more then that he was taken prisoner and carried to the Isle of Wight.'[45] The confusion around Davenant's whereabouts during this period attests to the complexity of intracontinental communications for those

[40] See William Davenant, *The Preface to Gondibert: An Heroick Poem* (Paris, 1650).
[41] A printed marginal note at the head of the Book III, probably inserted by the publisher, states that this part of the poem was 'Written by the Author During his Imprisonment' (*Gondibert*, p. 200) on the Isle of Wight, but as Gladish points out in his commentary (p. 307), this is not quite correct: in the *Preface* Davenant insists that 'a little time would make way for the Third [Book], and make it fit for the Presse' (*Preface*, p. 44), suggesting that a first draft at least was written by 2 January 1650, the date Davenant signs the *Preface*.
[42] Nethercot, pp. 252–3; Edmond, p. 103.
[43] *CSP Col. 1574–1660*, p. 340; cited in Edmond, p. 103.
[44] *CSPD, 1650*, p. 167.
[45] Quoted in Edmond, p. 104.

royalists who were in exile and unable to return safely to England. Armed with nothing but the manuscript of *Gondibert*, Davenant had little occupation other than the continuation of his literary experiment. His fate was not known to his friends on the continent, and the Council of State in London were still deciding what to do with him. He would never set foot on American soil.

In the end, the House of Commons proposed to put Davenant's name forward as one of six royalists who should be tried by the High Court of Justice for crimes against the state. Each defendant was considered individually, and Davenant's case split the House, twenty-seven votes 'for' and twenty-seven 'against'. As the newsbook *Mercurius Politicus* wryly recorded the events of 3 July 1650:

> In *Parliament,* it was debated this day, concerning the addition of two persons more to those *four* formerly named, who are to be tried at the *high Court of Justice*; and they agreed only upon one, whose name *Gerard*, brother to *Charls* the Lord. *William Davenant* was named for the other, and had been destin'd [to be charged], but that when it was put to the *Vote*, some *Gentlemen*, out of pitty, were pleased to let him have the *NOES* of the *House*, because he hath none of his own.[46]

Mercurius Politicus deliberately obfuscates what really happened in Davenant's case. Pity and a poor sense of humour (Davenant was well-known for having a disfigured nose from an earlier bout of syphilis)[47] had little to do with securing his release. The casting vote in Davenant's favour came from the Speaker of the House himself, William Lenthall, who was, as Stephen K. Roberts notes, 'the leading citizen of England'.[48] Lenthall was known to sympathise with royalist defendants: he had recently 'saved' another prominent royalist, George Goring, in the same way. His lenient treatment of royalists apparently led Cromwell and other leaders to seek his impeachment, although nothing came of their schemes.[49]

Despite Lenthall's intervention, the following day another vote was made, which put Davenant's name back on the list of those to be tried, and on the 5 July an ordinance was passed to that effect.[50] Sometime between 22 October and 7 November, Davenant was

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[46] *Mercurius Politicus*, no. 4 (27 July–4 July 1650), p. 64.

[47] On the range of nose-related satire aimed at Davenant, see Marcus Nevitt, 'The Insults of Defeat: Royalist Responses to Sir William Davenant's *Gondibert* (1651)', *The Seventeenth Century*, 24.2 (2009), 287–304.

[48] Stephen K. Roberts, 'Lenthall, William, appointed Lord Lenthall under the Protectorate (1591–1662)', *ODNB* <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16467> [accessed 27 July 2018].

[49] See Wilbur Cortex Abbott, ed., *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, 4 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1937–47), II, p. 86.

[50] *CJ*, p. 437. Both Nethercot (p. 268) and Edmond (p. 116) erroneously state that this ordinance was passed on 9 July.

transferred from Cowes Castle to the Tower of London.[51] No further action seems to have been taken, however. As Mary Edmond states in her account of this period, the question of who stepped in to protect Davenant is a vexed one, but John Milton and Henry Marten are both suspected of having a hand in his acquittal.[52] Despite being granted a stay of execution, Davenant remained in the Tower for another two years. Only in October 1652 did the Council of State finally order his release, probably at the instigation of Bulstrode Whitelocke, whom Davenant had known since at least 1635, when together they presented a masque for the visiting Princes Palatine at the Middle Temple.[53]

What this biographical account of the years between the regicide and the publication of *Gondibert* reveals is the complex and often paradoxical personal and political allegiances individuals had to negotiate to survive in post-war England. Davenant was a royalist exile, but one whom other royalists now distrusted. He was demoted to a marginal role in the colonies, albeit an important one protecting Charles's interests there. He was subsequently put forward for trial on a charge of treason by the Commonwealth, but saved by some of its most powerful and influential members (Lenthall, Whitelocke, even, perhaps, Milton). Davenant's loyalties were tested as it appeared the Parliamentarians could offer him a better deal than his exiled sovereign.

There are many factors that contributed to Davenant's accommodation of the new regime. On the one hand, the Commonwealth had offered him freedom where Charles Stuart offered only exile in the New World. According to his friend Hobbes's theories of political obligation, in order to preserve one's life, a subject 'taken prisoner in war' may accept the authority of the victor and break any loyalty to the old sovereign.[54] Niall Allsopp has recently demonstrated that it was indeed Hobbes's thinking about these issues that enabled the Caroline poet laureate to break the ideological links chaining him to the royalist side.[55] The broader culture of the early 1650s helped him to make this transition.

Indeed, in the aftermath of the regicide, the country set about to refashion itself as a Republic, and this meant creating a new culture that could accommodate and reconcile all

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[51] The earlier date is that signed by Davenant in the 'Postscript' to *Gondibert* from Cowes Castle, and the latter is when *Gondibert* was first entered in the *Stationers' Register*, suggesting Davenant was by then in London. See Edmond, p. 117; Nethercot, p. 271.

[52] Edmond, pp. 117–8.

[53] Whitelocke was at that time the Middle Temple's Master of the Revels. See Ruth Spalding, *The Improbable Puritan: A Life of Bulstrode Whitelocke, 1605–1675* (London: Faber & Faber, 1975), p. 38. Davenant's wrote a letter of thanks for his release to Whitelocke, dated 9 October 1652; quoted in Harbage, p. 117.

[54] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. by. C. B. Macpherson (London: Penguin, 1985). pp. 272–3.

[55] Allsopp, 'Turncoat Poets', pp. 78–112.

sides. Nicholas McDowell has argued that during the 1640s and early 1650s, royalists were thought to enjoy a monopoly on culture, and republican writers and politicians recognised that this monopoly had to be broken in order for them to ensure their continued legitimacy.[56] As such, the Republic began to conciliate with writers and artists, in an attempt to bring them into the service of the new state. Writers such as John Hall and Thomas Urquhart, the translators of Longinus and Rabelais respectively, and Andrew Marvell and Marchamont Nedham, gained patronage and support from the Commonwealth and Protectorate and began to embark on projects that 'would bring together former royalists and quasi-republicans'.[57] Traditionally seen as an unshakably royalist writer working against the grain of Cromwell's authority, Davenant is, I argue, one of a number of figures with whom the government of the early Protectorate attempted to reconcile, the aim being the development of a culture that could rival and overcome that of the exiled and defeated royalists.[58]

More broadly, the decision to abandon established loyalties in favour of the new regime stems from practical rather than ideological motives. Like many former royalists, Davenant had to find a way to make his livelihood in a country that had been transformed, and in which the traditional patronage and institutional structures which had provided his income had been either entirely removed or at the very least substantially restricted. 'Compounding and negotiating with the republican regime in the 1650s, or accommodating to its strictures, seemed the only viable course for those who wanted to resume work, business and family life after the Civil War', Janet Clare has written.[59] To support her claim, Clare quotes the diarist John Evelyn as evidence of this mindset. On 9 March 1652, three days after he witnessed the lavish funeral of Henry Ireton, Evelyn writes (somewhat laconically) that

> I made preparation for my settlement [in Deptford], no more intending to go out of England, but endeavor a settled life, either in this or some other place, there being

[56] On the perceived royalist 'monopoly on literary and linguistic talent', see Nicholas McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance in the English Civil Wars: Marvell and the Cause of Wit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 8–9, 53–111; 'Urquhart's Rabelais: Translation, Patronage, and Cultural Politics', *ELR*, 35.2 (2005), 273–303.

[57] Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, p. 169.

[58] As Wiseman notes, his three biographers, Nethercot, Harbage, and Edmond, all see Davenant as 'participating fairly completely in a "royalist" ideology', which she in turn goes on to refute; see *Drama and Politics*, p. 137.

[59] Janet Clare, 'Introduction', in *From Republic to Restoration: Legacies and Departures*, ed. by Janet Clare (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), pp. 1–22 (p. 4).

> now so little appearance of any change, for the better, all being entirely in the rebels' hands […] I was advised to reside in it, and compound with the soldiers.[60]

'[H]aving now run about the world, most part out of my own country, near ten years', Evelyn wants to finally return to England, which requires capitulation to the Republican victors. Likewise, for all the political and philosophical reasoning, it is possible that Davenant simply wanted to return to his profession as a man of the theatre, and capitulating to the new regime was the only way to achieve that end. Despite accounts that have dismissed Davenant's claims as a professional writer, it is clear from his activities across the revolutionary period that he considers himself a working playwright and manager rather than a courtly or amateur poet.[61]

Faced with the prospect of exile and potentially little financial security, Davenant made the decision to capitulate to the Commonwealth and try and make the best of a bad lot. The Republic was, for some at least, a relatively benign ruler. Davenant's acquaintance with Hobbes and his circle provided the intellectual rationale for a switch of allegiance, and as we shall see in Chapter 2, Davenant seems to have found his niche within a larger project by the Republic to reconcile with ex-royalist writers and co-opt them into generating cultural texts for the new order. The rest of this thesis explores what Davenant felt about the new regimes he worked under, and how he experimented to make the newly established theatre a vibrant and integral part of civil life.

Chapter Outline

The thesis proceeds chronologically, situating each of Davenant's post-regicide works in their immediate historical, political, and theatrical contexts, offering a fresh perspective on

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[60] Evelyn, *Diary*, III, pp. 58–9 (10 February 1652).

[61] Davenant is often ignored in accounts of 'professional' writers, such as Ira Clark's *Professional Playwrights: Massinger, Ford, Shirley, & Brome* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1992). But this is a result of conflating 'professional' with 'commercial' and, by extension, 'amateur' with 'courtly'. Davenant did certainly write for the court during the 1630s, but so did Ben Jonson and many other 'professional playwrights', including James Shirley. He was not himself a courtier (he was knighted only during the Civil Wars), although he knew and socialised with many members of the Caroline establishment. He considered himself a professional man of letters throughout his career, as the publication history of *Gondibert* and his insistence on his position as laureate attests. For an interesting examination of Davenant's pre-war relationship with other 'professionals', see Peter Beal, 'Massinger at Bay: Unpublished Verses in the War of the Theatres', *YES*, 10 (1980), 190–203. For a discussion of the ways changing patronage networks after the regicide affected how writers approached their vocation, see McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 202–58.

Davenant's part in the cultural evolution of the various regimes in which he found himself working. The figure that emerges is one who reacts to the changing circumstances around him in nuanced ways. Chapter 1 breaks with scholarly consensus regarding Davenant's heroic poem, *Gondibert*, to argue that it is his most radical theatrical experiment of the entire revolutionary period. Often read by critics as a failed example of the popular heroic poem, *Gondibert* becomes a turgid royalist allegory, with the stag hunted to death at the end of Book 1, Canto II symbolising the persecuted figure of King Charles I.[62] I suggest, on the other hand, that we read the poem in the context of Davenant's wider career as a playwright. Written at a time when the theatres were banned and with no prospect of their returning, Davenant nevertheless continued to insist on the importance and value of the theatre as a 'collateral help' to the government. In the *Preface* published ahead of the poem, which set out his theories of literature in relation to politics, Davenant states that drama is the most effective method of providing moral examples and heroic images by which the people might be instructed, improved, and entertained. Finding himself in a society that no longer supports the dramatic arts, at least in performance, I argue Davenant sets about to develop a new literary form—the heroic poem—that replicates in poetic ways the effects and sensations of performed drama. It does this by arguing that drama is the most effective method for manipulating the passions (emotions), and that this is something the authorities can take advantage of to ensure social harmony or to stir feelings of patriotism among the general population. *Gondibert* sets itself up as a drama by staging scenes in which characters must rely on visual or physical features (blushes, for instance) to discern internal states of mind, in much the way that spectators must learn to 'read' the gestures of the actor to understand which passion they are portraying. This only makes sense after a thorough reading of the *Preface* which states clearly that the poem is modelled on English dramatic principles. The explosion in play publishing during the 1650s has long been recognised as an important development, allowing readers to engage with dramatic materials at a time when attending a theatre was extremely difficult. Davenant's poem, while analogous to that enterprise, is subtly different: *Gondibert* is an experiment to discover whether a purely literary form might achieve the same ends—presenting moral examples through dialogue—as the banished drama.

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[62] See, for example, Smith, *Literature and Revolution*, p. 214; Potter, *Secret Rites*, p. 99; Timothy Raylor, 'The Hunting of the Stag: Denham, Davenant, and a Royalist Dispute over Poetry', in *Sir John Denham (1614/15–1669) Reassessed: The State's Poet*, ed. by Philip Major (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 143–60 (p. 155).

Chapter 2 builds on the ideas explored in Chapter 1, but deals this time with the first true legal dramatic performances of the 1650s. Moving from the Commonwealth to the Protectorate regime of Oliver Cromwell, the chapter situates Davenant's experimental entertainments at his private residence of Rutland House within the context of the 'reformation of manners' occurring in every sphere of public life at this time.[63] Building on the aesthetic principles outlined in the *Preface* to *Gondibert*, Davenant addresses another treatise on the value and use of the theatre to the Council of State. *A Proposition for Advancement of Moralitie, By a New Way of Enteratinment of the People* (1653), though, proposes a theatre like nothing that has gone before. This new theatre will use moveable scenery and specialist lighting to create wondrous visual effects to stir the passions of its audiences, while it will expand its use of music to include recitative, consorts, and aria singing. These new entertainments have more in common with continental operas of the time than with 'straight' theatre. The chapter develops by exploring how the dramatic works themselves, *The First Day's Entertainment at Rutland House* and *The Siege of Rhodes* deviate from the *Proposition*. Rather than sticking to a prescribed theory and function of drama, Davenant is keen to experiment and develop his ideas *in the process* of production. *First Day's Entertainment* makes this point clear: it in fact stages a debate about the nature of dramatic representations between Aristophanes the Poet and Diogenes the Cynic, and calls on its audiences to question what theatre is or might be for themselves. In his first full-length play, *The Siege of Rhodes*, Davenant introduced his audiences to female performers, scenic display and recitative music. The entertainment is the earliest example of the heroic drama—related to the heroic poem, *Gondibert*—and thus presents audiences with virtuous patterns and stage images that are intended to arouse the passions of its audiences and prove morally edifying. As we will discover, though, the conditions at Rutland House preclude Davenant from achieving his full potential, and so he continues to experiment in order to get *The Siege of Rhodes* right. Taken together, Chapters 1 and 2 show that Davenant is a committed theatrical innovator and experimenter, one who goes to great lengths to develop a viable and exhilarating form of performance for the new cultural landscape of the 1650s.

Having set out Davenant's aesthetic practices, the rest of the thesis alters its focus to explore how his new theatrical style is put to political use. Chapter 3 sees Davenant move from Rutland House to the Cockpit in Drury Lane. The transition from the private space of

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[63] Bernard Capp, *England's Culture Wars: Puritan Reformation and its Enemies in the Interregnum, 1649–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Rutland House to the public theatre suggests a level of confidence on the part of the authorities that Davenant's dramas are achieving the stated aims of the *Proposition*. Here, I examine two of Davenant's operas staged in 1658 and 1659 respectively: *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* and *The History of Sir Francis Drake*. These works ostensibly promote controversial foreign policies concerning the recent war with Spain in the Caribbean by denigrating the Spanish at the expense of the English. Both works loosely recall the 'golden age' of English colonial enterprise under Elizabeth I and present a series of situations in which the Spanish are shown to be covetous for gold, and extremely cruel to the native populations, whereas the English are displayed as righteous, heroic, and moral.[64] On the face of it, Davenant's Cockpit operas serve as propaganda for the Cromwellian regime. On closer inspection, however, we see that they are less concerned with the realities of New World colonialist endeavours but are much more interested in exploring debates and issues closer to home. Davenant uses the discourse of colonial rule—in *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* the English are shown as ruling benevolently over the native Incan population—to discuss broader questions about sovereignty, authority, and obedience. The operas explore ideas about the nature of power and authority at a crucial moment in the life of the Protectorate: Cromwell had just been offered the crown when *Peru* was staged, while *Drake* was performed as Richard Cromwell's government collapsed, to be replaced by the temporary Rump Parliament. The plays' concern for elected rulers over tyrannical despots allows Davenant to think through the anxieties felt by audiences in late-1650s London.

The final two chapters take us from the experimental theatres of the Protectorate to the professional buildings and companies established at the Restoration in 1660. I focus on just two of Davenant's Restoration works, albeit the most famous: his adaptations of *Macbeth* (1664) and, with John Dryden, *The Tempest* (1667). In Chapter 4, I argue that Davenant's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, produced at Lincoln's Inn Fields theatre in 1664, engages with questions that go right to the heart of the Restoration settlement itself. Charles II returned to England in May 1660 amid jubilation and revelling. But the fact remained that the change in regime once again necessitated a switch in allegiance from the population. In order to best facilitate this, the government officially set out to obliterate the past two decades, legally erasing the Civil Wars and Commonwealth from public memory. 'The Act of Free and General Pardon, Indemnity and Oblivion' ensured that none but a handful of

[64] William S. Maltby, *The Black Legend in England: The Development of Anti-Spanish Sentiment, 1558–1660* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1971).

those responsible for the death of Charles I would face retribution for their actions against the royalist cause. Davenant's *Macbeth* stages a series of debates about the efficacy of forgetting the past in order to heal a nation's wounds after a period of civil unrest. I argue that the play should be read as a nuanced and sustained meditation on the nature of memory and trauma as the Restoration audience find themselves 'haunted' by the regicide and Civil Wars. Far from seeing the Restoration of a monarch as a natural, preordained inevitability—as so much Restoration propaganda did—Davenant explores the all too human actions that brought about the regime changes of the 1640s and 1650s. The play attributes such causes to unruly passions, in this case 'ambition'. *Macbeth* thus offers a debate about the purpose and value of ambition in securing peace for the nation state. Davenant rewrites Shakespeare's tragedy about king-killing and prophetic justice to accentuate parallels with the recent events in which members of his audience played a crucial role.

This thesis ends with Davenant's *The Tempest, or the Enchanted*, which he co-authored with John Dryden in 1667. In Chapter 5, I explore this play in relation to the *annus mirabilis* of 1666–7, when enthusiasm for the Restoration regime had utterly waned. Following a series of national crises, *The Tempest* conducts a thought experiment, with the theatre acting as a kind of imagination laboratory. It takes its characters out of contemporary European civilisation and relocates them on a 'enchanted island'. By removing the checks and balances of civilised society, the play in effect returns its cast to a Hobbesian 'state of nature'. Reading Davenant's contributions to the play—the sailor subplot and the addition of Hippolito—I argue that Davenant explores alternative approaches to social interaction from that of the status quo of Restoration London. Confronted with a lawless island, the sailors each set out their vision of a government system in which they each hold power over their shipmates. Hippolito, meanwhile, has been raised by Prospero in isolation and has never seen a woman before. Trouble ensues for the youth, when he stumbles across Miranda and her sister Dorinda and his sexual desires are awakened with near tragic consequences. Outwardly, the play purports to preserve the conservative message of texts like Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* (1667), celebrating the healthy sexual proclivities of the royals and mocking the sailors' ill-founded pretensions to power. In the end, Hippolito's appetite is controlled and channelled through his learning about gentlemanly customs and institutions, while the sailors, drunk and squabbling, return to their posts onboard ship, happy to have the responsibilities of government taken away from them. But the play struggles to contain the submissive, anarchic energies it releases. *The Tempest* plays with political and sexual ideas, and reveals its own positions to be much more messy and volatile than previous accounts have suggested.

Finally, *The Tempest* demonstrates Davenant's habit of letting ideas, philosophies, and hypotheses play out in the theatre only to watch and see where they go. His theatre is a much more exciting, unpredictable place as a result.

Overall, the picture that emerges from the interplay between Davenant's innovative dramaturgy and the politics it explores across the revolutionary period is complex and at times unsettlingly inconsistent. Davenant's theatre is much more interested in exploring the ambiguities, paradoxes, and tensions within particular debates than in providing tidy answers or ready-made models that might smooth over cracks in the veneer of political stability. For Davenant, the theatre serves as a space of experiment, of imagination, and of play. His sensitivity to the needs and desires of the many constituencies who have a stake in the theatrical performances he oversees—the authorities, the audiences, and the creative personnel with whom he works—means that he consistently opts for open discussion rather than dogmatism and straightforward answers. The works examined in this thesis have been selected because they speak most clearly to the concerns and preoccupations of their political or historical moments. Throughout, I have tried to give a sense of Davenant's meandering and equivocating style in order to demonstrate that his works are far more experimental and less coherently unified or structured that previous critics have attempted to make them appear. As a result, we may be left with a sense that Davenant is not always successful in his attempts to capture the mood of the nation or to think through a constitutional paradox; but what comes through all the more strongly as a result is a playwright alert to the politics of his times, and who can read his historical moment with astonishing nuance, clarity and insight. In the final analysis, Davenant reveal himself to be 'a man of quick and piercing imagination'.

1

‘To sayle in untry’d Seas’: Dramatic Experiment in *Gondibert*

It might seem counterintuitive to begin a thesis on Davenant’s revolutionary theatre with a chapter devoted not to a play but rather to a poem. On the face of it, *Gondibert* is hardly ‘dramatic’ in any of the conventional senses that we might usefully apply the term. It is an acknowledged example of the English heroic poem, a genre which grew out of continental, chiefly French, neoclassical romance, and became popular with royalist writers during the 1640s and 1650s, in works such as Abraham Cowley’s *The Civil War* (1643), his *Davideis* (1656), Edward Benslowes’s *Theophila, Or Love’s Sacrifice* (1652), and John Denham’s *Coopers Hill* (1653).[1] Despite this, critics have long drawn parallels between *Gondibert* and the better known heroic dramas that were to come to prominence in the first decade after the Restoration, and whose prime example is Davenant’s own *The Siege of Rhodes*.[2] Back in 1902, for instance, George Saintsbury pointed to the connections between the heroic poem—‘neither pure Romance nor pure Epic, but a sort of medley between the two’—and its dramatic counterpart, before concluding that ‘we shall never quite understand the much discussed “Heroic Play,” till we take it in conjunction with the “Heroic Poem”.’[3] Others too have spotted the link. For one scholar *Gondibert* is a ‘strangely theatrical poem’, while another notes that it shares the same ‘ethical, political and aesthetic philosophy’ as Davenant’s earlier work for the Caroline stage, and that his ‘method of presentation throughout’ the poem is ‘that of the dramatist, disclosing scenes, drawing the curtain,

[1] On Davenant’s continental influences, see Cornell March Dowlin, *Sir William Davenant’s ‘Gondibert’, its Preface, and Hobbes’s Answer: A Study in English Neo-Classicism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1934), pp. 21–44. For the development of heroic poetry in English, see Smith, *Literature and Revolution*, pp. 203–49; Paul Salzman, ‘Royalist Epic and Romance’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Writing of the English Revolution*, ed. by N. H. Keeble (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 215–30; Colin Burrow, *Epic Romance: Homer to Milton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

[2] On the heroic play, see Cecil V. Deane, *Dramatic Theory and the Rhymed Heroic Play* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931).

[3] George Saintsbury, *A History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe*, 2 vols (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1902), I, pp. 378, 370 n. 1.

standing aside, uttering a stage direction'.[4] '*Gondibert* is much more in the style of the Restoration "heroic play" than in that of the classical epic', writes its editor.[5]

That commentators frequently detect a theatrical quality in *Gondibert* should not surprise us. In the *Preface* to the poem, which was published separately in both Paris and London in 1650, Davenant explains that he decided to base his text not on the epic poetry of Homer or Virgil, nor the archaic romances of Tasso or Spenser, but rather on the 'pleasant and instructive […] method' of English drama. 'I cannot discerne by any help from reading, or learned men', he tells us,

> that any Nation hath in representment of great actions (either by *Heroicks* or *Dramaticks*) digested Story into so pleasant and instructive a method as the English by their *Drama*: and by that regular species (though narratively and not in Dialogue) I have drawn the body of an Heroick Poem[.] (*Preface*, pp. 15–16)

Drama, according to Davenant, is the foremost literary vehicle for expressing 'great actions' to audiences. It should inform, therefore, even dictate, the heroic poem with which he hopes to achieve the same end. But why, if drama is so amenable a form, does Davenant not simply write another play? Why turn his hand to a new genre of literature that nevertheless apes the structural and narrative features of drama? Might *Gondibert*'s experiment with aesthetic form reveal something about the radical cultural and political circumstances in which it was initially written and read?

To answer these questions, we must first appreciate just how delicate the political situation was for Davenant during the period of *Gondibert*'s composition, that is between the regicide of Charles I in January 1649 and the publication of the poem in January 1651. As we have already seen in the Introduction, Davenant was incarcerated in the Tower of London, awaiting trial for his life during this time, and the *Preface* became, in Marcus Nevitt's words, 'the calling card of a well-connected mind for hire, who is ready (out of necessity or conviction) to be put into the service of the newly modelled state'.[6] To write 'straight' drama was untenable in mid-century England, where the theatres had been banned since 1642. Davenant nevertheless wanted to share his services as a writer with the new regime—and thus save his neck—and recognised the important role that literature might play in creating a

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[4] Kroll, *Restoration Drama*, p. 175; Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment*, pp. 102, 108. Cf. *Gondibert*, p. 294. See also Harbage, pp. 94–5.
[5] Gladish, 'Introduction', in *Gondibert*, p. x. See also Richard H. Perkinson, 'The Epic in Five Acts', *Studies in Philology*, 43 (1946), 465–81.
[6] Nevitt, 'The Insults of Defeat', p. 292.

common culture based on shared ideals and values.[7] According to David Norbrook, *Gondibert* represents 'an ambitious attempt at formulating a new royalist poetics for the changed political circumstances', a poetics based on 'a kind of manipulative image-making' that 'could be used to legitimize *any* established regime'.[8] Niall Allsopp has more recently suggested that Davenant's engagement with the philosophy of Thomas Hobbes 'helped him formulate a new way of thinking',[9] and provided him with the intellectual foundations to justify a switch of allegiance from the royalist side to that of the emerging Republic. Indeed, Davenant seems to have been keen to build up relationships with critically placed Parliamentarian grandees following the regicide, offering the likes of John Selden, John Wildman, Henry Marten, and Bulstrode Whitelocke hand-annotated presentation copies of *Gondibert* on its publication.[10]

In what follows, I argue that Davenant translates the image-making potential of drama onto the heroic poem for political ends. By effectively smuggling dramatic material into the Commonwealth under the very noses of those who have prohibited it, Davenant preserves an important cultural tradition while at the same time creating a new work that is seen by those in power to be aesthetically and morally uncontentious. While contemporaries like Humphrey Moseley oversaw the transfer of plays from the theatrical to the 'paper stage' in the form of printed playbooks and pamphlets as theatre culture was banished from public life, thereby protecting and propagating the (royalist) cultural traditions of the pre-war period, Davenant embarked on a much more radical project: to rewrite drama in its entirety, returning to first principles, and attempting to accommodate its distinctive features in a new literary form that did not require instantiation through performance, but that could nevertheless prove pleasant and instructive to all political sensibilities, whether royalist or not.[11] *Gondibert*, I argue, is a

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[7] On Davenant's allegiance switching during this period, see Allsopp, 'Turncoat Poets', pp. 78–127. For Hobbes's political allegiances as read through his civil science, see Jeffrey R. Collins, *The Allegiance of Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). On the issue of side-switching in the civil wars more generally, see Andrew Hopper, *Turncoats & Renegadoes: Changing Sides during the English Civil Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[8] Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, pp. 277, 278; my italics.

[9] Allsopp, 'Turncoat Poets', p. 78.

[10] Allsopp, 'Turncoat Poets', pp. 82–3. Allsopp provides bibliographical details for these individual copies in '"Lett none but our Lombard author rudely blame for's righteous paine": An Annotated Copy of Sir William Davenant's *Gondibert* (1651)', *The Library*, 7th ser., 16.1 (March, 2015), 24–50 (p. 28 n. 12). On Davenant's authorial corrections as an attempt to raise a printed edition to the prestige of manuscript, see Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 54.

[11] For this boom in play publishing, see Paulina Kewes, '"Give me the sociable pocket-books…": Humphrey Moseley's Serial Publication of Octavo Play Collections', *Publishing History*, 38 (1995), 5–21; Randall, *Winter Fruit*, pp. 51–65; Marissa Nicosia, 'Printing as Revival: Making Playbooks in the 1650s', *PBSA*, 111.4 (2017),

play masquerading as a poem. By reimagining drama as something told 'narratively and not in Dialogue', Davenant was able to divest the form of its royalist associations and set himself up as a literary talent worthy of the emerging Commonwealth's attention and support. Davenant was known for his dramaturgical innovations throughout this period, and I would argue that *Gondibert* represents his most ambitious theatrical experiment of all.[12]

This chapter is in two parts. Firstly, I examine Davenant's 'theory' of poetry as it is outlined in the *Preface*, and suggest the ways he draws on dramatic models to insist that heroic poetry has the potential to intervene in the political and social spheres as 'a kind of manipulative image-making', through a story about private love, public honour, and that most early modern, and actorly, of pursuits: the provocation of the passions. I then turn to *Gondibert* itself and examine how, both through its structuring principles and the stylistic and narrative management of its plot, it labours to replicate the effects and sensations more typically associated in the period with mimetic drama. I focus my analysis on just three of the 'Jewels and most pretious ornaments' (*Answer*, p. 51) of the poem: the duel between Gondibert and his rival Oswald, which spans three cantos of Book I; the short description of the Temple of Praise from Book II; and the love story between Gondibert and Birtha, which serves as the main plot of the narrative but comes to a head in Books II and III, and which Thomas Hobbes marked out for special praise, there having 'nothing bene sayd of that subject neither by the Ancient nor moderne Poets comparable to it' (*Answer*, p. 50). Through my close readings I demonstrate that Davenant not only imitates dramatic structures, but in fact imagines and visualises the poem in theatrical terms.

In a recent book on the 'offstage' in the early modern theatre, Jonathan Walker demonstrates how Renaissance dramatists frequently deployed a range of narrative strategies to present action that was otherwise physically or imaginatively 'unstageable'.[13] Davenant takes this idea to its logical conclusion in the late 1640s, when theatre itself is banished to the 'offstage' of public life. He fully narrativizes his 'play' *Gondibert* to get around the ban, while insisting that the effects on audiences that dramatic texts have might be replicated and

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469–89. On the politics of the 'paper stage', see Rachel Willie, 'Viewing the Paper Stage: Civil War, Print, Theatre and the Public Sphere', in *Making Space Public in Early Modern Europe: Performance, Geography, Privacy*, ed. Angela Vanhaelen and Joseph Ward (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 54–75; *Staging the Revolution*, pp. 25–51.

[12] For a discussion of Davenant's dramaturgical experiments with scenery and music, see Lewcock, *Sir William Davenant*, pp. 87–110.

[13] Jonathan Walker, *Site Unscene: The Offstage in English Renaissance Drama* (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 2017).

extended in heroic poetry to the benefit of the Commonwealth.[14] If royalists fashioned themselves through the theatre they watched, Davenant seems to suggest, republicans could do the same through the heroic poetry they read. And, of course, royalists could read the poem and imagine in their mind's eye a theatrical performance too: there is even a hint that such heroic plots might one day be returned to the stage, once the authorities recognise their true moral value. So often treated in isolation by critics, *Gondibert* has come to look like an anomaly in Davenant's output, but taken as an experiment in reimagining—and rehabilitating—drama during a period of intense anti-theatricalism and literary transformation, it becomes a central part of the larger story of the 'revolutionary theatre' that it is the ultimate aim of this thesis to explore.

The *Preface* as Heroic Manifesto

Gondibert represents an attempt to return to first principles, to a moment free from the literary burdens of the past. Davenant opens his *Preface* to the poem with a survey of Classical and Renaissance writers of epic and romance, and claims that, while each has contributed significantly to our shared cultural heritage, they have all in their turn exhibited an anxiety of influence, being guilty of craven imitation of their predecessors, and therefore have failed to explore fully new poetic horizons. Employing the language of sea-faring, Davenant writes that Homer, standing 'upon the Poets famous hill, like an eminent Sea-marke' (p. 3) precludes 'Coasters' like Virgil, Lucan, Statius, Tasso, and Edmund Spenser from venturing out into the uncharted waters of epic invention. As a result, they are no more able to 'excell' him 'then he that sailes by others Mapps can make a new discovery' (p. 7). It is time, Davenant insists, for something new. He himself has not been immune to this pressure to follow others' paths, but intends to make amends now. Using the *Preface* as an opportunity 'to accuse, and condemne, as papers unworthy of light, all those hasty digestions of thought which were publish'd in my Youth' (p. 20), he insists that *Gondibert* will break the epic cycle of repetition and that he can now 'sayle in untry'd Seas'. Davenant wants finally to 'venture beyond the track of others […] and affect a new and remote way of

[14] Davenant's later collaborator and friend, John Dryden, likewise saw *Gondibert* as 'rather *Play in Narration* […] than an Heroick Poem'. See John Dryden, 'Of Heroique Playes: An Essay', *Works*, XI, ed. by John Loftis and David Stuart Rodes (1978), pp. 8–18 (p. 11); my italics.

thinking' (p. 3), remote even from his own past self. The *Preface* and *Gondibert* are as much about personal reinvention as they are about literary experiment.

It may appear that Davenant is here wiping the slate clean entirely, rejecting Homeric epic as a viable model for invention, insisting on rewriting the rulebook *ex nihilo*. This would make sense at a moment when the country was reorganizing itself, and looking to build a new, republican culture that could forget the conflicts of the previous decade and build a stable foundation for the nation's future, based on conciliation and shared ideals.[15] Davenant's protestations against epic might be seen as an attempt to obliterate history and begin afresh. But this is not strictly the case. *Gondibert* may be an experiment with genre but Davenant feels he must follow an established structure of some sort; it is simply that epic is not suitable for his present purposes.

Having explained that he believes English drama is the most 'pleasant and instructive' way of presenting 'great actions' to audiences, Davenant proceeds to explain how he will attempt to replicate not only the basic structures of dramatic texts but also their style, by including in his poem not just a main plot but a number of equally engaging subplots and other theatrical effects:

> I did not only observe the Symmetry (proportioning five bookes to five *Acts*, and *Canto's* to *Scenes* (the Scenes, having their number ever govern'd by occasion)[16] but all the *shadowings*, *happy strokes*, *secret graces*, and even the *drapery* (which together make the second beauty) I have (I hope) exactly follow'd: and those compositions of second beauty, I observe in the *Drama* to be the underwalks, interweaving, or correspondence of lesser designe in *Scenes*, not the great motion of the maine plot, and coherence of the *Acts*. (p. 16)

On a practical level, the poem is to resemble a dramatic text in its division into acts and scenes. Not only that, but there are hints of its aspiration for future performance too. In his justification for his specifically-developed, four-lined stanza of alternating rhyme, Davenant writes that he 'beleev'd it would be more pleasant to the Reader, in a Worke of Length, to give this respite or pause, between every *Stanza*'. This verse, he argues, also lends itself

[15] See McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 5–10.

[16] Davenant often piles parenthesis upon parenthesis in his prose and verse, a quality picked up to comic effect by one contributor to *Certain Verses*. The author of 'Thus far in the Authors own words, Now a little in his own way' writes whole verses in parentheses, such as the following, which is the last of three verses all bracketed off together: 'As she past by (when out th'elixar flew) | As (though) (as a grave modern author spoke) | The power of Potion, Purge, and Pill, she knew)' (p. 282). In his comical satire, *Sir William Davenant's Voyage to the Other World: With His Adventures in the Poets ELIZIUM* (London, 1668), Richard Flecknoe lampooned Davenant for 'so perplex[ing] himself and Readers with Parenthesis on Parenthesis' (p. 11).

amenable to musical setting: 'the brevity of the *Stanza* renders it lesse subtle to the Composer, and more easy to the Singer; which in *stilo recitativo*, when the Story is long, is cheefly requisite'.[17] A later work by Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656) would be the first work in English to be sung entirely in recitative.[18] Clearly, Davenant hopes that *Gondibert* might be performed to music in the future, either as a heroic song or, perhaps, even as a libretto for a dramatic work:

> And this was indeed (if I shall not betray vanity in my Confession) the reason that prevail'd most towards my choyce of this *Stanza*, and my division of the maine worke into *Cantos* […] for I had so much heat (which you, Sir, may call pride, since pride may be allow'd in *Pegasus*, if it be a praise to other Horses) as to presume they might (like the Works of *Homer* ere they were joyn'd together and made a Volume by the Athenian King) be sung at Village-feasts; though not to Monarchs after Victory, nor to Armys before battaile. For so (as an inspiration of glory into the one, and of valour into the other) did *Homer's* Spirit, long after his body's rest, wander in musick about *Greece*. (p. 17)

It is the impulse for performance that determines all of Davenant's decisions in writing *Gondibert*. Just as the ancient Greeks used to sing parts of Homer's poems, so Davenant envisages that his works will be sung in the future throughout England's villages, although he hopes the motivation will be pleasure and moral instruction rather than the search for military glory or the celebration of kings, as it was with the ancient Greeks. The insistent note that *Gondibert* should not be sung 'to Monarchs after Victory' points to his professed switch of allegiance to the Commonwealth. The poem is not intended to celebrate royal successes; in England in 1650, there are none. Instead, this poem is for the people, the Commonwealth.

The *Preface* outlines the specific, even technical, features of the poem that readers will encounter, and aims to provide the appropriate 'aesthetic code'[19] to properly appreciate their significance. In other words, Davenant's explanations here encourage us to 'read' *Gondibert* as a script for a play, with each of its formal features corresponding to a generic or formal feature of a dramatic text. He insists that *Gondibert*'s indebtedness to the dramatic medium goes beyond these superficial features, however. The poem is also going to *feel* like

[17] For a discussion for contemporary ideas about writing for music in England, see Andrew Pinnock and Bruce Wood, 'A Mangled Chime: The Accidental Death of Opera Libretto in Civil War England', *Early Music*, 36.2 (2008), 265–84. The standard account of early modern English opera libretto is Eugene Haun, *But Hark! More Harmony: The Libretti of Restoration Opera in English* (Ypsilanti, MI: Eastern Michigan University Press, 1971).

[18] Pinnock and Wood, p. 270.

[19] Potter, *Secret Rites*, p. 75.

a play, boasting not just a 'maine plot' but also a series of subplots that will further add to the 'contexture of the whole' (p. 16). Just as 'these Meanders of the English Stage […] appeare to them [audiences] as pleasant as a sommer passage on a crooked River, where going about, and turning back, is as delightfull as the delays of parting Lovers' (p. 16), so Davenant envisages his poem will provide similar variety, diversion, and delight for its readers.

Drama also has other valuable qualities for Davenant's purposes that epic poetry apparently does not. As commentators have long recognised, Davenant saw the role of his poem to be in some way didactic, even exemplary, in the sense of providing images of moral virtue that readers could both learn from and emulate.[20] Heroic poetry should act as 'a perfect glasse of Nature [that] gives us a familiar and easy view of our selves', while also showing 'some patternes of human life, that are (perhaps) fit to be follow'd' (pp. 3, 12). Epic on the other hand is too concerned with the supernatural, with gods and ghosts, to be of use as a practical exercise in moral probity. Homer tends to 'intermixe such Fables, as are objects lifted *above* the Eyes of Nature', 'supernaturally' 'advanc[ing] his men to the quality of Gods, and depos[ing] his Gods to the condition of men' (p. 3; my italics), while his successors are no less guilty of such vulgar 'Errors'. Virgil and Statius are too full of ghosts; Tasso is disconcertingly obsessed with 'Witches Expeditions', while Spenser's 'allegoricall Story', *The Faerie Queene*, resembles nothing more than 'a continuance of extraordinary Dreames', which are as useful 'to humane application, as painted History, when with the cousenage of lights it is represented in Scenes, by which wee are much lesse inform'd then by actions on the Stage' (pp. 3–7). How can such narratives, unrealistic, extraordinary and vague as they are, possibly speak to the actual lived experiences of seventeenth-century English men and women, and teach them the way to live better lives and to respect their political leaders? Channelling neoclassical ideas and inflecting them with the work of earlier critics like George Puttenham and most especially Sir Philip Sidney, Davenant concludes that poetry is 'most instructive when it is true to nature and to probability'.[21] His characters will be 'Christian persons' (p. 9) only, and will not, for the most part, have anything to do with magic or the supernatural.

An experienced writer of court masques as well as plays, Davenant instinctively reaches for theatrical precedents in his search for a model that puts moral emblems before the

[20] Dowlin, *Davenant's 'Gondibert'*, pp. 7–20; William McCarthy, 'Davenant's Prefatory Rhetoric', *Criticism*, 20.2 (Spring, 1978), 128–43; Edward Schiffer, 'Sir William Davenant: The Loyal Scout Lost at Sea', *ELH*, 59 (Autumn, 1992), 553–76; Hillyer, pp. 19–50; Kroll, *Restoration Drama*, p. 173–5.
[21] Dowlin, *Davenant's 'Gondibert'*, p. 17. See also Schiffer, 'Loyal Scout, pp. 560–1.

eyes of readers.[22] *Gondibert*'s plot hinges on the question of whether its hero will carry out his public duty by accepting his role as King Aribert's heir and by marrying his daughter, the Princess Rhodalind, or follow his heart by marrying his true love Birtha, the daughter of Astragon the magician. It shows us what happens when 'private motives are privileged over public consequences',[23] and allows us to see the emotional and social fallout of such a conflict. *Gondibert* is a forensic exploration of how individuals navigate their social world and how they control their inner passions. Drama is, for Davenant, the obvious medium in which to explore such tensions. It is the idea that poetry is useful when it teaches us about the human passions that helps explain an important, but difficult, part of the *Preface*.

Whereas Davenant groups the other Classical writers together because of their use of the supernatural, his problem with Lucan's poem, *Pharsalia*, which recounts the events of the Roman civil war, is formulated slightly differently. Lucan is not a proper poet, Davenant says, not because he treats of gods and ghosts, but rather because he focuses too much on historical detail. The Roman poet 'chose to write the greatest actions that ever were allow'd to be true', but in so doing he failed to 'observe that such an enterprize rather beseem'd an Historian then a Poet' (pp. 4–5). The issue is that historians report facts and actions of particular events, whereas poets are more interested in searching for emotional realities that might be experienced universally:

> for wise Poets think it more worthy to seeke out truth *in the passions*, then to record the truth of actions; and practise to describe Mankinde just as *wee are persuaded or guided by instinct*, not particular persons, as they are lifted, or levell'd by the force of Fate, it being nobler to contemplate the generall History of Nature, then a selected Diary of Fortune: (p. 5; my italics)

Poetry's peculiar value, then, lies in its ability to reveal—and affect—universal, human passions. *Gondibert* concerns itself with specific actions of individuals like Gondibert and Birtha or Hurgonil and Orna, and uses these characters to animate larger debates about the interconnections and conflicts between love and honour, between the microcosm of the individual and the macrocosm of the polity, between the private passions and the public actions that result from them. Gondibert's dilemma either to be true to his desires and marry the innocent Birtha, or accept his public duty and take Aribert's throne, along with his

[22] Davenant describes his theatre in terms of emblems, '*heroicall pictures*' and '*parables*' later; see below (pp. 58–60).
[23] Potter, *Secret Rites*, p. 97.

daughter the princess Rhodalind, presents readers with *general* ethical and political problems through a study of *specific* narrative trajectories. Channelling Bacon, Davenant's poem therefore 'reduceth conceits intellectuall to Images sensible',[24] and it is such image-making (to use Norbrook's phrase) that makes its meanings explicable and applicable to readers.

In a commendatory poem included in the printed edition of *Gondibert*, Edmund Waller reveals that he fully grasped what it was his friend was attempting to achieve with his latest literary experiment: '*Man* is thy theame', Waller writes, noting that Davenant has succeeded in 'Draw[ing] to the life' his 'Vertue'.[25] Whereas in epic the gods 'in vain had come down' from on high, *Gondibert*'s characters reveal the 'humane Passions, such as with us dwell', thus providing 'flesh and blood' examples of moral virtue that readers can fully comprehend, relate to, and measure themselves against.

This emphasis on revealing the inner emotions is what makes Davenant's imagination in *Gondibert* unwaveringly theatrical. This study of the passions is precisely how seventeenth-century actors, like Classical orators, understood their craft. While reconstructing early modern theories of acting is extremely difficult given the paucity of evidence, we do know that in the period 'acting' was based on the idea that actors generate a character's inner passions by themselves feeling that passion internally and then presenting it in physical and vocal form in order to inspire or arouse those very same passions in their audiences.[26] Book VI of Quintilian's *Insititutio Oratoria*, for example, sets out to enumerate the various techniques by which a speaker might render and arouse in others particular passions, as Joseph R. Roach has demonstrated in his important book on the subject.[27] Davenant sets *Gondibert* in Italy, 'once the Stage of the World', as though his characters are actors that 'shew […] some patternes of human life' (p. 11). It is, after all, 'not truth, but image,'

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[24] Francis Bacon, *The Two Bookes of Francis Bacon. Of the Proficience and Advancement of Learning, Divine and Humane*, 2 vols (London: for Henrie Tomes, 1605), II, sig. Pp2^{v}.

[25] See *Gondibert*, pp. 269–70.

[26] This is most famously set out in Hamlet's discussion of acting technique with the players, mentioned above. There is a growing body of scholarly literature on early modern acting as regards the passions. See, for example, Joseph R. Roach, *The Player's Passion: Studies in the Science of Acting* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1993); Paul Menzer, 'The Actor's Inhibition: Early Modern Acting and the Rhetoric of Restraint', *Renaissance Drama*, 35 (2006), 83–111; Allison P. Hobgood, *Passionate Playgoing in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014). Blair Hoxby, *What was Tragedy? Theory and the Early Modern Canon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015) discusses the theoretical foundations of the passions and how they were applied to early modern conceptions of 'affective tragedy' (esp. pp. 57–110).

[27] Roach, *The Player's Passion*, pp. 23–57.

that ‘maketh passion; and a tragedy affecteth no less than a murder if well acted’, according to Thomas Hobbes.[28]

Hobbes certainly agreed with Davenant that heroic poetry should concern real people and deal primarily with how universal passions are externalised and manipulated. In his *Answer* to the *Preface*, he notes that ‘the proper subject of a Poeme is the manners of men, not naturall causes; manners presented, not dictated; the manners feyned (as the name of Poesy importes) not found in men’ (*Answer*, p. 46). Allsopp has demonstrated that, for Hobbes, ‘manners’ are merely the ‘public expression’ of ‘normative internal states’, i.e. the ‘passions’.[29] Heroic poetry, then, should be about ‘manners’, the outward, external signs of the passions.[30] Such focus on the feigned and the presented, Hobbes seems to suggest, means that all literary representation is essentially dramatic because artificial: ‘me thinkes the Fable is not much unlike the Theatre’ (*Answer*, p. 50), he concedes. Hobbes’s social philosophy had a profound influence on Davenant’s thinking during this period. The two men had become acquainted during their respective exiles to Paris in the 1640s. It was at the Louvre that Davenant shared his drafts of the *Preface* with Hobbes, who gave them ‘daylie examination’ (p. 3); Hobbes too seems to have discussed his own work with the poet. It is tempting to think that it was reading and responding to Davenant’s poem—‘I have used your Judgment no less in many thinges of mine, which coming to light will thereby appeare the better’ (*Answer*, p. 54)—that prompted Hobbes to see human subjects as, ultimately, mere performers: ‘a *Person*,’ he writes in *Leviathan*, ‘is the same that an *Actor* is, both on the Stage and in common Conversation’.[31] A person is one who *speaks* and whose speech has consequences for the social world of which they are an atomised part—like an actor in a play.[32] Hence Richard Kroll’s characterisation of *Gondibert* as ‘a scrupulous Hobbesian deliberation on the artificiality of civil life’.[33]

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[28] Thomas Hobbes, *Human Nature and De Corpore Politico*, ed. by J. C. A. Gaskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 76.
[29] Allsopp, ‘Turncoat Poets’, p. 89.
[30] Cf. Burrow, *Epic Romance*, p. 242.
[31] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 217. This of course is the etymological root of the Latin word *persona*.
[32] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 217: ‘*A PERSON is he* whose words or actions are considered, either as his own, or as representing the words or actions of an other man, or of any other thing to whom they are attributed, whether Truly or by Fiction’ (italics reversed). Cf. Kroll, *Restoration Drama*, pp. 170–1; James Loxley, ‘*Dramatis Personae*: Royalism, Theatre and the Political Ontology of the Person in Post-Regicide Writing’, in *Royalists and Royalism during the Interregnum*, ed. by Jason McElligott and David L. Smith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), pp. 149–70.
[33] Kroll, *Restoration Drama*, p. 169.

In its interest in, and examination of, how the passions of individuals affect their public actions, *Gondibert* aligns itself wholeheartedly with Renaissance drama and the court masque traditions that precede it, and of which Davenant was a significant exponent. But for whom exactly is the poem intended? What kind of audience does Davenant envisage for his poem, and what are they supposed take away from it? As with the Caroline masques, Davenant does not see his heroic poem as speaking directly to the masses, the 'common crowds', but rather for the 'Cheefs' of society. He is concerned with bolstering those 'Schooles of Morality' (p. 12), the Court and the Camp. He wants his poem, like the masques and elite theatres of the early Stuart period, to teach society's leaders how to understand human instincts and passions so that they can use that knowledge to improve the general morality of the populace at large. In this way, *Gondibert* is a text of counsel in the *speculum principis* tradition. Davenant tells us that he first recognised the potential of this kind of poetry when he observed that the four main ways of maintaining peaceful order in the nation—government, religion, the army, and the law—are 'defectivly apply'd,' being 'weake by an emulous warr amongst themselves'. He believes that 'to strengthen those prinicipall aides (still making the People our direct object)' requires some 'collaterall help […] which I will safely presume to consist in Poesy' (p. 37). These four elements of civil society have, according to Davenant, failed to control the citizens because they only work on the bodies, rather than on the minds of individuals. Therefore, poetry is a useful tool for the state because it works by persuading the passions, being a pleasant art, 'more then any enabled with a voluntary, and cheerfull assistance of Nature; and whose operations are as resistlesse, secret, easy, and subtle, as is the influence of the Planetts' (p. 38). The word 'persuasion' and its cognates recur throughout the poem itself. The heroic images presented by the poem are intended to educate those new leaders of the Commonwealth in their duties, and in the art of manipulating through images popular opinion and public behaviour. 'Nor is it needfull', Davenant writes,

> that Heroique Poesy should be levell'd to the reach of Common men; for if the examples it presents prevaile upon their Chiefs, the delight of Imitation […] will rectify by the rules, which those Chiefs establish of their owne lives, the lives of all that behold them; for the example of life, doth as much surpasse the force of precept, as Life doth exceed death. (p. 13)

The poem will work on the people through a kind of passionate osmosis: as the refined elites of society read the poem and implement its instructions, so the lower orders will follow suit.

In this way, poetry is a much more powerful engine of social change and improvement than any law or spiritual minister.

Davenant's poem is dramatic in the sense that it renders visible inner virtues, and that these images work to persuade readers to imitate such examples in their own lives. Anticipating antagonistic responses from those that 'accuse Poets' of being merely 'Admirers of Beauty', especially in the form of the female sex, he retorts that 'he that praises the *inward* Beauty of Women, which is their Vertue, doth more performe his duty then before: for our envious silence in not approving, and so encouraging what is good, is the cause that Vice is more in fashion and countenance then Vertue' (p. 42; my italics). *Gondibert* stages in our imaginations such 'Images of Action' that 'prevail upon our mindes' to make us better members of the Commonwealth. Having established through my analysis of the *Preface* precisely how *Gondibert* is going to function, and why, I now want to turn to the poem itself, and explore the ways in which Davenant maps or, in Potter's formulation, 'encodes' dramatic models, conventions, and sensations onto the heroic poem.

The Drama of *Gondibert*

As explained in the *Preface*, *Gondibert*'s structuring principles derive from drama rather than from the poetry of epic or romance. The text is divided into acts (Books) and scenes (Cantos), and its verse form was developed specifically to facilitate musical setting. Davenant had one eye on future performance, although not a kind that would be typically experienced in any theatre. Yet, his design for the poem goes far beyond these formal gestures to dramatic writing. *Gondibert*'s world is constructed, and its narrative managed, in entirely theatrical terms: it plays out in the mind's eye as a drama on a stage-set rather than as real events happening to real people. If the aim of the poem is to 'draw [the] passions' (p. 5), then it does so in strikingly histrionic terms. When Gondibert and Birtha finally reveal their love for one another near the end of Book II, for instance, they (and we) are provided only with the external signs of the face, voice, and body as evidence of their passions. So, we read how

> Her Face, o'recast with thought, does soon betray
> Th'assembled spirits, which his Eies detect
> By her pale look as by the Milkie way,
> Men first did the assembled Stars suspect. (II. 7. 69)

Birtha's face *displays* the internal emotions she is feeling at this moment in the scene through facial gestures, and Gondibert, like a spectator watching an actor, must interpret these 'spirits' with his 'Eies' in order to know that Birtha reciprocates his love. Just as the early astronomers were prompted by the light of the Milky Way to search for individual stars, so Gondibert discovers Birtha's *particular* thoughts and feelings through the *general* expression on her face, her 'pale look'. We shall return to this crucial moment later. For now, it is enough merely to recognise that on multiple levels—formal, narrative, and conceptual—*Gondibert* is imagined as a play, though told 'narratively and not in Dialogue', and that characters' inner motives are only revealed to us and to each other through external signs.

In *Literature and Revolution in England 1640–1660,* Nigel Smith argues that one of the effects of the civil wars on English literature was that it caused the epic to turn inwards: great scenes of heroic action and fierce battle typically associated with the genre came to be replaced 'with a novel inscription of the political and religious subject', so that during those years that Davenant was engaged with *Gondibert* the language of Classical and Biblical epic was 'redeployed to answer *inner* needs'.[34] Smith is thinking here chiefly of Milton's epic of sublime individualism, *Paradise Lost* (1667). *Gondibert,* on the other hand, refuses to permit its characters a psychologically complex interiority of the kind to be found in Milton's poem. It was '[a]gainst this tradition, which at one stage represented the militant triumph of puritanism and the Parliament,' Smith argues, that 'Davenant and Hobbes's important writings on epic were pitched.'[35] *Gondibert* never gives us unmediated access to a character's internal state of mind or emotional life; instead, we have to rely on descriptions of external signifiers as proxies for such passionate disclosure.

This insistence on externals and surface is there from the poem's opening Argument. Davenant intended that such 'Arguments' would be placed at the head of each canto to function like stage directions or playbills, introducing the setting and characters of the scene, and giving a hint of the action contained therein, rather than being read as part of the narrative action itself (*Preface,* pp. 16–17).[36] The Argument to Book I, Canto 1 reads:

> *Old* ARIBERT'S *great race, and greater mind*
> *Is sung, with the renown of* RHODALIND.

[34] Smith, *Literature and Revolution*, p. 203; my italics.
[35] Smith, *Literature and Revolution*, p. 203.
[36] On dramatic Arguments, see Tiffany Stern, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 63–80.

> *Prince* OSWALD *is compar'd to* GONDIBERT,
> *And justly each distinguish'd by desert:*
> *Whose Armies are in Fame's fair Field drawn forth,*
> *To shew by discipline their Leaders worth*. (I. 1. Arg.)

Here we are introduced to the principal characters of the canto, given a brief description of them, told of the canto's setting ('*Fame's fair Field*'), and offered the key motivation, as it were, for the unfolding action. (It is Davenant's deft handling of his characters' movements that leads Hobbes to compare it to the theatre.) Of course, such arguments are a feature of English epic: Edmund Spenser too includes them in *The Faerie Queene* (1590), and Milton would go on to add them to the second edition of *Paradise Lost* (1674). Through the last detail of Davenant's opening argument in *Gondibert*, he hints at the emblematic meaning readers are supposed to derive from the canto: in this case, the image of the two princes' armies set against one another will '*shew*' their leaders' respective virtue and honour through spectacular display.

The poem is overwhelmingly told from the perspective of individual characters, either by way of the narrator describing events through individual perspectives or, as often as not, through the use of direct speech. Characters *talk* in *Gondibert*, and while this is a perfectly usual method of exposition in narrative poetry from its earliest origins, it does argue for a more dramatic style of engagement with the poem; texts in dialogue always imply the characters who voice them. In his *Answer* to the *Preface*, Hobbes divides poetry into two categories: there is '*Narrative*' poetry, in which 'the Poet himself relateth' the story, and '*Dramatique*, as when the persons are every one adorned and brought upon the Theatre, to speake and act their owne parts'. *Gondibert* he defines as 'Heroique Narrative', that is 'an *Epique Poeme*', because it is 'pronounced by one' rather than 'many persons' (*Answer*, pp. 45–6). This is technically true, but it does not quite capture the experience of reading the poem, as Hobbes practically admits himself:

> I beleeve (Sir) you have seene a curious kind of perspective, where, he that looks through a short hollow pipe, upon a picture conteyning diverse figures, sees none of those that are there paynted, but some one person made up of their partes, conveighed to the eye by the artificiall cutting of a glasse. I find in my imagination an effect not unlike it from your Poeme. The vertues you distribute there amongst so many noble Persons, represent (in the reading) the image but of one mans vertue to my fancy, which is your owne; (*Answer*, p. 55)

Gondibert is incessantly polyphonic or, to switch from the aural to Hobbes's visual metaphor, made up of 'diverse figures', which themselves build up to make the complete whole of the poem (and, in Hobbes's flattering view, Davenant's own virtuous image). We do not see things from the perspective of just one character, for instance Gondibert himself, but through a range of characters, including Birtha, Astragon, Oswald, and Rhodalind. Plays work on similar lines: characters' individual 'parts' cohere together to make up the entire play.[37]

More conceptually, this anamorphic image, made famous in the frontispiece to Hobbes's *Leviathan*,[38] further reveals Davenant's purpose in composing his poem. *Gondibert* works by building up a single, unified picture through the layering up of multiple perspectives. The poem collapses the multiple into the singular; the drama presented by many actors is made to be read as a poem sung by one. For Hobbes, the leviathan is made up of individual members of the polity, and it is this body that becomes sovereign.[39] This is precisely how Davenant intends his new work to operate: from the various discrete images, characters, and scenes, emerges a vibrant and coherent picture. It is analogous to the Commonwealth itself, which is made up of diverse citizens. *Gondibert* boasts such scenes as '*The Hunting, The Battayle, The Citty Morning, The Funerall, The House of Astragon, The Library, and the Temples*' (*Answer*, p. 51). Each of these contributes to the success of the whole. It is 'a picture conteyning diverse figures' that taken together show 'but some one person made up of their partes' (*Answer*, p. 55).

Gondibert does not only attempt to replicate the sensation that it is *performed* by many people. Davenant goes further by actually thematising theatricality and performance *within* the narrative itself. He does this in order to draw his readers' attention to how drama—and the heroic poetry that he hopes will replace it—operates. For example, after Oswald's entourage have ambushed Gondibert and his men in the forest following a stag hunt (I. 2), the prince suggests that, rather than putting the lives of all their men at risk by directly engaging them in battle, the two statesmen should instead duel 'singly' (I. 3. 37). Their troops, meanwhile:

> Like unconcern'd Spectators let them stand,
> And be by sacred vow to distance bound;
> Whilst their lov'd Leaders by our strict command,

[37] The standard account of early modern parts is Simon Palfrey and Tiffany Stern, *Shakespeare in Parts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[38] The famous image was designed by Abraham Bosse (*c*. 1602–76).
[39] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 227.

> Only as witnesses, approach this ground. (I. 3. 39)

Oswald tellingly reaches for the language of the theatre here. The soldiers are to become 'unconcern'd Spectators', standing far off, as if the duel to take place is only an elite entertainment or sport, not the drama of *realpolitik* that will in fact seriously and materially affect them all beyond the performance itself. The simile is sufficiently vivid as to constitute a thematic impulse across the entire poem. Characters are frequently figured as spectators in a scene in order to demonstrate how heroic literature affects those who engage with it. Watching and being watched are crucial to the story. So, here the audience for this special performance of military skill and chivalric masculinity will be pointedly elite: only the named nobles are permitted to witness—and therefore countenance—the ensuing action, just as Davenant had made clear in his *Preface* that it was intended for the 'Cheefs' and not the 'common crowd'. The duel is even choreographed as a play might be: the performance site is selected, 'ordain'd by them and Fate' (I. 3. 45), the army leaders are brought to it 'like griev'd Spectators' (I. 3. 45) and are arranged into 'divided Stations' (I. 3. 46) around Oswald and Gondibert. The rank-and-file troops, meanwhile, 'far sever'd are' (I. 3. 46) from all this, having earlier made a vow 'Not to assist, through anger or remorse' (I. 3. 44) in the drama about to unfold.

By configuring the duel between the hero Gondibert and his opponent Oswald as a performance of chivalric honour and public duty, to be witnessed by particular spectators, Davenant demonstrates that the heroic genre, which is committed to providing reader-spectators with morally edifying images, is chiefly served by the dynamics and even the spatiality of drama. Oswald attempts to avert the dangers of full-blown battle between the armies for a duel between two individuals whom we know from their first introduction are antagonistic rivals ('*Oswald* the great, the greater *Gondibert*!' [I. 1. 27]). It is not that readers of poetry are incapable of imagining the scale, terror, activity, and thrill of battle that demands this approach, of course. Nor is it the case that poetry as an imaginative medium is incapable of adequately representing such action (one need only read Homer to discover the fallacy of this claim). Rather, by focusing on the individuals rather than the anonymous collective, Davenant provides *specific* examples that readers can lock onto and imitate, rather than a general and anonymous melange of action that we do not emotionally engage with. As Gladish notes in his commentary on the poem, Davenant 'depends on illustrative particulars in his characterizations rather than on generalizations' (p. 294). Thus, the Argument to Book

I, Canto 5 claims Gondibert's engagement with Oswald as 'The Batail in exact *though little* shape' (I. 5. Arg.; my emphasis).[40]

As *Gondibert* sets out to reproduce the qualities of drama it has also to acknowledge its limitations. Within the narrative, Davenant raises the fact that this metonymic or emblematic method of representation is at times unsatisfactory. Even the characters themselves have a problem with it: as the princes 'strait uncloath, and for such deeds prepare' (I. 3. 46), the leaders of the army break ranks and insist on fighting with their lords rather than standing idly by and merely *watching* the action unfold. For every one of Oswald's men who steps forward, one of Gondibert's does the same, in a kind of symmetrical dance. First Hubert, Oswald's brother, advances, crying 'I will not trust uncertain Destinie, | Which may obscurely kill me in a Crowd, | That here have pow'r in publick view to die' (I. 3. 47). Hubert's refusal to merely watch as his brother fights is immediately answered by Gondibert's man, Hurgonil, (I. 3. 49). Both retainers alight from their horses and meet on the field where Gondibert and Oswald are waiting to begin, squaring up to each other. Prompted by this assertion of honour and duty, the others quickly follow suit, until each is paired antagonistically with a rival from the other side. It is as though these spectators do not know the rules of watching plays: they risk breaking the necessary conditions of performance, in this case of chivalric honour and regal masculinity, by failing to properly observe it and instead taking to the 'stage' themselves. They neglect their responsibility as spectators to the duel, insisting that they wish to partake of the action. The army leaders 'esteem it an unpleasant shame | With idle Eies to look on busie hands' (I. 3. 51), and so beg their lords to be allowed to fight alongside them. Davenant here conjures up a powerful image of two opposing sides standing off against each other. As we learn in the following canto, 'These Four on equall ground those Four oppose' (I. 4. 11). It is certainly easy to see how this scene might be handled to dramatic effect in a theatre.

The tension is raised to breaking point as each pair adds to the chorus of dissent, until the threat of a full confrontation proves too much, and Oswald and Gondibert have to intervene:

> The Princes knew in this new kindled rage,
> Opinion might (which like unlucky winde

[40] This reluctance to present a full-scale battle may also derive from Davenant's theatrical imagination, as such large-scale actions were difficult to stage and therefore risked being accepted by spectators as credible. See Walker, *Site Unscene*, pp. 84–9. As we shall see, he would get around this issue in *The Siege of Rhodes* by presenting his battle scenes in perspective scenery.

> Sate right to make it spread) their Troops ingage;
> And therefore *Oswald* thus proclaim'd his minde.
>
> Seem we already dead, that to our words
> (As to the last requests of men dying make)
> Your love but Mourners short respect affords,
> And ere interr'd you our commands forsake?
>
> We chose you Judges of your needfull strife,
> Such whom the world (grown faithlesse) might esteem
> As weighty witnesses of parting life,
> But you are those we dying must condemn.
>
> Are we become such worthlesse sacrifice,
> As cannot to the *Lombards* Heav'n atone,
> Unlesse your added blood make up the price,
> As if you thought it worthier then our own? (I. 3. 62–5)

Oswald accuses the men of dishonouring him as their insistence on fighting implicitly suggest his and Gondibert's honour is a 'worthlesse sacrifice' on its own. Hubert and the others, however, insist that it is *because* they are related to him that they wish to share in this heroic action (I. 3. 69–71). Oswald reluctantly agrees to this on the grounds that his brothers share ('glory in') his blood (I. 3. 75),[41] but strictly prohibits from joining the fray those not directly related to him. He then 'calmly bid[s]' Gondibert to likewise 'provide | Such of his bloud, as with those chosen Three […] May in brave life or death fit Partners bee' (I. 3. 78). The Duke, however, has no brothers to call upon, but 'Three I see, to whom your stock may bow' (I. 3. 79): his friends and comrades-in-arms, Hugo, Arnold, and Hurgonill.

The conditions for the fight are, thus, satisfied, apart from one small delay. Tybalt also insists on fighting for Gondibert's cause because 'A Maid of thy high linage much I love' (I. 3. 83), and the Duke quickly solves this imbalance in the numbers by having Hugo and Tybald draw lots to see who will fight—Hugo wins. Now ready, the non-combating leaders are told to retreat to a good distance to finally watch the ensuing action. However,

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[41] In his gloss on this passage, Gladish draws yet another link between the heroic poem and drama by suggesting that these passages 'would seem to adumbrate the ranting scenes which became conventional in the Heroic Plays of the Restoration' (*Gondibert*, p. 296). Solyman, for example, similarly 'rants' in *2 The Siege of Rhodes*, when he tells us that he has artificially perpetuated the conflict with the Rhodians in order merely to satisfy his own army's lust for warfare and thus secure his own position as sovereign. See William Davenant, *2 The Siege of Rhodes*, in *The Siege of Rhodes: A Critical Edition*, ed. by Ann-Mari Hedbäck [Uppsala: Studia Anglistica Upsaliensia, 14, 1973], 2. 2. 53–64. Subsequent references to *2 The Siege of Rhodes* are to this edition and given in parentheses.

Davenant makes it clear that they are still not content with being cast in the role of passive spectators:

> When cruel *Borgio* does from *Tybalt* part,
> *Vasco* from *Goltho*, many a look they cast
> Backward in sullen message from the heart,
> And through their eies their threat'ning anger wast. (I. 3. 90)

In these opening cantos, Davenant light-heartedly plays with the expectations he himself works so hard to establish for the heroic genre in the *Preface*. The army leaders have been cast in the role of spectators as witnesses who will countenance Gondibert and Oswald's heroic actions, but they are 'griev'd' about this fate. They wish themselves to take on the mantle of heroic examples. Hubert speaks for all the men when he insists that he does not wish to die 'obscurely' as one of the crowd, but would rather be seen to fall in glory 'in publick view', inspired as he has been by Oswald and Gondibert's bravery. In other words, the leaders of the army want to become heroic examples for Davenant's readers. They do not want to remain passive receivers of that example themselves. Rather than watching their leaders, they intend to become images of praise themselves, 'Patterns' by which we as reader-spectators can learn to improve our morality and sense of honour.

By Book I, Canto 5, after the fight between the rival armies has taken place, the characters' resistance to being cast in the role of spectators has proved fruitful. They have been transformed, as if by magic, into the very images that Davenant always intended them to be. Along with 'mighty *Oswald*', we as readers can now study 'Fierce *Paradine*, and *Dargonet* the stout!' (I. 5. 76). These cantos concerning the duel actually enact before our eyes the very processes that Davenant's poem is supposed to catalyse for readers. The army leaders are encouraged to watch heroic actions in the form of Oswald and Gondibert's duel; this image then arouses their inner passions, and causes them to emulate the virtuous actions they see. They in turn become heroic images capable of stirring the passions of real-world readers of the poem. Hence Gondibert's insistence that they can now become actors for other audiences:

> Think now your valor enters the Stage,
> Think Fame th'Eternal *Chorus* to declare
> Your mighty mindes to each succeeding age,
> And that your Ladys the Spectators are. (I. 5. 19)

The men have become heroic through the process of spectating heroism. Now they must act as though their lovers were watching them. In this way, Davenant demonstrates to his readers precisely how his theory of poetry as 'collateral help' works in practice, and he explains how performance and spectatorship are crucial to the process. *Gondibert* only works because it is predicated on the principles of drama.

Davenant's heroic poem is not only concerned to demonstrate the processes by which it achieves its goals as moral literature, however. It also revels in images of the theatre for its own sake. Of all the scenes in *Gondibert*, it is the moment when Gondibert visits the three temples on Astragon's estate—The Temple of Prayer, The Temple of Penitence, and The Temple of Praise—that received the most admiration and comment from contemporaries and critics. Along with the battle in Book I, Canto 4, Hobbes expressly claims the description of the Temples as one of the 'Jewels' of the entire poem (*Answer*, p. 51). What is intriguing for our purposes here, is that of the three Temples visited by Gondibert, the third and most impressive, The Temple of Praise, looks suspiciously like a scenic theatre, like the one Davenant had planned to build back in 1639 and the ones popular with the exiled English courtiers in Paris. The Temple is described as follows:

> The Arched Front did on vaste Pillars fall;
> Where all harmonious Instruments they spie
> Drawn out in Bosse; which from the *Astrigall*
> To the flat *Frise*, in apt resemblance lie.
>
> Toss'd *Cymbals* (which the sullen Jewes admir'd)
> Were figur'd here, with all of ancient choice
> That joy did ere invent, or breath inspir'd,
> Or flying Fingers touch'd into a voice.
>
> In Statue o're the Gate, God's Fav'rite-King
> (The Author of Celestiall praise) did stand;
> His Quire (that did his sonnets set and Sing)
> In *Niches* rang'd, attended either Hand.
>
> From these, old *Greeks* sweet Musick did improve;
> The Solemn *Dorian* did in Temples charm,
> The softer *Lydian* sooth'd to Bridal Love
> And warlick *Phrygian* did to Batail warm! (II. 6. 46–9)

The arched front brings to mind the proscenium arch of the Caroline court stages that Davenant would later transfer to the public stage for the first time in *The Siege of Rhodes*. Not only that, but the Temple of Praise is a place of theatrical, or rather musical, performance. Sonnets are sung here in the tradition of Davidic psalm-singing. Music of various kinds is used to suit particular circumstances, whether the celebration of a wedding or a war.

It is here, in this temple-theatre, that Davenant reveals one of his most important images:

> The great Creation by bold Pencils drawn;
> Where a feign'd Curtain does our Eies forbid,
> Till the Sun's Parent, Light, first seems to dawn
> From quiet *Chaos*, which that Curtain hid. (II. 6. 53)

Like a scenic display behind a proscenium arch the painting of the Creation is revealed. The curtain lifts and, with the aid of appropriate lighting, reveals the seas and land, the woods and animals, as well as 'an universal Herd', who 'First gazing on each other in the shade | Then play, whilst yet their Tyrant is unmade' (II. 6. 60).

The description of the Creation of the world, 'exquisitely wrought' in pencil, again explains how Davenant's theory of the passions was to work, based on Quintilian's rhetoric and, especially his idea of *ekphrasis*. While *ekphrasis* now tends to be discussed in the restricted sense of a literary description of a work of pictorial art, it was originally understood as a method of any description, whether in words, actions, or visuals, that might provoke emotion in an audience. *Ekphrasis* in this wider sense is characterised by *enargeia* or 'vividness'. These two things together form, in Ruth Webb's summation, 'a conception of language as a quasi-physical force which penetrates into the mind of the listener, stirring up the images that are stored there'.[42] And this is how Davenant envisages his theatre, and his poem to work. The picture of the Creation, which forms the visual backdrop to the temple-theatre, is more correctly understood as a piece of movable scenery than a painting (he expressly tells us that it comprises 'Motion, Nature's great Preservative' [II. 6. 55]). The scenery works on spectators precisely as Webb describes:

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[42] See Ruth Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. 128. I am grateful to Prof Ros King for discussing these ideas, and for providing me with an advanced copy of her own article, '"A Lean and Hungry Look": Sight, Ekphrasis, Irony in *Julius Caesar* and *Henry V*', *Shakespeare Survey*, 69 (2016), 1–25.

> By Pencills this was exquisitely wrought;
> *Rounded* in all the Curious would behold;
> Where life *Came out*, and *Met* the Painters thought;
> The *force* was *tender*, though the strokes were *bold*. (II. 6. 73)

The Temple of Praise, dressed as a theatre, presents us with images of the entire creation, and thus suggests that the theatre is a space in which all of human knowledge and nature, can be seen. These images move our passions with tender '*force*'. In the temple an image of the 'Lord of life' is raised, and as the 'holy Mourners' watch it, they too 'seem with him to rise' because 'So well the Painter drew their passions strife' that they felt they were following him 'with Bodys, as with Eyes' (II. 6. 74). This is 'Pencils Rhetorique' which persuades the mourners to praise, by making them feel they are experiencing the same emotions as that artificial image they contemplate. This is how drama, and by extension, *Gondibert* works.

My final example of the theatrical imagination that informs *Gondibert*'s narrative regards the main plot of Birtha and Gondibert. Perhaps a more appropriate moment to discuss from the poem is when Astragon discovers that Gondibert has sincerely fallen in love with his daughter instead of the Princess Rhodalind, as he is supposed to do. In an episode that resembles if not actively derives from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Astragon, the 'fam'd Philosopher of Nature's' (I. 6. 66), wants to discover Gondibert's true feelings and intentions for his daughter, but sets about to make it happen of the Duke's own accord, rather than forcing him outright. That is, he wants to induce a response *passively*. He does this, we notice, by scrutinizing Gondibert intently as they walk in the garden with Birtha, looking for external signs of his inner feelings:

> Then on the Duke, he casts a short survey;
> Whose Veines, his Temples, with deep purple grace;
> Then Love's dispaire gives them a pale allay;
> And shifts the whole complexion of his Face. (II. 7. 72)

As Astragon watches the two lovers together he notices the physical manifestations of their mutual passions:

> Nature's wise Spy does onward with them walk;
> And finds, each in the midst of thinking starts;
> Breath'd short, and swiftly in disorder'd talk,
> To cool, beneath Love's Torrid Zone, their hearts. (II. 7. 73)

They cannot concentrate or catch their breath; they are gabbling. These are the outward signs that signify their inner emotions, their passionate love for one another. Their physiognomy betrays them, but for the good. The rest of the plot centres on the love triangle and Gondibert's moral dilemma in following his head or his heart. Conflict is created when King Aribert invites Gondibert to marry Rhodalind and become heir to the throne. Seemingly having no choice, Gondibert vows fealty to Birtha:

> My Vowes, which want the Temples seal, will binde
> (Though private kept) surer then publick Laws;
> For Laws but force the Body, but my Minde
> Your Vertue Councels, whilst your beauty draws. (III. 2. 47)

The entire poem spins on this moment, as it sets up the test between Gondibert's honour and his love. Will Gondibert remain loyal and therefore honourable? The romance narrative remains unfinished, denying closure while providing the potential for both options—rightful love or wrongful betrayal—to continue in play in the imaginations of readers.

Gondibert is all about public performances and interpersonal—social and political—relations. When Rhodalind meets Gartha at court, the latter is part of a scheme to get rid of Gondibert as heir to the throne. Gartha hates Rhodalind and Gondibert, blaming them both for her brother Oswald's death, though she never lets on because her plans demand she keep her cool. Along with Hermegild and Hugo, Gartha intends to destroy Gondibert's, and by extension Rhodalind's, reputation by turning his friends against him: in a subplot taken from *Much Ado About Nothing*, they convince Hurgonil, Gondibert's lieutenant, of his betrothed's infidelity, thus causing wider ructions within his faction at Court.[43] Having locked horns with Gartha before, the princess is fully prepared this time round to encounter 'feign'd Faces, and pretended hearts' (III. 1. 8); she grew up with courtly intrigue and politic behaviour, after all. But Gartha gives no hint of any chagrin. Instead, she 'had learn'd […] to hide | A rising Heart, behind a falling look' too well, and Rhodalind sees nothing in her comportment or her gaze that raises her suspicions. '[M]ask'd with meekness', she gains the confidence and the love of the princess (III. 1. 9–12), presumably to take advantage of this friendship in her

[43] While scholars have long been concerned with and interested in Davenant's engagement with Shakespeare in the Restoration adaptations, only one study has attempted to discuss Shakespeare's influence on Davenant's original plays, and is highly schematic and superficial, searching for parallels between characters and linguistic resemblances; see John David Ellis Williams, 'Sir William Davenant's Relation to Shakespeare: With an Analysis of the Chief Characters of Davenant's Plays' (published doctoral thesis, Kaiser-Wilhelm-Universität, Strasburg, 1905).

treacherous plot, though this was never written. What we do get from the extant text, however, is a sense that characters are sizing each other up and using every tool at their disposal to work out what others are thinking and feeling, and anticipating how they are going to act and react. Like so many dramatic texts of the period, Davenant's poem is interested in how characters interact with one another, with how they manage to negotiate and surmount the often-difficult social situations in which they find themselves, or conversely, with how they conspicuously fail to do so. Put simply, *Gondibert*'s overriding concern lies in how characters read (or misread) each other's internal states through external cues. As Katherine Eisaman Maus states in her study of inwardness in the theatre: 'inwardness as it becomes a concern in the theatre is always perforce *inwardness displayed*: an inwardness, in other words, that has already ceased to exist.'[44] In this way, we are prompted to read the narrative descriptions of the characters in *Gondibert* in the same way that we would read an actor's physical and vocal performance onstage.[45] One of the purposes of this text is to verse politicians and courtiers in the many ways that people can deceive and manipulate. Denied the opportunity by the Commonwealth to write for the theatres, Davenant uses his poem to undertake the same educational role.

In her analysis of the poem, Lois Potter draws on an image that curiously recurs three times, that of 'Tullia's urn'. Legend has it that this urn contained the body of a woman, Tullia herself, and a burning lamp, and that on its opening the body would disintegrate and the lamplight be extinguished (p. 301). Book III, Canto 7 of *Gondibert*, which was itself not included in the original editions of the poem but was only printed later, in 1685, is the most intriguing use of the urn image:

> Unlucky Fire, which tho from Heaven deriv'd,
> Is brought too late like Cordials to the Dead,
> When all are of their Sovereign sence depriv'd,
> And Honour which my rage should warm is fled.
>
> Dead to Heroick Song this Isle appears,
> The ancient Musick of Victorious Verse:
> They tast no more, than he his Dirges hears,
> Whose useless Mourners sing about his Herse.

[44] Katherine Eisaman Maus, *Inwardness and Theatre in the English Renaissance* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 32; my italics. On the outward presentation of internal states in the late seventeenth-century theatre, see Cynthia Lowenthal, *Performing Identities on the Restoration Stage* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2003).

[45] See Roach, *The Player's Passion*, pp. 23–57.

> Yet shall this Sacred Lamp in Prison burn,
> And through the darksome Ages hence invade
> The wondering World, like that in *Tullia*'s Urn,
> Which tho by time conceal'd, was not decayed. (III. 7. 1–3)

Potter suggests that the urn serves as a metaphor for Davenant's (royalist) work more generally. Imprisoned in Cowes Castle awaiting trial for his life, Davenant 'saw the act of writing heroic verse […] as an act of defiance' against the Parliamentarian regime that represented the coming of 'a new dark ages'.[46] The pun on 'Sovereign sence', for Potter, demonstrates his belief that '"heroic" values, inseparable from the king, have died with him', and that Davenant 'envisages his work surviving only in the peculiar sense that Tullia's body did: in total darkness and confinement, to be recovered in more enlightened times.'[47] All royalists can hope to do now is retreat to the private, internal world of the imagination, and wait for better times to come.[48] This chapter perforce reads this moment differently. Tullia's urn does not represent a concealed royalist culture, but instead promotes and champions a new poetics altogether. Like the urn, *Gondibert* becomes a receptacle in which is placed, as it were, the entire English dramatic tradition, to both preserve and protect it until such a time that it can be revealed again in open daylight. With the ban on theatres still in force, drama's position in the emerging culture remained uncertain. And yet, *Gondibert* is not just a reactive royalist measure. It is innovatory, experimental and transformative. As Norbrook, Nevitt and Allsopp have all suggested, the poem attempts to work on behalf of the Commonwealth. Davenant uses the *Preface* and poem to show that he has something to offer those now in charge. He can teach them how to generate and manipulate the passions of the people for their own ideological ends.

This chapter has argued that far from being a peculiar interruption to Davenant's dramatic writing, composed as a pastime while he was in prison, *Gondibert* is central to understanding his ideas about theatre, performance, and its social and political purpose. Davenant's literary imagination is entirely and unapologetically theatrical. He laced the poem with the grammars and representational strategies of drama. *Gondibert* is conceived as a play, albeit one told 'narratively and not in Dialogue', and it stages dramatic moments within its

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[46] Potter, *Secret Rites*, p. 99.
[47] Potter, *Secret Rites*, pp. 100, 99.
[48] On the poetry of retirement, see Thomas N. Corns, *Uncloistered Virtue: English Political Literature 1640–1660* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); Loxley, *Royalism and Poetry*, 192–241.

narrative. Characters' inner emotions and psychologies are detected only through external signifiers, much in the way that passions were understood to be conveyed by actors onstage. The poem thus primes us to think through the terms and conventions of a lost medium: mimetic drama. *Gondibert* represents a sincere attempt to reinvent drama because the political and material circumstances in the aftermath of the regicide meant he had no access to the theatre at the time of its composition in 1650. That Davenant never completed the project has more to do with his personal circumstances than with a lack of belief in its aesthetic quality. As he notes in the postscript to Book III, Canto 6: 'I shall ask leave to desist, when I am interrupted by so great an experiment as Dying' (p. 250). By the time he was in a position to continue it, Davenant's fortunes changed once again, this time for the better, and he was indeed permitted to present theatrical works to an audience; *Gondibert* was thus redundant as an exercise. That contemporaries such as Dryden and Hobbes recognised *Gondibert*'s curious relationship to drama nevertheless demands that we account for its place in the context of Davenant's wider career as a theatre writer and practitioner.

Davenant's *Gondibert* is revolutionary in the sense of reinventing a dramatic form that did not require theatrical performance. It also inaugurated his ideas about what the purpose and function of the theatre was for a civilised society: it provides both moral examples for audiences, but also provides a forum for voicing multiple perspectives and reconciling them into one coherent work. This would prove crucial for moving forward positively across the turbulent period of the 1650s and 1660s, as one regime gave way to another and people's allegiances were severely tested. Perhaps the most striking testament to *Gondibert*'s theatrical qualities is this: in the eighteenth century, Gondibert's love of Birtha was considered so stage-worthy as to be adapted into a play outright, albeit one that, ironically enough, seems never to have been professionally performed.[49]

[49] William Thompson, *Gondibert and Birtha: A Tragedy* (Oxford, 1751). Hannah Cowley's *Albina, Countess Raimond: A Tragedy* (London, 1779) is also loosely based on Davenant's poem: here, Gondibert is secretly enamoured with the heroine, who is unenthusiastically betrothed to another. *Albina* was premiered at the Haymarket Theatre on 31 August 1779; see *The London Stage, Part 5: 1776–1800*, ed. by Charles Beecher Hogan (Carbondale, Ill: Southern Illinois University Press, 1968), p. 268.

2

‘Morall Schools and Heroic Representations’: Staging Reform, 1656–1658

In the previous chapter, I argued that Davenant wrote *Gondibert* as a demonstration of how poetic—i.e. literary—texts might be reconfigured to replicate the aesthetic processes and imaginative effects usually associated with mimetic drama in the new cultural landscape of the Commonwealth. Such an experiment was necessary, it was argued, because the Parliamentarian government that had come to power following the regicide continued to outlaw the theatre as a cultural institution: stages were dismantled, actors were fined and imprisoned, and many spectators too were threatened with punishment should they be found enjoying the delights and distractions of performance.[1] Drama though, with its ability to stage multiple perspectives, facilitate debate and discussion, and promote moral examples of behaviour, continued to be considered by many a useful and protean artform. As the Commonwealth gave way to the Protectorate in 1653, an opportunity to argue for the reintroduction of the theatre proper presented itself once again.

Predictably, given his tenacious and entrepreneurial spirit, Davenant was at the forefront of the campaign to re-establish the theatre once Cromwell had been installed as lord protector in December 1653. Having been acquitted for crimes against the state the previous year and finally released from the Tower on charges of debt in June 1654, by the middle of the decade Davenant was back in business as a playwright and theatre manager.[2] Using his privately rented residence, Rutland House in Aldersgate Street, as a makeshift venue, he produced two new works in the spring and summer of 1656, which, in the words of one

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[1] Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, pp. 3–58.

[2] The original spell in prison, which prompted the ‘Postscript’ to *Gondibert*, came to end at the instigation of some prominent figures in the Parliamentarian regime, who were evidently friends and sympathisers to the old poet laureate, including the Speaker of the House of Commons, William Lenthall, the Keeper of the Great Seal, Bulstrode Whitelocke, and Henry Marten; John Milton may also have had a hand in the scheme (Edmond, pp. 117–19). Davenant’s subsequent imprisonment for debt was overturned by the direct intervention of Cromwell himself, who passed the case over to the Council of State for examination (*CSPD, 1654*, p. 224). Edmond, p. 119, cites a letter included in the case file from Colonel Bingham, Governor of Guernsey, as evidence for the Council’s leniency: dated 1 February 1654, Bingham’s letter speaks of ‘the breach of conditions with Sir William Davenant. He has lately been made a prisoner for debt, whilst he remains a prisoner on bail to the Court of Articles, to return to the Tower when demanded; and thereby he cannot stir out of town to recover his debt […] I hope, in lieu of his two years imprisonment after exchange, the Court will allow him some further time to follow his occasions, as his sufferings, contrary to the articles of war, have been great.’

historian, would 'transform the cultural life of interregnum London'.[3] *The First Day's Entertainment at Rutland House* and *The Siege of Rhodes* were certainly revolutionary in the sense of bringing great changes to the theatre. Radically experimental, they inaugurated practices and conventions that would lay the foundations for English theatre for the next two hundred years. To avoid the anti-theatrical laws that were still in force during this period, Davenant employed instrumental and vocal music in new and complex ways, music not being subject to the same level of suspicion and censure as 'straight' drama.[4] The Rutland House entertainments thus become bound up with the complex and contested histories of other theatrical forms, such as the court masque and English opera, a point to which we will return. Moreover, *The Siege of Rhodes* successfully introduced to the public theatre many new theatrical elements that would have a profound effect on future styles and modes of performance, including the proscenium arch, moveable wing-and-shutter scenery, recitative singing, and—most radical of all, perhaps—female performers. Davenant's first works for the Protectorate stage were as experimental and boundary-pushing as *Gondibert* had been in the realm of poetry five years earlier.

Critics have tended to discuss Davenant's theatre enterprise during the Protectorate as the fulfilment of a longer-term ambition to introduce the scenic stage to the public theatre that can trace its origins back to 1639. This is unsurprising; in the 1650s he does indeed set out to establish a scenic theatre open to the public. In order to pursue this, Davenant published what amounted to a theatrical manifesto in 1653. *A Proposition for Advancement of Moralitie, By a New Way of Entertainment of the People*, printed anonymously in the autumn, built on the aesthetic theories first developed in the *Preface* to *Gondibert*, and aimed to show precisely how the theatre could be used as an aid to the government in its task of maintaining order and peace through 'instructive *Morality*'.[5] Arguing that through the use of 'severall ingenious *Mechanicks*, as *Motion* and *Transposition of Lights*'—i.e. moveable scenic and lighting

[3] Capp, *England's Culture Wars*, p. 199.
[4] On music in the Protectorate, see Percy A. Scholes, *The Puritans and Music in England and New England: A Contribution to the Cultural History of Two Nations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934); Patrick Little, 'Music at the Court of King Oliver', *The Court Historian*, 12 (2007), 173–91; Capp, pp. 178–9.
[5] [William Davenant], *A Proposition for Advancement of Moralitie, By a New Way of Entertainment of the People* (London, 165[3/]4), p. 9. Subsequent references are to this edition and given in parentheses in the text. For a discussion of Davenant's authorship and the intellectual and political contexts of the *Proposition*, see James R. Jacob and Timothy Raylor, 'Opera and Obedience: Thomas Hobbes and *A Proposition for Advancement of Moralitie* by Sir William Davenant', *The Seventeenth Century*, 6.2 (1991), 205–250. Jacob and Raylor also provide a transcription of the *Proposition* (pp. 242–8). They date the text to late November or early December 1653, immediately before the Barebones Parliament was dissolved and the establishment of the Protectorate.

effects—and 'without any scandalous disguising of men in womens habits', Davenant set out to prove that his new type of theatre could 'by degrees enamour them [his audiences] with consideration of the conveniences and protections of Government' (pp. 14–15). The emphasis on refraining from cross-dressing plays to the puritan antitheatrical gallery here.[6] In other words, the combination of visual display and moral tales could function as a 'collateral help' (p. 9) to the authorities, promoting their policies and endearing public opinion towards them.

Taking the *Proposition* for the last word on Davenant's ideas about the nature and function of drama, scholars typically proceed to examine how the works that come after it satisfy its criteria. Accounts of Davenant's Protectorate theatre become, then, overly determined, even teleological, as each work is seen as an incremental refinement on what has gone before, moving inexorably towards the perfected form of Restoration dramas yet unwritten.[7] This approach comes, in part, from a desire to 'sort out' and organize what is in fact a very confused and meandering history, not to mention a highly disparate range of genres, modes, and performance styles reflected in the individual works. In their respective studies, for example, both Susan Wiseman and Rachel Willie resist historical chronology in order to clear up the mess. Noting that *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru*, performed at the Cockpit theatre in 1658 'continues the work of *The First Day's Entertainment*', Wiseman proceeds to discuss its dramaturgical innovations in relation to the Rutland House show, but she conspicuously ignores the fact that *The Siege of Rhodes* comes before it.[8] Instead, *Rhodes* is treated in a separate, and self-contained section of her chapter on Davenant. Willie does the same in her book, arguing that the later Cockpit entertainments, *Peru* and *The History of Sir Francis Drake* (1659), are both in fact reinventions of the Caroline masque in Chapter 3, only to leave *Rhodes* unaccounted for until the discussion of post-1660 heroic drama in Chapter 4.[9] *Rhodes* does indeed have a complex print and performance history—it was adapted, amended, and extended multiple times between 1656 and 1663—so it is understandable that these commentators are keen to tidy up the mess in order to make their arguments

[6] For a discussion of cross-dressing, acting, and puritan antipathy in the Jacobean period, see Bernard Capp, 'Playgoers, Players and Cross-Dressing in Early Modern London: The Bridewell Evidence', *The Seventeenth Century*, 18.2 (2003), 159–171.

[7] For a discussion on this point, see Walkling, *Masque and Opera*, pp. 153–4.

[8] Wiseman, *Drama and Politics*, p. 145. In her study, Clare conflates the thematic and political interests of *The Siege of Rhodes* and the two Cockpit entertainments under the 'same celebration of "Englishness", and in particular the nation's military and naval power' (*Drama*, p. 32).

[9] Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, p. 19, 94–132.

manageable and explicable.[10] Wiseman and Willie are interested in exploring political and ideological questions in these texts, and so the relationships *between* them is less important than correctly historicising the works individually.

However, as Andrew Walkling has recently cautioned, we need to recognise that Davenant's work at Rutland House during 1656 is more contingent, provisional, and messy than we are frequently led to believe. Davenant's 'seemingly experimental and evolutionary process' gives rise, not to an uninterrupted process of dramatic development but rather to a 'perplexing jumble of styles' that throws up more interesting questions for us.[11] For Walkling, *The Siege of Rhodes*'s later incarnation as the first heroic play—attested to by writers like Dryden—obscures its more awkward position within the development of drama and *opera* in England *c.* 1656. Musicologists from Edward Dent onwards, Walkling argues, have consistently (and wrongly, in his view) seen *Rhodes* 'as the pivotal work in Davenant's Protectorate tetralogy, rather than as the anomaly it actually represents'.[12] My chapter builds on Walkling's observations, and argues that any sense of consistency found in Davenant's early Protectorate theatre is the result of hindsight and retrospective reading, not of his own thinking and practice. Davenant was much more reactive, experimental, and unsure in his ideas than past accounts have suggested, and we need to chart this uncertainty if we are to fully appreciate his creative contribution to seventeenth-century theatrical culture. What comes through is less a coherent and stable project of theatrical reformation, and more of a reactionary, *ad hoc* process of experimentation. Davenant's mid-decade productions are a mixture of innovation, trial and error.

In what follows, I show that Davenant's project as articulated in the *Proposition* and supposedly carried out in *First Day's Entertainment* and *The Siege of Rhodes,* is in fact much less thought-through than it might at first appear. By situating the *Proposition* within a larger discourse of reform during this period, I will suggest that Davenant uses the text as a convenient and compelling way to convince the authorities that he is the right man to oversee the reintroduction of the theatre in London. What comes out of a reading of the *Proposition* is a confident and assured vision of a fully reformed theatre that could be 'sold' to the

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[10] See Ann-Mari Hedbäck, 'The Printing of *The Siege of Rhodes*', *Studia Neophilologica*, 45 (1973), 68–79; Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes*, ed. by Hedbäck, pp. xi–xxvii.

[11] Walkling, *Masque and Opera*, p. 153.

[12] Walkling, *Masque and Opera*, p. 153. Walkling also provides a good survey of the scholarship on English opera and Davenant's contested place within it (pp. 1–8). For a provocative attempt to revise the history of English opera, see James A. Winn, 'Heroic Song: A Proposal for a Revised History of English Theatre and Opera, 1656–1711', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 30.2 (Winter 1996/7), 113–137.

authorities. In the subsequent sections I turn to *The First Day's Entertainment* and *The Siege of Rhodes* respectively, and show how they each reveal a much more exploratory, rather than prescriptive, attitude to dramatic developments. The *Entertainment*—as its title suggests—was an occasional piece.[13] Rather than presenting audiences with a perfected, finalised vision (*à la* the *Proposition*), it in fact stages a debate about the nature and purpose of drama. Far from providing concrete morals it instead asks pertinent and searching questions about the future of the genre it professes to inaugurate. Finally, I turn to *The Siege of Rhodes*. Set during the Ottoman siege of the island (*c.* 1522), Davenant's opera strives to promote the virtuous and heroic actions of its characters in an effort to raise the moral sensibilities of its audiences. While the text itself certainly appears to conform to the established rules as laid out in 1653, a closer look at the play's production reveals that it is far from a stable text. Instead, Davenant can clearly be seen experimenting with it, and he shows himself to be less than happy with the results of its initial production.

Davenant did not stick to a grand plan to create a definitive form of Protectorate theatre, as the *Proposition* led the authorities to believe he would; in practice he was much more reactive and responsive to immediate circumstances and pressures than that. This is not to say that Davenant did not believe in the moral arguments he put forward—far from it—but rather that the drama we are left with is less consistent in its ideas than we have perhaps realised. What makes Davenant's Rutland House entertainments so interesting and exhilarating to study is that through a carefully contextualised reading we can see him grappling with ideas and plans that do not necessarily come off. They thus serve as a touchstone for how drama during the Protectorate developed in the face of unexpected change or circumstances, and are potentially eloquent about the many directions that were open to the playwright in a period where every aspect of civil life seemed to be undergoing change and reform.

'To Consist in the Improvement of Instructive *Morality*': Reforming Culture in the 1650s

Scholars of the mid-century theatre frequently subsume Davenant's works within a larger narrative of aesthetic and social reform. Ever since the establishment of the Commonwealth,

[13] Wiseman, *Drama and Politics*, p. 144; Clare, *Drama*, p. 30. See also Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, pp. 90–1.

politicians, churchmen, and those sympathetic to the puritan cause, set out to improve the manners of Englishmen and women, embarking on a series of reforms on virtually every aspect of national life, from religion, education and politics, to marriage, sex and the arts.[14] Ultimately, the aim was to 'reshape the mental landscape'[15] of the population so that where before people had fallen for the seductive idolatry of royalism, they now would be delivered to the righteous path of godliness (and republicanism). This godly reformation was supported, in part, by the intellectual revolution also taking place at the time. During the early 1650s, a flurry of 'proposals', similar to Davenant's, appeared in print by men of learning, each concerned with bringing moral, spiritual or civic issues to the attention of the authorities and offering advice on how best to improve them. For example, the prominent republican writer John Hall wrote *An Humble Motion to the Parliament of England concerning the Advancement of Learning and Reformation of the Universities* in 1649, arguing for curriculum reforms at both Oxford and Cambridge colleges.[16] Samuel Hartlib, the famous intellectual, meanwhile, shared correspondence with a wide network of philosophers, natural scientists and other experts on all manner of issues and ideas, from husbandry to language learning.[17] Other texts, motivated by different issues but employing the same discourses of advancement and improvement, followed.[18]

In order to be taken as a serious candidate for government preferment, Davenant too had to show the authorities that he was committed to godly reform in his chosen sphere of the

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[14] Capp, *England's Culture Wars*, pp. 59–83; Paul Slack, *From Reformation to Improvement: Public Welfare in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), pp. 77–101; *The Invention of Improvement: Information and Material Progress in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 91–128.

[15] Capp, *England's Culture Wars*, p. 13.

[16] John Hall, *An Humble Motion to the Parliament of England concerning the Advancement of Learning and Reformation of the Universities* (London, 1649). See also William Petty, *The Advice of W. P. to Mr Samuel Hartlib for the Advancement of Some Particular Parts of Learning* (London, 1648); Jo[hn] Webster, *Academiarum Examen, or the Examination of Academies. Wherein is discussed and examined the Matter, Method and Customes of Academick and Scholastick Learning, and the insufficiency thereof discovered and laid open; As also some Expedients proposed for the Reforming of Schools, and the perfecting of all kind of Science. Offered to the judgements of all those that love the proficiencie of Arts and Sciences, and the advancement of Learning* (London, 1653).

[17] Samuel Hartlib, *An Essay for Advancement of Husbandry-Learning: or Propositions for the Erecting Colledge of Husbandry* (London, 1651). See also, Charles Webster, ed., *Samuel Hartlib and the Advancement of Learning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970). See also the essays in Mark Greengrass, Michael Leslie, and Timothy Raylor, eds, *Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation: Studies in Intellectual Communication* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Jacob and Raylor, 'Opera and Obedience', pp. 215–27.

[18] See Charles Webster, *The Great Instauration: Science, Medicine and Reform, 1626–1660* (London: Duckworth, 1975).

theatre, and that he had enough expertise and experience to carry out the job effectively. 'It was not enough', writes Lois Potter, 'to show that the theatre might be a "safe", even a positive, social influence. It had to look recognizably new as well. Reforming and re-forming thus went together.'[19] The publication of the *Proposition for Advancement of Moralitie* was intended to prove to the incoming government that Davenant had enough of a grasp on his vision to ensure that the reformation of the theatre could be affected, and that it would work in support of the regime's wider aims and objectives regarding the reformation of manners.

The document purports to explain as rationally as possible how a reformed theatre would work in practice, how it might be used to manipulate the passions of audiences in order to improve their morality and endear them to the new regime. Davenant makes the case that as with most other public goods, it is the responsibility of the state to provide methods of improving and educating the population, and that the theatre is an appropriate tool to use in this task: 'As 'tis the principal Art of Military Chiefs to make their Armies civil, so is it of Statesmen to civilize the people, by which Governours procure much ease to themselves, and benefit to those that are govern'd', he writes (*Proposition*, p. 1). Subjects 'should receive good education from the State, as from vertuous Philosophers, who did anciently with excellent success correct the peoples manners, not by penal Statutes and Prisons, but by Morall Schooles and Heroick Representations at the publick charge' (*Proposition*, p. 2). Davenant's appeal to the ancient republics of Greece and Rome was part of a larger cultural trend of fashioning English republicanism on these classical models.[20] It is worth noting that Davenant's enterprises did not go unnoticed by Hartlib and his circle: a summary of the *Proposition*, in Davenant's own hand, is collected among the Hartlib papers.[21]

It is worth pausing at this point to note that Davenant's *Proposition*, while important, was not unique in its advocacy of the theatre as a moralising force in this period. It is part of a much longer tradition of defences for drama.[22] In 1647, for example, when the second round of anti-theatrical legislation was being put through Parliament, John Hall suggested that the theatre could be a useful tool in maintaining public order: 'it were a good way to mollfie peoples minds to suffer Play-houses againe,' he wrote, adding 'that it would be a

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[19] Potter, 'Plays and Playwrights', p. 294.

[20] Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, pp. 299–325.

[21] M. Greengrass, M., Leslie, and M. Hannon, eds, *The Hartlib Papers* (hereafter *HP*) (Sheffield: Humanities Research Institute Online Publications, University of Sheffield, 2013), 50H 53/4/1a–2b <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/hartlib> [accessed 27 July 2018].

[22] See, for example, Thomas Heywood, *An Apology for Actors* (London, 1612).

considerable addition to the education of the Gentry'.[23] In his journal *Observations, Historical, Political, and Philosophical upon Aristotles first Book of Political Government*, published in 1654, John Streater wrote that 'the wisest of princes and states have esteemed of plays and interludes to heighten the minds of people', influencing 'a spirit of heroicness',[24] while as far back as 1637–8, John Milton intimated that a reformed drama was not beyond use. '[A]lthough the corruptions in the theatre deservedly should be removed,' he wrote in his commonplace book, 'it is by no means necessary for that reason that all practice of the dramatic arts should be completely done away with'; 'what [is] more useful', he asked, 'for seeing at a single view the events and changes of human life?'[25] Three years later, in *Reason of Church-Government*, Milton again called on the magistrates to 'take into their care […] our publick sports, and festival pastimes' as well as the theatres themselves, recognising how dramatic images can prompt spectators to virtue: 'the procurement of wise and artfull recitations sweetened with eloquent and gracefull inticements to the love and practice of justice, temperance and fortitude, instructing and bettering the Nation at all opportunities, that the call of wisdom and vertu may be heard every where.'[26] This is intriguingly close to Davenant's own vision of what post-war theatre should be and do.[27]

There are in fact many different arguments being made in theatre's favour by these writers, rather than one coherent response. Firstly, theatre is understood to be a harmless distraction, nothing more than pleasant entertainment that 'mollifies' the people. Secondly, it can function as an educative medium, inculcating the gentry in civilised language, gestures, ideas, and so on. Thirdly, it can be used to promote the emulation of heroic ideals and values and therefore increase the morality of those who witness it. These arguments are all much older than those who articulate them here, but it is important to recognise that, while they are not unique, they are in fact different and not necessarily complementary. Can a play be both simply a distraction *and* educative? Is the theatre the pastime of the ordinary people or the preserve of the elite? These tensions and potential contradictions are left unresolved by the above writers. Davenant's *Proposition* likewise reflects this diversity of arguments for theatre, but it attempts nevertheless to account for each of them in turn, ultimately folding

[23] John Hall, *A True Account and Character of the Times* (London, 1647), p. 8.
[24] John Streater, *Observations, Historical, Political, and Philosophical upon Aristotles first Book of Political Government*, 4 (25 April–2 May 1654), p. 30.
[25] John Milton, *Commonplace Book*, in *CPW*, I, pp. 344–513 (pp. 490–91).
[26] John Milton, *The Reason of Church-Government*, in *CPW*, I, pp. 736–861 (p. 819).
[27] See Jacob and Raylor, 'Opera and Obedience', p. 208.

them in on each other. 'If the peoples senses were charm'd and entertain'd with things familiar to them,' he writes,

> they would easily follow the voices of their shepherds; especially if there were set up some Entertainment, where their Eyes might be subdu'd with *Heroicall Pictures* and change of *Scenes*, their Eares civilis'd with Musick and wholsome discourses, by some *Academie* where may be presented in a Theatre severall ingenious *Mechanicks*, as *Motion* and *Transposition of Lights*, to make a more naturall resemblance of the great and vertuous Actions of such as are eminent in Story; without any scandalous disguising of men in womens habits, as have bin us'd in Playes; the former would not onely divert the people from disorder, but by degrees enamour them with consideration of the conveniences and protections of Government. (*Proposition*, pp. 13–15)

The question of what is the primary purpose of this theatre is raised here. The people are supposed to be 'entertain'd', and through such entertainment they will become susceptible to the orders and opinions ('voices') of the authorities and thereby follow their leaders without resistance. But the idea that the theatre is educative also persists: the ears will be 'civilis'd' by the music, and the eyes 'subdu'd' by the visual splendour of the scenes. By exposing spectators to a range of powerful images, comprising scenery, music and text, their emotions (passions) would be stirred, and they would be prompted to appropriate heroic and moral actions.

Davenant argues that by presenting spectators with '*Heroicall Pictures*', he can compel them to submit to the ideological and political agendas of the 'shepherds', in this case the government authorities, who will sanction and determine the content of his works. Just as Davenant's *Preface* to *Gondibert* employs the language of the passions to describe the poem's effect on readers, so now in the *Proposition* he describes how his theatrical images will serve as 'collateral help' to the government, as 'the generality of mankind are solely instructed by their senses, and by immediate impressions of particular objects' (*Proposition*, pp. 9–10). Recalling Quintilian's discussion of *ekphrasis* and *enargeia* from the *Preface*, he notes 'that *Perswasion* must be joyn'd to *Force*' (*Proposition*, p. 11; my emphases); the '*Motion* and *Transposition of Lights*' which proved to be such a popular and transformative part of his new dramaturgy will achieve this end, he claims.[28]

[28] The phrase '*Motion* and *Transposition of Lights*' can be traced back to Inigo Jones and the Caroline masque tradition. In the Argument for *Tempe Restored*, Jones writes that his 'showes are nothing else but pictures with Light and Motion' ([Inigo Jones and Aurelian Townshend], *Tempe Restored: A Masque Presented by the Queen and Fourteen Ladies to the King's Majesty at Whitehall on Shrove-Tuesday, 1631* [London, 1631], sig. A3^{r}).

The two main arguments of theatre's function—to entertain and therefore distract, or to educate and instruct audiences—are brought together in the *Proposition* by the idea of the *Parable*. By bringing together poetic language and visual splendour in wholesome '*Discourses*', the new drama will serve its purpose, working these elements 'to the best advantage, and mak[ing] their touches strengths and heights, not only for delight but instruction' (p. 19). 'There can be no better way then by bringing all into the channel of *Morality*', Davenant insists (p. 19):

> this kinde of representation (consisting partly in the variety of objects by the change of *Scenes*, like Historicall Painting) is no other then that of *Parables*, unlesse this be made more lively then if it were deliver'd merely by discourse: and is no new; for by *Parables* in Morall Fictions the Prophets of old did often teach; and likewise by that way our Saviour hath oftenest taught; and *Morality* was not only the onely theame of the Prophets, but was also half that great precept in which our Saviour contracted his whole Doctrine; which was divide between our manners or behaviour towards one another (which is *Morality*) and our Piety towards God. (pp. 23–24)

Through the analogy with the parable, the *Proposition* argues that Davenant's scenic dramas will instruct audiences *through* entertaining 'Morall Fictions'. Distraction, pleasure and educational value are not mutually exclusive aims for drama but rather are mutually reinforcing. Davenant strains to make his case here, aligning his new entertainments with the moral tales told by the prophets—and by Christ himself. But this is a result of his desperate need to prove that the theatre can be a godly institution if entrusted to the right person.

The *Proposition*'s argument is not as fluent as critics have claimed, however. For instance, its title suggests that its intention is to offer a truly public theatre to all levels of society, but it is unclear precisely how this is to be administered: in the *precis* of the *Proposition* found in the Hartlib papers, Davenant asks that the authorities 'would please to allow them a Guard […] to preserve the Publick peace during the foresaid Morall Presentments'.[29] Davenant clearly anticipated public resistance to his venture, and there is a hint in the evidence about the two Rutland House productions, that his audiences were made up of society's elite rather than the lower orders.[30] In order to convince the government to support his project, Davenant had to make a number of arguments and make them in such a

[29] *HP*, 50H 53/4/1a–2b. See also, Jacob and Raylor, 'Opera and Obedience', p. 249.

[30] A government report covering the performance of *First Day's Entertainment* stated that entrance cost '5s a head', a large sum of money beyond the means of the majority of Londoners at this time. See TNA SP18/128/no. 108; cited in Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, p. 150.

way that they appeared inextricably linked. He anticipated the antagonistic responses he was likely to receive: 'Others may object, that recreations though never so innocent, are a losse of time to the people in giving them too great a diversion of pleasure' (p. 24), he writes. But Davenant was quick to alleviate these objections by again linking the idea of pleasure with obedience and instruction:

> To this I reply, that whosoever in Government endeavors to make the people serious and grave (which are attributes that may become the peoples Representatives, but not the people) doth practice a new way to enlarge the State, by making every Subject a States-man; and he that meanes to govern so sadly (as it were without any Musick in his Dominion) must lay but light burdens on his Subjects; or else he observes not the ordinary wisdome of those, who to their beasts that are much Laden whistle all day to encourage their travel. (pp. 24–26)

In the end, Davenant's clinching argument for the reintroduction of the theatre comes down to a need to provide both instruction and delight in order to keep the people subdued and subservient to their 'Representatives'. Thus, the authorities would do well to heed his plans and permit him to create such an entertaining institution as the theatre. Evidently, the authorities were convinced by Davenant's proposals, but as we shall see in the following section, the playwright was still not finished experimenting with theatrical forms or with theorising how drama might function in practice.

'Would you meet to be delighted with Scænes?': Playing at Rutland House

Three years after the appearance of the *Proposition*, in 1656, Davenant was finally able to make good on his promise of a reformed theatre that would act both as 'collateral help' to the government and as a moral instructor and entertainer of the people. He managed to secure the use of a property, Rutland House, for his initial enterprise. Rutland House was the sequestered former home of the Dowager Countess of Rutland, Cecily Manners (d. 1654), whom Davenant may have known personally before the war.[31] Private venues were often used for theatrical entertainments in this period, and the tentative nature of Davenant's

[31] Walkling notes that Davenant had written an elegy for Cecily's husband, Francis Manners, Earl of Rutland, which appeared in his collection of poetry *Madagascar; with Other Poems* in 1638 (*Masque and Opera*, p. 150 n. 18).

project meant that keeping it small-scale, at least initially, would protect him, both financially and legally.[32] In the spring, he produced *The First Day's Entertainment*, written with the express purpose of introducing the reformed theatre to a paying public. It was evidently hotly anticipated by some: a note in the Hartlib papers records how 'Sir John [*sic* for William] Davenant and Captain Cooke have obtained the Designe of Moral Representations and Captain Cooke is already preparing for it a great House. It is to bee acted always with an Italian Musick'.[33] On the opening night itself, a spy was tasked with reporting back to John Thurloe, Cromwell's spymaster, what occurred during the course of the evening.[34]

The *Entertainment* is less a drama and more of a debate *about* drama. It is divided into two parts. The first half consists of a disputation between Diogenes the Cynic and Aristophanes the Poet, '*who Declaim* Against, *and* For Publique Entertainment *by* Moral Representations' (sig. A5^{v}). The second part presents us with a Londoner and a Parisian both lauding the greatness of their respective cities, cultures and customs, while denigrating those of the other. (Davenant, who had lived in Paris like so many expatriates during the civil war years, and whose third wife was French, no doubt took great delight in writing these comic, tongue-in-cheek speeches.) Each speech is preceded by a consort of instrumental music, and it is clear from the texts that music is an integral part of the experience Davenant is selling to patrons. The *Entertainment* was more of a concert or 'lecture-recital' than a play proper.[35]

Rather than expressly dramatic, it in fact resembles the disputations and debates that were so popular during the 1650s.[36] Indeed, this style seems to have been envisioned by Davenant from the outset. Walkling suggests that the *Entertainment* appears 'initially to have been conceived as a sort of modular piece, into which debates on topics of perceived importance could be inserted as desired—thereby effectively creating a "Second Day's" and "Third Day's Entertainment," and so on.'[37] On 3 April 1656, just a few weeks before the

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[32] See James Wright, *Historia Histrionica* (London, 1699), sig. C^{r}: 'in *Oliver*'s time, they used to Act privately, three or four Miles, or more, out of Town, now here, now there, sometimes in Noblemens Houses, in particular *Holland-house* at *Kensington*, where the Nobility and Gentry who met (but in no great Numbers) used to make a Sum for them, each giving a broad Peice [*sic*], or the like.' In the note collected by Hartlib, Davenant asks that a 'Guard' be made available 'to preserve the publick Peace during the foresaid Morall Presentments', should they go ahead (*HP*, 53/4/1a).

[33] *HP*, 29/5/62A–B.

[34] TNA SP18/128/no. 108.

[35] Dent, *Foundations*, p. 54.

[36] On these disputations, see Capp, *England's Culture Wars*, pp. 112; see also Capp, 'The Religious Marketplace: Public Disputations in Civil War and Interregnum England', *English Historical Review*, 129.536 (2014), 47–78. Kroll also notes the *First Day's Entertainment*'s use of the *in utramque partem* device (*Restoration Drama*, p. 190).

[37] Walkling, *Masque and Opera*, p. 152.

Entertainment was performed, Davenant's friend, Abraham Cowley, wrote a letter asking an unnamed correspondent if they would be willing to 'take upon yow ye trouble of writing one Pro and Con upon what Theme yow please'.[38] He even mooted a few ideas of his own, such as the Spanish cruelty to the Amerindians (which Davenant would later address himself at the Cockpit theatre), or the advantages of the single life as opposed to the married life. It is possible that other such 'declamations' were published, although the evidence is sketchy.[39]

The *Entertainment* opens with 'a Flourish of Music' (sig. A3^{r}). A curtain is drawn back, and the Prologue enters. The first legal words spoken in London by an actor to a paying audience since the bans of 1642 and 1647 comically anticipate a hostile reception to the very activity the audience has presumably come to enjoy:

> Me-thinks, as if assur'd of some disgrace,
> I should step back, ere scarce I shew my face:[40]
> 'Tis not through terror, that I know not how
> To fashion my approaches, vail, and bow,
> But that displeasure in your looks I spy,
> Which seem to turn aside and stand awry.
> Ere yet we can offend, are we disgrace'd? [41]

The Prologue is nervous, concerned that he has somehow offended the audience before the performance has even begun. Their 'displeasure', however, comes from the cramped

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[38] Princeton University Library, Taylor MSS, RTC01, Box 5/29^{v}; dated 3 April 1656; see below (p. 86).

[39] Walkling cites the 'Satyricall declamations at the Opera' from William London's *Catalogue of New Books* (London, 1660) as a potentially 'lost' work, which he believes is the same as the 'Satyrical Declamations by Sir *William Davenant* Knight' advertised in *Mercurius Politicus*, 416 (13–20 May 1658), p. 538 (*Masque and Opera*, p. 152 n. 25). However, it is not possible to determine for certain whether these refer to new works or to *First Day's Entertainment* itself. William Howell's *An Institution of General History, From the Beginning of the World to the Monarchy of Constantine the Great* (London, 1661), also contains a list of 'Books printed for *Henry Herringman*', including the 'Satyrical Declamations at the entertainment at *Rutland* house, by Sr. *William Davenant*' (sig. Vvvv2^{v}). This title suggests that all these titles refer to the same work: the *First Day's Entertainment*, as we have it. The list in Howell also mentions all of Davenant's other extant 1650s works, '*Gondibert*, an Heroick Poem', 'The siege of *Rhodes*', 'The History of Sr. *Francis Drake*', and 'The cruelty of the *Spaniards* in *Peru* expressed by Instrumental and Vocal Musick, and by Art of perspective in Scenes, &c. all three written by Sir *William Davenant*' (sig. Vvvv2^{r}); as we can match one extant text to every title, we need not assume any texts are missing.

[40] Prologues often sported cloaks, as was the case in Davenant's own *Love and Honour* (London, 1649), where the Prologue wore a 'grave long old cloak' (sig. E3^{r}). See Tiffany Stern, '"A Small-Beer Health to his Second Day": Playwrights, Prologues, and First Performances in the Early Modern Theatre', *Studies in Philology*, 101.2 (Spring, 2004), 172–199 (pp. 180–184).

[41] William Davenant, *The First Days Entertainment at Rutland-House, By Declamations and Musick: After the Manner of the Ancients* (London, 1657 [actually published 1656]), sigs. A3^{r}–^{v}. Subsequent references are to this edition and given in parentheses. The Thompson copy, British Library E. 1648(2.), which is available via EEBO, gives a date of 22 November 1656.

conditions of the auditorium rather than any political or aesthetic opposition to the drama itself: '*are our Benches, not your looks misplac'd?*' (sig. A3^{v}), he asks. Rutland House is a makeshift theatre space, and the room used for the performance is far narrower than anyone would ideally like it to be. The roof is too low. Two sets of benches are set directly facing each other, in parallel with the stage area. This is not necessarily a problem, as the Prologue concedes, because spectators do not attend the theatre '*meerly to hear us*' but to be seen by others: '*I mean, Each would see all, and would of all be seen*' (sig. A4^{r}). But clearly Davenant felt it needed to be addressed directly in order to forestall complaints from the spectators themselves. The Prologue apologies for the narrowness of the room, but attempts to make this part of the experience of the evening: '*Think this your passage, and the narrow way | To our Elisian Field, the* Opera' (sig. A4^{r}).

After this brief introduction, the main debate begins between Diogenes and Aristophanes. They take turns to argue against and for the kinds of moral dramas that (paradoxically, in Diogenes' case) they themselves are currently in. It effectively put the *Proposition* onstage in the mouths of the characters. Diogenes and Aristophanes each '*appear sitting*' on a gilded rostrum, dressed in '*Habits agreeable to their Country and Professions*' (p. 2) and speak one after the other, separated by musical interludes which fit their characters: Diogenes's music is 'sullen' while that anticipating Aristophanes' speech is 'pleasant' (pp. 1, 21). It is clear which character we are meant to side with in the ensuing debate.

Diogenes, who is ostensibly against theatrics of any kind, despite being part of one, spends most of his speech warning audiences against those very innovations Davenant had advocated in the *Proposition*. He opens with the comic wish that his audience were either older or poorer than they are so that he 'might take less pains to make you wise' and they 'not being diverted by the gaudy emulations of your wealth […] might minde *Diogenes*' (p. 3). He points out that when people come together they 'are excellently inclin'd' to mischief, having 'not yet distinguished the modesty and wariness of solitude from the impudence and rashness of Assemblies' (pp. 4–5), thus playing on much anti-theatrical rhetoric during the 1640s about theatres being places that breed sedition. The spectators who have met at the theatre are figured as 'Beasts of *Athens*' who are only 'made gentle, when bred single, and continue wilde whilst you are in Herds' (p. 5).[42] This gathering of people together, which makes up the 'Body-Politique', is synonymous with Hobbes's leviathan: 'all tending to commotion, change and dissolution'. Governments only stay in power, Diogenes tells us, 'When you [i.e. the

[42] Cf. Davenant, *Preface*, p. 40.

People] are alone'. 'Meet not at all', he warns, 'Man, when alone, is perhaps not wholly a Beast; but Man meeting Man till he grows to a Multitude, is certainly more then a Monster' (pp. 5–6). For the cynic, the leviathan is a cause of terror and disgust.

Obviously, the audience is meant to find Diogenes, the advocate for solitude, proposing such a way of life for them as humorous, if not ridiculous. Whereas Davenant, following Hobbes, tends to read the power of the assembled body-politic in a positive way, because it displaces tyranny and ultimately keeps us from civil war, Diogenes sees this in a negative light. As Aristophanes counters later when he takes up the rostrum: 'I come to accuse him [Diogenes] of the evils of Solitude' (p. 22). Hobbes's famous emblem is built up of many bodies, which together constitute the overall body of the 'sovereign'. Diogenes fails to understand that in order for chaos to be *avoided*, the multiplicity of voices must come together in the modern equivalent of the '*Agora*' (p. 5) and submit to the monarch, not keep away from it. Aristophanes explains that

> as sullen Diogenes is by Nature secretly urg'd to live alone, so those who are not misgovern'd by passion, have an instinct to communication, that by vertuous emulations each may endeavour to become the best example to the rest; for men meet not to see themselves, but to be seen by others, and probably he who doth expose himself to be a publique object, will strive to excel before he appears. (pp. 23–24)

Theatre is celebrated as a positive political tool simply by virtue of its bringing people together: it is an institution which assimilates individual selves into the polity, and encourages them to behave civilly because moving in harmony.

As we have seen, both the Greek philosopher and playwright sit on rostra in costume before the audience: they are literally set upon pedestals for the delight and edification of the spectators. Aristophanes even makes reference to Diogenes's 'Tub', suggesting that 'He would have you all hous'd like himself' (p. 25). The image of Diogenes, cut off from civilisation, was a common motif in early modern iconography; in the same year that Davenant's production was mounted at Rutland House, Thomas Stanley's *The History of Philosophy* was published, containing an entry on Diogenes complete with an image depicting him setting out for the wilderness alone, though some signs of social life are present in the background—soldiers talking to a hermit in a tub (Diogenes's future self) and a cityscape.[43] Aristophanes' point that citizens meet to 'become the best example to the rest' is

[43] Thomas Stanley, *The History of Philosophy. The Seventh Part, Containing the Cynick Philosophers* (London, 1656), sig. Bbbb3^{r}.

precisely enacted within the limited narrative of the *Entertainment* itself. Davenant, however, complicates his dramaturgical system by presenting spectators with images that are coded as negative but comic, such as Diogenes and, presumably for most members of the London audience, the Frenchman. Aristophanes ends his speech by drawing our attention to this very tendency, by subsuming Diogenes and, by association himself, into the representations he has been describing: 'I will conclude in excuse and defence of her [Poetry's] Enemy; who hath much reason to diswade you from Moral Representations, because he is himself the worst representation of Morality; and is justly afraid to be represented in the *Theatre*' (p. 40).

At this point Davenant uses the figure of Hercules as an example of moral virtue, only here Diogenes argues that poetry does not have the power or, in the language of the *Preface* and *Proposition*, the 'force' pro-theatricalists believe it wields: 'The Ghost of *Hercules* rais'd by a Poet, can no more make you laborious and patient, then a Rose or Lettice, rais'd in a Glass by a Chymist, can make you sweet, or serve you for a salade' (p. 12). Diogenes questions the transformative power of the '*Heroicall Picture*' while counterintuitively proving that it *does* work on spectators in the way Davenant describes in the *Proposition*. As a dramatic representation of himself as an unsociable, anti-aesthetic cynic, Diogenes teaches spectators not to behave as he does, but rather to take pleasure in his ludicrous obstinacy. Aristophanes on the other hand presents Davenant's own position in this discussion by asserting that 'Vertue in those Images of the *Heroes*, adorn'd with that Musick, and these Sceans, is to be enliven'd with Poetry' (p. 18). He goes on:

> Poetry is the subtle Engine by which the wonderful Body of the *opera* must move. I wish, *Athenians*! you were all Poets, for then, if you should meet, and with the pleasant vapours of *Lesbian* wine, fall into profound sleep, and concur in a long Dream, you would ere morning, enamel your Houses, tile them with Gold, and pave them with Aggots […] but [I] am confident a whole Ream of Odes and Epigrams will not be held, by any man here, a sufficient pawn for a *Drachma*. (pp. 18–19)

Diogenes moves on quickly from complaining about crowds in general, to the more pressing matter at hand: 'I intended not to declaim against Assemblies […] but against such as meet for Recreation' (p. 7). 'What need you publique Recreations?', he asks the spectators directly (p. 8).

He then turns to the subject of music and painted scenery in the theatres which, he says, are deceitful arts:

> Would you meet to enjoy the pleasure of Musick? 'tis a deceitful Art, whose operations lead to the evil of extreams, making the Melancholy to become mad, and the merry to grow fantastical. Our Cities ancient stamp, the *owl* (which bears no part in the merry Quires of the Woods) denotes the Wisdom, not the mirth of *Athens*. (pp. 14–15)

Curiously, the image of the owl of Athens (symbol of Minerva/Athena, goddess of wisdom) serves a symbolic function as it represents, for Diogenes at least, the city's wisdom rather than its festive mood caused by 'the merry Quires of the Woods'. No 'extasie of Musick' transporting us 'beyond the Regions of Reason' are to be found here (p. 16). Of the use of painted scenes to depict the play's settings, Diogenes asks

> Would you meet to be delighted with Scænes? which is, to be entertain'd with the deception of motion, and transposition of Lights; where, whilst you think you see a great Battel, you are sure to get nothing by the Victory […] you may finde it more profitable to retire to your Houses, and there study how to gain by deceiving others, then to meet in Theatres, where you must pay for suffering yourselves to be deceiv'd. (pp. 17–18)

Here he quotes directly from the *Proposition* (p. 14), highlighting that crucial aspect of the new drama, the 'motion, and transposition of Lights'. However, by turning the *Proposition*'s thesis on its head—that this scenic display will enable spectators to more easily accept the virtuous deeds being presented to them, because more naturally related—Diogenes offers an alternative way of 'reading' the scenography. For him, the perspective scenes only heighten the artificiality of the theatre, and therefore its capacity to mislead spectators into vice and trick them out of their hard-earned cash for the privilege. By acknowledging this possibility within the performance, Davenant heads off at the pass any accusation that this is indeed what happens when spectators are confronted with stage scenery. By putting this criticism into the mouth of the ridiculous Diogenes, he nullifies the effect of what from certain quarters of Protectorate society might in fact be a legitimate complaint. In order to dissent, detractors would have to willingly join the Diogenes side of the argument and become social outcasts like him, with the attendant risk of being judged culturally or intellectually wanting by their fellow spectators present at the performance.

Again, Aristophanes the Poet reinforces this reading by asking, 'Is [painted scenery] not the safest and shortest way to understanding, when you are brought to see vast Seas and Provinces, Fleets, Armies, and Forts, without the hazards of a Voyage, or pains of a long March?' (pp. 37–38). He argues that this visual *trompe l'oeil* is itself both pleasant and

instructive: ‘Nor is that deception where we are prepar’d and consent to be deceiv’d. Nor is there much loss in that deceit, where we gain some variety of experience by a short journey of the sight’ (p. 38). This is not quite a prototype of the Coleridgean ‘suspension of disbelief’ idea but rather a realisation that entering into the tacit contract that facilitates mimetic performance requires you to hazard being deceived. Doing so will ensure that you are never actually taken in by what you see—in truth you cannot be, the scenery is intentionally not sufficiently life-like (i.e. in motion)—but will allow you to imaginatively ‘mind-travel’ well enough in order to derive pleasure and experience from the dramatic conceit.[44] Through Aristophanes, Davenant suggests that using scenery heightens the sensual pleasure and the passions of the audience, but does not place an inordinate burden on their cognitive activities: ‘And are they not safer entertain’d with what they instantly admire, then with that which busies their judgement?’ (p. 28). We may want to question this supposition, as McInnis has done, but it certainly was a politically astute move to figure the spectators as passive watchers rather than intellectually engaged witnesses to the drama in what was still potentially a hostile environment (at least for some).[45] Through enacting on-stage the very dramaturgical aesthetic that Davenant is proposing to his Protectorate audience, he not only demonstrates how it will function in practice, thereby neutralising any possible challenge from detractors, he is also training spectators in precisely how to ‘read’ that dramaturgy in a way that elicits the responses he wants from them.

The evening was apparently a success. The government reporter writes that after the play was over there ‘were songs relating to the Victor (Protector)’, i.e. Cromwell and that it is to continue for another ten days.[46] Perhaps Davenant was overcautious (or enthusiastic), about advertising the entertainment, however, as only one hundred and fifty spectators attended the opening night, out of an anticipated four hundred. The five-shilling entrance fee may have proved too much for many members of the gentry, who were Davenant’s principal patrons. We do not know whether there were any further entertainments written and staged before *The Siege of Rhodes* in September, but we do know that in *First Day’s Entertainment* Davenant had succeeded in presenting to the public his newly reformed moral drama, and that the Protectorate authorities were content to allow him to continue.

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[44] David McInnis develops a more sophisticated argument about the relationship between scenery and theatrical imagination; see his *Mind-Travelling and Voyage Drama in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 147–63.

[45] McInnis, *Mind-Travelling*, p. 153.

[46] TNA SP18/128/no. 108.

'Virtue's Pattern': *The Siege of Rhodes* and Protectorate Opera

Through its confluence of scenic effects, music, and passionate characters, *The Siege of Rhodes* strives to generate '*Heroicall Pictures*' that could inspire audiences with their depiction of honour and virtue. In this way, it appears to deliver on the objectives of the *Proposition* and conform to the type of theatre adumbrated by Aristophanes in *First Day's Entertainment*. However, an analysis of the print and performance conditions of the show will demonstrate that, in the end, it is much less certain in its dramaturgy than it might appear, and consequently that this is a much more radical and experimental drama than anything the *Entertainment* anticipated.

Each of *Rhodes*'s five entries opens with the scenery being moved into place, 'prepared by instrumental music'; the main body of the action is then sung in recitative; subsequently, a Chorus made up of the principal singers both summarises the preceding narrative action and extracts a universally applicable moral precept from it. In the first entry, for instance, the printed text tells us that

> *The curtain being drawn up, a lightsome sky appeared, discovering a maritime coast full of craggy rocks and high cliffs, with several verdures naturally growing upon such situations; and, afar off, the true prospect of the city Rhodes, when it was in prosperous estate, which so much view of the gardens and hill about it as the narrowness of the room could allow the scene. In that part of the horizon, terminated by the sea, was represented the Turkish fleet making towards a promontory some few miles distant from the town.* (I. 1–8)

Along with Davenant's detailed descriptions of the scenes, the designs by his collaborator, John Webb (1611–1672), also survive, and we can see just how the visual elements of the drama would have worked pictorially by aligning these with the text.[47] Richard Southern has noted that Webb's designs 'did not introduce scenery as an illusionistic setting' but rather allowed Davenant to present information relating to location in a convenient shorthand, while his text could focus exclusively on the heroic plot.[48] We have seen how Davenant's theatre of the 1650s privileges '*Heroicall Pictures*' akin to the painted image, and the use of such

[47] These designs, held at Chatsworth House, Derbyshire, are reproduced in Clare, *Drama*, pp. 188–90.
[48] Southern, p. 114. For a brilliant 'performance-orientated' analysis of *The Siege of Rhodes*, which explores its use of moveable scenery and music, see Walkling, *Masque and Opera*, pp. 163–75. See also Lewcock, pp. 93–103.

scenery enables him to concentrate 'on moments of heroic crisis',[49] instead of setting up the play's action rhetorically. Though aesthetically rich and appealing to spectators in their own right—the perspective was an unmatched marvel in England at this time—the scenes serve a very practical function within the broader schema of the narrative Davenant is attempting to relate.

Once the scene is in place, the action of *The Siege of Rhodes* begins. The Rhodian admiral enters yelling (though, of course, he is singing):

> Arm, arm, Villerius, arm!
> Thou hast no leisure to grow old;
> Those now must feel thy courage warm,
> Who think thy blood is cold. (I. 10–14)

The admiral informs Villerius, the Grand Master of Rhodes, that a Turkish fleet is approaching the city, and that they must prepare to defend themselves. The sails of the ships, he says, are like 'shady wings to distant sight | Spread like the curtains of the night' (I. 20–21). Indeed, the spectators at Rutland House would be able to see the black sails of the armada in the shutter designs Webb had created for this scene; it remains visible throughout the entire entry. But whereas the admiral describes the motion of the ships with his language—'Each squadron thicker and still darker grows' (I. 23)—the actual painted shutters remain static throughout. Spectators do not experience the alignment of both sign systems in the way that the *Proposition* necessarily suggested they would (*Proposition*, pp. 19–20). Instead, the scenography presents us with crucial locational markers and with the immediate threat of the armada's arrival, but does not reveal the outcome of the situation as the scripted text does through the voices of the characters on stage. In this way, dramatic tension, and pleasure, is created through the promise by the spectacle of a revelation only later fulfilled by the poetic text.

Upon discovering that the city is in imminent danger, Villerius sends the admiral offstage to raise the alarm, only to be met by Alphonso, the entertainment's protagonist, who speaks directly to him:

> What various noises do mine ears invade
> And have a consort of confusion made?
> The shriller trumpet, and tempestuous drum,

[49] Clare, *Drama*, p. 191.

> The deafening clamour from the canon's womb,
> Which through the air like sudden thunder breaks,
> Seems calm to soldiers' shouts and women's shrieks.
> What danger, reverend Lord, does this portend? (I. 42–48)

Alphonso's description of the cacophony of sounds reflects the music being played as part of the recitative at this point. Frustratingly, the score for *The Siege of Rhodes* does not survive, but we know that the composers included established musicians Henry Lawes and Matthew Locke who wrote the vocal music (Locke even sang the admiral's part), while the instrumental pieces were written by Dr Charles Coleman, who also contributed music to *First Day's Entertainment*, and George Hudson.[50] Just as the scenery works in tandem with the text to create dramatic tension, so the 'shriller trumpet' together with the sound effects of thunder and cannon present audiences with a soundscape of multiple disjointed harmonies, ending in 'confusion'. All this serves as non-verbal exposition to the ensuing drama centred on the siege itself, but it also allows Davenant the opportunity to make links between the themes his heroic drama explores and the characters through which those ideas are presented.

Villerius responds to Alphonso's question, 'What danger, reverend Lord, does this portend?', with an aphorism reminiscent of *Gondibert*: 'Danger begins what must in honour end' (I. 49). Alphonso wants to join the fight on the side of the Rhodians but Villerius warns him to stay out of the conflict. Alphonso, we learn, is not in fact a native of Rhodes, but a visiting Sicilian duke who has recently married the beautiful and chaste Ianthe. The Rhodian refuses to accept Alphonso's aid, instead ordering him to return to his wife:

> Away, away, and hasten to thy bride!
> 'Tis scarce a month since thy nuptial rites
> Thou camest to honour here our Rhodian knights,
> To dignify our sacred annual feast:
> We love to lodge, not to entomb a guest. (I. 77–81)

Villerius cannot see Alphonso embroiled in the all-too-physical violence of an armed combat because he represents for the Rhodians the abstract concept of pure honour itself. 'Men lose their virtue's *pattern* losing thee' (I. 85; my emphasis), he tells the duke. Just before this, the characters have been identifying the approaching enemy by the 'Wise emblems' (I. 54), the Islamic crescents, which adorn their ships. Alphonso, for Villerius and Davenant's Rutland House spectators who take his lead, serves likewise as a signifier of abstracted dutiful,

[50] See Clare, *Drama*, p. 232.

masculine honour. Ianthe too 'doth yield her sex no less a light' (I. 86), which also serves to set in motion the second facet of the heroic genre—love. Love and honour are the driving forces, the primary passions, of the plot. Like *Gondibert*, part of the moral programme of *The Siege of Rhodes* entails portraying the antagonistic distinctions between public duty and private desire.[51] Alphonso's initial impulse is to look to secure greater public good, but this will be challenged later in the drama when he is driven to suspect that Ianthe has seduced her captor Solyman in order to secure her (and Rhodes's) release (III. 126–215). The duke's unfounded sexual jealousy is contrasted directly with the sultan's honourable conduct: 'He seemed in civil France' (III. 173), Ianthe says of Solyman. In the end, Solyman is revealed to be more Christian in charity than the Christians themselves.[52]

Each entry of *The Siege of Rhodes* is characterised by its own peculiar rhythmic modulation. We begin, in the first entry, with the fast-paced, quick-fire exchanges between the admiral and Villerius that form the alarum (the opening refrain 'Arm, arm' is repeated three times, twice by the admiral and once by Villerius, within the space of fifteen lines); this is then followed by the more sedate conversation in which Villerius identifies the enemy ships to Alphonso, at which point the audience can take a lengthy, detailed look at the spectacular scenography ('All these are yet but the forerunning van | Of the prodigious gross of Solyman' [I. 56–57]); only for the *tempo* to pick-up again as Villerius sends Alphonso back to Ianthe ('Away, away, and hasten to thy bride!'). We then reach the musical as well as the narrative climax of the entry; this is the moment that will become the '*Heroicall Picture*' Davenant has been moving towards. Alphonso gives us—he may even direct this squarely to the audience—his own definition of 'honour':

> Honour is colder virtue set on fire;
> My honour lost, her love would soon decay,
> Here for my tomb or triumph I will stay.
> My sword against proud Solyman I draw,
> His cursèd prophet and his sensual law. (I. 89–93)

As he draws his sword at line 92, he stands in front of the relief scene of the armada facing the ships (presumably he is stage-left as the ships are stage-right in Webb's designs). Immediately, Villerius joins him in what the text describes as a 'Chorus' and they repeat the

[51] Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, p. 125. On *Gondibert*'s examination of 'public actions' and 'private motives', see Potter, *Secret Rites*, p. 97.
[52] Clare, *Drama*, p. 184.

gesture and a variation of the final couplet: 'Our swords against the proud Solyman we draw, | His cursèd prophet and his sensual law' (I. 94–95). There is no typographical evidence to suggest how long Alphonso and Villerius held their stances against the static backdrop, but it would seem dramatically appropriate to maintain the stage picture for at least a few seconds before both characters leave the stage. The musical accompaniment would ensure this was the case.

On the one hand, the action the spectators watch, in which Alphonso and Villerius draw their swords in preparation for combat, is happening *inside* the scene depicted on the shutters; presumably they are in one of the buildings represented. But on another level, the tableau presents spectators with an emblematic image that requires careful decoding: Alphonso and Villerius stand like gods over the image of Rhodes; they protect the city from the threat of Solyman's foreign fleet. Crucially, they are positioned *apart from* the city which is in their charge. These two ways of reading the moment—as paradoxically figuring the two men both inside as well as abstracted from Rhodes—play out simultaneously in the minds of the spectators. The scripted speech serves as an *inscriptio* to this choreographed image, reassuring us of the conceptual nature of the performed gesture, as well as its reality within the logic of the overall narrative. The result is that, as Villerius recognises in the entry itself, Alphonso is translated into an emblem of honour: he stands in front of Rhodes, sword raised seemingly ready to attack the *entire* Turkish armada. Honour may be 'virtue set on fire', but it is a virtue nonetheless and, Davenant suggests, spectators should take this patriotic, Christian example away with them when they leave the theatre. As critics have noted when analysing the political dimensions of the play, England and Europe's relationship with the Muslim world was fraught during this period, but Davenant is in fact using the historical event of the siege of Rhodes of 1522 by Solyman the Magnificent as a proxy for more recent conflicts closer to home.[53]

Immediately after Alphonso and Villerius's departure a Chorus '*By Soldiers of Several Nations*' takes position and sings about the 'termagant Turks' (I. 96) who will be easily subdued by the French, English and Spanish (i.e. Christo-European) armies:

> Let 'em land fine and free
> For my cap, though an old one,
> Such a turban shall be,

[53] See, for instance, Wiseman, *Drama and Politics*, pp. 152–60; Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, pp. 118–32; Kroll, *Restoration Drama*, pp. 191–95.

> Thou wilt think it a gold one.
>
> It is seven to one odds,
> They had safer sailed by us:
> Whilst our wine lasts in Rhodes
> They shall water at Chios. (I. 108–115)

The entry ends on a tense but triumphantly optimistic note. Alphonso *is* going to aid the Rhodians in their battle with the Turkish forces, and we are sure, partly because we know the historical outcome, that the Europeans will be successful in their endeavours against the Turks. But this ending only raises more questions about what is to come in the following entries. This initial exposition has so far described the 'honour' aspect of the genre very effectively, but what about the 'love' element? What is Ianthe's part in all this? As the scene transforms for a second time, Rhodes '*appears beleaguered at sea and land*' (I. 118SD); the main confrontations are about to take place and the spectators are being primed to feel the full dramatic effect of that violent clash.

I have dwelt at length on this opening entry of *The Siege of Rhodes* because it is vital to understand how the structure of the drama affects how the spectators read the scenery in relation to the action, and how the emblematic 'moment' that punctuates that action engages with the larger questions of the plot. The rest of the entertainment continues this methodology: dramaturgical form and conceptual content are collapsed into one and the same enterprise. In the second entry, the Rhodians appear overwhelmed by the Turkish forces, and Solyman commands his men to 'range all the camp for an assault! (II. 89). As he soliloquises about the vices of the Christians ('Their light in war does still increase, | Though oft misled by mists of wine' [II. 97–98]), a Turkish 'bassa', Mustapha, brings in Ianthe whose face is veiled. She has sought out Solyman with the intention of selling her jewels in exchange for Alphonso's freedom, just as Henrietta Maria had pawned her crown jewels to raise money for the royalist war effort in 1642.[54] The sultan demands to see her face, but Mustapha has sworn on 'our prophet's plight' (II. 161) to Ianthe that she shall remain covered. Solyman concedes. He recognises, instead, that Ianthe is a 'great *example* of a Christian wife' (II. 176; my italics) and—no doubt to the surprise of Davenant's audience, who if they knew the source material would have known Solyman to be a tyrant[55]—grants her and Alphonso safe passage back to Sicily.

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[54] Clare, *Drama*, p. 183.

[55] See Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain 1558–1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 50–63.

Alphonso questions the private motives of Solyman's decision, thinking that Ianthe has exchanged sexual favours for freedom. The rest of the entertainment examines the fall-out of this tension between public duty (Ianthe is seen by the Rhodians as their saviour, 'All we ourselves can do for Rhodes is less' [III. 85]) and private emotional turmoil:

> ALPHONSO He in two days your high esteem has won.
> What he would do I know; who knows what he has done?
> (*Aside*) Done? Wicked tongue, what hast thou said?
> What horrid falsehood from thee fled?
> O jealousy (if jealousy it be),
> Would I had here an asp instead of thee.
> (IV. 88–93)

In the final scene-change of the fifth entry, from the Castle of Mount Philermus to the 'town besieged', we see Ianthe lying on a chair (she has purportedly been wounded on her return voyage) with Alphonso by her side. After staying behind to continue fighting, he makes one last assault and too is injured. After the fighting has ended, and the Rhodians have successfully seen off the Turkish armada, the lovers are reconciled in a publicly performed but supposedly private moment: 'It is my Lord! Enough of strength I feel | To bear me to him, or but let me kneel' (V. 264–65). As she moves towards her husband, however, Alphonso '*starts back in amazement*' (V. 269SD). 'Keep back Ianthe', he tells her. He is too ashamed of his conduct to accept the reconciliation. Instead, the spectators are left with a final tableau of awkward embarrassment. Narrative and harmonic closure is denied (possibly with the knowledge that Davenant would provide a second part to *The Siege of Rhodes* in 1659). 'Draw all the curtains, and then lead her in', Alphonso says, 'Let me in darkness mourn away my sin' (V. 273–74). The emblem of true virtue and honour throughout the course of the action was tainted and brought into sin. Davenant's entertainment stages for the spectators' pleasure and edification the retribution such mistakes require. And they have to wait until 1659 to discover if Alphonso will triumph as an '*Heroicall Picture*' of pure virtue.

Clearly, *Rhodes* is a much more elaborate and ambitious project than either the *Proposition* or the *First Day's Entertainment* anticipated. Its heavy reliance on scenic effects and recitative pushed the resources Davenant had at hand to their extreme limits. Indeed, we can sense the strain in the production in Davenant's letter 'To the Reader', where he anticipates, in an attempt to mitigate, the disappointment of the audience in the creative elements of the show:

> It has been often wished that our scenes (we have obliged ourselves to the variety of five changes according to the ancient dramatic distinctions made for time) had not been confined to eleven foot in height, and about fifteen in depth, including the places of passage reserved for the music This narrow allowance for the fleet of Solyman the Magnificent, his army, the island of Rhodes and the varieties attending the siege of the city that I fear you will think we invite you to such a contracted trifle as that of the Caesars carved upon a nut. ('To the Reader', p. 194)

Rutland House is simply too small a venue for this kind of production: it is figuratively bursting at the seams, and needs to be relocated to a properly conditioned venue for its full effects to be appreciated. The show has merely been a test run, in miniature, he suggests. That Davenant went back to *The Siege of Rhodes* again and again, tinkering, adapting, and amending is testament to the experimental and provisional nature of his time at Rutland House. These shows are not, as the *Proposition* might have led the authorities to believe, fixed entities on the road to full-throated musical drama. They are instead highly volatile experiments—they do not always, as in the 1656 production of *Rhodes*—succeed. When Davenant returned to *Rhodes* again in 1659 and 1661, he removed the music, added a second part, complete with additional characters. He never quite gets it right, but continues searching and exploring possibilities. The indefiniteness of the nomenclature for these works too attests to their innovatory status: are they 'masques', operas, moral representations, or heroic plays? Davenant—and his contemporaries more generally—are not sure. The generic conventions they employ have not settled down sufficiently to taxonomise them.[56]

The Rutland House productions and the *Proposition* that argues for them are each complexly involved in Davenant's process of developing and experimenting with a new reformed theatre that could prove amenable to the Protectorate regime and satisfy his own creative ambitions. It is often difficult to track where they follow a prescribed logic or diverge from it. This chapter has attempted to examine each of the works written during the 1653–6 period on its own terms, showing how rather than merely conforming to precedent in predicable ways, they are in fact highly responsive to local pressures and exigencies, and that throughout each, Davenant questions what and how a reformed theatre might look and function. In the *First Day's Entertainment*, he attempts to explain to spectators how the scenic and musical technologies he now employs should be interpreted, while in *The Siege of Rhodes*, he pursues the idea of staging '*Heroicall Pictures*' that promote moral exempla for

[56] The slipperiness of these terms in the context of the 1650s has been recognized and discussed by, among others, Clare *Drama*, pp. 29–35 and Walkling, *Masque and Opera*, pp. 1–24.

audiences, but he also shows that the complexities of the dramatic form mean that this is harder to achieve than the *Proposition* may have suggested. We can see that Davenant worked hard to develop an entirely new form of dramatic work that could serve the changing times in which he was now working and living. In the remaining chapters of this thesis, I want to turn from questions of dramaturgy and theatrical aesthetics to ask how Davenant used this theatre to address the political challenges, debates, and concerns of the nation across the turbulent period of the Protectorate and Restoration.

3

‘Your glory, valiant English, must be known’: Heroic Politics at the Cockpit

This chapter moves us beyond the defence of the theatre as an end in and of itself, to focus instead on how Davenant puts his reformed dramaturgy to political use. Having sold the government a vision of the theatre as a ‘collateral help’ to their efforts to maintain authority, on the face of it Davenant purports to champion the Protectorate’s activities and policies through ‘*Heroicall Pictures* and change of *Scenes*’ (*Proposition*, p. 14). As we will see, in 1658–9, he managed to transfer his enterprise from the private space of Rutland House to a fully functioning public theatre: the Cockpit in Drury Lane. Such a move meant that his operas and entertainments could be seen by many more people, and that he could more fully exploit the scenic and musical technologies he had experimented with at Rutland House. Unconstrained by issues of space and expertise, as he had been, the new venue allowed him to pursue these theatrical activities to even greater effect. While the circumstances surrounding the move to the Cockpit remain obscure, it is likely that the government authorities were involved, at the very least turning a blind eye to his work: recent research by Christopher Matusiak suggests that the Cockpit had continued in operation during the early 1650s under the management of prominent royalists who frequently caused trouble for the Parliamentarians in and around Westminster.[1] It is possible that Davenant’s installation at the Cockpit in 1658 was intended to counteract an oppositional royalist culture growing up in and around the theatre’s environs during this period.

For the Cockpit, Davenant wrote and produced two related operas that engaged with an urgent and controversial government policy, Cromwell’s so-called ‘Western Design’. This plan involved attacking the Spanish West Indies and securing a colonial base in the Caribbean in order to take control of the trade routes through to the New World.[2] These operas, *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* (1658) and *The History of Sir Francis Drake*

[1] Christopher Matusiak, ‘Elizabeth Beeston, Sir Lewis Kirke, and the Cockpit’s Management during the English Civil Wars’, *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 27 (2014), 161–91.

[2] On Cromwell’s Western Design, see G. M. D. Howat, *Stuart and Cromwellian Foreign Policy* (London: St Martin’s Press, 1974), pp. 86–90; David Armitage, ‘The Cromwellian Protectorate and the Language of Empire’, *HJ*, 35 (1992), 531–55; Carla Gardina Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica: Oliver Cromwell’s Bid for Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017).

(1659),[3] are set in the New World in the sixteenth century, and they explore Spanish and English encounters with the native populations of South and Central America, celebrating English clemency and restraint over Spanish cruelty and greed. They were intended to win over audiences in favour of the Western Design project, by serving as '*Parables*' (*Proposition*, p. 23), teaching the English about their own glorious history of colonial discovery and about the dreadful actions of their Spanish enemies. Davenant had, of course, warned that this was the purpose of his reformed drama. In the *Proposition for Advancement of Moralitie*, he suggested that the best kinds of entertainment would be just such nationalist and colonial narratives as these:

> The chiefest objects represented, should be those famous Battles at Land and Sea by which this Nation is renown'd; presenting the Generals and other meritorious Leaders in their conduct, Dangers, Successes, and Triumphs; and the interlocution, between the changing of the *Scenes*, should be in praise of Valor, Vigilance, Military Painfulnesse, Temperance, and Obedience to Authority; which will not, like the softer arguments of Playes, make the people effeminate, but warme and incite them to Heroicall Attempts, when the State shall command them; and bring into derision the present Vices and Luxury. (pp. 21–2)

Both *Peru* and *Drake* boast leaders of men who display all these qualities and who, as we will see, fully encourage spectators to emulate their behaviours and who deride vices such as greed, laziness and pride.

However, on closer inspection we see that Davenant's theatre is more ambitious and interesting than this. Rather than simply playing to the Protectorate and spouting pro-Cromwellian propaganda, Davenant uses his theatre to complicate the debates around English colonial expansionism. As a consequence, *Peru* and *Drake*, although ultimately championing Cromwell's foreign policies and demonstrating that an English presence in the New World would be advantageous both for England and the native populations of Central and South America, they nonetheless prompt about rightful authority, of obedience and allegiance, and of good versus tyrannous governance, which had preoccupied the nation since at least the outbreak of civil war in 1642 if not before. Thus, Davenant's Protectorate operas reveal themselves to be as interested in domestic politics as they are in foreign affairs.

As the fate of the Protectorate became more uncertain in the final months of Cromwell's rule, and after the accession of his son, Richard, in September 1658, Davenant's

[3] References to *Peru* and *Drake* are to Clare, ed., *Drama*, pp. 241–61 and 262–94 respectively. Subsequent references are given in parenthesis in the text.

operas offered a way of thinking through important but often abstract debates and discourses through concrete examples. Davenant's strength as a dramatist and manager lies in his ability to react to complex and changing situations. His sensitivity to the needs and desires of those in power enables him to maintain a nuanced grasp of the issues he is exploring, while avoiding outright controversy. For Davenant, the theatre is a vehicle through which to garner public support and mitigate people's concerns by exploring questions and debating opinions and ideas. My overall aim in this chapter is to show that Davenant demonstrates a peculiar sensitivity to the shifting politics of his time, and that his works in the final years of the Protectorate reveal his unique ability to present nuanced assessments of the political moment and use the stage to support particular political positions. Like the characters they contain, these operas explore and map hostile terrain in an attempt to secure the status quo.

Before turning to *Peru* and *Drake,* themselves, it is necessary to examine further the context in which they were written and produced. First, I discuss Davenant's relationship with the government authorities during the mid-1650s, especially a letter he wrote to a prominent member of Cromwell's government in 1656, to demonstrate the lengths he went to get the support of the authorities to proceed with his enterprise. This letter adds to what we already know about Davenant's theatre from the *Preface* and *Proposal,* and offers an insight into how Davenant changed, altered, and fudged his proposals in order to accede to external pressures and desires. I then briefly chart his move from the semi-private venue of Rutland House to the Cockpit. As we will see, the significance of the move to the Cockpit has been severely underappreciated by critics and theatre historians, but it is highly suggestive about the confidence the Protectorate authorities placed in Davenant to produce works that would champion their policies; building on Matusiak's work, I argue that Davenant was permitted to use the venue and produce works there that were outwardly sympathetic to the Protectorate regime as part of a larger attempt to promote Cromwellian policy. Scholarship on the history of Westminster and its environs, including Drury Lane, has shown that the city was predominantly royalist, and that many of the landed gentry had their London residences there. J. F. Merritt, for example, provides evidence that, in the 1650s, luxury trades began to reassert themselves in the area, evidence that supports Davenant's assessment of the situation in his letter to Thurloe.[4] She is careful to note, however, that the desire for 'conspicuous display' was not only felt by royalists; Republican supporters too began 'to embrace the

[4] J. F. Merritt, *Westminster 1640-60: A Royal City in a Time of Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), pp. 201–3. See also Derek Hirst, 'Locating the 1650s in England's Seventeenth Century', *History*, 81.263 (1996), 359–83 (pp. 371–5).

lifestyle of the fashionable gentry and aristocracy for which the West End was famous.'[5] Davenant's theatre, then, was surely intended to satisfy the growing need on both sides of the political divide to demonstrate wealth, power, and status. While I would want to place Davenant's Cockpit entertainments within this context, I want to argue that Davenant demonstrates the paucity of Merritt's simplistic, binary model of a town divided down royalist/republican lines. His works at the theatre are much more complex and nuanced in their politics.

Finally, I show how *Peru* and *Drake* present audiences with pro-Cromwellian images of heroic English as opposed to cruel Spanish colonists in an effort to win over the hearts and minds of London audiences. However, we will discover that Davenant's works are far more questioning and ideologically adroit than this might suggest. Rather than providing neat and tidy positions in line with government policy, Davenant's entertainments in fact reveal a much more contingent reading of contemporary events. In *Peru*, for instance, Davenant stages a series of conflicts and invasions that support Thomas Hobbes's thinking about the nature of sovereignty. While the Incans lose to the Spanish, it is the English who prove able to secure the allegiance of the native population, and therefore succeed in their colonial enterprise. *Drake* likewise presents a series of '*Heroicall Pictures*' that show the English as innately heroic while their enemies are nothing more than tyrannous and spiteful. *Drake* was performed during the troubled Protectorate of Richard Cromwell, which makes its appeal to English superiority all the more urgent, as the country faced the threat, once again, of civil unrest and political crisis.

The Protectorate's Playwright? Moving towards a Legitimate Theatre

Davenant had established the parameters for his Protectorate theatre in the *Proposition* in 1653, although he continued to debate what the new reformed theatre might look like in *The First Day's Entertainment*. In that same year that the *Entertainment* was staged, 1656, and probably before opening at Rutland House, Davenant wrote a letter to John Thurloe, Cromwell's Secretary of State. This letter, headed 'Some Observations Concerning the People of this Nation', argues for the establishment of a state-sponsored, public theatre. The letter, however, differs in some particulars from the *Proposition*, and has a particular bearing

[5] Merritt, *Westminster 1640-60*, p. 202.

on our interpretation of the two operas under discussion here. Most obviously, the letter is the first suggestion that Davenant planned to intervene in the Protectorate's anti-Spanish foreign policies by writing a work on the theme of the Spanish conquest of South America.[6] In the final paragraph of his letter, Davenant writes to Thurloe that

> If morall representations may be allow'd (being without obscenenesse, profanenesse, and scandall) the first arguments may consist of the Spaniard's barbarous conquests in the West Indies and of their severall cruelties there exercis'd upon the subjects of this nation: of which some use may be made.[7]

The general point about 'morall representations' is comparable to that found in the *Proposition*, but the specific suggestion of taking the Spanish South American conquests as his theme *is* new, and takes on a peculiar force in 1656. Davenant proposes stage works that support Cromwell's controversial Western Design, in which the Protector resurrects an Elizabethan anti-Spanish rhetoric to justify English colonial expeditions in the West Indies during the early years of the Protectorate.[8]

Reading *Peru* and *Drake* in the context of Cromwell's colonial project is obviously important, and we will have recourse to engage with this context later. But focusing solely on how Davenant engages with Protectorate foreign policy draws our attention away from what I would suggest is the primary purpose of the letter to Thurloe: that is, not with identifying expedient narratives that will encourage patriotic responses as war with Spain looms ever closer, but with justifying the theatre as an economic and social good for the nation in general. Davenant uses the war with Spain as an example of what drama could do—i.e. persuade the public of the validity of controversial government policies through heroic stage images. By presenting spectators with patriotic displays of 'famous Battles at Land and Sea', for instance, his works could tap into a patriotism that would itself 'incite' the audience to carry out their own 'Heroicall Attempts, when the State shall command them; and bring into derision the present Vices and Luxury' (*Proposition*, pp. 21–2). Besides, as Janet Clare has

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[6] See Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, p. 155; Wiseman, *Drama and Politics*, p. 142; Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, p. 95.

[7] This letter is undated and bound with papers relating to *c*. January 1657, but it probably predates the Rutland House productions. For a transcription, see C. H. Firth in 'Sir William Davenant and the Revival of the Drama during the Protectorate', *EHR*, 18 (1903), 319–321. Subsequent references are to this transcription.

[8] See Potter, 'The Plays and Playwrights', p. 299; Susan J. Wiseman, '"History Digested": Opera and Colonialism in the 1650s', in *Literature and the Civil War*, ed. by Thomas Healey and Jonathan Sawday (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 189–204; Richard Frohock, 'Sir William Davenant's American Operas', *The Modern Language Review*, 96.2 (April, 2001), 323–333. See also Edmond, pp. 129–34.

recognised, the Western Design was a failure following the embarrassing loss of Hispaniola to the Spanish in 1657, and so Davenant had to put off producing *Peru* until the following year, by which time English fortunes in the ongoing war with Spain had improved.[9]

By far the greater part of Davenant's letter is concerned with convincing the Secretary of State that his theatre would not only serve the government's agenda, but would also have wider, social benefits for the local area around the Cockpit theatre. Davenant claims that such a venture would lure back to London the royalist gentry who, ever since the establishment of the Commonwealth, have been confined to their country estates, and that this in turn would stimulate the local economy. (He notes in passing that 'thirteene houses of the nobility are let or offer'd to hire' currently, including the one he himself will use as a performance space, Rutland House.) Encouraging the upper classes back to the capital will, Davenant insists, improve the entire economic system and this will have wider economic and social benefits: ensuring the financial solvency of those 'mechanicks' and 'retaylers' (cf. *First Day's Entertainment*, p. 9) of the city who are 'chiefly maintain'd by the superfluous expence of gentry', will in turn preclude them from seditious behaviour against the state caused by the inveterate 'melancholy' of their own poverty. Getting the nobles to want to come back to London, though, will prove a harder challenge. Davenant plays up their vanity, arguing that they require 'divertisements'—occasions to get together and show off their fancy clothes and other accoutrements to each other. For,

> The countrey doeth not provoke that expence which flowes from the gentry in cities; because those who are expencive in habits and ornaments, weare them to be seene by a numerous concourse of others not by a thinne society of themselves.
>
> But that concourse [of people] consists of pleasant assemblies, which are severall wayes occasion'd in all great cities, not only in times of peace, for transmitting the wealth of the gentry to retaylers and mechanicks, but allsoe in seasons of hazard, because States should never seeme dejected, nor the People be permitted to be sad.[10]

The gentry are presented as wanting to buy expensive things so that they can be seen wearing them; they also want to be delighted with pleasurable entertainments rather than reminded of the troubling realities of public life. They do not necessarily want to be lectured on someone

[9] Janet Clare, 'The Production and Reception of Davenant's *Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru*', *The Modern Language Review*, 89 (1994), 832–41 (p. 836). *Peru* was entered in the Stationers' Register on 30 November 1658—i.e. *after* Cromwell's death—but George Thomason's copy bears the date 25 July 1658, suggesting that the play was performed during the summer of that year (BL, shelf mark E.756.22).

[10] Firth, 'Sir William Davenant', p. 320.

else's foreign policy. Davenant's proposed theatre will give ample opportunity to satisfy both desires—the audiences and the government's—at once.

While Davenant stresses the economic validity of his proposed project, he is careful also to suggest that it will have social benefits too. He argues that the theatre will encourage a *rapprochement* between the godly party and the once-royalist, chiefly Anglican, nobles who should take up their part in civil society once again, but who have tended to avoid London in favour of their country seats since the establishment of the Commonwealth. As I argued in the Introduction, by the mid-1650s the Protectorate had begun a process of conciliation with the royalists in order to cultivate a landscape in which all could function for the benefit of the new state. John Thurloe was an important architect of this plan, so Davenant's appeal for his support is logical. With no prospect of a return to monarchy, it was deemed not only prudent but desirable to move ahead as positively as possible. Davenant seems to have felt that enough time had passed since the wars to begin to heal old wounds and start afresh. In his letter, he warns Thurloe that unless steps are taken to repair the social divisions that have characterised post-war English society up to this point, an entire generation 'uningag'd in the late differences' risks entering its political majority doomed to endlessly repeat old conflicts *ad infinitum*. To avoid this fate, the nation must come together and settle their differences, or at least find accommodations for them. Unless a concerted effort was directed towards this project, Davenant insisted, the young would simply fall into a life of 'licentiousnesse, gaming, and discontent', traits antithetical to the moral reformations underway.[11]

Reiterating the arguments put forward in the *Preface* to *Gondibert* and the *Proposition*, Davenant insists that the English people 'require continuall divertissements, being otherwise naturally inclin'd to that melancholy that breeds sedition', and insists that his theatrical entertainments, rather than encouraging political rebellion by bringing large groups of people together, will in fact distract them from political plotting. Davenant notes that 'our Ancestors' felt the need to 'entertaine them [the people] with publique Meetings for prizes in archery, horse-races, matches at foot-ball, wakes, may-poles and sports of Christmas, theatres and other publique spectacles'.[12] Why, he implies, should we not do the same?[13] Willie goes so far as to suggest that Davenant here echoes James I's advocacy for holiday pastimes in the *Book of Sports*, which was first published in 1618 and reprinted again in 1633. It is true that

[11] Firth, 'Sir William Davenant', p. 320. See Capp, *England's Culture Wars*, pp. 199–203.
[12] Firth, 'Sir William Davenant', p. 320. Cf. *Preface*, p. 38; *Proposition*, pp. 8–11.
[13] Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, p. 95. Certainly, some old traditions and ceremonies, particularly in the rural areas, survived (Hirst, p. 370).

the godly reformers in the 1650s had energetically sought to condemn the Book of Sports and the undertaking of secular pastimes on the Sabbath, and that this had garnered sometimes vehement resistance from less zealous citizens.[14] Davenant suggests that such pastimes are necessary for the health and contentment of England's citizens and argues that the morally reformed theatre is a perfect way to entertain them.

We can see from all this that Davenant's principal concern in 1656 was with getting a public theatre set up, rather than with staging the anti-Spanish dramas in particular. The theme is only proposed in the letter's final paragraph, and his language regarding their 'barbarous' activities abroad is tentative, even flippant: if Thurloe is happy to permit theatrical productions, the letter states, then this *may* be a useful subject with which to start but, in the end, the details are arbitrary. Indeed, a letter by Davenant's friend and fellow poet, Abraham Cowley, to an unknown correspondent suggests the arbitrariness of the possible themes that might be appropriate for this new theatrical enterprise. Asking his correspondent if they might consider 'tak[ing] upon yow ye trouble of writing one Pro and Con upon what Theme yow please', Cowley offers a couple of topics that might work, such as '[t]he praeminence of a single or a married life, under what persons yow shall Judge most proper', or the 'for and against the right of the Spaniards to the West Indies, in the person of a Spaniard and an Indian'.[15]

Davenant states clearly in his letter to Thurloe that 'the *first* arguments may consist of the Spaniard's barbarous conquests' (my emphasis), thus implying that other arguments may be put forward in the future, depending on what the government's particular interests or concerns are. Dramatic content is relegated to a mere vehicle through which larger political issues, yet to be defined, shall be safely staged before London's populace to the benefit of the government: 'offers of this kinde may evade that imputation of levity, since the People were this way guided to assist their owne interests by the Athenians and Romans', he writes. That Davenant was not wedded to the anti-Spanish argument but interested instead in building a theatre that could react flexibly and efficiently to any political or social pressure, is further suggested by his decision to lay *Peru* aside for two years, until July 1658. As Janet Clare has pointed out, in April and May 1656 Cromwell's Western Design encountered major problems

[14] Capp, *England's Culture Wars*, pp. 100–9; Christopher Durston, '"Preaching and Sitting Still on Sundays": The Lord's Day during the English Revolution', *Religion in Revolutionary England*, ed. by Christopher Durston and Judith Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), pp. 205–25.

[15] This letter survives in Princeton University Library, Taylor MSS, RTC01, Box 5/29^{v}; quoted in Eric Walter White, *The Rise of English Opera* (London: John Lehmann Ltd, 1951), p. 66.

following the humiliating loss of Hispaniola to the Spanish.[16] A play that championed English superiority over their enemy in such a climate could only appear 'impossibly ironic',[17] and risked seriously undermining the government's efforts. Instead, Davenant produced two works on very different topics (*First Day's Entertainment* and *1 The Siege of Rhodes*). He only picked up on his anti-Spanish theme when the situation had sufficiently improved from the English point of view.

Critics and theatre historians frequently concern themselves with uncovering the political and ideological messages encoded in Davenant's 1650s operas, but they have signally failed to appreciate the significance of the venue itself in the story of Davenant's legitimisation of the theatre in the late Protectorate period. The Cockpit in Drury Lane was a Jacobean-era indoor theatre that had enjoyed a vigorous and varied life before the outbreak of war in 1642.[18] During the Civil War and Commonwealth periods, it operated as a site for illicit performances, and we know that it was frequently raided, eventually dismantled by soldiers in 1649. However, activity there did not cease entirely. We have evidence that the Cockpit was 'refitted' in 1651,[19] and recent archival research by Christopher Matusiak suggests that its managers at this time, Elizabeth Kirke and her husband Lewis, were prominent royalists, so much so that they were under government surveillance. The Kirkes' very presence in Drury Lane during the early days of the Protectorate, Matusiak argues, 'infused the Cockpit with robust royalist feeling during the civil war era, and […] likely motivated the heightened resistance observed there by contemporaries.'[20]

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[16] Clare, 'Production and Reception', p. 384.

[17] Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, p. 96. See also Clare, *Drama*, pp. 236–7; Wiseman, *Drama and Politics*, p. 143.

[18] For the pre-war history of the Cockpit (also known as the Phoenix), see *JCS*, VI, pp. 47–77; Herbert Berry, 'The Phoenix', in *English Professional Theatre, 1530–1660*, ed. by Glynne Wickham, Herbert Berry, and William Ingram (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 623–37; Frances Teague, 'The Phoenix and the Cockpit-in-Court Playhouses', in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, ed. by Richard Dutton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 240–259; Eoin Price, 'The Cockpit or Phoenix Playhouse' (2014), in *Map of Early Modern London* <https://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/COCK5.htm> [accessed 27 July 2018].

[19] The Cockpit's interior was dismantled by soldiers in 1649, and in a Chancery Bill from 1672, William Beeston, son of the theatre's original owner and manager, Christopher, claimed that he had 'laid out near Two hundred pounds about the repairing & fitting' of the Cockpit theatre in 1650/1. See Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, pp. 95–6.

[20] Matusiak, 'The Cockpit's Management', p. 182. See also Matusiak, '"Where the Birds of Mars were Wont to Fight": The Cockpit at War,1642-1655', *Shakespeare Bulletin* (forthcoming). Elizabeth Kirke was the widow of Christopher Beeston, the original owner and manager of the Cockpit; she took over the running of the theatre on her husband's death, while his son from an earlier marriage, William, attempted to set up a company of players there before eventually moving to Salisbury Court. See Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, pp. 88–100.

The Kirke's patent on the theatre lapsed on 1 April 1656, and given that they had posed a problem for the authorities in Westminster, it seems likely that Davenant was permitted to move to the theatre in order to secure it for Parliamentarian ends. While Rutland House had served Davenant well as a venue for his initial theatre experiments in 1656, it was quickly apparent that the space was not entirely fit for purpose. The room in which his performances were given was too '*narrow*' (sig. A4^{r}), as the Prologue himself stated in *First Days' Entertainment*, while in a letter to his readers in *The Siege of Rhodes*, Davenant felt compelled to point out that the only way to improve the 'blemishes' of the production was 'by building us a larger room' (p. 194). He was looking for a new venue. After 1658 *Rhodes*, *Peru* and *Drake* were all produced at a *public* theatre, and Davenant makes much of the fact that they are open to anybody who can afford to pay the price of a ticket. At the end of the printed text of *Peru*, for example, he insists that '*Notwithstanding the great expense necessary to scenes and other ornaments in this entertainment, there is good provision made of places for a shilling*' (p. 261).[21] While this is still a substantial sum that would preclude the vast majority of the population from attending performances, it is nevertheless a reasonable price for the elite audiences Davenant wishes to draw in.[22] Back in 1656 at Rutland House, a seat would cost you five times as much.[23]

Foreign Affairs and Home Truths: Operatic Politics at the Cockpit

The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru performs many of the functions outlined in the 'Observations'. It provides spectators with delightful display while at the same time promoting positive images of the English in contrast to the Spanish enemy. Its six entries follow the same formal, stylized pattern: a perspective scene is revealed to music; then enters the Priest of the Sun, 'clothed in a garment of feathers' (I. 13) who recounts the 'history' of Spanish atrocities in the New World; he then 'waves his verge', an enchanted staff, and his

[21] Willie notes that court masques in the 1630s were nominally ticketed events, but the nature of the court's demography precluded the general public from attending (*Staging the Revolution*, p. 80–1)

[22] Establishing 'buying power' in the period is difficult, but see Robert D. Hume, 'The Economics of Culture in London, 1660–1740', *HLQ*, 69.4 (December, 2006), 487–533. Hume's quantitative analysis suggests that while only around two per cent of the population could actually afford to regularly attend the theatre in the post-1660 period, of those we 'are probably safe in assuming that a fair number of Londoners and visitors could pay a shilling to sit in the gallery of a theater' (p. 530).

[23] TNA SP18/128/no. 108. Walkling suggests that 'after moving to the Cockpit [… Davenant] strove for greater affordability', possibly to encourage greater attendance (*Masque and Opera*, pp. 150–1).

attendant performs an acrobatic routine for the audience's delight; a chorus of Incans sings a song which describes verbally the scenic view, and finally a dumb show recaps and develops the narrative. The work functions, not so much by engaging spectators in the dramatic action, but by presenting them with words and images—'*Heroicall Pictures*'—that will delight and entertain them as well as call forth horror at the atrocities the Spanish carry out on the native Incan population. It is much more in the 'declamatory' style of *First Day's Entertainment* than the dialogic form of *The Siege of Rhodes*. This 'eccentric structure', added to the fact that Davenant and Cowley had proposed an anti-Spanish work as early as 1656, leads Andrew Walkling to surmise that Davenant had indeed written *Peru* by 1656, 'while his "operatic" vision was still under development'.[24]

The focus on images rather than action is suggested in the printed text by the amount of detail given over to the scenic descriptions.[25] Davenant gives the audience plenty of time to view the painted scenes on display before the Priest enters and recites his narrative. The first entry opens thus:

> *The audience are entertained by instrumental music and a symphony (being a wild air suitable to the region); which having prepared the scene, a landscape of the West Indies is discerned; distinguished from other regions by the parched and bare tops of distant hills, by sands shining on the shore of rivers, and the natives, in feathered habits and bonnets carrying, in Indian baskets, ingots of gold and wedges of silver. Some of the natives being likewise discerned in their natural sports of hunting and fishing […] The symphony being ended, the chief priest of Peru enters with his attendant after him.* (I. 1–12)

The sheer abundance of visual detail on display in the scene—colourful images of Incans going about their daily 'sports' of fishing and hunting, or carrying endless supplies of gold and silver across the sands—reinforces the idea that the Incan world is full of Arcadian splendour, even down to the '*coco trees*', '*sugarcanes*' and '*parrots*' depicted in the scene (I. 9–11). It presents spectators with an idealised, prelapsarian society where the people live in amiable harmony with each other in nature.

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[24] Walkling, *Masque and Opera*, p. 154. See also, Clare, *Drama*, p. 235.

[25] Like Davenant's other Protectorate operas, *Peru* was likely pre-circulated and intended to be consulted during performance by the spectators. Thomason was clearly able to purchase a copy prior to performance (see fn. 9, above). Wiseman goes so far as to suggest that *Peru* 'makes a bid to foreclose on interpretation' by presenting the printed libretto as the '"definitive" interpretation of events onstage […] by fitting them into a narrative and ascribing meaning to that narrative' ('"History Digested"', p. 195). On the use of 'plots' in performance more broadly, see Stern, *Documents of Performance*, p. 66. McInnis discusses the opera's textual supports in relation to early modern sightseeing and travel guides (*Mind-Travelling*, pp. 153–4).

After the initial revelation of the scenery, the Priest encourages spectators to review it, this time guiding them to particular aspects of the painted display himself: 'Thus fresh did Nature in our world appear, | When first her *roses* did their leaves unfold' (1. 22–3; my italics), for instance. The Priest then begins to explain to the audience the history of the Incan people. He explains that during this period in history, sometime in the sixteenth century, the Incans lived in harmony and did not feel the need to fight amongst themselves or prove their strength by combat and competition. Rather, they lived 'temperately' and 'contented', the 'bolder Incans' acting as 'great examples, to be only praised' (I. 29–31) by younger members of their society. The natural state of the Incans is one of innocence not war, contrary to what Hobbes had insisted was true of mankind in *Leviathan*.[26] However, this all changes suddenly with the arrival of the Spanish—the '*bearded people*' (II. 13)—who move to enslave the native population in search for wealth and glory: 'beggared slaves we grew', laments the chorus, simply 'For having silver hills, and strands of gold' (1. 53–4). The Spanish, in contrast to the local Incans, are shown to be covetous 'idolaters of gold' (II. 23), greedily extracting the natural resources of the land—resources the Peruvians themselves only use for religious decoration—and shipping it back to Europe, a theme taken up more fully in *Drake*.

The first chorus describes the moment of Spanish discovery as a fatal blow to the Incan way of life, rather than as a triumph of Christian evangelism and colonialism, as the continental Europeans felt it to be. Now, the native population are forced to live in 'crafty cities' (I. 58) that keep them subdued; they must build fortresses to protect themselves against potential enemies (I. 68–71); they have to wear clothes, because they have been taught that nakedness breeds shame (I. 72–3); and they now experience poverty, which provokes 'scorn' among neighbours where before 'none could want, and all were innocent' (I. 75–6). The arrival of the Spanish has left the Peruvians discontented and disenfranchised. Peru becomes a raided Paradise; the opera presents the activities of the *conquistadors* as precipitating another 'fall'.[27] Where Peru had once been an Eden, now it resembles Hobbes's description of the state of nature, where men lack a sovereign who can protect their interests. No longer innocent, the Incans become melancholic, as the opera proceeds to its conclusion.

In the second entry, the text tells us that the Peruvians believed in an ancient prophecy that '*a bearded people* […] *should spring out of the sea and conquer them*' (II. 7–10). The scene depicts this moment of cultural encounter, with Spanish ships about to reach land and

[26] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, pp. 184–5.
[27] See Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, p. 99.

the Incans '*pointing with amazement to the fleet (as never having had the view of ships before), and in a mourning condition*' (II. 5–6). This primal scene between the native Peruvians and the Spanish is told by the Priest not in real or historical time, but as a prophecy—'now *I see* their doom' (II. 18; my italics). It is proleptic. He describes how the Spanish will arrive in 'floating castles' (II. 25) and will enslave the Incan people to satisfy their own avarice. A soloist sings 'Of joys we have lost', while 'Dark grows that light | Which cheered our sight' (II. 54–8). Once masters of the creatures they farm and hunt, the Peruvians will 'now such masters fear, | As will no season give us to be free' (II. 64–5). In the accompanying dumb-show, the Peruvians express to the spectators their '*admiration*', meaning 'wonder', at the ships while simultaneously showing their '*lamentation*' for their fellow people who are now 'in deep affliction' (II. 70–2), and who must leave their wives and children in order to fight against this foreign threat. The stark contrast between the Edenic innocence of the pre-conquest Incans and the barbarous actions of the (Catholic) Europeans is intended to raise the audience's sympathies for the natives as well as their disgust and anger towards their natural enemies, the Catholic Spanish.[28] Davenant does not accept that the events his opera represents are a foregone conclusion, however. He mixes and confuses temporalities in an attempt to undermine the history of Spanish conquest, and to offer a way out of it. The scenes depicted are a prophecy, at least from the Incan point of view, being foretold by the Priest of the Sun. While Davenant's opera is retelling a history that has already come to pass in the sixteenth century, he uses the example to hint that such a crisis still might be averted by some kind of intervention by the English. This is meant as a stirring story of hope, rather than a tragedy in which it is too late to intercede. Davenant's colonial operas insist that there is still time for the English to make good on their ambitions. What they must do to achieve their aims, is avoid employing the same methods as the Spanish.

It is in *Peru*'s third entry that the entertainment's potent politics are most strikingly revealed. Here, we learn that the Spanish arrival in Peru has coincided with an internal conflict between two of the Incan chiefs, both sons of the now dead emperor, who go to war with each other in a bid for power. The familiar conflict between love and duty, which came to epitomise the heroic genre, as we have already seen in *Gondibert* and *The Siege of Rhodes*, is iterated here in the scenic display as well as in the Priest of the Sun's song. The scene presented behind the Priest shows '*two Peruvian armies marching and ready to give battle,*

[28] Addressing Parliament on 17 September 1656, Cromwell insisted that 'truly, your great enemy is the Spaniard. He is. He is a natural enemy, he is naturally so […] an enmity is put into him by God'. See Abbot, ed., *Writings and Speeches*, IV, p. 261.

being led by the two royal brethren, sons of the last Inca' (III. 3–4).[29] The text then reveals the complex backstory that led to this civil conflict (something the speeches and songs performed then go on to assume the spectators are familiar with, rather than explicitly recapping themselves). This means that the performance itself does not have to spend time and precious scenic and musical resources setting this plot-line up, but instead can proceed efficiently with its main business. Readers are informed that the Incan emperor had, in fact, divided his kingdom between his two sons at the behest of his second wife, mother to the younger boy. Upon his father's death, this son then proceeded to raise arms against his older brother in order to secure his own power. It is at this point that Incan history and the Spanish plot merge in *Peru*, as we are told that this was the '*unfortunate time when the Spaniards, pursuing their second discovery of the Peruvian coast, landed and made a prodigious use of the division of the two brethren, by proving successful in giving their assistance to the* unjust *cause of the younger*' (III. 17–20; my emphasis).

Only after the spectators have read this does the Priest recount how the Incan emperor manages to compromise the political stability of his realm in unjust terms, all for the love of his younger son. He was, he says, '*prevailed on*' (III. 13) by his wife:

> How fatal did our Inca's passion prove,
> Whilst long made subject to a foreign love.
> Poor lovers, who from empire's arts are free,
> By nature may entirely guided be.
> They may retire to shady cottages,
> And study there only themselves to please:
> For few consider what they mean or do;
> But nations are concerned when monarchs woo.
> And though our Inca by no law was tied
> To love but one, yet could he not divide
> His public empire as his private bed;
> In thrones each is to whole dominion bred.
> He blindly prized his younger son's desert,
> Dividing empire as he did his heart. (III. 21–34)

While private persons are free to love where their hearts incline them, nobody being much interested in what transpires in 'shady cottages', those who govern have other responsibilities than merely indulging their personal desires. When kings act, they act on behalf of nations,

[29] This scenic display of the two armies is analogous to the presentation of Oswald and Gondibert's armies in Book I of *Gondibert*, discussed above (pp. 36–7).

for good or ill. The Incan emperor is prepared to sacrifice the future stability of his realm to satisfy the personal ambitions of his wife and son, usurping established procedures of governance. After the emperor's death, his endorsement is used by his son, Atahualpa, as justification for raising arms against his elder brother in a bid for power. (The parallels to *King Lear* are hard to miss, though Cordelia's motives for returning to her homeland with an army against her sisters are wholly different to Atahualpa's.)

Mixing domestic and national politics, *Peru* suggests, is never a good idea, though at the same time it acknowledges the difficulty in fully separating them out. As rulers are both figureheads and mortal men susceptible to the same foibles and vagaries of the passions as anyone else, so empires and hearts are inevitably lost and won together. Like Lear, the emperor may choose to go against tradition and, it is implied, the laws of nature in the name of love, but he too does so 'blindly', leaving his subjects open to violence and war, a situation that the Spanish are ready to exploit for their own nefarious ends.

In the convergence of these two stories—the Incan civil war and the Spanish conquest—Davenant deliberately collapses historical time in order to make a broader point about civil unrest and foreign intervention in domestic politics. The folly of the Incan emperor in trying to subvert the established order leads to the conquest of his people by a foreign power. Despite *Peru*'s initial celebration of Incan life in all its Arcadian splendour, the emperor's decision to undermine its political system is punished with the arrival of the Spanish. What was in reality a mere coincidence—the Incan civil war occurring at the same time as the Spanish arrival in Peru—the opera treats as a form of providential logic: immediately after the Incan civil war, the scene depicts the Spanish subverting the elder Incan's authority with support for his brother, and by so doing '*attain*[*ing*] *the dominion over both*' (IV. 7).[30] Even the younger brother is eventually forced to yield to Spanish superiority and becomes a puppet-king.

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes states that the Commonwealth and sovereign exist solely to prevent invasion from a foreign power, but he goes on to assert that '[i]f a Monarch subdued by war, render himself Subject to the Victor; his Subjects are delivered from their former obligation, and become obliged to the Victor'[31] themselves. The Incan sovereign, the emperor, is shown to have failed to protect his people through his decision to elevate love above duty, and his son Atahualpa likewise does so by accepting Spanish aid in his war

[30] On the providential strain of Cromwellian rhetoric, see Blair Worden, 'Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England', *Past & Present*, 109 (November, 1985), 55–99.
[31] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 273.

against his brother. As a result, and following Hobbesian logic, the Europeans legitimately move in and take control. The Incans are obliged to accept their new leaders because their king compromised their safety and could not overcome Spanish firepower. The question *Peru* poses, then, is not whether European rule over the Incans is just. According to Davenant's thinking, based on Hobbesian principles, it is. The real question is *which* European power should rule over them, and how? The Spanish are represented as exceedingly cruel, treating the Incans as slaves in their pursuit of wealth and empire, trapping them in 'silver fetters' (V. 67) and forcing them to work in poor conditions. In contrast to the Priest of the Sun's life-giving verge, which causes his attendant to dance vigorously for the delight of Davenant's spectators, the Incans are now beaten with Spanish truncheons into slavish passivity, collecting and carrying baskets of gold and silver for their new overlords.

Having made a case that Peru requires conquest, but arguing that the Spanish are not the right candidates to fulfil the role of sovereign, Davenant proposes the English as a rightful power. *Peru* ends with the English army arriving to join the Incans in routing the tyrannous Spanish. In a brief skirmish represented by the scenery, the Spanish are shown to be easily '*scattered, as if put to flight*' (VI. 6–7). They pose no real threat to the brave English soldiery. The Priest's speech shows how the Incans have moved from the state of innocence that characterised them at the beginning of the opera to one of experience, with that experience telling them to place their future trust in the worthy English rather than the duplicitous and enslaving Spanish. 'We on our knees these Spaniards did receive', the Priest sings,

> As gods, when first they taught us to believe [in Christian doctrine].
> They came from heaven, and us o'er heights would lead,
> Higher than e'er our sinful fathers fled.
> Experience now (by whose true eyes, though slow,
> We find at last what oft too late we know)
> Has all their cozening miracles discerned:
> 'Tis she that makes unlettered mankind learned.
> She has unmasked these Spanish dark divines […]
> When first the valiant English landed here,
> Our reason then no more was ruled by fear:
> They straight the Spaniards' riddle did unfold,
> Our griefs are past, and we shall cease to mourn
> For those whom the insulting Spaniards scorn,
> And slaves esteem,
> The English soon shall free;
> Whilst we the Spaniards see
> Digging for them. (VI. 16–35)

The Incans have woken up to the terror they experienced under the Spaniards, and have recognised the English as their true liberators. In a comic end, the final dumb-show presents a Spanish soldier, '*loaden with ingots*' (VI. 42), laying down for a nap in the woods, only to be interrupted and harassed by two dancing apes and a baboon (presumably costumed actors) and finally chased off stage in frightened humiliation.

The final chorus and tableau show the Incans being served at table by the now-checked Spanish, while the English 'sit and rule as our guests' (VI. 74). They return to their idealised life before even the Incan empire established itself, and before the Spanish arrived: 'The air, the river and the wood | Shall yield us sport and change of food' (VI. 66–7) once again. But there is a Hobbesian twist to this story. In order to protect and preserve themselves, the Peruvians are shown to have *elected* the English as their new rulers in place of either the Spanish or the Incan emperors, and the English are only too happy to oblige. They remain in Peru as benevolent 'guests'. The final dance consists of a Spaniard kicked into submission by the English, while they and the Peruvians '*salute and shake hands, in sign of their future amity*' (VI. 82–3). Presented as compassionate and just in their colonial enterprises, Davenant suggests that the English are perfectly placed to supplant the Spanish. The Incans invite them to take control. Hobbes may be right to insist that a sovereign should concede his power once defeated by a foreign enemy, but Davenant's opera argues that who is permitted to fill that vacancy is open to question. *Peru* works to forward Cromwell's policies at the same time as garnering support from his potentially more hostile or cynical critics, such as those royalist gentry potentially in attendance at the Cockpit, who might yet accuse the lord protector of overambition and cruelty to rival the Spanish. Janet Clare has suggested that while in the 1656 letter to Thurloe the proposal for an anti-Spanish work is unproblematically supportive of Cromwellian foreign policy, those watching in 1658 could only see it in the context of a 'colonialist fantasy' and 'the anachronism of New World expansionism nurtured by the Protectorate'.[32] The images of Spanish cruelty, together with comic elements of the drama, show England's moral and civil superiority over their European foes, presenting a case for intervention in the New World that the native populations of the West Indies and the Americas were also shown to covet, even if the political circumstances beyond the playhouse made that an impossibility in reality.

[32] Clare, 'Production and Reception', p. 836.

Peru, like *Drake* later, rewrites England's relationship to the New World as it really was in the sixteenth century (and as it stood in 1658). Davenant concedes this much himself by including an episode in which Cromwell's own New Model army, signified by their red coats,[33] intercede on behalf of the Incans, a moment never meant to be understood as historical fact:

> *These imaginary English forces may seem improper, because the English had made no discovery of Peru in the time of the Spaniards' first invasion there; but yet in poetic representations of this nature, it may pass as a vision discerned by the Priest of the Sun before the matter was extant, in order to his prophecy.* (VI. 7–11)

Two things are happening simultaneously here. Firstly, Davenant draws on the prerogative of the poet to reinvent history in order to reveal deeper truths about the state of human nature: 'for why should a Poet doubt in Story to mend the intrigues of Fortune by more delightfull conveyances of probable fictions, because austere Historians have enter'd into the bond of truth' (*Preface*, p. 10), he asks. As Willie notes, according to Davenant 'there is a universality to human action which can instruct contemporaries in their own modes of behaviour'.[34] *Peru* and *Drake* thus alter the facts of history in order to show the world as it is below the surface of social artifice. Secondly, and more revealingly, Davenant anticipates audience resistance to this very idea of playing with the past on poetic or aesthetic grounds. To counter this resistance, he subsumes the subsequent narrative sequence into the Priest's present by considering it a prophecy of that which is *yet* to come. The events depicted are predicted by the Priest to occur in the future—though whether an Elizabethan future or a Cromwellian future is left unanswered. The audience, then, are supposed to read this prophecy as occurring (or about to occur) in *their* future as of *c*. 1658, as well as seeing this army as part of their Elizabethan past. Past, present and future are forcibly and productively collapsed into each other at this moment to serve Davenant's broader political project to further the government's superior image as they continue war with Spain.[35] This concern to 'obliterate' Stuart history and recover an Elizabethan nationalist myth that can appeal to Davenant's audiences (whether republican or royalist) by circumventing more recent histories and conflicts proves even more productive in his next opera, *The History of Sir Francis Drake*. It is to this work that we next turn.

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[33] Clare, 'Production and Reception', p. 386.
[34] Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, p. 126.
[35] Wiseman, '"History Digested"', p. 194.

The History of Sir Francis Drake is similar to *Peru* in drawing on colonialist discourses. As David McInnis has pointed out, *Drake* 'is notable for its shift away from expository speeches [as found in *Peru*] towards dramatic dialogue and greater emphasis on character'.[36] More than the earlier work, *Drake* resembles a traditional play, one that celebrates the exploits of an historical, national figure whose achievements and legacy cut across partisan divides. However, all this does not mean to say that Davenant's relationship with the authorities was as strong as it had been when *Peru* was first staged: aside from the political turmoil felt throughout London, Davenant's own activities at Drury Lane came in for extensive scrutiny by the very government he had championed since 1656. *Drake* was performed amidst the chaos surrounding Richard Cromwell's struggles with the Third Protectorate Parliament in May 1659. Oliver had died the previous September and, like a prince, Richard immediately inherited his father's title as lord protector. After the initial rejoicing, things quickly began to fall apart.[37] We can feel Davenant pushing even harder now for a theatre that provides images of how the English wish to see themselves: united, strong, and moral. He uses every available means at his disposal, both technological and literary, to achieve this. No longer secure under the unofficial protection of key political figures like Thurloe, Whitelocke and Oliver Cromwell himself, Richard's Council began to investigate the precise nature of Davenant's Cockpit ventures in December 1658.[38] As *Mercurius Politicus* recounts it:

> A course is ordered for taking into consideration on the *Opera* shewed at The Cockpit in *Drury*-lane, and the persons to whom it stands referr'd are to send for the Poet and Actors, and to inform themselves of the nature of the work, and to examine by what authority the same is exposed to publick view, and they are also to take the best information they can concerning the acting of Stage-playes, and upon the whole to make report.[39]

Clearly, the new Council's unease about Davenant's productions show that they were not aware of the reasoned arguments he had painstakingly put forward in both the *Proposition* and the 'Observations', and that they had not bothered to visit the Cockpit to watch one of the 'moral entertainments' for themselves. Or, if they had, this new regime did not automatically

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[36] McInnis, *Mind-Travelling*, p. 152. See also Clare, *Drama*, p. 263.
[37] See Jason Peacey, 'The Protector Humbled: Richard Cromwell and the Constitution', in *The Cromwellian Protectorate*, ed. by Patrick Little (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007), pp. 32–52.
[38] *CSPD 1658–9*, p. 225.
[39] *Mercurius Politicus*, 547 (23–30 December 1658), p. 118.

consider the propaganda benefit sufficient reason to permit theatrical gatherings of this kind, as Oliver Cromwell's evidently had. As late as February 1659 John Barwick informed Edward Hyde that the 'Lords', such as they were, were making speeches in the House against the persistent use of the *Book of Common Prayer* in services across the country, as well as of stage plays.[40] The rising threat of old (royalist) Anglicanism became once again inextricably linked to public drama. Presumably, Davenant answered for his work, convincing the Council of his good intentions because there seems not to have been any interruption to playing at Drury Lane. *Drake* was performed, as we have seen, as late as the following May, the same time as Richard's resignation as Protector and the establishment of the Rump Parliament.

The entertainment is itself an attempt by Davenant to provide 'divertisements'[41] to keep the people from melancholy in the face of major political upheaval. Richard's failure to control the army and Parliament meant the country was increasingly likely to drift back into civil war. Davenant continued to use his theatre to maintain a sense of calm perspective as the situation outside darkened, and the myth of national unity he had created from 1656 gave way once more to fracture and crisis. If 'States should never seeme dejected, nor the People be permitted to be sad' ('Observations'), then it was more important than ever that Davenant offer Londoners delightful fictions with which to distract themselves from the political turmoil of Parliament. The patriotic images of Elizabethan conquest and derring-do on display in *Drake* inspired spectators with pride in their national history as well as, it was anticipated, hope for their own futures. Walkling points out that while *Drake* more properly resembles *Rhodes* it is a much less dogmatic production. '*Drake*'s heroism is suitably attenuated, subordinated to the principal goal of providing its audience with splendid entertainment', he writes.[42]

Indeed, the show might have gone too far in its attempt to be a light-hearted piece of entertainment. The diarist John Evelyn attended a performance at the Cockpit in May 1659, just as the political situation in London was reaching crisis point. He writes dismissively about the opera, which he was obliged to visit because he was staying with his brother:

> I went to visite my Bro, & next day to see a new *Opera* after the *Italian* way in *Recitative Music* & *Sceanes*, much inferior to the Italian composure & magnificence: but what was prodigious, that in a time of such a publique Consternation, such a

[40] *CSP: Thurloe*, VII, p. 615 (16 February 1658/9); Capp, *England's Culture Wars*, p. 201.
[41] Firth, 'Sir William Davenant', p. 320.
[42] Walkling, *Masque and Opera*, p. 156.

> Vanity should be kept up or permitted; I being ingag'd with company, could not decently resist the going to see it, though my heart smote me for it.[43]

Evelyn cannot understand how people can sit around and enjoy such a frivolous activity as watching plays when the political situation outside the theatre is so precarious. As they listen to the singers and gawk at the sub-par scenery, Richard Cromwell's Protectorate is collapsing from within; in two days, he will concede to pressure from the army and reinstate the Rump Parliament, signalling the end of Protectoral rule in England.[44] For this spectator at least, Davenant's aim of distracting his audiences so that they ignore or forget about politics proved impossible.

Drake continues *Peru*'s project both conceptually and aesthetically. The text tells us that its frontispiece was the same as that used in the earlier production, '*our argument being in the same country*' (7–8). Presumably, a lack of funds prompted Davenant to recycle the proscenium arch from *Peru*, but there is no dramatic reason why he should point this out to his readers. Indeed, it surely would make better commercial sense to downplay those elements that had been reused from previous productions.[45] It must be the case that Davenant intended his audiences to see the entertainments as a kind of theatrical diptych, sharing the same themes and ideas in support of the government's pursuits, though in differing ways.[46] *Peru*, as we have seen, primarily vilifies Spanish barbarity in the new world, while *Drake* uses an historically significant figure (Sir Francis Drake) to celebrate and promote English heroism.

The plot is based on the account of Drake's 1572–3 voyage to the West Indies found in *Sir Francis Drake Revived*, a text compiled by Philip Nicholas and published for the first time in 1628 by Drake's nephew, also called Francis.[47] Throughout Davenant's entertainment, the English are shown to be in sympathy with the various peoples they encounter. The Symerons, who the text explains '*were a Moorish people, brought formerly to Peru by the Spaniards as their slaves, to dig in mines*' (II. 4–5), are befriended by Drake and

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[43] Evelyn, *Diary*, III, p. 229 (5 May 1659). He saw the play on the 6 May.

[44] See Hutton, *Restoration*, pp. 39–41.

[45] Davenant has a habit of lamenting his own scenic capabilities, usually accompanying this with a request for spectators to pay more money so that he can improve them. See, for example, his note 'To the Reader' attached to *The Siege of Rhodes* as well as the Prologue to its second part.

[46] The title-page of *Drake* states that it is 'The First Part', which suggests that Davenant had intended to continue it, although no other text is known to exist. Clare suggests that, as a result of the Restoration, 'Francis Drake had outstayed his usefulness as a unifying national hero', and consequently 'a sequel did not materialize' (*Drama*, p. 267).

[47] Clare, *Drama*, p. 265.

his crew, who have just hit land in the Americas.[48] The Symerons themselves have recently revolted against the Spanish and now govern themselves, boasting a monarch 'of their own election' (II. 6). As with the Incans in *Peru*, Davenant is here interested in staging a moment of political and social upheaval and thinking through the implications this has for broader cultural encounters: the Europeans in both dramas appear just as a stable native regime crumbles and a power vacuum opens up. Gold, the two dramas suggest, is not the only thing up for grabs in the New World.

To drive this point home Davenant shows us the Symeron king humbly submitting to English royal authority, just as the Incans had done following the ousting of the Spanish in *Peru*. Offering his services to Drake, the king shows his loyalty to the supreme power, Queen Elizabeth herself:

> KING […] Welcome! and in my land be free,
> And powerful as thou art at sea.
> DRAKE SENIOR Monarch of much! and still deserving more
> Than I have coasted on the Western shore!
> Slave to my Queen! to whom thy virtue shows
> How low thou canst to virtue be;
> And, since declared a foe to all her foes,
> Thou makest them lower bow to thee.
> (II. 79–86)

The Symerons and English find a common cause in their hatred of the Spanish and create an alliance to their mutual benefit, with England's monarch, Elizabeth, enjoying the senior position. 'Instruct me', the Symeron king tells Drake, 'how my Symerons and I | May help thee to afflict the enemy' (II. 87–8). The Incans agree that Drake will be provided with a local guide, Pedro, so that he can lead his expedition to intercept the Spanish mule trains in Panama. This is Drake's ostensible purpose for being in South America in the first place, '[f]or nothing can afflict them [the Spanish] more | Than to deprive them of that store' (II. 91–2) of gold they use to fund their colonial projects and their wars against England. Together, the Symerons and the English will get their revenge on their mutual enemy and, crucially, gain great glory in the process. Nevertheless, Davenant demonstrates a subtle awareness here of the dynamics of colonial discourse. The King, although now an ally, is far from equal in Drake's mind: he is still a 'slave' to Elizabeth, just as the Incans were 'beggared slaves'

[48] Following Clare, I have retained Davenant's spelling of 'Symerons' rather than using the modern Spanish *cimarrónes*; see *Drama*, p. 270.

under the Spanish. While *Peru* argues that the English should endeavour to treat their colonial possessions differently from the Spanish, there is no question that they still retain a sense of superiority, being European and Christian.

As in *Peru*, the Spanish are portrayed here as brutal, lust-filled sadists in pursuit of gold and silver in sharp contrast to the noble Englishmen. Their covetousness for the Symeron resources is something Drake and his men simply do not share. The central entries focus on the various escapades of the Anglo-Symeron expedition—they climb trees to see both the North and South Atlantic seas, enjoy watching the native Peruvians going about their business of hunting a stag, and plot against the Spanish—simply for the thrill (and glory) of travel and exploration, not for financial reward. Honour and mercy are the watchwords of Drake and his men. In the fifth entry Captain Rouse runs in to tell Drake that a Spanish bride has been captured by a party of Symerons and 'tied to a tree' (v. 87).[49] Distressed by the scene that has been discovered before them, Rouse explains that the Symerons have committed this crime as a way of avenging their own people: 'they have all those cruelties expressed | That Spanish pride could e're provoke from them | Or Moorish malice can revenge esteem' (v. 105–7). Drake, however, is furious: 'the honour of my nation turns | To shame' (v. 109–10). He calls his men to turn against the Symerons they have been working with in order to preserve their honour and distance them from this act of barbarity. But Pedro, the Symeron guide, calls for calm and clemency:

> Stay! stay! successful chief! my heart as low
> As the foundation where thou treadst does bow.
> But 'tis not for my own offence;
> For if I should offend
> My king, in thee his friend,
> I would not with my self dispense.
> Thy mercy shall our pattern be.
> Behold, the afflicted bride is free. (v. 131–8)

The lady then disappears, freed in a *coup de théâtre*. The scene demonstrates exactly why the English must still consider the Incans 'slaves': they have, because of their experiences under Spanish rule, become barbarous and violent, and therefore require civilising through English example. Davenant plays with fantasies of justice here: 'Spanish pride' has prompted 'Moorish malice'.

[49] It is difficult to discern from the text, but it appears that the bride is part of the scenic representation, not an actress onstage; see Clare, *Drama*, p. 287.

Left to their own devices, Davenant suggests, the Symerons prove violent and troublesome, and the Spanish have gone in too forcefully and only encourage them to seek 'revenge'. To overcome this conundrum, a different approach to establishing authority is required. The English here, as in *Peru*, must build consensus, offer conciliation, and provide a friendly but firm attitude to their new subjects. Pedro manages, though, to ensure that mercy extends to those Symerons who took the bride, thinking 'their duties were to take their foes', the Spanish having previously 'forced our brides and slaughtered all our guests' (V. 147, 155). He appeals to Drake's sense of honour by insisting that he has rectified the situation, the bride now 'as free and as unblemished too | As if she had a prisoner been to you' (5. 142–3). The English, Pedro suggests, would act differently to both the Symerons and the Spanish; they are morally superior beings, and the Symerons themselves can now acknowledge this. Justice, Drake shows, comes not from retribution in the form of excessive violence but rather through forgiveness and self-restraint: 'No length of studied torments shall suffice | To punish all unmanly cruelties', he says, before instructing the Symerons to 'March on! they may ere night redeem | By virtuous valour my esteem' (V. 162–5). The Symerons learn the nature of justice, honour and mercy from the English.

Such episodes in the opera play on anxieties to do with how to perform authority in the New World, and nationalist anxieties closer to home. It is in the final entry concerning the mule train that *Drake* most succinctly promotes this image of the noble English against the barbarous Spanish. While planning to intercept the train carrying gold from Panama, Drake Senior impresses on his men their true motives for being there:

> That treasure which I now would make your prize:
> Unworthy 'tis to be your chiefest aim.
> For this attempt is not for gold, *but fame*;
> Which is not got when we the reco [*sic*] get,
> But by subduing those who recue it [i.e. the Spanish]. (VI. 26–30; my emphasis)

The English, he suggests, are above such worldly things as monetary gain, unlike their Spanish adversaries. Instead, they are interested in securing glory and immortal reputation through deeds of bravery and heroism. (The very fact that they do get the gold in the end is presented as a happy coincidence or a just reward.)

Much more is at stake here than simply gaining gold, of course. The prosperity and fame of the English as authorities in the New World is bound up with their ability to manage and conciliate with the Symerons. Evelyn, concerned with his immediate moment overlooks

the more profound politics written into the play. The rightful—i.e. Godly, just, able—colonisers are not motivated by financial gain but instead demonstrate an authority and honour that rewards them regardless. Davenant is saying something about the English as a nation here. *Drake*, more so than *Peru*, harks back to the Age of Discovery under Elizabeth, a time before the British project of the early Stuarts. In the 1650s, such an interrogation of 'Englishness' was once again desired as the idea of British proved untenable: Scotland was never under the control of the Protectorate, and remained a royalist nation, proclaiming Charles II king in 1652, while Cromwell's decimation of Ireland thoroughly relegated that nation (to English eyes at least) as a colonial outpost rather than as a sister nation.[50]

During the expedition, the Spanish engage in fighting Drake's men, volleys are heard offstage, and swords are drawn. Eventually, the English prove victorious, in 'famous Battails at Land and Sea', as Davenant's note collected by Hartlib has it, and the Spanish flee for fear of death.[51] *Drake* ends with the hero himself meditating on what future generations will make of his exploits:

> Those who hereafter on our legend look
> And value us by that which we have took
> May over-reckon it, and us misprise […]
> Your glory, valiant English, must be known,
> When men shall read how you did dare
> To sail so long and march so far,
> To tempt a strength much greater than your own. (VI. 101–110)

Drake is presented as the ultimate English victor. His credentials for national celebration are impeccable: he is merciful beyond the call of duty, valiant, and his only interest is in gaining glory for his queen and nation, not base commercial successes. The text brilliantly sidesteps any political controversy by generating images of Elizabethan heroism that seemingly transcend the conflicts that characterised the relationship of monarch and parliament in the early Stuart period. As John Watkins and others have noted, the Protectorate rewrote the Elizabethan period as one of political cohesion, where monarch and parliament worked in harmonious consort, and used this as a basis for their own discourse of national life.[52] This

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[50] See David Stevenson, 'Cromwell, Scotland and Ireland', in *Cromwell and the Interregnum: The Essential Readings*, ed. by David L. Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 183–212.

[51] Jacob and Raylor, 'Opera and Obedience', p. 249.

[52] John Watkins has examined how the Protectorate appropriated images of Elizabeth and Elizabethan iconography to conjure up appealing images of a shared national heritage before the arrival of the divisive Stuarts. See his *Representing Elizabeth in Stuart England: Literature, History, Sovereignty* (Cambridge:

contrasted starkly with the more recent and troubling conflicts of the early Stuart period. At a moment when England's self-image was particularly fragile, Davenant effectively bypassed controversial and divisive images, by rallying around a heroic figure like Drake who could appeal to English men and women, regardless of their partisan politics.

This chapter has looked at the way that Davenant's Cockpit operas engage with contemporary political issues—the ongoing war with the Spanish—to think through broader questions about the political and ideological situations at home. It has argued that Davenant's operas certainly do provide propaganda in support of Cromwell's regime, and that through the veil of New World discoveries, the operas allow him to raise discussions about important domestic topics, such as the nature of sovereignty and power. Whereas the *Proposition* had argued that the 'people' could receive moral education and diversion from the theatre, Davenant now insists that he wants to engage only with society's leaders. *Peru* and *Drake* explore what it means to have a subject's allegiance, what it means to be a good ruler, and what it means to be English in a post-Stuart and post-British world. Davenant's Cockpit entertainments are frequently muddled in their thinking, or unsuccessful in their aims—but such failures show a dramatist working quickly to respond to the immediate experiences and issues of his moment. This demonstrates Davenant's deft ability to read the moment and adapt to it. He seeks to bring all political and ideological positions into harmony through the use of a myth based on Elizabethan (rather than early Stuart) nationalism, one that might transcend recent conflicts following the Civil Wars. In the presentation of the civil war in *Peru* and or the use of excessive force by the Spanish in *Drake*, Davenant raises urgent questions about correct government, the nature of tyranny, and of the power of theatre to affect and challenge these ideas. We can see in Davenant's Protectorate operas a writer experimenting and trying to come to terms with what is happening around him. We see too a creative personality making his own way in unchartered territory. Drama is able to do new things at the Cockpit: it can ask new questions and pose new solutions.

Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 87–107. Willie writes that the appeal to nostalgia for an Elizabethan past allowed republicans and royalist alike to 'interpret the pre-civil-war Inca existence in accordance with conflicting ideologies' (*Staging the Revolution*, p. 100).

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‘Double Damn’d’: *Macbeth* and the Restoration

From Cockpit to Tennis Court

In the previous chapters, we explored Davenant’s dramatic experiments at his private residence of Rutland House and the refurbished Cockpit theatre in Drury Lane. The move from a private venue to a public theatre had, I suggested, both practical and political motivations: on the one hand, Davenant consistently lamented the lack of space available at Rutland House to fully accommodate the scenic designs and the musicians required for his Protectorate operas, while the authorities’ concern about the Kirke-Beeston operation at the Cockpit prior to 1656 seems to have prompted their support of Davenant’s takeover in 1658; at the very least, the government was prepared to turn a blind eye to Davenant’s activities until May 1659, when Richard Cromwell was ousted. The Cockpit had been refurbished for occupation by William Beeston in 1651, and at some subsequent point it was made ready to accommodate John Webb’s moveable scenery.[1] By the time Davenant moved there in 1658, he could transfer the scenic designs for *The Siege of Rhodes* to the Jacobean-era theatre, as well as commission new scenes for both *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* and *The History of Sir Francis Drake*.

In the immediate aftermath of the Restoration, then, Davenant seems to have abandoned the Cockpit theatre, which was now beginning to show signs of wear: we have no records of performances of his operas beyond those of May 1659 around the time of Richard Cromwell’s removal from power. We do know, however, that the theatre continued to be used as a performance site into the early 1660s by others. John Rhodes presented a series of (unrecorded) plays there in the 1660–1 season; Hotson shows that Rhodes was fined £4 6*s* on 28 July 1660 for ‘illegal acting at the Cockpit’.[2] Thanks too to research by Colin Visser and John Orrell, we know that at least one, possibly two, French acting troupes performed what

[1] Iain Mackintosh and John Orrell, in separate but complementary studies, have both posited the idea that Webb’s designs for *The Siege of Rhodes* refer to the dimensions and frame of the Cockpit theatre, rather than Rutland House. See Iain Mackintosh, ‘Inigo Jones—Theatre Architect’, *TAB*, 31.3 (1973), 99–105; John Orrell, *The Theatres of Inigo Jones and John Webb* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 63–64.
[2] Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, p. 198; c.f. *London Stage*, p. 12.

are described as *tragédies* or *pièces à machines* at the Cockpit as late as 1661 and 1662.[3] Mademoiselle d'Orléans's company of actors went on tour from Paris to Brussels during these years in the early 1660s, eventually arriving in London with at least two scenic productions: Chapoton's *La Descente d'Orphée* (1640) and Corneille's *Andromède* (1650). *Andromède* seems to have been performed at the Cockpit on 20 January 1662, although the *London Stage* editors remain agnostic about the play's provenance and give no indication of which theatre was used.[4] Visser and Orrell convincingly demonstrate that both plays were indeed performed at the Cockpit: assessing the playbooks and designs for these productions, Visser demonstrates that both *La Descente* and *Andromède* used the same stock of scenery, and suggests how the scenic technologies would have worked on the Cockpit stage.[5] The libretto for *La Descente* was published in London in both French and English texts.[6] Remarkably, Visser makes no mention at all of Davenant's Protectorate operas as evidence of the Cockpit's capacity to accommodate scenic technologies before the Restoration. Orrell, however, makes the case that it was Davenant's scenic reformations at the Cockpit in the 1650s that meant the French companies had a suitable venue to produce their works; he also shows that Charles II and his court regularly attended the opera there.[7] On 30 August 1661, Samuel Pepys too attended the Cockpit but found the players and the scenes 'so nasty and out of order and poor, that I was sick all the while in my mind to be there'.[8] With the establishment of the Davenant-Killigrew monopoly in 1662, the Cockpit, even as a venue for foreign troupes who were less effected by its legislation as protected visitors of the Crown, ceased to be used for serious theatrical performance.[9] Instead, it became a site for a theatrical nursery, run by George Jolly, for the training of apprentice actors, until it was eventually abandoned altogether during the plague of 1665.[10]

Thus, with the restoration of Charles II in the spring of 1660, Davenant yet again moved to a new performance site. The return of the king meant also a return to the long-banished institution of the commercial theatre, and Davenant set out to secure his place as

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[3] Colin Visser, 'The Descent of Orpheus at the Cockpit, Drury Lane', *Theatre Survey*, 24 (1983), 35–53; John Orrell, 'Scenes and Machines at the Cockpit, Drury Lane', *Theatre Survey*, 26 (1985), 103–19.
[4] *London Stage*, p. 46.
[5] Visser, 'The Descent', pp. 47–49.
[6] The latter as *The Description of the Great Machines, of the Descent of Orpheus into Hell. Presented by the French Commedians at the Cock-pit in Drury-lane* (London, 1661).
[7] Orrell, 'Scenes and Machines', pp. 104–11.
[8] Pepys, *Diary*, II, p. 165.
[9] On these foreign troupes, see Walkling, *Masque and Opera*, pp. 193–218.
[10] Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, pp. 176–86.

one of the leaders of the new theatrical settlement. He quickly rallied with his friendly rival, Thomas Killigrew, to secure a duopoly on London's theatres, which gave them each a licence to manage a theatrical company and a purpose-built venue, while denying all other rivals the opportunity to get in on the action.[11] Davenant's patent permitted him to form a company of young actors under the name of the king's brother, the Duke of York, while Killigrew managed the King's Men himself. Both managers decided that the developing West End of London—Drury Lane and its environs—remained a choice destination for a theatre district, it having become a popular area among the wealthier members of the gentry in the 1650s. In order to improve on the Cockpit, though, Davenant (like Killigrew) chose to set up his new enterprise in a vacated tennis court, Lisle's, in Lincoln Inn's Fields, rather than remain in the older theatre at the Cockpit. Lisle's was just off Portugal Row, and so Davenant was able to extend the existing building to include modest lodgings for him and his family, his younger actresses, whom he and his wife, Mary, would supervise and train, as well as a scene room at the back of the theatre.[12] The interior of the building was refurbished to accommodate extensive scenic arrangements, an apron in front of the proscenium arch, and a tiered auditorium.[13]

Tim Keenan's recent book on Restoration staging practice offers a fundamentally new way of conceiving of the Lincoln's Inn Fields theatre.[14] Taking account of the entire corpus of plays produced at Lincoln's Inn Fields (and its rival theatre, Bridges Street), Keenan proposes a methodically rigorous model of the theatre and how it might have operated. One of the principle findings of Keenan's research is that 'the scenic area was more frequently used for acting than is still often assumed' by prevailing scholarship.[15] This most obviously affects the 'discovery' scenes that were a staple of Restoration dramaturgy. The common notion, as Keenan states, is that 'following a discovery actors would quickly move downstage

[11] See Judith Milhous, 'Theatre Companies and Regulation', in *The Cambridge History of British Theatre*, ed. by Joseph Donohue (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 108–25 (pp. 109–10). See Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, pp. 197–280; Freehafer, 'The London Patent Companies', pp. 13–25.
[12] On Davenant's guardianship of the younger actresses in his company, see Gilli Bush-Bailey, *Treading the Bawds: Actresses and Playwrights on the Late-Stuart Stage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).
[13] For an overview of the Lincoln's Inn Fields set up among its local geography, see Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, pp. 120–7. For a plan of the theatre, see the illustration facing p. 124.
[14] Tim Keenan, *Restoration Staging, 1660–74* (London: Routledge, 2017).
[15] Keenan, *Restoration Staging*, p. 61. This is something that Lee J. Martin demonstrated over fifty years ago, as Keenan notes, but subsequent scholars have ignored. See Lee J. Martin, 'From Forestage to Proscenium: A Study of Restoration Acting Techniques', *Theatre Survey*, 4 (1963), 3–28.

to assume their familiar acting position on the forestage.'[16] A careful review of the stage directions in the Restoration play corpus certainly does reveal instructions to actors to 'come forward' or 'advance', but *only* in plays from the later playhouses, Dorset Garden and Drury Lane; no such directions are found in Lincoln's Inn Fields or Bridges Street plays.[17] It would seem, then, that one of the most radical differences between the Protectorate playhouses and Davenant's Restoration venue is the expansion of the acting space to include the scenic area: in the new Lincoln's Inn Fields, action occurred both on the forestage *and* in the scenic stage, especially following a discovery. Davenant's earlier complaints about the inadequate size of his venues appear to stop after the Restoration.[18] This has important implications for the two plays I will examine in the remainder of this thesis, Davenant's adaptations of *Macbeth* and *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island*. In the former, the scenic stage is used for the witches' cave; supernatural characters are confined to the upstage position. In the latter, the discovery is used to particular effect as characters spy on each other and spectatorship itself becomes a dominant theme of the play.

Just as the move from Rutland House to the public Cockpit transformed Davenant's dramaturgical practices in the 1650s, so the move to an expanded stage set-up at the Lincoln's Inn Fields from the Jacobean theatre encouraged further experiment and change. While it is difficult to know the precise dimensions of the Lincoln's Inn Fields, it was certainly bigger than the Cockpit, both in terms of acting space and in audience capacity. Its scenic and machine capabilities too were more sophisticated, allowing actors to fly in, sink below the stage in the scenic area, and to come forward into the apron to be among the audience, lit by the same chandeliers. It is only by fully comprehending, as far as the extant evidence will permit us, the distinctive natures of each of Davenant's revolutionary theatres, that we can understand and appreciate his crafting of his dramas for specific spaces and audiences. In the remainder of this thesis, I examine Davenant's two most successful adaptations of Shakespearean texts to explore precisely what it was he was offering to Restoration audiences, both in terms of theatrical spectacle and political commentary.

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[16] Keenan, *Restoration Staging*, p. 61. For a typical account, see J. L. Styan, *Restoration Comedy in Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 28; Southern, *Changeable Scenery*, pp. 109–62.

[17] Keenan, *Restoration Staging*, p. 62.

[18] The prologue to the printed edition of *2 The Siege of Rhodes* asks the 'Wits' in the audience for more money so that Davenant's '*contracted Scenes should wider be*', but this prologue might have been written for a 1659 performance at the Cockpit. If it was written with a Lincoln's Inn Fields performance in mind, it probably refers to the unfinished refurbishment of the theatre in June 1661. See *London Stage*, p. 29.

Debating the Restoration: Davenant's *Macbeth*

Of all Davenant's post-regicide dramas, none responds so overtly to the politics surrounding its production as the 1664 adaptation of *Macbeth*. Concerned with the killing of a king and his usurpation by an overambitious soldier, the play seems to speak to a version of recent history of the English and Scottish nations, deliberately stirring up memories of the Civil Wars, regicide, and Cromwellian rule. With the benefit of hindsight, the play casts the Interregnum as a tragic and freakishly unnatural disruption to the status quo. As Macbeth's maniacal grip on power tightens, Scotland falls into darkness and despair. The natural order is subverted: owls attack falcons, and witches stir abroad. The oldest character in the play, Seyton, reflects that he has seen many 'Hours dreadful, and things strange' in his long life, but that the murder of the king and the political fallout that follows have 'made that knowledge void'.[19] Nothing like the terror of regicide has ever befallen Scotland before. It is only the rightful restoration of a new monarch, Malcolm, that ensures survival: 'Now *Scotland*, thou shalt see bright Day again, | That Cloud's remov'd that did Ecclipse thy Sun' (V. 9. 17–18), proclaims Macduff in the play's closing moments. His pun on sun/son emphasises that the *rightful* monarch, and thus the natural order of things, has been restored—the cloud was nothing more than a temporary occlusion of a heavenly body—while also celebrating in strikingly Carolean terms the dazzling power of true majesty.[20]

This thesis has argued that Davenant's theatre served as a space for exploring some of the most sensitive and complex issues of the day. From *Gondibert* on, Davenant was concerned to present readers and spectators with a set of examples and patterns that could help make sense of the questions and debates preoccupying people at any one time. He did so by staging narratives and presenting them from more than one possible point of view, and without necessarily coming to any neat conclusions. Davenant's operas and plays acknowledge (and often embody in their very form) provisionality, ambiguity, chance, and

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[19] William Davenant, *Macbeth: A Tragedy*, in *Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare*, ed. by Christopher Spencer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), pp. 33–107 (II. 4. 3–4). Subsequent references are to this edition and given in parentheses in the text. The dating of the text is discussed by Spencer in *Davenant's 'Macbeth' from the Yale Manuscript* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), pp. 1–16.

[20] Charles II, like his French cousin, Louis XIV, was described as 'so glorious a sun' in panegyric. See Clare Jackson, *Charles II: The Star King* (London: Allen Lane, 2016), pp. 6–10. For Charles's self-conscious presentation of majesty, see Kevin Sharpe, *Rebranding Rule: The Restoration and Revolution Monarchy, 1660–1714* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), pp. 9–222; Anna Keay, *The Magnificent Monarch: Charles II and the Ceremonies of Power* (London: Continuum, 2008); Laura L. Knoppers, 'The French Connection: Luxury, Portraiture and the Court of Charles II', in *From Republic to Restoration*, ed. by Clare, pp. 267–88.

paradox. In this chapter, I argue that Davenant's alterations to Shakespeare's play raise profound questions about the nature and function of sovereignty and of arbitrary power in light of the establishment of the Restoration in 1660. Having established his 'opera' during the Protectorate, Davenant once again faced the challenge of negotiating a political and ideological regime change, this time *back* to a royalist position. Many contemporaries also had to make the transition, and this proved more complicated than official acts and announcements suggested.[21] In what follows, I explore *Macbeth*'s representation of regicide and monarchy, and suggest that while it does profess a commitment to royalist ideology it nevertheless displays an ambiguous and potentially unsettling relationship to monarchical power and authority as a result of the Republic experiments of the 1650s.

My argument is in three broadly related parts. First, I set out the specific Restoration policies with which Davenant's *Macbeth* is engaged. I explore the play's often uncomfortable relationship with the official propaganda of the Restoration regime, specifically with a key piece of legislation—the 'Act of Free and General Pardon, Indemnity and Oblivion'—which attempted to unwrite the troubling history of the 1640s and 1650s, and I will show how Davenant uses his play to complicate and nuance conceptions of royalism in the early 1660s. Rather than seeing the monarchy as a divinely-ordained phenomenon, the play uses Hobbesian ideas to argue that it is, in fact, a form of social organisation *contracted* between subjects and monarch in order to avoid civil unrest. Having shown how the play attempts to complicate the Restoration regime's view of royalism as divinely ordained, I argue that the play challenges the ideological motivation behind the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion. While it might be possible to erase from the official record memories of the past, such a luxury was not available for individual people. Building on his idea of the theatre as a place in which to reanimate the dead and use them as instructive examples for current situations and behaviours, the play shows itself to be literally haunted by ghosts, suggesting that 'forgetting' is a futile enterprise. Instead, there is a need to remember history in order to learn from it and to avoid it repeating itself in the future. As if wanting to prove the point, *Macbeth* stages a contest between memory in the form of the ghosts of Duncan and Banquo and prophecy in the form of the witches. He shows that while the latter cannot be trusted, and are even comically incompetent, the ghosts' warnings can and must be heeded. Finally, I explore how,

[21] For an intriguing example, see David Norbrook, 'Memoirs and Oblivion: Lucy Hutchinson and the Restoration', *HLQ*, 75.2 (2012), 233–82. On the transition between Protectorate and Restoration governments more generally, see Blair Worden, '1660: Restoration and Revolution', in *From Republic to Restoration*, ed. by Clare, pp. 23–52.

rather than 'restaging' the literal past of the Civil Wars and Protectorate, *Macbeth* presents audiences with the *general* dilemmas and conflicts experienced by those involved in the earlier regimes. It identifies 'ambition' as the driving passion that led to the conflicts of mid-century, and explores how this passion works through the presentation of it in the two leading characters: Macbeth and his rival Macduff. Thus, through an exploration of ambition *Macbeth* works through related ideas of tyranny, public duty, and justice, pertinent to the Restoration settlements.

In *Regicide and Restoration,* Nancy Klein Maguire shows how dramatists in the early 1660s betray 'an obsession with figures of monarchy, with usurpation and regicide, and with recuperation of royal power', and that these writers 'manifest anxiety about the regicide and fear of unforeseen complications about restoration', while Rachel Willie has argued that the Restoration stage was never a 'royalist monolith' but served instead as 'a site where the body politic could and was represented and debated'.[22] *Macbeth* portrays just such anxieties as Maguire outlines, by pointing out that one's right to rule is not based on providence or God's grace, but rather on one's ability to gain the people's trust and refrain from tyranny. In line with Willie's characterisation of the Restoration stage, the play acts as a way of demonstrating and thinking through the 'unforeseen complications' of such a contentious argument.

Despite appealing to the languages of order, restoration, and natural succession that typified the rhetoric surrounding Charles II's own return to power in 1660, *Macbeth* is strikingly ambivalent in its ideological outlook.[23] Lois Potter, for example, observes that 'it is not easy to read Davenant's *Macbeth* as pure divine right royalism. Its very language works against such a reading.'[24] Macbeth may be described as an abhorrent 'Monster, | More Deform'd than ever Ambition Fram'd, | Or Tyrannie could shape' (V. 8. 28–30), but this is revealed to be a metaphor only: he 'is not a fiend from hell, but a man who has pursued "others Rights, by Lawless Power".'[25] The witches' ravings likewise are presented ambiguously in Davenant's adaptation, and Malcolm's restoration is categorically not the result of divine providence, as Macduff's meteorological image (quoted above) might

[22] Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration*, p. 5; Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, p. 14.
[23] On this panegyric discourse, see Nicholas Jose, *Ideas of the Restoration in English Literature, 1660–71* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1984), pp. 31–43.
[24] Potter, *Secret Rites*, p. 205.
[25] Potter, *Secret Rites*, p. 207, citing *Macbeth*, V. 9. 34.

suggest; he is an *elected* king, brought back to power through the efforts of his subjects.[26] The problems lying at the centre of the play are political—Hobbesian—rather than diabolical.[27]In an important departure from Shakespeare's text, Davenant has Fleance return to the stage in the final act, to serve as a haunting, albeit dumb reminder that one's claim to sovereignty is provisional and subject to 'the Peoples Prayers' (v. 9. 39).

Critics have often detected in Davenant's text a series of irresolvable tensions and paradoxes, as it refuses, or at the very least resists, tidy conclusions and philosophical certainties about the nature of sovereignty. Richard Kroll reads the play's overriding mood as one of 'prevailing skepticism', in which 'the possibility of a transcendental order, must yield to a world in which all truths are a matter of characters' local perception.'[28] Ted H. Miller goes further, proposing that Davenant's play is founded upon a philosophy or 'worldview' predicated on doubt and ambivalence. Drawing on the work of the political theorist and philosopher Stephen K. White, Miller argues that *Macbeth* displays all the traits of a 'weak ontology'. He explains that while 'strong ontologies'—ways of understanding our being *in the world*—purport to know '"the way the world is", or how God's being stands to human being, or what human nature is', weak ontology 'defines itself, in part, against the forgetfulness of strong ontologies', resisting such overt certainty, and thus leaving room in their narratives for 'contingency and indeterminacy'.[29] Miller cites the Restoration sermons of Gilbert Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury and Carolean panegyrics as examples of strong ontological texts. Such texts insist that the Restoration was a Providential event: it was preordained by God, certain and assured. For such writers, there is no question of Charles's right to authority, and certainly no question about the nature of his return.

This way of seeing the world is figured in *Macbeth* in the character of Lady Macduff, who at one point states the Providentialist view that Scotland will be granted freedom from Macbeth and justice from Heaven without her husband's intervention in events. Miller argues

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[26] On the medieval Scottish system of inheritance and its significance for Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, see David Norbrook, '*Macbeth* and the Politics of Historiography', in *Politics of Discourse: The Literature and History of Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. by Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), pp. 78–116.

[27] See Gregory Augustine Foran, '"King Hereafter": *Macbeth* and Apocalypse in the Stuart Discourse of Sovereignty' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 2010), pp. 109–52.

[28] Kroll, *Restoration Drama*, p. 201. For a fuller analysis of this aspect of the play, see Kroll, 'Emblem and Empiricism in Davenant's *Macbeth*', *ELH*, 57.4 (Winter, 1990), 835–864.

[29] Ted H. Miller, 'The Two Deaths of Lady Macduff: Antimetaphysics, Violence, and William Davenant's Restoration Revision of *Macbeth*', *Political Theory*, 36.6 (2008), 856–82 (pp. 856, 857). Miller quotes from Stephan K. White, *Sustaining Affirmation: The Strengths of Weak Ontology in Political Theory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 6–8.

that her death in Act III, Scene 2 thus becomes 'an argument against strong ontological political evaluations'.[30] The world Lady Macduff inhabits is more ambiguous, provisional, and unsure—more godless—than she is prepared to comprehend. Davenant kills her off 'to remind his audience what it might be like to trust in such righteous convictions *before* earthly forces and pragmatic considerations have warranted their safety. Her sobering death is the ultimate rejoinder' to an over-confident metaphysics.[31]

Davenant's *Macbeth*, scholars agree, is not a blindly royalist text. Nor is it interested in claiming that characters have access to an omniscient and therefore omnipotent source of knowledge beyond or outside of their own individual experiences of the world. The play's action is not motived by belief in the presence of a divinely-sanctioned cosmic order. Rather, *Macbeth* draws attention to the fact that history and politics are the result solely of human interactions. They are revealed as provisional and fraught activities, subject to the vagaries of circumstance and the whims and foibles of all-too human subjects. Like *Gondibert*, *Macbeth* relegates the supernatural to the margins, dismissing its claims to revealed truth, and focusing instead on those 'naturall probabilities in Story, which are instructive to humane life' (*Preface*, p. 4). As we shall see, even Davenant's witches do not know everything, but merely 'inhabit the limited epistemological world of the other characters, unable like them to penetrate the appearances of things'.[32] If *Macbeth* tells us anything about the Restoration settlements of the 1660s, it is that kings are appointed and held in place by the people's prerogative, not by a higher, divine power.

Such epistemological challenges are registered, for instance, in a short scene in Act IV, in which Macduff attempts to convince Malcolm finally to take the reins of power and defeat the tyrannical Macbeth. Malcolm is troubled by Macduff's proposal to enter into a civil war, because he cannot work out what Macduff's true motives are. Thinking about Macbeth's earlier profession of loyalty to Duncan and how he subsequently betrayed the King, Malcolm fears that Macduff might do something similar: 'This Tirant', he says, 'whose foul Name blisters our Tongues, | Was once thought honest. You have lov'd him well. | He has not toucht you yet' (IV. 3. 5–11). Macbeth was 'once thought honest', as Macduff is now, but will that honesty prove false in the future as it had done for his father, in the past? It has been eighteen years since Macbeth took to the throne, and Malcolm cannot tell for certain which way Macduff's allegiances lie.

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[30] Miller, 'Two Deaths'. p. 858.
[31] Miller, 'Two Deaths', p. 872; original italics.
[32] Kroll, 'Emblem and Empiricism', p. 850.

The scene recalls Duncan's earlier doubts about the Thane of Cawdor:

> There's no Art
> To find the minds construction in the face:
> He was a Gentleman on whom I built
> An absolute trust. (I. 4. 12–15)

Unable to correctly 'read' Cawdor's true motives, Duncan promoted Macbeth, thus setting off the chain of events that have led to this moment between Macduff and Malcolm in Birnam Wood. Davenant further encourages the link between Duncan's inability to divine his subjects' loyalties with Malcolm's doubts about Macduff. Unlike Shakespeare's text, Davenant has Macduff himself deliver to Macbeth 'The news of your success' (I. 3. 90) from the King. Might Macduff, like Cawdor and Macbeth before him, be hiding something from Malcolm now? He had once professed loyalty to Duncan, only to accept (begrudgingly) Macbeth as king later. Is he really turning his coat once more in the name of his country? 'I am not treacherous' (IV. 3. 13) is all he can say by way of lame assurance.

While Malcolm eventually comes to accept Macduff's virtuous motives, it is telling that the play stages a moment of severe doubt on the part of the future king. Men's motives are never unproblematically verifiable in *Macbeth*; they always require some external signifier—like the look of a face or the rubbing of hands—that might be open to misinterpretation. The stage is the perfect place to literalise this dilemma, because it is an artform that deals wholly in externals and in characters' professed intentions; it cannot ever really reveal 'the minds construction', but shows us only the 'face' of a *persona*, a person or actor. We have already seen how these ideas were so effectively set up in *Gondibert*, especially in the scene in which Birtha and Gondibert reveal their love to each other and to Astragon through their blushes and coy glances.

The recognition that we cannot be as certain about the way the world is as we might wish, has important political consequences in the early 1660s. Charles's regime, like Duncan's, had great difficulty in assessing subjects' allegiances after the Restoration. This difficulty eventually led to the Act of Uniformity in 1662, which was intended to force the hand of religious dissenters by having them accept (or reject) the established Church of England as the national church.[33] Rather than strengthening the monoculture of Restoration

[33] Hutton, *The Restoration*, pp. 171–80; Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and His Kingdoms, 1660–1685* (London: Allen Lane, 2005), pp. 58–60. As Hutton reminds us, 'it must be stressed that this act functioned as a part of the whole [second Restoration] settlement' (p. 171), which included many pieces of legislation.

Anglicanism, however, the Act only served to further divide the country, irreparably damaging any good-will felt on the part of dissenters (not to mention Catholics) to Charles's regime.[34] Factionalism and fracture were the inevitable result.

Davenant had already insisted that a strong monarch was necessary to keep the various factions that were growing in check, rather than capitulating to any one group in particular.[35] In a 'Poem to the Kings most Sacred Majesty' (1663), Davenant betrays an anxiety that one settlement faction might win out over the others, and argues that it is vital that the monarch should rise above such petty squabbling, and maintain social harmony by acknowledging the needs, desires, and fears of *all* parties over which he must rule:

> Victors by conqu'ring Realms are not secure,
> Nor seem of any thing, but hatred, sure:
> A King who conquers Minds does so improve
> The Conquer'd that they still the Victor love.
> How can *You* rest where Pow'r is still alarm'd:
> Each Crowd a Faction, and each Faction arm'd?
> Who fashions of Opinion love to change,
> And think their own the best for being strange;
> Their own if it were lasting they would hate,
> Yet call it *Conscience* when 'tis *obstinate* […]
> That Feaver, Zeal (the Peoples desp'rate fit)
> You cool, and without bleeding, master it:
> Dissembled Zeal (Ambition's old disguise)
> The Vizard in which Fools out-face the Wise.
> *You* keep with prudent arts of watchful care
> Divided Sects from a conjunctive War;
> And when unfriendly Zeal from Zeal dissents,
> Look on it like the War of Elements;
> And, God-like, an harmonious World create
> Out of the various discords of your State.[36]

Davenant's view is that, rather than Anglicans bulldozing others' opinions with their self-conceit and confidence, insisting that they were right to believe that the king was

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[34] N. H. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1987).
[35] Miller, 'Two Deaths', p. 865.
[36] William Davenant, 'Poem to the Kings most Sacred Majesty', in *Shorter Poems*, pp. 90–103, ll. 89–8, 137–46.

'accountable to none but God'[37] alone, Charles should instead acknowledge the multitude of voices in his realm—the 'various discords'—and make out of all of them a 'harmonious World'. Davenant was widely suspected of having converted to Catholicism after the regicide, so he was hardly an impartial commentator in these events.[38] This was, he maintained, the only way to secure peace as well as Charles's own authority as the newly installed king. Charles should, in effect, function as a Hobbesian sovereign, or '*Mortall God*'. For Hobbes, the Commonwealth is generated by every person submitting to one man, who then acts on their behalf:

> For by this Authoritie, given him by every particular man in the Common-Wealth, he hath the use of so much Power and Strength conferred on him, that by terror thereof, he is inabled to forme the wills of them all […] And in him consisteth the Essence of the Common-wealth; which (to define it,) is *One Person, of whose Acts a great Multitude, by mutuall Covenants one with another, have made themselves every one the Author, to the end he may use the strength and means of them all, as he shall think expedient, for their Peace and Common Defence*.[39]

Hobbes and Davenant both believe that the only way to ensure the sovereign retains his authority over his subjects is to acknowledge the multiple perspectives and opinions they each have, and from them create a single 'Covenant' that he thinks expedient. He should not, as the Anglicans hoped he would, merely champion one side at the expense of the others. The Restoration, if it was to be successful in 'conquer[ing] Minds' and thus securing the king's authority, needed to engage a more nuanced approach to such topics as religion and politics, an approach that could take account of the mixed voices, the contrary opinions, and the shifting allegiances—whether royalist, Parliamentarian, or Independent—that had brought it about.

Throughout the revolutionary period, Davenant has promoted the theatre as the supreme institution in which to stage, in controlled, fictionalised conditions, the controversial and often irresolvable problems of the moment, without ever compromising the rule of law or the dominant political consensus. There are no easy conclusions offered by any of the operas or plays Davenant produced in this period, even in the case of the overtly pro-Cromwellian operas *Peru* and *Drake*. *Macbeth*, likewise registers the contradictions and tensions inherent

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[37] Francis Gregory, *David's Returne from His Banishment* (Oxford, 1660). See also Mark Goldie, 'John Locke and Anglican Royalism', *Political Studies*, 31 (1983), 61–85.
[38] See Edmond, p. 103.
[39] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, pp. 227–8.

in the Restoration settlements. Davenant fully appreciated the 'difficulty of sustaining the religious and political settlements that made the Restoration possible',[40] and wrote into *Macbeth* a critique of those sections of the polity, such as the die-hard Anglicans, who refused to acknowledge the messiness of the reality they faced in securing a 'peaceful' settlement for the nation. While *Macbeth* should certainly be seen as 'one of the early celebrations of the Restoration,' it shows itself 'already mindful of […] looming troubles' ahead for Charles's regime.[41] For Davenant, the theatre is a vital part of civic life precisely because it gives voice to things unsayable in other public spaces, things that nevertheless, he feels, demand articulation. The play offers an opportunity to hear those 'various discords' in the form of a 'Morall Fiction' or '*Parable*' (*Proposition*, p. 23).

Macbeth thus offers an opportunity to explore ideas related to the Restoration moment. In the next section, I want to develop this idea and suggest that the theatre serves as an arena for the debates around memory, history, and forgetting that animated so much discussion in the 1660s. In order to secure their authority, the key architects of the Restoration aimed at taking control of historical memory itself, and worked to erase the troubling histories of the 1640s and 1650s rather than dealing with them directly—in effect, they wanted to silence dissenting voices, while holding all the power to 'forgive' those who had capitulated with the Protectorate regime, including Davenant himself. It was well-known at the time that Davenant had, in the 1650s, 'obtained Leave of Oliver and Richard Cromwell to vent his Operas in a time' when his supposed master, Charles II, was suffering in exile.[42] And he was not alone. As Potter observers: 'For that majority of Davenant's audience in 1664 who had been quiescent under Cromwell [*Macbeth*'s] argument externalises an inner conflict which badly needed ventilating'.[43] *Macbeth* argues against the Restoration impulse to forget, and shows through the example of its own narrative that troubling memories tend to resurface to haunt the living, despite any steps taken to keep them buried. Better, it argues, to acknowledge those alternative perspectives and subsume them under the totalising figure of a Hobbesian sovereign. *Macbeth* is haunted by the brute fact that citizens and subjects are once again compelled to switch their allegiances and justify their past actions. In turn, the theatrical production works to bring those memories of the mid-century back into public consciousness precisely so that the ghosts of the past could be exorcized for good.

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[40] Miller, 'Two Deaths', p. 863.
[41] Miller, 'Two Deaths', p. 864.
[42] Bawcutt, ed., *Control and Censorship*, p. 223.
[43] Potter, *Secret Rites*, pp. 203, 206.

Davenant's Theatre as 'Memory-Machine': Forgetting Oblivion

The Restoration has long been understood as an exercise in selective forgetting and remembering. 'The fear that history would repeat itself, and that the country would be torn apart by another civil war,' Paulina Kewes has argued, 'haunted post-1660 England'.[44] To address this fear, Charles II, on his return in 1660, attempted to erase the 'late troubled times' from public memory. The start of his reign was backdated to 1649 (the year of his father's death), and the legislature was returned to that of the 1641 Long Parliament—the last set of reforms to have been placed before the king. In Tim Harris's phrase, 'constitutionally, it was as if the last nineteen years had never happened.'[45] The destruction of the legal and constitutional frameworks of the Republic was matched only by a more material iconoclasm: emblems of the Republic, such as the state's arms and seals, were demolished and removed from public view. Records deemed embarrassing or compromising to the incoming regime were altered or destroyed.[46] Most drastic of all, the Convention Parliament, which was legally responsible for overseeing Charles's return to power, implemented the Act of Free and General Pardon, Indemnity and Oblivion, which attempted to circumscribe people's individual memories, if not by literally expunging them, then at least by encouraging their suppression:

> Out of a hearty and pious Desire to put an end to all Suites and Controversies that by occasion of the late Distractions have arisen and may arise betweene all His Subjects […] And to bury all Seeds of future Discords and remembrance of the former as well in His owne Breast as in the Breasts of His Subjects one towards another […] That all and all manner of Treasons, Misprisions of Treason, Murthers Felonies Offences Crimes Contempts and Misdemeanors Counceled Commanded Acted or done since the first day of January in the yeare of our Lord One thousand six hundred thirty seaven by any person or persons before the [twenty fourth] day of June in the yeare of our Lord One thousand six hundred and sixty […] be Pardoned Released Indempnified Discharged and put in utter Oblivion.[47]

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[44] Paulina Kewes, 'Acts of Remembrance, Acts of Oblivion: Rhetoric, Law, and National Memory in Early Restoration England', in *Ritual, Routine, and Regime: Institutions of Repetition in Euro-American Cultures, 1650–1832*, ed. by Lorna Clymer (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2006), pp. 103–131 (p. 103).

[45] Harris, *Restoration*, p. 47.

[46] Jonathan Sawday, 'Re-Writing a Revolution: History, Symbol, and Text in the Restoration', *The Seventeenth Century*, 7 (1992), 171–99 (p. 175).

[47] 'An Act of Free and Generall Pardon Indempnity and Oblivion', in *Statutes of the Realm: Volume 5, 1628–80*, ed. by John Raithby, pp. 226–234. *British History Online* <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/statutes-realm/vol5/pp226-234> [accessed 27 July 2018].

The language of the Act is unequivocal. It promises that any and all actions taken against the Crown between 1647 and 1660 will be forgotten and, by implication, forgiven. In effect, all those subjects who had reconciled themselves with the Republic would be given a full pardon, and would be permitted to live as though any 'rebellion' had never taken place. On closer inspection, however, the phraseology of the Act is not as sure as it might be. Charles wishes to 'bury all Seeds of future Discords', meaning that he wants to lay to rest the conflicts of the past and look to a future in which the history and memory of the late 'Distractions' can play no active role. Even the king's own memories will be purged and 'put in utter Oblivion'. But, as even the most naïve of horticulturalists knows, seeds that are buried in the ground tend, in time, to resurface as mighty oaks. Critics have long been aware of the paradox lying at the heart of the Act of Indemnity: 'An act of oblivion ostensibly indicates an intentional disregard or an arranged state of having been forgotten, while a pardon seems to be an intentional remembrance of an act, only to excuse or forgive it.'[48] It became clear that the Act could not forgive and forget simultaneously. As John Dryden wrote in his celebration of the king's return: 'Among our crimes oblivion may be set, | But 'tis our King's perfection to forget',[49] rather than the people's prerogative. Matthew Neufeld and Edward Legon have shown that both royalists *and* parliamentarian republicans not only remembered precisely what transpired in the 1650s after the Act of Indemnity came into force, but that they also demonstrated very strong views as to how that history should be publicly commemorated.[50] Jonathan Sawday too cites texts such as *The Great Memorial* and *The Black Remembrancer*, which recorded the names of the regicides and details of the trial of Charles I, as evidence that the attempt to obliterate the Interregnum from the public consciousness was almost immediately 'forestalled': 'The past was, undoubtedly, urging itself on to the present', he writes.[51] Davenant saw his theatre as a place to let this seemingly mnemonic inevitability play out.

If remembering is so important for acknowledging the complexities adhering to the Restoration moment, then Davenant's theatre should be a space in which to remember the past and metaphorically re-member the dead, rather than forget them. This is precisely how

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[48] Kewes, 'Acts of Remembrance', p. 113.

[49] John Dryden, 'To His Sacred Majesty: A Panegyric on his Coronation', in *Poems*, I, pp. 55–61 (ll. 87–8).

[50] Matthew Neufeld, *The Civil Wars After 1660: Public Remembering in Late Stuart England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013), pp. 17–86; Edward Legon, 'Remembering Revolution: Seditious Memories in England and Wales, 1660–1685' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University College, London, 2015). See also Norbook, 'Memoirs and Oblivion', pp. 238.

[51] Sawday, 'Re-Writing', p. 179.

he characterised it in his panegyric. Davenant presents the theatre in the poem as 'the Poets Magick-Glass', a space 'In which the Dead in vision by us pass; | Where what the *Great* have done we do again, | But with less loss of time and with less pain)'.[52] It is a 'publick mirrour'[53] which can reanimate the past for the edification, moral instruction and pleasure of the audience. In a certain sense, 'Poem to the Kings most Sacred Majesty' pre-empts Marvin Carlson's evocative idea of the theatre as a 'memory machine'. For Carlson all theatre consists of the 'retelling of stories already told, the re-enactment of events already enacted, the reexperience of emotions already experienced'; it 'weaves a ghostly tapestry for its audience, playing in various degrees and combinations with that audience's collective and individual memories' of the past.[54] Davenant proposes that his theatre will likewise restage those things 'obliterated' by the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion in order to air those troubled memories and emotions that preclude society from moving forward positively; it also teaches the present something about itself. When Shakespeare's Macbeth insists the witches show him his future, he is confronted with '*A show of eight King, the last with a glass in his hand*' (IV. 1. 127SD), the 'glass' most likely signifying a magic mirror or crystal ball used for divination.[55] Davenant, on the other hand, omits the glass entirely (IV. 1. 101SD). For him, the theatre itself is already the 'Magick-Glass' that both shows us the past and, by inference, presages the future. It is being offered as a tool for the Restoration regime to use to fully engage the various members of the Commonwealth in the collective enterprise of accommodating with the monarch.

Why did Davenant choose to adapt *Macbeth* to engage with these particular issues of history, memory and authority, in the early years of the Restoration? The history of Macbeth and its narratives were frequently used by writers in the early modern period. Shakespeare's play of course explored questions about kingship and loyalty in the wake of the Gunpowder plot in 1606, but earlier writers too had taken the story of Macbeth and manipulated it for their own ends. For example, in the 1570s and 1580s the Scottish humanist George Buchanan used Macbeth as a precedent to advance his own ideas about royal succession based on

[52] Davenant, 'Poem', ll. 371–4.
[53] Davenant, 'Poem', l. 401.
[54] Marvin Carlson, *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2001; rpt. 2008), pp. 3, 165.
[55] See William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. by Sandra Clark and Pamela Mason (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2015), p. 244 fn. 110.1.

election.[56] Among the constitutional crises and hot debates about legitimate succession and the deposition of tyrannical kings of the 1640s, John Milton built on Buchanan's version of the story, as well as quotes from Shakespeare's play, to discuss the legal and moral reasoning for deposing a tyrannical leader in his *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649). Later, in the 1651 *Defensio pro populo Anglicano* ('A Defence of the English People'), he answered those who challenged the legality of the limited government with the laconic 'For Scotland I refer you to Buchanan'.[57] Milton had even made notes in the early 1640s for a verse drama he intended to write on the subject of Macbeth and the murder of Duncan: he would recount the murder from the point of view of Duncan's ghost, with a view to the whole consisting 'mainly of debate about what to do to combat Macbeth's tyranny', modelling the narrative on the structure of hugely popular public disputations of the late 1640s and 1650s, as Davenant's *First Days' Entertainment* was to do in 1656.[58] As William C. Carroll has noted, 'the narrative of Macbeth would be continually appropriated and re-told by both royalists and their opponents,' in the seventeenth century, because it 'foregrounds the same problems of sovereign authority that were continually at stake' throughout the period.[59]

David Roberts has observed that Davenant 'had an unrivalled instinct for making the past speak to the present',[60] and he used his adaptation of *Macbeth* to do precisely that. The play's longstanding appropriation for political debates about sovereignty made it amenable to the current climate; it also lent Davenant legitimacy in addressing these issues through this text. *Macbeth* was itself an example of history that was recognised as valuable example from which to draw instruction and advice, and which crucially proved malleable to adaptation. When the play was printed in quarto in 1674, as if to stress the play's value as a historically-

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[56] George Buchanan, *Rerum Scoticarum historia* (Edinburgh, 1582). In an earlier work of 1579, *De jure regni apud Scotos*, Buchanan had justified the deposition of Mary, Queen of Scots, and as a result his work was condemned by James VI's Scottish parliament in 1584. See also Alan Sinfield, '*Macbeth*: Historiography, Ideology, and Intellectuals', *Critical Quarterly*, 28 (1986), 63–77.

[57] John Milton, *A Defence of the People of England*, in *CPW*, IV, pp. 285–537 (p. 481). See also John Milton, *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, in *The Complete Works of John Milton, Volume VI: Vernacular Regicide and Republican Writings*, ed. by N. H. Keeble and Nicholas McDowell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 131–85.

[58] Martin Dzelzainis, 'Milton, *Macbeth*, and Buchanan', *Seventeenth Century*, 4 (1989), 55–66; Potter, *Secret Rites*, pp 202–3; Nicholas McDowell, 'Milton's Regicide Tracts and the Uses of Shakespeare', in *The Oxford Handbook of Milton*, ed. by Nicholas McDowell and Nigel Smith (Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 252–271; Foran, '*Macbeth* and Apocalypse', pp. 71–108.

[59] William C. Carroll, '"Two Truths Are Told": Afterlives and Histories of Macbeths', *Shakespeare Survey*, 57 (2004), 69–80 (p. 71).

[60] David Roberts, *Restoration Plays and Players: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 95.

informed document, its publisher, Peter Chetwinde, included ‘An Argument’ of the history, taken verbatim from the second edition of Peter Heylyn’s *Microcosmus, Or a Little Description of the Great World* (1625). This text was itself based on the narratives found in Holinshed and Boece, and was dedicated to that ‘greatest and best accomplished traveller’, the then Prince of Wales, later Charles I.[61] As Carroll points out, Heylyn’s account ignores Buchanan’s constitutional arguments about elected succession in order to turn the narrative into one about ‘the restitution of lineal inheritance as the “true heir” assumes the throne’.[62] In 1674, the ‘Argument’ may have placed the play firmly in a royalist camp, but in 1663–4, in performance, the alternative history of the play—as a way of questioning forms of government, was equally in play.

Ghosts play a small but significant role in the Restoration *Macbeth*. As in Shakespeare’s original, we see Banquo’s spirit strut and fret across the stage during the banqueting scene in act III. His interruption of the feast forces Macbeth to confront his bloody actions, and attempt to justify them: ‘Tis not the first of Murders; blood was shed | E’re humane Law decreed it for a sin’ (III. 5. 66–7), he tells his wife after the ghost makes its first descent. Prompted by the image of his dead friend and comrade-in-arms, Macbeth worries about what kind of stability he and his kingdom can enjoy now that ‘Charnel-houses and our Graves must send | Those that we bury back’ (III. 5. 61–2):

> The times have been,
> That when the brains were out, the man wou’d dye;
> And there lye still; but now they rise again
> And thrust us from our seats. (III. 5. 69–72)

If the dead can no longer by relied upon to stay quiet, if memories will not remain buried, then Macbeth’s entire future as king is thrown into doubt. Banquo’s ghost rudely crashes his friend’s party and threatens a usurpation of his own.

The unwanted and unforeseen return of Banquo serves multiple functions in the play. On the one hand, it provides an intriguing spectacle, utilising the Lincoln’s Inn Fields’s trapdoors to dramatic effect as it descends and rises again at Macbeth’s feet.[63] On the other, it works as a theatrical metaphor for the kinds of memory being discussed in the Act of

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[61] Peter Heylyn, *Microcosmus, A Little Description of the Great World. Augmented and revised* (Oxford: John Lichfield and William Turner, 1625), pp. 508–10, sig. ¶2[r].
[62] Carroll, ‘Afterlives and Histories’, p. 73.
[63] The Yale Manuscript, which Spencer dates to *c.* 1664 includes the direction ‘The Ghost of Banquo rises at his fe[et]’ (Spencer, ed., *Davenant’s ‘Macbeth’*, p. 117.)

Indemnity and Oblivion and by Davenant's panegyric to Charles II. These are memories that come back to haunt the living in the present. They are unsolicited but return regardless, even if Macbeth has taken pains to hide what he has done. Ghosts in early modern drama invariably return unbidden in the service of memory (and revenge)—think of Old Hamlet's plea to his son to 'Remember me' (*Hamlet*, I. 5. 92). However, as Davenant has said, by staging these unwanted memories in the play, Davenant is in fact recuperating them for education and moral ends. The dead 'teach their living Race' by being reanimated in the theatre. Banquo's ghost prompts Macbeth to set out to justify (and question) his treacherous actions to secure his ambitions, thus turning him into a negative example for spectators. It is the sight of Banquo's bloody body that causes Macbeth to become paranoid, seek out the witches' advice, and become a tyrant.

Banquo is not the only ghost to appear in the play. Davenant also allows the dead King Duncan a return to the world. In act IV, scene 4 Macbeth, torn between heading into battle and attending his indisposed wife, finds her wandering about the castle in a distracted state. He salutes her, only to find her cowed in fear at the sight of the royal phantom:

> MACBETH How does my Gentle Love?
> LADY MACBETH *Duncan* is dead.
> MACBETH No words of that.
> LADY MACBETH And yet to Me he Lives.
> His fatal Ghost is now my shadow, and pursues me
> Where e're I go.
>
> (IV. 4. 26–9)

Unlike Banquo's ghost, there is no indication here that Duncan is physically present onstage. He is rather like the dagger, 'a false creation' (II. 1. 36), emanating from Lady Macbeth's distracted brain. She knows this, recognising that '*to Me* he Lives', and Macbeth insists that it is her 'Fears [that] have misinform'd your eyes […] Methinks there's nothing' (IV. 4. 30–3). Clearly, she has been psychologically compromised as a result of her guilt at her part in the murder of the king. 'Why do you follow Me?', she asks in desperation: 'I did not do it' (IV. 4. 32). Duncan's ghost follows Lady Macbeth around as a reminder of her and her husband's past actions. She is confronted by a 'shadow', a memory, of a once living body and is forced to acknowledge it, even as others refuse or are unable to do so. (Macbeth and the spectators in Davenant's theatre cannot themselves see Duncan.) Lady Macbeth accepts that her misperception is internally generated but nevertheless traces the cause of the hallucination back to her and her husband's treason: 'the strange error of my Eyes | Proceeds from the

strange Action of your Hands' (IV. 4. 37–8), she retorts. The memory of past wrongs, in the form of the imagined ghost, rudely crashes in on the Macbeths' present; while one cannot erase those 'strange' remembrances from her mind or the bloody signs of them from her hands, so the other does not recognise them as having any purchase whatsoever on his here-and-now. Macbeth is far too focussed on a living, future threat to his kingship to worry about the dead.

Memory more generally is a recurring theme in the play. In an early conversation between Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff, the problems of memory are brought up once again. Lady Macduff has come to visit her friend as a distraction from thinking about her husband who is fighting with Macbeth in the war. The change of scene, though, has not worked: she is still 'disconsolate', her bosom 'fill'd […] up with fears' (I. 5. 2, 14). Lady Macbeth suggests, politely but with a hint of exasperation, that she should stop worrying now that the battle is won and Macduff is safe from harm. Lady Macduff does not quite see it like that. Instead, she insists that prolonged exposure to emotional strain and trauma make forgetting the past extremely difficult: 'Ah Madam, dangers which have long prevail'd | Upon the fancy; even when they are dead | Live in the memory a-while' (I. 5. 16–18). Lady Macduff, despite her confidence in the ways things work later on, here articulates the problem facing all the characters in the play but also those responsible for the Restoration settlements too. Even when things are certain, the memory of the past troubles remain 'a-while'. One cannot help but recall the past, even when it cannot affect the present. Davenant's *Macbeth* is in part a salient reminder that memory cannot be so easily forged, erased or suppressed as those in power had hoped it could, but that it might, through cultural institutions like the theatre, be managed, manipulated and finally contained.

Davenant's insistence on memory and history as the basis for understanding the world is put in direct competition with the alternative, providentialist view: that of prophecy and divine revelation. This method of understanding the world is demonstrated through the witches as opposed to the ghosts in the play. Rather than presenting a world in which the fates of men and women are directed by prophecy and superstition, *Macbeth* shows up the arbitrariness of power and the precariousness of social relations. The witches are shown both to be as dependent on empirical experience as anybody else, rather than being party to the knowledge of a prime mover who operates outside of the social (human) realm. In a crucial substitution to Shakespeare's text, when the witches are tasked by Macbeth to 'answer me' (IV. 1. 67), they do not call on their diabolical apparitions—the armed head, the bloody child, and the crowned child holding a tree—but speak their prophecies themselves. Heccate is no

devil in this production, but is rather the witches' ringleader. Surely, if Davenant wanted to demonstrate the witches' access to supernatural knowledge through scenic spectacle, he could have done so. That he does not suggests that the straightforward dramaturgy was a strategic choice, and tells us something about the witches' power, or lack thereof, to influence events beyond rhetorical persuasion. In Shakespeare's text, Macbeth writes to his wife that he has 'learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge' (I. 5. 2). Shakespeare plays on the ambiguity of the witches' power: it is not clear whether they influence events or simply convince Macbeth that they do; whatever the reason, however, Macbeth *believes* in their prophecies because of what he has seen with his own eyes. In Davenant's play, he has merely 'been told' (I. 5. 40) that they can divine the future. They do sing their song, chanting that 'We gain more life by *Duncan's* death' (II. 5. 50), but it is never clear whether the song simply expresses their desire for regicide or is itself an incantation intended to bring the murder about. It is not that Davenant's text changes the relationship between Macbeth and the witches, but that he makes the ambiguity between their power and Macbeth's actions greater.

Part of that ambiguity stems from the witches' tonal vagueness. While critics have argued that the witches are indeed meant to be frightening, Amanda Eubanks Winkler provides musicological evidence that they are in fact figured in the Restoration productions as humorous, even comic, and are no doubt a major source of the 'divertisement' that Samuel Pepys associates with the play.[64] In her musicological study of seventeenth-century witches in the theatre, Winkler shows that Davenant's witches dance and sing to a series of jigs in the play, a 'light-hearted' dance-style typically associated in the period with excessive sexuality and, thus, with the potentially for comic effect.[65] Davenant's witches, unlike their Shakespearean counterparts, are not figured as 'weird' prognosticators of misfortune, to be feared and heeded, but are rather fallible grotesques whom only fools would credit: 'He that believes ill news from such as these, | Deserves to find it true. Their words are like | Their shape; nothing but fiction' (II. 5. 88–90), says Lady Macduff when she and her husband are confronted by the sisters on the heath. We might baulk at Lady Macduff's moral and spiritual absolutism here, but she is correct in her assessment of the witches' powerlessness.

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[64] Murray, *Restoration Shakespeare*, p. 52; Amanda Eubanks Winkler, *O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note: Music for Witches, the Melancholic, and the Mad on the Seventeenth-Century English Stage* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), pp. 40–8; Pepys, *Diary*, VIII, p. 7 (7 January 1667).
[65] Winkler, *O Let Us Howle*, p. 40.

It is not that the witches are correct, but rather that Macbeth chooses to believe them and act upon their words that causes the tragedy of the final acts to occur. Macbeth knows that what they say is unverifiable. 'Infected be the Earth in which they suck,' he muses, 'And Damn'd all those that trust 'em' (IV. 1. 123–4). However, there is just enough circumstantial evidence of what is to come, that he puts store in their words regardless:

> Time thou Anticipat'st all my Designes;
> Our Purposes seldom succeed, unless our Deeds go with them.
> My Thoughts shall henceforth into Actions rise,
> The Witches made me cruel, but not wise. (IV. 1. 129–33)

In act III scene 8, Heccate, the witches' leader, complains that they have overstepped their remit in riddling Macbeth:

> Why did you all Traffick with *Macbeth*
> 'Bout Riddles and affairs of Death,
> And cal'd not me; All you have done
> Hath been but for a Weyward Son:
> Make some amends now: get you gon,
> And at the pit of *Achœron*
> Meet me i' th' morning: Thither he
> Will come to know his Destiny. (III. 8. 2–11)

According to Heccate, the witches have inadvertently set off a chain of events that they either did not realise they were starting or that they did in contravention to their master's larger plan. Macbeth is no more than a 'Weyward Son', according to Heccate, rather than the central pawn in a cosmic game of dynastic chess.

'The Spur of my Ambition prompts me': Exploring the Passions of Power

Many commentators have noted how Restoration adaptors of Shakespeare were interested in neoclassical principles of harmony and pattern and regularised the plays' language to achieve that end. Spencer, for example, observes that the 'resulting plays are more tightly coherent' at the expense of registering individual characters' psychology. Instead, the plays are 'primarily *social*: they emphasise permanent patterns of human relationships with less attention to the

depths of individual experience.'[66] This patterning of human relationships, as Spencer puts it, is not merely the result of the eccentricities of Restoration adaptors, however. It is also, as by now should be clear, an organising principle of Davenant's dramaturgical aesthetic across the revolutionary period. We have seen it in *Gondibert*, as the hero is compared to Oswald; in *The Siege of Rhodes*, with the (Christian) Alphonso and the (Muslim) Solyman; and even in *The First Day's Entertainment*, with the pro-theatrical Aristophanes and the antitheatrical Diogenes and the Englishman and Frenchman. The groups of English colonizers are offered as balance for the greedy Spanish in *Peru* and *Drake*. In *Macbeth*, Davenant demonstrates the same 'generalizing, conventionalizing tendency'[67] that he first described in the *Preface* to *Gondibert*. Macbeth does resemble in many particulars Oliver Cromwell, but that is because Davenant has written into the play the same human passions, desires, and character flaws that were recognised to be pertinent to the lord protector. Davenant has massaged Shakespeare's play to pick up on the topical issues, because he wants to explore through the theatre the motivations and complex allegiances that led to the interregnum period. Davenant insists that dramatic characters should be composite creations—what Hobbes called 'a picture conteyning diverse figures' (*Answer*, p. 55)—taking key traits from a range of historical characters to reveal their underlying universal *passions* or motivations rather than simply 'record[ing] the truth of actions' (*Preface*, p. 5) in all their banality. In what remains, I want to explore how *Macbeth* explores these passions. As I have been arguing throughout this thesis, however, Davenant is not concerned with staging 'particular persons, as they are lifted, or levell'd by the force of Fate,' but rather felt it 'nobler to contemplate the generall History of Nature, then a selected Diary of Fortune' (*Preface*, p. 5). *Macbeth* is not a veiled commentary on the historical past, but rather an exploration of those universal human patterns of behaviour that brought that history about. Davenant uses *Macbeth* to explore what he saw as the governing 'passion' of the recent conflicts: ambition. He uses the play as a convenient narrative in which he can play out particular experiences to make general claims about society.

The word 'ambition' ricochets through *Macbeth*.[68] We first hear the word when Lady Macbeth muses over her husband's letter in act I, scene 5, in which he informs her of his promotion as Thane of Cawdor:

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[66] Spencer, 'Introduction', in *Five Restoration Adaptations*, p. 12.
[67] Spencer, 'Introduction', in *Five Restoration Adaptations*, p. 12.
[68] See Raddadi, *Davenant's Adaptations*, p. 99; Spencer, 'Introduction', in *Five Restoration Adaptations*, pp. 15–6.

> *Glamis* thou art, and *Cawdor*, and shalt be
> What thou art promis'd: yet I fear thy Nature
> Has too much of the milk of humane kindness
> To take the nearest way: thou would'st be great:
> Thou do'st not want ambition: but the ill
> Which should attend it: what thou highly covet'st
> Thou covet'st holily! alas, thou art
> Loth to play false; and yet would'st wrongly win! (I. 5. 50–57)

According to Lady Macbeth, her husband is too agreeable for his own good. He covets high office, but is not prepared, she believes, to take the actions necessary to achieve it: 'Thou willingly, Great *Glamis*, would'st enjoy | The end without the means! (I. 5. 59–60). For her, as for other characters in the play, ambition is almost always a socially negative, even evil, thing.

It is not Macbeth himself, however, but his 'desires' that are the problem. They are 'irregular' (I. 5. 58) and 'too effeminate' (I. 5. 63) for a soldier, and thus require her chastisement and careful management, if he is to overcome his scruples and achieve his full potential. As in Shakespeare, Lady Macbeth invokes the spirits to 'unsex me' (I. 5. 77), so that she might take on the burden of masculine ruthlessness and aid her husband in his endeavours to become king. She asks that the spirits

> Empty my Nature of humanity,
> And fill it up with cruelty […]
> That no relapses into mercy may
> Shake my design, nor make it fall before
> 'Tis ripen'd to effect: (I. 5. 78–83)

She asks too that her breasts be filled with 'gall' instead of milk, with all the associations with 'human kindness' (I. .5. 86), and that she be hid 'in a smoak as black as hell', so that 'my keen steel' does not discern 'the wound it makes' (I. 5. 87–8).

In this important scene, Lady Macbeth defines ambition as coveting power. She has clearly been reading her Hobbes with care. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes joins ambition with covetousness, writing that they are in fact the same passion applied to different objects: 'Ambition', he writes, is the '*Desire* of Office, or precedence', while 'Covetousness' is the '*Desire* of Riches'.[69] That Macbeth *covets*, suggests that he desires both power and wealth,

[69] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 123.

even if he does so ‘highly’ and ‘holily’. Lady Macbeth, on the other hand, recognises that in order to satisfy ambition, one has to be merciless. You must ‘Look like the innocent flower, | But be the serpent under’t’ (I. 5. 101–2). Macbeth, though, is ‘Loth to play false’.

Immediately before Macbeth goes off to carry out the murder, he runs into Banquo, and they discuss together the events of the last few days:

> BANQUO What, Sir, not yet at rest? the King’s a-bed;
> He has been to night in an unusual pleasure:
> He to your servants has been bountiful,
> And with this Diamond he greets your wife
> By the obliging name of the most kind Hostess.
> (II. 1. 10–14)

The king is shown to be a generous and benevolent ruler, against whom injury would be unjust and cruel. Macbeth, however, prompted by Banquo to think on the witches’ prophecies, attempts subtly to know where his friend’s loyalties truly lie. Can Banquo be relied upon to support Macbeth’s claim to the throne? Banquo assures him that he can: ‘still keeping my bosom free, | And my Allegiances dear, I shall be counsell’d’ (II. 1. 26–7). In Chapter 21 of *Leviathan* Hobbes offers a series of situations in which a subject may legitimately switch allegiance from their sovereign, such as if they are taken prisoner and ‘his means of life be within the Guards of the enemy’. Likewise, if the sovereign ‘dye without known Kindred, and without declaration of his Heyre […] no Subjection is due’.[70] Of course, Duncan *has* announced his heir, but Macbeth’s premise is founded on the supposition that he will reach the throne unimpeded by the rightful heirs. The scene sets up Macbeth as a traitor, but also as a potential sovereign; the parallel with Cromwell, whose iconography increasingly styled him as a monarch (though always refusing the crown), is clear.[71] When he hears the bell which signals the time to carry out the murder, Macbeth implores Duncan not to hear it, ‘for ’tis a bell | That rings my Coronation, and thy Knell’ (ii. 1. 50). Macbeth’s rise to power, and the satisfaction of his ambition is predicated upon his merciless treatment of Duncan, who must die.

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[70] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 273.

[71] See, for instance, John Gauden’s engraving for the pamphlet *Cromwell’s Bloody Slaughter-House* (1660) as reproduced in Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell*, p. 180. On Cromwell’s refusal of the crown, see Patrick Little, ‘John Thurloe and the Offer of the Crown to Oliver Cromwell’, in *Oliver Cromwell: New Perspectives*, ed. by Patrick Little (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 216–240 (p. 218).

Ambition, for Macbeth, later becomes the crux upon which his entire fate hinges. In act IV, scene 4, for example, Davenant links *Macbeth* to the heroic genre and the love and honour plots of *The Siege of Rhodes*. With Malcolm's English and Scottish forces fast approaching, Macbeth orders his army to march, but refuses to go with them because he is concerned about his wife's health (she has been taken ill after the murder of Duncan): 'the Indosposition of my Wife | Detains me here', he tells Seyton (IV. 4. 3–4). Macbeth is shown pulled in two emotional directions as he is forced to choose between duty to his country and love for his wife:

> The Spur of my Ambition prompts me to go
> And make my Kingdom safe, but Love which softens
> Me to pity her in her distress,
> Curbs my Resolves. (IV. 4. 9–12)

Like Gondibert and Alphonso in *The Siege of Rhodes,* Macbeth is here presented with the dilemma of whether to privilege 'private motives […] over public consequences'.[72] We see him tussle with himself as he deliberates: 'Yet why should Love since confin'd, desire | To controul Ambition, for whose spreading hopes | The world's too narrow, It shall not' (IV. 4. 13–15). While his individual, personal self might privilege love, his duty as sovereign, he recognises, much follow his 'Ambition': 'Great Fires | Put out the Less' (iv. 4. 15–16), he says. He then asks Seyton to 'bid my Grooms | Make ready; Ile not delay my going', only to instantly change his mind again:

> SEYTON I go.
> MACBETH Stay *Seyton*, stay, Compassion calls me back.
> SEYTON He looks and moves disorderly.
> MACBETH Ile not go yet.
> (IV. 4. 19–20)

Ambition is shown here to be a destructive force, both for the Commonwealth of Scotland, in the sense that it was Macbeth's ambition (and his wife's love) that led to the regicide and his tyranny in the first place, and for Macbeth personally. He is now consumed with self-doubt and paranoia, which means he cannot rule effectively or indeed make the ruthless and merciless decisions that are required of one who has ambition. Lennox reports to Fleane and Donalbain that 'Some say he's Mad' (V. 2. 15) and that

[72] Potter, *Secret Rites*, p. 97.

there is a Civil War
Within his Bosom; which will hinder him
From waging this successfully. None can
Resist a forreign foe, who alwayes has
An enemy within him. For each murder
He weares a dagger In his Breast. (V. 2. 17–22)

Macbeth's ambition has caused a civil war in his breast. In *Peru*, Davenant demonstrated how a nation in the state of civil war was open for invasion by a foreign enemy (the Spanish), because, according to Hobbesian thinking, a sovereign who caused civil war forfeited their rights to power. Macbeth's ambition has caused something similar in himself but also in the nation at large. The microcosm of his body reflects the macrocosm of the state, in a common symbolic gesture of the king's two bodies. In *Macbeth*, Lennox's choice of phrase suggests that Scotland is now ripe for invasion by Malcolm with 'the aid sent by the *English* King' (V. 2. 7), Edward I, to usurp Macbeth. Those still in Macbeth's service are said to 'move only in Command | And not in love' (V. 2. 24–5), implying that the contract between subject and sovereign is beginning to break down.

Finally, Lennox argues that

Ambition is a tree whose Roots are small,
Whose growth is high: whose shadow ever is
The blackness of the deed attending it,
Under which nothing prospers. All the fruit
It beares are doubts and troubles, with whose crowne
The over burdend tree at last falls downe. (V. 2. 27–32)

For Lennox, ambition is a sickly growth that bears nothing but death and destruction: the higher the ambitious climb, he says, the harder they fall.

In the following scene, as the English soldiers approach Dunsinane from Birnham Wood, and Macbeth prevaricates on what to do, he charges his servant, Seyton, to 'Send out our Scouts' (V. 3. 42). Seyton, however, has other ideas. Distressed by his lord's ravings, he switches sides:

SEYTON Sir, I am gone.
Aside] Not to Obey your Orders, but the Call of Justice.
I'le to the *English* Train whose Hopes are built
Upon their Cause, and not on Witches Prophecies.

(V. 3. 42–5)

Rather than continue serving the delusions of a mad king, Seyton finally capitulates and joins the other side. Macbeth has shown himself to be incapable of protecting his people, and of making the kinds of decisions that would keep the nation together. The English approach unimpeded, and Macbeth's 'subjects cry out Curses | On my Name, which like a North-wind seems | To blast my Hopes' (V. 3. 25–7). Unable to maintain the safety of the realm, Seyton throws in his lot with the others. It makes sense in a play that exorcises memories of the regicide by restaging it before an audience, to condemn the 'passion' that brought it about. Davenant called the ambitious Macbeth a 'tyrant', and few people could have avoided thinking about Cromwell, who was often depicted in such terms in the popular press and in official Restoration propaganda. In *A Memento Directed to all Those that Truly Reverence the Memory of King Charles the Martyr* (1662), for example, Roger L'Estrange emphasised that 'The true *Cause* of the late War, was *Ambition*', while Thomas Forde, in *Virtus Rediviva*, observed that 'Though *Charls* was innocent, it was a crime enough that he was *King*, and stood in the place that ambition aimed at'.[73] Given such sentiments, *Macbeth* can be seen as a staged debate about the nature and function of 'ambition' as the cause of the late troubles.

Ambition is not always a dirty word in *Macbeth*. It is not simply something that rebellious traitors have, but a necessary trait, in moderation and under the right conditions, for the protection of the nation. In one of Davenant's additional scenes, following Macbeth's coronation, Macduff and his wife suspect foul play: 'Great *Duncan's* bloudy death | Can have no other author but *Macbeth* (III. 2. 1–2). Lady Macduff is sure of the reason Macbeth committed his crime: 'Ambition urg'd him to that bloudy deed' (III. 2. 5), and hopes that her own husband will never prove susceptible to such a vice: '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 (III. 2. 6–8). Macduff is less concerned with debating the motivation for Duncan's murder as he is with righting what has happened; he thinks Duncan himself is calling to him 'for justice' (III. 2. 10). It is here that Lady Macduff's strong and Macduff's weak ontology collide in the play, as they debate the nature of 'ambition' and of public duty. While she is certain that the

[73] Roger L'Estrange, *A Memento Directed to all Those that Truly Reverence the Memory of King Charles the Martyr* (London, 1662), sig. C1^{v}; Thomas Forde, *Virtus Rediviva: Or, A Panegyrick On the Late K. Charls the I. Second Monarch of Great Britain* (London, 1660), sig. B8^{r}. See also, Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration*, p. 148 and 249 fn. 34.

situation will eventually correct itself, as part of the natural ebb and flow of history, Macduff himself is less certain:

> If the Throne
> Was by *Macbeth* ill gain'd, Heavens Justice may,
> Without your Sword, sufficient vengeance pay.
> Usurpers lives have but a short extent,
> Nothing lives long in a strange Element. (III. 2. 10–14)

For her, the usurpation of a rightful kin is an aberration, but Heaven itself can be relied upon to rectify the situation in time. Macduff, on the other hand, holds less store in godly intervention, and believes instead that 'My Countreys dangers call for my defence | Against the bloudy Tyrants violence' (III. 2. 15–16). To overcome tyranny, he suggests, requires subjects to stand up and do something proactive. He goes so far as to contemplate assuming 'the Scepter for my Countrey's good' (III. 2. 24) himself, asking

> Is that an usurpation? can it be
> Ambition to procure the liberty
> Of this sad Realm; which does by Treason bleed?
> That which provokes, will justifie the deed. (III. 2. 25–9)

That word 'liberty', which became so loaded in the political debates of the 1640s and 1650s, hangs on the end of the line. Macduff lets it linger before going on, as if in challenge to his wife's objections to his proposals. Liberty itself is at stake; he dares her to continue in her chagrin when the risks are so high.

Lady Macduff worries about all this. For her, it seems as though her husband's dedication to serve, and therefore save, his country from a despot is a pretence to satisfy his own ambition to become king. His proposed plan of action would make Macduff himself a regicide: 'You'd raise your self, whilst you wou'd him dethrone; | And shake his Greatness, to confirm your own' (III. 2. 19–20). Whatever else Lady Macduff thinks about Macbeth, he is still a king, and killing him would be no different to killing Duncan. Read in a certain light, Macduff's actions would look like 'usurpation at the second hand' (III. 2. 22). According to Hobbes, 'Tyranny' is just monarchy 'misliked'.[74]

Macduff insists that his motives are thoroughly different from Macbeth's:

[74] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 240.

'My aim is not to Govern, but Protect: And he is not ambitious that declares, | He nothing seeks of Scepters but their cares' (III. 2. 40). Again, Macduff keys into the language of the Protectorate here, the word used to describe Cromwell's rule. Lady Macduff, though, cannot see the difference between what Macduff proposes to do, and what Macbeth actually did:

> If the Design should prosper, the Event
> May make us safe, but not you Innocent:
> 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'l be at best unjustly Good.
> You, by your Pitty which for us you plead,
> Weave but Ambition of a finer thread. (III. 2. 29–38)

Macduff, then, is shown to be as susceptible to ambition as his nemesis, just as Monck was thought to be too powerful by some after Cromwell's death. As Davenant well knew, Monck's own past political allegiance was a chequered affair. He was initially part of the Protectorate regime, becoming governor of Scotland at Cromwell's request, only to turn in favour of the Stuart cause again in late 1659, leading the charge for Restoration in 1660. Kroll has also noted that, like Macduff, Monck was known for his good relationship with his wife, Anne.[75] Macduff's wavering here as he too shows himself susceptible to the allure of power reflects the messiness of those lives as they were lived during the turmoil and uncertainty of Richard's Protectorate. That fact, however, is the entire point of Davenant's play.

This scene is fascinating because it brings together the two aspects of the play that this chapter has been dealing with: the weak versus strong ontology of the Restoration, and the universal, human passion that explicates that history. For Lady Macduff, no personal intervention is required to right what will be corrected by Providence: i.e. Macduff does not need to kill Macbeth, because all this is part of God's grand plan. Ambition, then, must always be a wholly evil thing. Macduff though sees the world differently. He appreciates, as Davenant does, the nuances and provisionality required in the real world. In the *Preface* to *Gondibert,* for example, Davenant had already married the heroic genre to the themes of love and ambition. He states that

[75] Kroll, 'Emblem and Empiricism', p. 860.

> the Characters of men (whose passions are to be eschew'd) I have deriv'd from the distempers of Love, or Ambition: for Love and Ambition are too often the raging Feavers of great mindes. Yet Ambition (if the vulgar acception of the Word were corrected) would signifie no more then an extraordinary lifting of the feet in the rough ways of Honor, over the impediments of Fortune; and hath a warmth (till it be chaf'd into a Feaver) which is necessary for every vertuous breast: (*Preface*, p. 13)

Davenant's appreciation of ambition as a motivating passion is much more ambiguous than Hobbes's, which corresponds to 'the vulgar acception of the Word', as a wholly negative phenomenon. In *Macbeth*, ambition is treated in much more nuanced ways. Macduff might have offered Macbeth his loyalty when he first became king, but now that he has proven himself a tyrant, Macduff must once again rethink his allegiances. Ambition is the thing that allows him to make and act on that choice. *Macbeth* as a whole debates the efficacy of this decision.

In the end, *Macbeth* does show that ambition is a destructive force in the wrong hands. But those such as Macduff who demonstrate the ambition to overcome tyranny likewise succeed, and their destruction is of the tyrant, Macbeth, himself. Ultimately, the play is ambivalent about ambition; it is more interested in asking the question of what happens when it is used for good and for bad. Macbeth dies recognising his own ambitious folly. Having chosen, despite learning of Macduff's birth, to fight, he engages Macduff in a sword fight, and falls fatally wounded. As he stands over the tyrant's dying body, Macduff remembers those who have likewise fallen at Macbeth's hands: 'This for my Royal Master *Duncan*, | This for my dearest Friend my Wife, | This for those Pledges of our Loves, my Children' (v. 8. 35–7). He hears a noise offstage, and turns to Macbeth to tell him his grim fate: 'I'le as a Trophy bear | Away this Sword, to witness my Revenge' (v. 8. 39–40); he leaves Macbeth alone. Macbeth's final words bring the discussion about the nature and purpose of ambition to its conclusion: 'Farewell vain World, and what's most vain in it, Ambition' (v. 8. 41).

At the close of the play, after Macduff kills Macbeth and brings his sword (rather than his head) onstage, Malcolm orders his loyal subjects to

> Drag his Body hence, and let it Hang upon
> A Pinnacle in *Dunsinane*, to shew
> To future Ages what to those is due,
> Who others Right, by Lawless Power pursue. (v. 9. 31–4)

No one in the auditorium could surely fail to see the parallel being set up with those real traitors—Oliver Cromwell, Henry Ireton, and John Bradshaw—who were exhumed, decapitated, and who had their heads displayed on London's battlements in 1661, as retribution for their past crimes against the state and king. Davenant fully intends to collapse the play-world into the larger reality of the Restoration, as his audiences meditate on this striking emblem of traitorous ambition and royal revenge. However, the play's final lines are more unsettling and ambiguous, than such an assertion of royal power suggests. While Malcolm calls for what many might take to be reasonable steps to punish the crimes of a usurper, Macduff, the play's champion of weak ontology, attempts to circumscribe the king's actions here. Malcolm's army may have succeeded in battle, but now the threat has been neutralised, it is important that 'kind Fortune Crown your Raign in Peace' (v. 9. 37). The restored king must not be seen to perpetuate violence and conflict, but to repair the nation through clemency. That is what his people expect and require in order to subject themselves to his rule. Malcolm is no divine-right king, but rather enjoys his authority solely because the 'Peoples Prayers still wait on you' (v. 9. 39). Malcolm's success as a monarch will be measured by contrasting his actions against Macbeth's: 'His Vice shall make your Virtue shine more Bright, | As a Fair Day succeeds a Stormy Night' (v. 9. 41–2). This is the same message that Davenant had given Charles II in his panegyric of 1660. Not only that, but the play ends on a further note of 'contingency and indeterminacy'. Fleance, a future successor and ancestor of Charles II, haunts the moment of Malcolm's restoration. Davenant brings him back on stage, though he says nothing, just like his father's ghost at the banquet. The play has shown time and again that the ambition of those in power resurfaces, and that the cycle of violence and usurpation is all but too easily set in motion once again. Macduff's hope that the people continue to accept Malcolm as their sovereign becomes a warning that such confidence in his righteousness is misplaced, and that he may forfeit his authority to an ambitious subject in the future.

In terms of the play's larger engagement with its own moment of production, it seems to suggest that it is better to acknowledge the mistakes made by all parties in the past and the challenges facing the present, rather than attempt to erase or ignore them, or to be overly punitive to history's losers, as Malcolm wants to be to Macbeth's body. Loyalty, after all, is a fickle human contract, not a divinely-granted right. As Davenant well knew, it was not a universal human trait that could be relied upon. In the only surviving manuscript copy of the play, now held at the University of Yale, and which probably served as the fair copy for the

printed text, Malcolm's order to display Macbeth's corpse is scored out.[76] At least one reader (or editor?) felt this was too close to the contemporary bone and decided to enact a local version of erasure, in the spirit of the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion.

This chapter develops the thesis on Davenant's theatre by demonstrating both that the theatre is being used as a place of debate, but also in confirming what Davenant has known since the regicide in 1649: namely, that allegiances continually shift and are provisional, and that incumbent sovereigns must recognise and conciliate with those that may have, in the past, turned against them if they are to secure power. Aside from Malcolm himself, all the other characters present on stage at the play's end had, after all, whether by conviction or duty, professed loyalty to the very man they have just destroyed. The fortune of kings, Davenant concludes, rests in the 'Peoples Prayers'. A king can only rule if he has the capacity to forgive past crimes, and thereby gain the loyalty of his subjects. We have seen that Davenant offers the theatre as a 'Magick-Glass', in which one might safely and in controlled conditions restage the events of the past, and offer a series of critical interventions in the formation of national and social memory in the present. Davenant's theatre is one predicated on bringing into focus the contentious, the contingent and the indeterminate, which permits him to appeal to various perspectives and positions without compromising his commitment to the Restoration regime. Rather, he offers a more pragmatic way forward than the Anglican zealots who expect those who think differently to fall quiet now that Charles II is in charge and has supported the Act of Conformity. Ultimately, this chapter has argued that Davenant's theatre across the entire period of the revolution displays an appetite for ambiguity and debate (Miller's weak ontology) rather than a prescribed or Providentialist interpretation of the world. In the final chapter, I turn to Davenant's final adaptation of Shakespeare, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* (1667), which he co-wrote with the rising star of the theatre, John Dryden, and explore how this work draws on contemporary discussions of political and sexual continence at a moment when Charles II's own competence and restraint were under severe scrutiny.

[76] Spencer, *Davenant's 'Macbeth'*, p. 146.

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‘Th’ effect of his great Art I long to see’: Experimental Theatre in *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island*

In *Macbeth*, a play deeply vexed by questions of usurpation, tyranny, and civil war, Davenant taps into the anxieties and debates that accompanied the early Restoration. This thesis has sought to recognise Davenant’s highly responsive and adaptive approach to the shifting terrain of English political life in the revolutionary period. His operas and plays across the 1650s and 1660s, while not always consistent or entirely successful, engage with contemporary issues—from Cromwellian foreign policy to Charles II’s desire to erase from public memory the divisions that led to the Civil War—and seek to offer audiences examples upon which to model their own behaviours and responses to such subjects. Davenant uses the dialogic form inherent to drama to stage multiple perspectives through characters’ interactions, encouraging spectators to make up their own minds about what they see playing out before them. By offering voices to all parties—the usurper and the usurped, the republican and the royalist, the living and the dead—the theatre walks a tightrope, brilliantly balancing its allegiances, as it assimilates and synthesises from its many divergent views a singular work of art. My final chapter concerns Davenant’s most successful and popular play, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* (1667).[1]

By ‘popular’, I mean here that the play was, as far as we can make out from the available performance calendar, the most frequently performed play in the 1660s. There are in fact two versions of the Restoration *Tempest*: Davenant and Dryden’s play of 1667 contains some impressive musical and scenic elements, such as Hippolito’s cave (II. 5; III. 6) and the echo duet ‘Go Thy Way’, sung by Ariel and Ferdinand in III. 4 (composed by Davenant’s collaborator on *The Siege of Rhodes*, John Bannister). The play was then further

[1] There is a large body of scholarly material on the Restoration *Tempest*s, especially regarding their musical components, but much of this work is faulty to a degree, often confusing texts, venues, composers and dates. Students and scholars unfamiliar with the complexities (and controversies) of Restoration theatre history need to be on their guard. For good accounts of the 1667 and 1674 *Tempest*s respectively, see the commentaries by Novak and Guffey in Dryden, *Works*, X, pp. 319–79, and Spencer, *Five Restoration Adaptations*, pp. 16–22, 407–13. On the music, see Matthew Locke, *Dramatic Music*, transcribed and ed. by Michael Tilmouth, Musica Britannica, LI (London: Stainer and Bell, 1986). For Shadwell’s hand in the 1674 revision, see Helene Maxwell Hooker, ‘Dryden and Shadwell’s *Tempest*’, *HLQ*, 6.2 (February, 1943), 224–28.

revised into a dramatic opera, probably by Thomas Shadwell, for the state-of-the-art Dorset Garden Theatre in 1674. This later production boasted extensive scenic and masque-like spectacular, with elaborate music provided by an international team of composers and singers, including Matthew Locke, Pelham Humphrey, Pietro Reggio, Giovanni Battista Draghi and James Hart. This 'operatic' version proved to be extremely popular, and continued to be performed in theatres, in various forms, until its music was reset in 1695. In this operatic form, *The Tempest* continued to be regularly revived until the early nineteenth century.[2] Not only that, but *The Tempest* appears to have captured the imaginations of Restoration and eighteenth-century writers, musicians, and artists, who in turn engaged with the play by composing poems, songbooks, and musical scores for purchase by readers and theatregoers.[3]

The chapter argues that the play represents the culmination of Davenant's revolutionary theatre as inaugurated in 1650.[4] It fulfilled everything Davenant wanted the scenic and musical theatre to be. It was not, strictly speaking, Davenant's last play, however. That accolade falls to *The Man's the Master* (1668), a translation of Paul Scarron's *Le Jodelet, ou le Maistre Valet* (1644). This farcical comedy was first performed on 26 March 1668, a mere twelve days before Davenant's death.[5] While *The Man's the Master* alludes to the contemporary penchant for musical drama—it contains a burlesque song '*in Recitativo and in Parts*', and its epilogue is sung 'In a Ballad'[6]—it is thematically distant from the revolutionary works I have been examining in this thesis and therefore is not discussed further here.

The Tempest was written and produced at a time when Charles II's political stock was at its lowest, after a year of plague, fire, war, and courtly scandal had eroded public confidence in the monarch and his closest advisors. Prospero's 'enchanted island', removed in time and space from England, offers an opportunity to ask questions about the direction of the nation after the recent crises of the mid-1660s. It sets the clock back, returning to a period in which characters live in a 'state of nature', and explores what things might have been like

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[2] See the relevant entries in *London Stage*.

[3] For example, the songbook for the 1674 version, *The Songs and Masques in 'The Tempest'* (London, 1674) was likely sold at the theatre prior to performance as both a libretto and a souvenir of the play. See Valerie Fairbrass, '"Books of the Songs to be had at the Theatre": Some Notes on Fruit Women and their Contribution to Theatre Finances', *Theatre Notebook*, 66. 2 (2012), 66–84.

[4] See Kroll, *Restoration Drama*, p. 200.

[5] Edmond, pp. 202–3.

[6] Davenant, *Works*, pp. 361–2, 382–3; second pagination.

had the country taken a different path in May 1660. As characters are forced to follow their instincts and passions, *The Tempest* quickly reveals that contractual royalism—the radically new form of government established at the Restoration, if not promoted as such—is the only viable (and desirable) form of government capable of maintaining social order. However, the comic representation of alternative systems allows Davenant to provide a sense of balance between opposing views and registers a subversive undercurrent to political debates. Davenant cowrote *The Tempest* with a young John Dryden in late 1667. The nature of the collaboration, and the question of who wrote what, has been the subject of much speculation. Following his statements in his preface, Dryden is usually credited with writing most of the play; however, this is far from certain. Mongi Raddadi has argued that Davenant was responsible for the play's overall design, tracing plot and linguistic echoes to the playwright's earlier works.[7] I am inclined to agree, and would argue that, while Davenant may not have written every scene himself, his was the guiding hand behind the overall conception for it. Dryden states (echoing Davenant's own comments about Hobbes in his *Preface* to *Gondibert*) that 'my writing received daily his amendments' (*Preface*, p. 84). Not only that, but as theatre manager, he would have overseen the other facets of the production that generated meaning, such as the scenery, music, and casting choices.

Adapted from Shakespeare's play, it received its premiere on 7 November at Lincoln's Inn Fields before an audience that included Charles II, James, Duke of York, their wives, and many members of the Restoration court.[8] The play makes some substantial changes to Shakespeare's original text: Miranda and Caliban both get sisters in the form of Dorinda and Sycorax respectively, while Hippolito, the youthful heir to Mantua usurped by Alonzo (Shakespeare's Alonso), is raised in a hidden part of the island.[9] Prospero, having cast a horoscope that causes him to mistakenly believe his charge is fated to die should he 'behold the face of any Woman' (II. 4. 8), denies Hippolito any other human contact. Prospero's plan notwithstanding, the majority of the play revolves around the quartet of young lovers discovering the opposite sex, falling in love, and overcoming the obstacles

[7] Raddadi, *Davenant's Adaptations*, p. 149

[8] *London Stage*, p. 123; See Pepys, *Diary*, VIII, pp. 521–2. Pepys is the earliest record we have of a performance, and as such the date is assumed to be the premiere, although this must remain conjecture.

[9] These changes are discussed in detail by Raddadi, *Davenant's Adaptations*, pp. 119–49. See also Katharine Eisaman Maus, 'Arcadia Lost: Politics and Revision in the Restoration *Tempest*', *Renaissance Drama*, 13 (1982), 189–209; Dobson, *Making of the National Poet*, pp. 38–61; Murray, *Restoration Shakespeare*, pp. 74–88.

placed before them by their meddling father.[10] During the course of the action, sexual potency is conflated with political authority. The revenge plot concerning Prospero's brother Antonio and Alonzo is substantially reduced, being resolved by the masque of devils in Act II. The comically inept attempts of the sailors to take control of the island, however, becomes a major element in the Restoration adaptation. The revisions of the play work to enhance its topical relevance.

The years between the production of *Macbeth* and *The Tempest* had been difficult. The plague and Great Fire of London had devastated the capital, leaving the theatres closed for some sixteen months.[11] A series of political disasters—the Dutch raid on the Medway in June 1667, and the fall of the powerful lord chancellor, the Earl of Clarendon, in November—had caused many to question the success of the Restoration regime that was so jubilantly welcomed back in 1660.[12] Looking back over what had undoubtedly been a bad year for England, Samuel Pepys summed up the general feeling of disillusionment:

> Thus ends this year of publick wonder and mischief to this nation, and, therefore, generally wished by all people to have an end […] publick matters in a most sad condition; seamen discouraged for want of pay, and are become not to be governed: nor, as matters are now, can any fleet go out next year. Our enemies, French and Dutch, great, and grow more by our poverty. The Parliament backward in raising [funds], because jealous of the spending of the money; the City less and less likely to be built again, every body settling elsewhere, and nobody encouraged to trade. 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![13]

It is little wonder, given such turmoil, that many of Pepys's contemporaries saw 1666, with its link to the Beast of Revelations, as the start of the end of days.[14] The naval mismanagement and foreign policy blunders were matched only by the excesses, debauchery and foppishness of the court. In an age famed for its satire, literature was deployed as a

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[10] On Prospero as akin to a 'neurotic and domineering father of a farce', see Maus, 'Arcadia Lost', p. 196.

[11] The theatres were closed on 5 June 1665 due to the severity of the plague and were not reopened until October 1666. See TNA LC 5/138, p. 147; cited in Allardyce Nicholl, *A History of Restoration Drama 1660–1700*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928), p. 286 fn. 8. The first recorded performance after the fire at Lincoln's Inn Field is for 26 December 1666 (*London Stage*, p. 99).

[12] See Hutton, *The Restoration*, pp. 268–84; C*harles II: King of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 214–53. For a literary perspective on this period, see James Anderson Winn, *John Dryden and His World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987), pp. 168–91.

[13] Pepys, *Diary*, VII, p. 426 (31 December 1666).

[14] Hutton, *The Restoration*, p. 246. For an entertaining account of this year, see Rebecca Rideal, *1666: Plague, War and Hellfire* (London: John Murray, 2016).

political weapon, with many writers turning to lampoon the King and his courtiers for their sexual libertinism.[15] Marvell, one of the period's most caustic observers, wrote that the entire nation was fast degenerating into a 'race of drunkards, pimps, and fools', and linked this directly to the negative example being set by the court.[16]

Critics have frequently read *The Tempest* in terms of its immediate context, noting how it engages with contemporary debates about the Carolean court or the state of the English navy following its humiliating defeats against the Dutch.[17] For Katherine Eisaman Maus, for instance, *The Tempest* presents Prospero as lacking authority and judgement, and thus 'redefines the limits and uses of sovereignty' in light of the contractual theories used to justify the Restoration.[18] Eckhard Auberlen, meanwhile, sees the play as part of Dryden's larger attempt to champion the Stuart cause in the face of growing criticism of royalist ideology and libertine behaviour.[19] In its portrayal of the failure of alternative political systems and its ultimately joyful restoration of Prospero and Hippolito, Auberlen argues, *The Tempest*, like Dryden's sensational poem *Annus Mirabilis* earlier in the year, 'must be seen as part of this attempt to support the newly restored monarchy'.[20] Read thus, *The Tempest* makes a stridently partisan intervention into the crises of the day, and it is Dryden who is understood to encode its politics because he is considered the senior creative force in the collaboration. More recently, attention has moved beyond simplistic political positioning to ask more

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[15] See, for example, the poems in *Poems on the Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660–1714*, vol. I, ed. by George deF. Lord (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1963).

[16] Andrew Marvell, 'The Last Instructions to a Painter', in *Poems*, ed. by Smith pp. 362–96 (l. 12). On the reputation of the court as a place of sexual libertinism, see Tim Harris, '"There Is None that Loves Him but Drunk Whores and Whoremongers": Popular Criticisms of the Restoration Court', in *Politics, Transgression, and Representation at the Court of Charles II*, ed. by Julia Marciari Alexander and Catharine MacLeod (New Haven: The Yale Centre for British Art, 2007), pp. 35–58; Sharpe, *Rebranding Rule*, pp. 170–2; James Grantham Turner, *Libertines and Radicals in Early Modern London: Sexuality, Politics and Literary Culture, 1630–1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[17] See, for instance, George R. Guffey, 'Politics, Weather, and the Contemporary Reception of the Dryden-Davenant *Tempest*', *Restoration*, 8 (1984), 1–9; Winn, *John Dryden and His World*, pp. 187–9; Gavin Foster, 'Ignoring *The Tempest*: Pepys, Dryden, and the Politics of Spectating in 1667', *HLQ*, 63.1/2 (2000), 5–22; Matthew H. Wikander, '"The Duke My Father's Wrack": The Innocence of the Restoration *Tempest*', *Shakespeare Survey*, 43 (1991), 91–98. For a summary of this scholarship, see Murray, *Restoration Shakespeare*, p. 233 n. 81.

[18] Maus, 'Arcadia Lost', p. 190.

[19] Eckhard Auberlen, '*The Tempest* and the Concerns of the Restoration Court: A Study of *The Enchanted Island* and the Operatic *Tempest*', *Restoration*, 15.2 (1991), 71–88.

[20] Auberlen, 'Concerns', p. 83; my italics. Steven N. Zwicker, *Lines of Authority: Politics and English Literary Culture, 1649–1689* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), argues that verse apologies for the court, such as *Annus Mirabilis*, were intended as direct answers to criticisms voiced in Marvell's satires (pp. 90–129). See Dryden, *Annus Mirabilis*, in *Poems*, I, pp. 106–201. See Winn, *Dryden and His World*, p. 171. Dryden based his verse form for the poem on Davenant's in *Gondibert*, another link between the two writers.

interesting questions about the play's strategies and methods for handling these issues. Raddadi's work, which places Davenant firmly in control of the production, suggests that the work is best understood through his political and intellectual interests and concerns.[21]

Given Davenant's involvement, John Shanahan has read *The Tempest* as a 'science play', showing how in both its form and its content *The Tempest* attempts to replicate onstage the experimental methodologies and spatiality of the seventeenth-century 'laboratory'. Shanahan argues that Davenant and Dryden explore on their 'enchanted island' the nature of political allegiance, obligation, and crucially the passions that govern mankind, and that their methodological approach resembles that of the New Science. He places the play in a nexus of texts, along with John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Thomas Spratt's *The History of the Royal Society* (both 1667), that shares this impulse: 'the logic governing the adaptation and early popularity of the revised *Tempest* stems in large part from the way that the play exemplified natural philosophical ideas and projects associated with the Royal Society', he writes. The play 'embodied the cautious and multi-perspectival methodological protocols of the new science while simultaneously proposing a means to manage memories of the previous two decades' political strife.'[22] Such 'multi-perspectival' methods characterise Davenant's theatrical project throughout the revolutionary period.

Shanahan's approach to *The Tempest*—seeing it as an experiment in political philosophy conducted 'on a stage that functioned as a laboratory'[23]—is, I think, highly suggestive, given Davenant's own professed interests in science and the advancement of learning generally. As we have seen in texts such as the *Preface* to *Gondibert* and *Proposition for the Advancement of Moralitie*, Davenant situated his revolutionary work within the discourse of improvement typified in the correspondences of the Hartlib circle and by Hobbes's approach to his subject as a political science.[24] He is clearly intrigued by the idea of the theatre as a space in which to explore questions and ideas regarding social

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[21] See fn 3, above.

[22] John Shanahan, 'The Dryden-Davenant *Tempest*, Wonder Production, and the State of Natural Philosophy in 1667', *The Eighteenth Century*, 54.1 (Spring, 2013), 91–118 (p. 92).

[23] Shanahan, 'The Dryden-Davenant *Tempest*', p. 92. For a discussion of how *The Tempest* utilises baroque spectacle to generate 'wonder' in ways analogous to contemporary Cabinets of Curiosity or *Wunderkammers*, see Cary DiPietro, 'Seeing Places: *The Tempest* and the Baroque Spectacle of the Restoration Theatre', *Shakespeare*, 9.2 (2013), 168–86; Joseph R. Roach, '*The Enchanted Island*: Vicarious Tourism in Restoration Adaptations of *The Tempest*', in *'The Tempest' and its Travels*, ed. by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman (London: Reaktion, 2000), pp. 60–72. On the tensions between the stage and the early modern laboratory in post-1660 culture, see John Shanahan, 'Theatrical Space and Scientific Space in Shadwell's *Virtuoso*', *SEL*, 49.3 (Summer, 2009), 547–71.

[24] See Noel Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), pp. 146–55.

improvement: the 'Poet's Magick-Glass', as Davenant called the theatre in his panegyric to Charles II in 1663, may no longer signify a mirror or an occult crystal ball, like the one used in *Macbeth*. Instead, now it might just as easily indicate a microscope, capable of revealing the human passions as Robert Hooke's instrument showed minute objects and creatures invisible to the naked eye.[25] Davenant and Dryden use their island/theatre/laboratory to 'seek out truth in the passions […] to practise to describe Mankinde just as wee are persuaded or guided by instinct' (*Preface*, p. 5). *The Tempest* is a play concerned with getting back to a state of nature, and exploring that moment of cultural encounter between man and woman, and watching what unfolds in order to better understand how humans react to and engage with each other.[26]

The idea in *The Tempest* is that its characters represent the *universal* patterns of mankind: any one of us placed in their circumstances would behave as they do. Understood thus, the 'enchanted island', as human observatory, serves as a microcosm for Davenant's theatre. Like his previous works, Davenant seems to have had his finger on the pulse in electing to adapt *The Tempest*: his adaptation coincided with other texts that raise profound questions about political expediency and gender relations, returning their protagonists to a 'state of nature', a *tabula rasa*, or utopia. One thinks particularly of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, already mentioned, but also of Henry Neville's *The Isle of Pines*, which was published in 1668. Neville's story concerns an Englishman, George Pines, who is shipwrecked along with four unmarried women on an uninhabited island. Unimpeded by European mores and laws forbidding polygamy, Pines begins to indulge in unrestricted sexual pleasures with each of the women, producing in excess of seventeen hundred children before his death at the age of eighty.[27] He develops a system of governance and inheritance that ensures his paternity can be corroborated and his offspring kept in power.

In what follows, I focus on the presentation of the sailors in *The Tempest* and the sexual education of the young lovers, especially Hippolito, and argue that Davenant conceives of the play as an experiment in social anthropology and political philosophy.

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[25] Robert Hooke, *Micrographia: or some Physiological Descriptions of Minute Bodies made by Magnifying Glasses. With Observations and Inquiries Thereupon* (London, 1665).

[26] See Barbara A. Murray, '"Transgressing Nature's Law": Representations of Women and the Adapted Version of *The Tempest*, 1667', *Literature & History*, 3rd ser., 12.1 (2003), 19–40.

[27] John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. by Stephen Orgel and Jonathan Goldberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Henry Neville, *The Isle of Pines*, in *Three Early Modern Utopias: 'Utopia', 'New Atlantis' and 'The Isle of Pines'*, ed. by Susan Bruce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 187–212. For a broader discussion of these issues in the period, see James Grantham Turner, *One Flesh: Paradisal Marriage and Sexual Relations in the Age of Milton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

Through his portrayal of these characters, he stress-tests alternative options from the royalist ideology that undergirds the Restoration regime, assessing their strengths and weaknesses, to explore current debates about the Restoration settlements. First, I look at Davenant's portrayal of the sailors and their attempts to erect a government on the uninhabited island. Far from being likeminded in their approach to their project to establish a government, each sailor presents a slightly different model to that suggested by his companions. Having made a case that the drunken sailors contribute a vitally important political aspect to the play rather than mere comic relief, I then turn to the four young lovers and argue that through their journey from sexual innocence to experience, Davenant shows how the passions are indelibly linked to the notion of political expediency. The unbridled sexual impulses of Hippolito and Prospero's two daughters, particularly Dorinda, must be cultivated, managed and put to reproductive ends, in order to ensure the future maintenance of patriarchal and royalist social order. Even when characters are returned to a state of nature in this play, it seems that they are shown to display an instinct for and need of civilising institutions (such as marriage) and behaviours (such as monogamy). Davenant's play argues that all human interactions are predicated on such social and political codes, and that these are necessary for society to function effectively. In so doing, the play subtly offers Charles's court, perceived by the majority of the nation in 1667 to be sexually promiscuous, self-indulgent and politically irresponsible, an image of the best way to keep their subjects' respect and approval as the nation enters a difficult period of reparation following the traumatic events of 1666–7.

'A Duke! where? what's he Duke of?': Nation Building and its Discontents

In his preface to the printed edition of the play, Dryden tells us that Davenant took responsibility for writing the sailors' scenes: 'The Comical parts of the Saylors were […] his invention,' Dryden writes, 'and for the most part of his writing, as you will easily discover by the style' (p. 84).[28] The subplot of *The Tempest*, involving the sailors Stephano, Mustacho, Ventoso and Trincalo (Shakespeare's 'Trinculo'), and their attempts to take control of the island is both hilariously funny and politically revealing. Trapped on the 'barren Island' (II. 3. 10), they each put forward a pattern or philosophy for survival that in some way or another

[28] It is, of course, extremely difficult to ascertain precisely which parts were written by Davenant and which by Dryden, as the phrase 'for the most part' attests.

deviates from the monarchical model practised by the Italian dukes they have left behind and, by analogy, the England in which the play is shown.[29]

The first we see of the sailors after the storm that opens the play is in Act II, Scene 3. Three of them end up on the island together; Trincalo is elsewhere. Upon arriving on the uninhabited island, Stephano, Mustacho, and Ventoso quickly fear the worst: 'Our ship is sunk, and we can never get home agen' (II. 3. 48–9), one of them says. In a mild panic, Mustacho believes that there is only one option available to them for ensuring their survival: 'we must e'en turn Salvages, and the next that catches his fellow may eat him' (II. 3. 49–50). Confronted with the reality that no civil institutions or customs are in place to ensure his safety, Mustacho immediately reverts to a Hobbesian state of mind, where the primary objective of man's being is to preserve his own life at the expense of all other considerations. His nightmare is that the mariners have ended up in a place devoid of any form of governance that might maintain peace and order. Thus, for Mustacho the island represents a return to the state of nature, which inevitably leads, according to Hobbes, to a time of war.

In one of the most famous passages in *Leviathan*, Hobbes describes how, removed from civilisation, 'every Man is Enemy to every man':

> In such condition, there is no place for Industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no Culture of the Earth; no Navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by Sea; no commodious Building; no Instruments of moving, and removing such things as require much force; no Knowledge of the face of the Earth; no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continuall fear, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short.[30]

Hobbes's bleak image of the state of nature bleeds into Davenant's adaptation of Shakespeare's play.[31] Where in Shakespeare's original, Gonzalo presents a utopian Commonwealth as a place of natural abundance, rest from physical toil, and unadulterated joy, Davenant flips the intended meaning of the old man's words around. For Shakespeare's Gonzalo, 'Letters should not be known', nor the 'use of metal, corn, or wine or oil', but rather there would be 'No occupation, all men idle, all' (II. 1. 151–5). This fantasy is presented as

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[29] Wikander suggests that Davenant demotes Alonzo (and by implication, Prospero) from King to Duke in order to set the adaptation 'apart from its model [… to] suggest that some political ideas in Shakespeare's *Tempest* might have been too embarrassing (or subversive) for the adaptors to touch' ('Innocence', p. 92).

[30] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 186.

[31] Derek Hughes, *English Drama 1660–1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 49.

potentially seductive—despite Antonio and Sebastian's mockery of it—but Davenant removes any positive spin altogether: 'all is barren on this Isle' (II. 3. 43), is Mustacho's pitiful lament. The sailors' presence on the island can only lead to their collapse into incivility, competition, selfishness, and war. Idleness will not bring rest or peace, but starvation, violence, and death.[32] All Mustacho can think to do is take 'another soop [sup or sip] to comfort us' (II. 3. 45–6) and, once the store of rum is depleted, accept the need to eat his comrades or risk being eaten himself. Mustacho quickly reveals himself to be a Hobbesian individualist.

Ventoso, however, has other ideas. He does not subscribe to Hobbes's observations about the state of nature being a state of war. He is nothing less than a committed Aristotelian. Ventoso, unlike his companion, refuses to admit defeat in the face of adversity, and instead stresses that the island offers the men a unique opportunity to reinvent society *ex nihilo*: 'No, no, let us have a Government; for if we live well and orderly, Heav'n will drive the Shipwracks ashore to make us all rich, therefore let us carry good Consciences, and not eat one another' (II. 3. 51–4). Ventoso is anxious to see the island as a *tabula rasa*, a blank space upon which to inscribe a new way of organising social hierarchies: 'This Isle's our own, that's our comfort, for the Duke, the Prince, and all their train are perished' (II. 3. 46–7), he says. He understands that 'man is by nature a political animal',[33] and thus puts his trust in the power of the *polis*, albeit reimagined from the Italian city-state from which he has come. To ensure more than mere survival, Ventoso ventures, the sailors must organise themselves and work together. If they do so, they may even thrive, able to operate as part of the established (European) commercial economy by accruing wealth from future wreckages.[34] The point is that they do not have to establish their new government in the image of what has gone before; here, away from princes and dukes, they can transform the social order, as they did temporarily onboard the ship in Act I, Scene 1. There, though, they were decried as 'whorson insolent noise-maker[s]' (I. 1. 80–1) for doing so; now they might be 'free […] in a

[32] This is true for the Italian dukes in Davenant and Dryden's version too; in an earlier scene, they have been abused by a pair of devils who force them to repent for their crimes before being reconciled with Prospero (II. 1. 41–111).

[33] Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. by H. Rackham (London: William Heinemann, 1950), I. 1. p. 9. For Hobbes's riposte to Aristotle, see *Leviathan*, pp. 223–4.

[34] On the importance of 'circulation'—whether economic, sexual or bodily—as a major preoccupation of mid-seventeenth century literature, see Kroll, *Restoration Drama*, pp. 32–9.

new Plantation' (II. 3. 60). Ventoso wants to argue that on this new land, he can be free from the strictures of pre-existing, European, power structures.[35]

Mustacho and Ventoso may be comic stooges,[36] but presented with the prospect of being removed from civilised society, they inadvertently play out a thought experiment on Hobbesian and Aristotelian philosophies. The debate revolves around questions of social construction, and how best to 'erect such a Common Power, as may be able to defend'[37] the sailors, both from themselves and from external enemies. For Davenant, the exotic island allows him to test Hobbes's hypothesis about mankind's primal passions and motivations by restaging for his audiences the moment *before* civilisation developed—something that comes through too in the main plot with the innocent lovers. The sailors' plot is thus an entertaining exploration of state-building, analogous to the constitutional experiments tried out by the republicans in the 1650s. Ventoso's and Mustacho's projects, though, prove in the end humiliatingly futile, but like Cromwell's legacy, nevertheless they serve to undermine the apparent strength of the alternative by lingering in the mind long after they have been replaced. Although mocked, the sailors articulate ideas and philosophies that presented very real challenges to the Restoration regime.[38]

While Stephano, promoted by Davenant from Alonzo's butler to Master of the Ship, latches onto Ventoso's idea of re-establishing a social contract between the three men, he proposes a contract based on strictly monarchical principles: 'Whoever eats any of my subjects, I'le break out his Teeth with my Scepter', he says, 'for I was Master at Sea, and will be Duke by Land: you *Mustacho* have been my Mate, and shall be my Vice-Roy' (II. 3. 55–8). Confronted with a power vacuum, Stephano makes a number of assumptions about how

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[35] It is possible that Ventoso's characterisation lampoons Digger ideas of the 1640s and 1650s. Their own 'plantation' on Saint George's Hill was a well-known local site. See, for instance, Christopher Hill's discussion of Hobbes and Gerrard Winstanley, in *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1991), pp. 107–50, 387–94.

[36] Unfortunately, no casting records for these characters survive, although *London Stage* suggests that the well-known comic actors Cave Underhill and Edward Angel played Stephano and Trincalo respectively (p. 123), suggesting that the other two mariners were also played by actors known for their comedic skills.

[37] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 227.

[38] For instance, Algernon Sidney wrote in the mid-1660s that '*monarchy is the worse evil that can befall a nation*'; see his *Court Maxims*, ed. by Hans W. Blom, Eco Haitsma Mulier, and Ronald Janse (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 20. For more details about republicanism in the Restoration, see Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the English Republic, 1623–1677* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 143–206; Gaby Mahlberg, *Henry Neville and English Republican Culture in the Seventeenth Century: Dreaming of Another Game* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009). For Republican justifications of royalism in 1660, see Glenn Burgess, 'Monarchy and Commonwealth: "Republican" Defences of Monarchy at the Restoration', in *From Republic to Restoration*, ed. by Clare, pp. 53–68.

their island government is going to work. He instinctively, almost unconsciously, imposes a monarchical system onto his fellows, as though monarchy were a naturally occurring phenomenon.[39] Tellingly, he presumes to map the hierarchies that dictated the sailors' social interactions at sea onto the land, taking as ship's master the role of duke for himself, playing on the old trope of the 'ship of state'.

Ventoso, predictably, is not so sure about Stephano's intervention. He recognises his opportunity to be truly radical on this empty island, now that he is no longer in thrall to the Italian dukes. He points out that Stephano has no *a priori* claim to the land, it being a 'new Plantation', and therefore he cannot 'chuse your Vice-Roy'. 'I am a free Subject', Ventoso declares, 'and will have no Duke without my voice' (II. 3. 59–61). What follows is a comical and, for the author no doubt a tongue-in-cheek, discussion about the corrupt processes by which governments and, it is implied, royal courts secure power:

> STEPHANO (*whispering*) *Ventoso*, dost thou hear? I will advance thee, prithee give me thy voice.
>
> VENTOSO I'le have no whisperings to corrupt the Election; and to show that I have no private ends, I declare aloud that I will be Vice-Roy, or I'le keep my voice for my self.
>
> MUSTACHO *Stephano*, hear me, I will speak for the people, because there are few, or rather none in the Isle to speak for themselves. Know then, that to prevent the farther shedding of Christian blood, we are all content *Ventoso* shall be Vice-Roy, upon condition I may be Vice-Roy over him. Speak good people, are you well agreed? what, no man answer? well, you may take their silence for consent.
>
> (II. 3. 62–73)

Stephano attempts to secure his place by bribing Ventoso, who rather than conspiring privately, proudly states that he will only accept Stephano's authority if he is compensated with a viceregency of the island along with Mustacho. His concern to be open and honest inadvertently reveals his capitulation to bribery and election-rigging in the face of opposition.[40]

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[39] Auberlen, 'Concerns', p. 78. This is the attitude of so much Restoration propaganda. Davenant's own panegyric, 'Poem to the Kings most Sacred Majesty', argues, for example, that 'Those who did hold Success the Cast of Change […] Might in these Miracles [of the Restoration] Design discern, | And from wild *Fortune's* looks Religion learn' (ll. 63–66).

[40] Davenant's comic depiction of bribery here may have more serious undertones. In April 1667, the rival theatre company, Killigrew's King's, produced Edward Howard's *The Change of Crowns*, in which a 'country-gentleman […] do abuse the Court with all the imaginable wit and plainness about selling of places, and doing every thing for money' (Pepys, *Diary*, VIII, p. 167–8 [15 April 1667]). The King ordered that *The Change of*

This process is made even more comic—ridiculous—by Mustacho's intervention on behalf of 'the people': drunk and disoriented, he does not realise that there is no one but himself and Ventoso to cast a vote in favour of Stephano's election as duke. He takes the inevitable silence to his propositions as evidence for popular assent. As Auberlen has shown, Mustacho's claim to speak on behalf of the people, like the claims of the other sailors, is grounded in serious political theory.[41] In particular, Mustacho appears to be engaging with ideas expressed by Robert Filmer in his *Patriarcha* (1680). For example, in Chapter 13, Filmer rejects the idea that the people hold the power to elect a king, or that if the

> silent acceptation of a governor by part of the people be an argument of their concurring in the election of him […] it follows that every Prince that comes to a crown, either by succession, conquest or usurpation, may be said to be elected by the people. Which inference is too ridiculous, for in such cases the people are so far from the liberty of *specification* that they want even that of *contradiction*.[42]

Read through Filmer, Mustacho's claim to 'speak for the people' is both misguided and 'ridiculous'.[43]

The whole election is revealed as paradoxical and muddled: Mustacho wants Ventoso to be elected to the position of Vice-Roy, which will mollify his rival and make him more amenable to the new settlement, but at the same time, he insists that 'I may be Vice-Roy *over* him' (II. 3. 71–2; my italics). Mustacho's proposals make a mockery of the whole endeavour: as things stand, the sailors all want to be rulers, but they are entirely without subjects. While Stephano claims authority over the other two, Mustacho and Ventoso scramble to establish a system by which they each might rule over the other, in a desperate bid to procure somebody over whom they might hold some power.

What promised to be a revolutionary political experiment has degenerated, within minutes of playing time, into a farce of corruption, double-dealing, and one-upmanship. The project to create a new social order that benefits all three sailors has failed before it even

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Crowns be suppressed, and its actors imprisoned. For an excellent discussion of this play as a challenge to conventional narratives about the Restoration theatre's blatant and unproblematic royalism, see Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, pp. 9–17.

[41] Auberlen, 'Concerns', pp. 77–82.

[42] Robert Filmer, *Patriarcha and Other Political Works*, ed. by Peter Laslett (Oxford: Blackwell, 1949), p. 82 (italics original); cited in Auberlen, 'Concerns', p. 78.

[43] As Auberlen himself acknowledges, it is impossible to establish which specific texts they may have read or known ('Concerns', pp. 78, 87 n. 31). Filmer's work, for example, though completed by 1653 (the year of his death) was not published until 1680.

begins, precisely because the monarchical system Stephano inaugurates requires subjects but none of the sailors wish to accept that role, seeing as they have the opportunity to avoid it. With his colleagues now on the verge of physical violence, Stephano intervenes with an ironic, self-aggrandising speech: 'Hold, loving Subjects: we will have no Civil war during our Reign: I do hereby appoint you both to be my Vice-Roys over the whole Island' (II. 3. 79–81). Ventoso and Mustacho are not exactly 'loving' but they do agree to these terms in order to secure peace and prosperity. The joke is easy to see: the two viceroys are pleased to be promoted to positions of power, and do not seem perturbed by the fact that they have no subjects to rule over but are, through a sleight of hand by Stephano, in fact his subjects now. In order to maintain peace in an environment that, in his absence, would encourage only violence and war, Stephano takes on the mantle of a Hobbesian sovereign, or *Mortall God*.[44] Hobbes's theories, it seems, have been vindicated.

This scene makes a crucial point about Davenant's theatre as a laboratory for testing political ideas. Through his parody of nation building, Davenant teases out politically important questions relevant to his own moment: is the Restoration predicated on Hobbesian principles? Was Charles II elected by the (silent) people, or created a monarch by divine right and/or historical precedent? In reality, he was indeed restored by an act of parliament, but the subsequent coronation, which required the casting of new plate and jewels, attempted to gloss this fact with a display of sacred, divinely-appointed kingship. *The Tempest* plays with these debates, refusing to tell us precisely how those in authority come by their power. By the end of the play all the characters return to their original social positions, presided over by the rightfully restored dukes, Prospero and Hippolito, as though no radical transformations had ever taken place. But that it gives voice to the sailors' alternative perspectives at all (even just to mock them), shows how much creative energy can be released through debates rather than answers. *The Tempest* encourages audiences to remember that royalism is no more a natural construct than any other form of government; instead, it requires a constant vigilance and power of will to maintain it. There is no such thing as 'natural' politics, and the artifice of the stage brings this point home.

The second half of Act II, Scene 3 works to further complicate the debate over the nature of the body politic. Trincalo arrives to join his mates, and they explain their plans to assert control of the island. However, on hearing from them that 'the Island's empty; all's our own' (II. 3. 113), Trincalo refuses point blank to join Stephano and the others, instead

[44] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 227.

reasoning that 'this Island shall be under *Trincalo*, or it shall be a Common-wealth […] I'll have no Laws' (II. 3. 131–2, 140). Why, Trincalo asks, should Stephano be monarch and not another? Why must there be laws that circumscribe his actions? Stephano, concerned to avoid another bloody conflict because 'My Subjects are but few' (II. 3. 143), calls his viceroys to leave the 'Rebel' (II. 3. 144) alone, but not before Trincalo proclaims himself duke and warns that 'he will make open war wherever he meets thee or thy Vice-Roys' (II. 3. 146–7). As Davenant and his audiences knew only too well, eliciting complete consent on matters of governance is never easy. Stephano's status as an *elected* monarch invariably means that his 'subjects' may decide at any point not to give him their full support, essentially exercising a veto.

Now left alone, Trincalo encounters Caliban and offers the monster 'A dram o' the' Bottle' (II. 3. 171). On tasting the wine, Caliban becomes convinced that Trincalo 'is a brave God, and bears cœlestial Liquor' (II. 3. 176), and offers to show his new master the rest of the island. He switches his allegiance from Prospero to Trincalo immediately because the sailor can provide something he desires (alcohol) that the magician cannot: 'A curse upon the Tyrant whom I serve,' he says, 'I'le bear him | No more sticks, but follow thee' (II. 3. 190–1). Caliban promises too to introduce Trincalo to 'My lovely Sister, beautiful and bright as the full Moon' (II. 3. 201), which sets the sailor plotting. As if to labour the point that the sailors' role in the play is to experiment with alternative forms of government, Trincalo himself argues for yet another method of securing power. Already it is clear that he requires a different approach to Stephano and the others, because he has discovered that the island is not 'barren' at all—it is in fact populated by native creatures and colonising Europeans. While Stephano and his companions never encounter the native people of the island, instead deciding among themselves to elect their leaders, Trincalo plans to woo Sycorax and secure his sovereign claim through primogeniture:

> Here's two subjects got already, the Monster,
> And his Sister: well, Duke *Stephano*, I say, and say agen,
> Wars will ensue, and so I drink. (*Drinks*)
> From this worshipful Monster, and Mistress
> Monster, his Sister,
> I'le lay claim to this Island by Alliance.
> Monster, I say thy Sister shall by my Spouse:
> Come away Brother Monster, I'le lead thee to my Butt
> And drink her health. (II. 3. 217–25)

Trincalo's approach to securing the island 'by Alliance', although comical, resembles the chosen method of the English soldiers in *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru*. Where the Spanish impose themselves upon the New World and incarcerate the Incans, Davenant portrays the English as their friends and 'guests', *invited* as they are like Trincalo to take charge.[45] From the native Caliban's perspective, Prospero the tyrant is analogous to the Spanish, while Trincalo is figured as a benign and benevolent master. When Caliban introduces him to Sycorax, she is equally grateful for the opportunity to take advantage of the match, although she implies that Trincalo may have a more troubling time than he envisages: coveting his boson's whistle, she notes that 'I shall have all his fine things when I'm a Widow' (III. 3. 31). Clearly, Sycorax plans to outlive this conqueror and enjoy the delights of his office thereafter.

By this stage in the play, we have been introduced to four different types of social organisation: outright anarchy, a Commonwealth, elected monarchy, and rule by conquest and inheritance. Each is, in turn, shown to be untenable as the sailors fall into disputes and rivalries, and ultimately fail to make their new order work. Trincalo gets the closest—he, in fact, mirrors Prospero's own plans to marry his daughters into worthy royal dynasties—but his plans too crumble to nothing. It is not that these alternative forms of government are inherently flawed, however, but rather that the sailors themselves are incapable of making them work. *The Tempest* works to show that only certain people, with the right kind of education and training, are able to rule effectively.

The rest of the sailors' plot tracks the breakdown of their new allegiances. Trincalo wishes to claim the island by producing children with his new wife, 'the lawful Inheretrix' (III. 3. 119), Sycorax. His attempt to enforce some semblance of civilised order onto his wife

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[45] Shakespeare's *Tempest* has long been read through a post-colonial lens, especially in relation to the New World. See, for example, Paul Brown's classic essay, '"This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine": *The Tempest* and the Discourse of Colonialism', in *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. by Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985; rpt. 2005), pp. 48–71; Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492–1797* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 89–134; John Gillies, 'The Figure of the New World in *The Tempest*', in *The Tempest and its Travels*, ed. by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman (London: Reaktion, 2000), pp. 180–200. For the contrary view, see Jerry Brotton, '"This Tunis, sir, was Carthage": Contesting Colonialism in *The Tempest*', in *Post-Colonial Shakespeares*, ed. by Ania Loomba and Martin Orkin (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 23–43. On the plays engaged with colonial themes in the Restoration period, see Bridget Orr, *Empire on the English Stage: 1660-1714* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), esp. pp. 188–211; Candy B. K. Schille, '"Man Hungry": Reconsidering Threats to Colonial and Patriarchal Order in Dryden and Davenant's *The Tempest*', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 48.4 (Winter, 2006), 273–90. Murray, however, resists reading Davenant's play in this context, instead seeing the island not as a wild, uncultivated wasteland or New World, 'but rather as an elegantly landscaped garden' (*Restoration Shakespeare*, p. 78).

and 'Brother Monster' (III. 3. 1), however, is quickly revealed to be ineffective. Having gained the confidence of Stephano, he admits that 'an hour ago under an Elder-tree' he found Sycorax 'upon a sweet Bed of Nettles, singing Tory, Rory, and Ranthum, Scanthum, with her own natural Brother' (IV. 2. 106–9). Sycorax's overzealous sexual proclivities suggest that Trincalo is not a natural ruler, either in the bedroom or in the kingdom. His plan to rule the island is finally put paid to when Stephano, having failed to adequately negotiate a lasting peace with his rival, turns Sycorax against Trincalo (IV. 2. 119–40). The three of them fall to fighting, and the others quickly intervene with the resonant question, 'Who took up Arms first, the Prince or the People?' (IV. 2. 150). For Restoration audiences, this question would surely prompt memories of the Civil Wars. In many accounts of Charles I's trial, the King was reported to have stated defiantly that 'I never took up Arms against the People, but for the Laws'.[46] It is a *general* conundrum, as well as a specific verbal echo, however; the Peruvians in *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* faced this question too. The question goes to the heart of the nature of sovereignty itself. This final 'civil war' between the sailors brings their experiment crashing down, as each character proclaims the others to be traitors and rebels. 'The whole Nation is up in Arms' (IV. 2. 160), Trincalo cries, before beating Stephano off the stage with his fists.

The play's conclusion works to reconcile the sailors with their former masters in an attempt to contain the subversive energies they have released on the island. In the final scene, after everything is harmoniously concluded, Ariel drives the sailors onstage to be reacquainted with the Italian dukes and Prospero's family. Exasperated with their failure to achieve their aims of governing themselves, on seeing Alonzo and Prospero, the sailors each renounce their claims to the island, and begrudgingly return to their ship to resume their roles there. Trincalo laments that 'I shall need no hangman, for I shall e'en hang | My self, now my friend Butt has shed his | Last drop of life. Poor Butt is quite departed' (V. 2. 212–14). It seems that all their revolutionary fervour was the result of their inebriation. Now they have sobered up, they realise their mistakes. All they long for now is to return to the normality and

[46] *A Perfect Narrative of the Whole Proceedings of the High Court of Justice in the Tryal of the King in Westminster Hall, on Saturday the 20. and Monday the 22. of this instant January* (London, 1649), p. 16. Other texts record a similar sentiment, with slightly altered phrasing; for example, *The Proceedings of the High Court of Justice with Charls Stuart, late King of England, in Westminster Hall, begun January 20. ended January 27. 1648* (London, 1655), p. 33; *Collections of Notes taken at the Kings Tryall, at Westminster Hall, on Munday last, Janua. 22. 1648* (London, 1649), p. 6. For a discussion of the seventeenth-century debates about whether the king or the people were the chief aggressors in the Civil Wars, see R. C. Richardson, *The Debate on the English Revolution*, 3rd ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 11–39.

stability of the social order they enjoyed before arriving on the island. 'Now their wine is gone', Prospero assures a concerned Antonio, 'they will not quarrel' (V. 2. 17–18). Republican idealism is nothing more than the fume of a drunkard, Prospero claims, while monarchy is the sane, rational, and sober choice.

Presented with a virgin land, unspoiled by the imposition of a political settlement, the sailors each set out to establish what they believe will be the most successful style of government, be it a pseudo-democracy based perhaps on Digger ideas (Ventoso), monarchy by election as dismissed by Filmer (Stephano), or by soliciting the support of the native population and consolidating power through marriage and progeny (Trincalo). In the play's larger scheme, of course, each proposed system is revealed to be as impotent and unsustainable as the last. Unlike the characters in *Macbeth* or the 1650s operas, the sailors are from the start doomed to fail in their endeavours. But, like those earlier works the play can only reach such a conclusion 'after presenting the rejected ideas in a lively political satire and comedy'.[47] Davenant uses his theatre to stage these experiments in a safe and observable environment, thus demonstrating the value of his theatre and its use as a 'collaterall help' (*Preface*, p. 37) to the incumbent regime, which needs to convince the people of its own authority in the face of opposition, dissent, and disillusionment with the established order of things.

'How Men and Women in your | World make love, I shall soon learn': Cultivating Passions and Educating Princes

The sailors' futile attempts at nation building are, as with so much colonial discourse of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, aligned with the language of sexuality.[48] Trincalo manages to take charge of the island by marrying Sycorax, but his downfall comes when he is shown to be sexually naïve and ineffectual. He asks that his new bride 'be not too boistrous' with him when they leave to consummate their union, seeing as he is 'a young beginner' (III. 3. 96–7), and later it is revealed that he does not satisfy her urges as a lover: he stumbles

[47] Auberlen, 'Concerns', p. 84.

[48] The conflation of the languages of imperialism with sexuality (woman-as-land) is a common one in Renaissance writing. For important discussions on the rhetorical and ideological connections between colonialist and gendered discourses, see Louis Montrose, 'The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery', *Representations*, 33 (1991), 1–41; Patricia Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property* (New York: Methuen, 1987), pp. 126–54.

across her having sex with Caliban, and she asks more than once to be allowed to enjoy the delights of the other sailors (III. 3. 154–5; IV. 2. 10–11). Moreover, Trincalo does not recognise that sexual competence might in this world serve as a direct proxy for, rather than a distraction from, his aptitude as a political leader: 'To be a Prince, who would not be a Cuckold?' (III. 3. 159), he asks in all sincerity. Instead of seeing sexual potency as directly linked to political authority, as the play itself does, Trincalo understands the two concepts to be almost mutually exclusive. His 'marriage' to Sycorax is a convenient legal fiction: He married her, he tells Stephano, 'to be a great man and so forth' (IV. 2. 112), not because he loves her or displays any erotic desire for her. Earlier, he admitted how his ancestors, 'like other wise men, have anciently us'd to marry for Estate more than for beauty' (III. 3. 8–9), and thus justifies his own actions through this precedent. Davenant's play, however, collapses the two ideas—sexuality and political potency—into each other, making the case that Trincalo's ability to properly regulate and control sexual passions, and to direct those energies to productive ends, is a necessary corollary to successful political action.

The play works hard to establish contractual royalism as the 'sane' choice through the sailor plot. Having done so, Davenant uses the main plot with the lovers to explore what makes a person a successful monarch under such a system. This plot involves the four lovers, Miranda, Ferdinand, Dorinda and Hippolito, and Prospero's rather feeble attempts to stage-manage their courtships. Davenant uses the lovers to explore questions about human instincts and passions, sexuality and love by returning them to a state of nature, before social customs and cultural expectations have been inscribed onto them as young adults. Miranda and Dorinda have grown up without interaction with men (aside from their father), and Davenant pushes the conceit even further. In his preface, Dryden tells us that it was his older collaborator who 'design'd the Counterpart to Shakespear's Plot, namely that of a Man who had never seen a Woman', explaining that 'by this means those two Characters of Innocence and Love might the more illustrate and commend each other' (p. 84). Hippolito is a boy who, like Trincalo, is ignorant of sex, until that is he discovers the sisters, at which point his desire becomes so excessive as to constitute a threat to the patriarchal authority that, as heir to a dukedom, he is supposed to uphold. Much has been made about the fact that Hippolito is a breeches part, and was originally played by an actress, probably Jane Long. The play clearly revels in the paradoxes, double entendre, and knowing asides available to an actress playing the part of an uninitiated young man, but I remain agnostic as to how much this would have

affected the overall impact of the character. Dryden explicitly tells us in the prologue that the gender swap is not integral to the play: 'All you shall see of her is perfect man' (l. 36).[49]

Michael Dobson compellingly argues that *The Tempest* 'owes its lasting appeal to its representation not only of patriarchal monarchy but of the patriarchal family which both provided its basis and served (as it arguably still does) as the last refuge of its ideology'.[50] The play experiments with a character who is 'guided by instinct' (*Preface*, p. 5) rather than culture or education, and shows how this unbridled sexuality must be cultivated and circumscribed in order to ensure political competence. Through Hippolito's sexual awakening, *The Tempest* explores the idea that sexual liberation is both a positive thing to be celebrated while simultaneously something to be moderated through manmade institutions and codes, such as marriage. In this way, the play offers a pattern by which Charles II's court might measure themselves.

While Dryden himself apparently took responsibility for the actual writing of the scenes between Hippolito and the girls, he is nevertheless clear that the character was originally Davenant's creation (p. 84). The idea of staging a youthful male character devoid of female contact was something that had evidently intrigued the older playwright for a long time. Back in 1635, Davenant wrote a play called *The Platonick Lovers*, which looked to send up the cult of Neoplatonism that charmed the court of Queen Henrietta Maria and to which Davenant himself contributed so expertly in masques such as *The Temple of Love* (1635).[51] One plot strand of *The Platonick Lovers* focuses on the character of Gridonell, whose father sends him to a military camp with the express order he 'should never learne to Write nor Reade, | Nor never to see a Woman'.[52] In so doing, Gridonell's father, Sciolto, plans to

> endure the hazard of a new

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[49] On Hippolito's gender play, see Howe, *The First English Actresses*, pp. 63–4; Murray, '"Transgressing"', pp. 30–1. Tim Keenan discusses a recent student production of the play and the impact Hippolito's character had on its modern audience in 'Adapting the Adaptors: Staging Davenant and Dryden's Restoration *Tempest*', *Journal of Adaptation in Film and Performance*, 2.1 (2009), 65–77.

[50] Dobson, *Making of the National Poet*, p. 43.

[51] G. F. Sensabaugh, 'Love Ethics in Platonic Court Drama 1625–1642', *HLQ*, 1.3 (April, 1938), 277–304; Lesel Dawson, '"New Sects of Love": Neoplatonism and Constructions of Gender in Davenant's *The Temple of Love* and *The Platonick Lovers*', *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 8.1 (May, 2002), 4.1–36 <http://purl.oclc.org/emls/08-1/dawsnew.htm> [accessed 27 July 2018]; Britland, *Drama*, pp. 131–49; Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment*, pp. 22–6, 198–200.

[52] Davenant, *The Platonick Lovers: A Tragœcomedy* (London: Richard Meighen, 1636), sig. B2^{r}. It is worth noting that *The Platonick Lovers* was reprinted, along with Davenant's very popular *The Wits*, in 1665; see William Davenant, *Two Excellent Plays: 'The Wits, A Comedy': 'The Platonick Lovers, A Tragi-Comedie'* (London: G. Bedel and T. Collins, 1665).

> Experiment, and try how Nature will
> Incline him; learning (I finde) doth make men
> Sawcey with their Maker, and false unto
> Themselves, and Women make us all fooles. (sig. B2^{v})

Gridonell is clearly a prototype for Hippolito.[53] *The Tempest* too 'hazard[s]' an experiment to see how human beings react to the opposite sex when they have been removed from the traditional courtship rituals of early modern society.

Like Hippolito, Prospero's daughters are presented as ignorant of their true natures as woman, but they are not as innocent as Dryden's preface suggests. When Miranda tells her sister about the ship caught in the storm, she tries to contain her excitement at the prospect of seeing 'that thing […] a Man' (I. 2. 317). Neither girl knows exactly what a man is, but instinctively their emotions or passions are stirred by the thought of spying one:

> DORINDA But what is that? for yet he [Prospero] never told me.
> MIRANDA I know no more than you: but I have heard
> My Father say we Women were made for him.
> DORINDA What, that he should eat us, Sister?
> MIRANDA No sure, you see my Father is a man, and yet
> He does us good. I would he were not old.
> DORINDA Methinks indeed it would be finer, if we two
> Had two young Fathers.
>
> (I. 2. 318–25)

Confused as to what men do with women, the girls nevertheless intuit that it might be preferable to spend time with younger rather than older men, and that two are better than one. When they do eventually stumble across Hippolito in his cave, the sisters comically play off each other in order to be the first to approach him. Miranda, as the senior sibling, insists that 'I'le meet the danger first' (II. 5. 25), but Dorinda, keener, sees through the ruse: 'Nay, Sister, you shall never vanquish me in kindness. | I'le venture you, no more than you will me' (II. 5.

[53] Nethercot, p. 399. Harbage, pp. 261–2, argues that Davenant must have written the Hippolito scenes, given how closely they resemble Gridonell's character, but Raddadi (*Davenant's Adaptations*, p. 135), while pointing out the connection, warns us not to conflate the characters too much, 'lest we exaggerate the similarity between' them. Gunnar Sorelius traces Hippolito back to Montezuma in Dryden and Robert Howard's *The Indian Queen* (1664); see *'The Giant Race before the Flood': Pre-Restoration Drama on the Stage and in the Criticism of the Restoration* (Uppala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1966), p. 158.

26–7). Like Birtha in *Gondibert*, what they lack in formal knowledge, Miranda and Dorinda make up for by their instincts, which pull them like magnets towards their future lovers.[54]

Eventually, Dorinda and Hippolito chat, Miranda having been called away by Prospero. Crucially, despite their inexperience, both know they feel something towards the other, but they do not have the adequate language to articulate the emotion. Informing each other that they are a man and woman respectively, they fear that they might be mortally dangerous to each other, as Prospero has warned them they are:

> DORINDA Ay me! Heav'n grant we be not poison to each other!
> Alas, can we not meet but we must die?
> HIPPOLITO I hope not so! for when two poisonous Creatures,
> Both of the same kind, meet, yet neither dies.
> I've seen two serpents harmless to each other,
> Though they have twin'd into a mutual Knot:
> If we have any venome in us, sure, we cannot be more
> Poysonous, when we meet, than Serpents are.
> You have a hand like mine, may I not gently touch it?
> (*Takes her hand*) (II. 5. 56–64)

Unable to draw on a formal education, Hippolito is forced to deduce what to do from his observations on the island: venomous snakes are able to 'twin' themselves without harming each other, thus, because women and men appear to be the same species, he supposes that they cannot hurt each other either. He decides to test his hypothesis by joining hands with Dorinda.

That gesture, reminiscent of Romeo and Juliet's first meeting, causes their passions to stir. Unlike Romeo and Juliet, however, Dorinda and Hippolito are unaware of what is happening to them.[55] Dorinda observes how

> I've touch'd my Father's and my Sister's hands
> And felt no pain; but now, alas! there's something,
> What I touch yours, which makes me sigh: just so
> I've seen two Turtles mourning when they met;
> Yet mine's a pleasing grief; and so methought was theirs;
> For still they mourn'd, and still they seem'd to murmur too,
> And yet they often met. (II. 5. 65–71)

[54] Where Prospero's girls believe that children grow 'within the ground' (I. 2. 333), Birtha believes that 'Babes proceed from mingling Eies' (II. 7. 45). For discussion of the comparisons, see Edmond, p. 113; Raddadi, *Davenant's Adaptations*, p. 133.

[55] Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, I. 5. 91–109.

'Oh Heavens!', Hippolito replies, 'I have the same sense too' (II. 5. 72). Both grope towards knowledge of love and sexual desire. This time it is Dorinda who extrapolates her experience from observations of turtle doves. She knows that what she feels is 'pleasing', but that it manifests itself through a 'sigh', which she typically associates with grief. Hippolito 'feel[s] at my heart', which 'pleases, though it pains me' (II. 5. 73–4). Called offstage by her father, Dorinda has not time to pursue the idea, leaving Hippolito alone to muse on Prospero's lie:

> he hath more
> Offended truth than we have him:
> He said our meeting would destructive be,
> But I no death but in our parting see (II. 5. 80–3)

The encounter between Hippolito and Dorinda restages the prelapsarian moment of encounter between man and woman. It demonstrates that, while they may not have the vocabulary to articulate their feelings, sexual love is nevertheless a universal instinct or passion: whether they know what it is or not, the younger couple inadvertently find love, and it begins to direct their actions throughout the rest of the play. What Prospero intends now, is a gradual education, so that they can all learn to channel their unbounded sexual appetites to productive ends. He contrives it so that Hippolito meets Ferdinand, hoping that the elder prince will educate the younger man, 'for friendship does provide a double strength t'oppose th' assaults of fortune' (IV. 1. 12–13).

Hippolito's conversations with Ferdinand, however, bring the play close to tragedy. Ferdinand does, as Prospero intends, teach Hippolito the language to describe his feelings for Dorinda, but Hippolito is uneasy about the concept of monogamy that that language presupposes. On hearing Ferdinand mention his love for Miranda, Hippolito exclaims that 'Now I suspect that love's the very thing, that I feel too!' (III. 6. 30–1). Problems arise, however, when Hippolito discovers Dorinda has a sister, and wants to court her too (in fact, he makes it known that he 'will have all of that kind, if there be a hundred of 'em' [II. 6. 53–4]). When Ferdinand chides him, insisting that 'if you love you must be ty'd to one' (III. 6. 57), they argue and agree to undertake a duel for Miranda's love and honour. More experienced, and trained in sword-play, Ferdinand lands a blow on Hippolito, who falls down dead at the end of Act IV. In a rage, Prospero sentences Ferdinand to death, vowing that 'all my designs are ruin'd | And unravell'd by this blow | No pleasure now is left me but Revenge' (IV. 3. 36–8). All ends happily enough, however, when it is revealed that Ariel has

procured a magical herb that restores Hippolito to life, leaving him free to marry Dorinda, while Ferdinand can marry Miranda, as Prospero originally intended.

Having recovered from his duel, Hippolito discovers that his passions have been miraculously quelled; he loves only Dorinda. He tells her that 'if my soul had gone, it should have walk'd upon | A Cloud just over you, and peep'd, and then I would have | Call'd you' (V. 2. 23–5). As he sends her to Prospero to plead for Ferdinand's life, Miranda enters and the two talk together. Hippolito recognises her beauty, but insists that 'Nothing but Dorinda can surpass her' (V. 2. 53). He no longer covets every woman he encounters, but directs his energies to his one true love. The four lovers, committed to each other having learned that monogamy is the surest way to happiness and safety, prepare to leave the island with the Italian dukes. Convinced that Hippolito is now fully able to control his sexual passions, Prospero reveals his true identity as Duke of Mantua: 'You are to be Lord of a great People', he says, and explains that 'that your happiness may be compleat, | I give you my *Dorinda* for your Wife' (V. 2. 157–8, 164–5). Order—social, dynastic, sexual—has been restored. Prospero announces that the couples, 'By saying holy words […] shall be joyn'd in marriage | To each other' (V. 2. 68–9), and that 'you, *Miranda*, must with *Ferdinand*, | And you, *Dorinda*, with *Hippolito* lye in | One Bed hereafter' (V. 2. 177–9). Once again, Ferdinand is on hand to explain to Hippolito the finer details of what this means: 'for | Your own and fair *Dorinda*'s sake I must instruct | You' (V. 2. 191–3), he whispers to his brother-in-law.

Davenant offers Hippolito and the others as 'some patternes of human life, that are (perhaps) fit to be follow'd' (*Preface*, p. 12). While he lived in solitary, uncivilised exile on the island, he had no methods for channelling his innate human passions; hence Prospero keeping him away from womankind. However, for Prospero to reintegrate the boy back into society as a royal sovereign, those same passions needed to be cultivated and circumscribed. Before Miranda and Dorinda met Hippolito, Prospero ordered him to go into his new cave and 'read the Book I gave you last' (II. 4. 76). We do not know what the book Hippolito is reading is about, probably some manual or treatise for princes, but that does not matter. What is important is that Prospero suddenly concern himself with educating his ward, because he plans now to reinstate him as Duke of Mantua, having successfully reconciled with Alonzo and Antonio. His sexual impulses tempered and redirected to generative ends—Alonzo prays that the weddings beds prove 'fruitful in | Producing Children' (V. 2. 179–80)—Hippolito is deemed fit to return to public duty and take the reins of power. By using the theatre as a laboratory in which to observe how human beings behave when their governing institutions and codes of behaviour are removed, Davenant shows that the ability to rule is bound up with

a potent sexuality that is nevertheless managed and 'ty'd to one'. *The Tempest* might be a comic entertainment, but it maintains Davenant's conviction that good theatre provides moral examples and patterns of behaviour that spectators can learn to emulate. In the '*damning year*' of 1667 (Epilogue, p. 185), in which the Carolean court was under scrutiny as a sexually excessive institution, such lessons were urgently required.

This chapter has argued that Davenant's adaptation of *The Tempest* should not be seen merely as a frivolous piece of Restoration elite entertainment. Instead, the play brings to bear all of Davenant's thinking about the theatre across the revolutionary period. It is a place in which to stage multiple perspectives and viewpoints, to test out (and therefore root out) competing and contradictory opinions and philosophies, and to explore the nature and function of the human passions and how best to manage them productively. I have argued that Davenant's portrayal of the sailors thinks through the many varieties of non-royalist forms of government available as alternatives to Charles's regime, but that it does so to demonstrate that they cannot be held to work seriously while those who subscribe to them are incompetent, idiotic, and (metaphorically or literally) inebriated. Thus, *The Tempest* works to support the royalist ideology of the Restoration, while warning that the social contract between monarch and subjects requires constant care and attention if one is to avoid sedition. In the character of Hippolito, Davenant presents us with a viable monarch figure, and while the play does revel and indulge in bawdy, celebrating Hippolito's sexual vigour, just as the Carolean court celebrated the king's, so it also insists that such potency must be put to positive ends: i.e. matrimony and the production of heirs to continue the dynastic line. Sexual incontinence, as Trincalo discovers with Sycorax, leads to political ruin. *The Tempest* looks forward to a new generation who were 'uningag'd in the late differences', to reuse Davenant's phrase from his letter to Thurloe in 1656, and who are about to inherit their political responsibilities. 'All past crimes I bury in the joy of this | Blessed day' (V. 2. 151–2), Prospero declares. No doubt Davenant believes that Charles and his court could, likewise, begin again as they look to rebuild the city, that '*Phoenix* daughter of the vanish'd old', around them.[56] Throughout this thesis, I have argued that Davenant had a remarkable gift for reading and reacting to his moment, characterised by what Dryden called his 'quick and piercing imagination' (p. 84). In his adaptation of Shakespeare's comedy, he draws on the sexual scandals of the court, and the general feeling of political disillusionment in the nation

[56] Dryden, *Annus Mirabilis*, l. 602.

(as described by Pepys), and produces a humorous and generous play that offers a way out of the morass.

Conclusion

It is difficult to overstate Davenant's professional achievements in the period between 1650 and 1667. He succeeded in rehabilitating theatrical performance under the Commonwealth regimes of the 1650s and in negotiating the choppy waters of the Restoration to emerge as the leading theatrical power of the 1660s. His theatre was distinguished as much for its political adroitness, its sensitivity in responding to events, as it was for its aesthetic innovations; indeed, later narratives of the period's theatre would take these two strands of his work as inextricably linked. We have seen how Dryden celebrated his collaborator as 'a man of quick and piercing imagination' in the preface to *The Tempest*, calling attention to Davenant's lively dramatic vision and his keen, penetrating insight into the key debates and questions of his times. Elsewhere, the successor of the poet laureateship further alludes to Davenant's unparalleled ability to respond to the political and cultural needs of his moment, and of his inspired pragmatism in the face of an ever-changing landscape. In his essay 'On Heroique Playes' attached to his own two-part heroic drama, *The Conquest of Granada* (1672), Dryden writes that 'the first light we had' of the genre 'on the *English Theatre*' was from the late Davenant himself:

> It being forbidden him in the Rebellious times to act Tragedies and Comedies, because they contain'd some matter of Scandal to those good people, who could more easily dispossess their lawful Sovereign than endure a wanton jeast; he was forc'd to turn his thoughts another way: and to introduce the examples of moral vertue, writ in verse, and perform'd in Recitative Musique […] In this Condition did this part of Poetry remain at his Majesties return: When growing bolder, as being now own'd by a publick Authority, he review's his *Siege of Rhodes*, and caus'd it to be acted as a just Drama; but as few men have the happiness to begin and finish any new project, so neither did he live to make his design perfect: There wanted the fulness of a Plot, and the variety of Characters to form it as it ought: and, perhaps, something might have been added to the beauty of the stile[.][1]

Dryden suggests that Davenant's aesthetic experiments of the 1650s were not solely the result of professional ambition but of political expediency: Davenant was 'forc'd' to develop a form of drama that might appeal to the Commonwealth authorities, providing images of 'moral vertue' and heroic grandeur simply to get around the prohibition against stage plays. These

[1] Dryden, 'Of Heroique Playes', p. 9.

works, Dryden writes, were sung in recitative rather than spoken as 'just Drama' in order to make them more palatable to a government antagonistic to spoken drama but apparently tolerant of musical entertainment. As such, they are vitally important in the drive towards the full splendour of the Restoration theatre, but they are also flawed: they lack the 'fulness' of proper plays, their characters are a little too wooden, and Davenant's language—his 'stile'—could use some careful revision. Dryden's essay works hard to celebrate Davenant's achievements in inaugurating a new genre, while insisting on the superiority of his own creation that the essay introduces. The new laureate damns his predecessor with faint praise: Davenant's Protectorate theatre is figured as a 'shadow',[2] an insubstantial presage of what might come to be realised under the patronage of the true king, Charles II.

Dryden's account, as Rachel Willie has shown, is partisan and works to frustrate the 1650s' claim to theatrical novelty, innovation, and revolution.[3] He attempts to make a hard and fast distinction between the theatrical experiments of the 1650s and the plays of the 1660/70s by insisting that Davenant's operas are not quite fully formed—they are somehow premature, unfinished. Davenant's works, while important and worthy of recognition—'we are bound, with all veneration to his memory, to acknowledge what advantage we receiv'd from that excellent ground-work which he laid'[4]—they are nevertheless only a foundation ('ground-work') upon which the Restoration tradition is to be built. Davenant is not, paradoxically, to be considered a natural part of that tradition.

Part of the problem for Dryden is that he refuses to look at Davenant's dramatic output as a whole, focusing instead on the 'heroic' operas of the 1650s. This thesis, however, has argued that such a selective approach to Davenant is misguided and skews our understanding of and appreciation for his larger theatrical project. While the heroic genre is a specific form, the preoccupations, concerns, and anxieties articulated in the 1650s operas are also examined in his poem *Gondibert*, as well as his adaptations of Shakespeare. *Macbeth* and *The Tempest* share many of the characteristics—both dramaturgical and thematic—of the earlier works. They explore questions of sovereignty, of loyalty and obedience, and of love and honour. Davenant uses his experimental theatre to explore issues of sexuality, power, and human relationships. Critics have been reluctant to bridge the divide across 1660, but

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[2] Dryden, 'Of Heroique Playes', p. 10.

[3] Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, p. 135: Dryden 'glosses over the complexities of Restoration attitudes to drama, and in so doing helps to consolidate the *myth* that royalists took a more generous view of the theatre than their parliamentary counterparts. His comments entwine the political and the aesthetic merit of Davenant's text [i.e. *The Siege of Rhodes*]'; my italics.

[4] Dryden, 'Of Heroique Playes', pp. 9–10.

Davenant's practice compels us to reassess the validity of this period marker and its impact on theatre and literary history. While not all of Davenant's works from this period are equally revelatory about the political circumstances in which they were initially produced, by setting the 1650s works alongside Davenant's Shakespeare adaptations, we are able to see what he takes to be the key debates of the period. By charting the continuities in dramatic style and political themes across what I have been calling the revolutionary period, the thesis shows just how consistent, even persistent, Davenant's practice is from *Gondibert* in 1650 to *The Tempest* in 1667.

The thesis has been concerned to explore how Davenant—unique among playwrights in working as a dramatist across the middle decades of the seventeenth century—used his works to respond to and engage with urgent questions of authority. Theatre for him was a space in which to experiment and play with ideas, themes, or situations, and through which audiences could gain a better insight into the nature of human relations and political intrigues. As such, while I have selected the key works from the period that most clearly reflect these preoccupations, and which readily repay close historical analysis, I have not claimed to be comprehensive in my survey of Davenant's works from this period. Davenant wrote other plays during the early years of the 1660s that I have not covered here, including his adaptation of Shakespeare and Fletcher's *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, retitled *The Rivals* (1664) and his amalgamation of *Measure for Measure* and *Much Ado about Nothing*, retitled *The Law Against Lovers* (1662). Neither have I looked at Davenant's multiple attempts to reinvent his 1650s operas as plays in the 1660s, in the second part of *The Siege of Rhodes* (?1659; 1661) and *Playhouse to be Let* (1663), which subsumes *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* and *The History of Sir Francis Drake* into its metatheatrical narrative as Acts IV and III respectively.[5] My interest has been with examining how his works respond to their immediate contexts, whether in terms of theatrical innovation or political thinking; I have not attempted to track how Davenant returns to the same plays at different times, nor with how he recycles material in an attempt to 'perfect' (Dryden's phrase) his project.[6]

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[5] For these works, see Edmond, pp. 172–3, 182–90. For a discussion of Davenant's *Law Against Lovers*, see Murray, *Restoration Shakespeare*, pp. 37–50. For the dating of *The Rivals*, see Christopher Spencer, '*Macbeth* and Davenant's *The Rivals*', *SQ*, 20 (Spring, 1969), 225–9, and for an engaging discussion of the play, see Huw Griffiths, 'Adapting Same-Sex Friendship: Fletcher and Shakespeare's *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and Davenant's *The Rivals*', *Shakespeare*, 11.1 (2015), 20–9.

[6] Tracking the ways that Davenant reuses material at different moments has proved a fascinating exercise. See, for example, Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, pp. 118–32; Clare, 'Reframing Drama', pp. 150–1, 160–4; Matthew Birchwood, 'Turning to the Turk: Collaboration and Conversion in William Davenant's *The Siege of Rhodes*', in

It is worth reflecting, I think, on some of the issues that this thesis has raised about Davenant's works, and the wider implications for the study of mid- to late-seventeenth-century theatre. The works I have discussed in this thesis are complex and difficult to get a handle on; they defy our usual disciplinary methods of analysis. The multimedia aspect of Davenant's revolutionary theatre, comprising text, pictorial scenery, and music, means that we must approach them from an interdisciplinary or a *multi*disciplinary standpoint if we are to hope to get any significant purchase on the ways in which they signify to their audiences. The nature of much of this material makes it resistant to traditional literary approaches, and makes tidy conclusions impossible to sustain. The analytical tools necessary to do justice to these works are only now being seriously developed by scholars in the field, at the intersection of musicology, performance studies, theatre history, and literature criticism. But even these new approaches by the likes of Walkling, Willie, and others, have proven insufficient, given that what we are mostly dealing with in relation to Davenant's output are lacunae in the evidence. We do not possess the scenery used in the productions (aside from the singular designs for *The Siege of Rhodes*) or, in most instances, any of the music.

Davenant's works for the revolutionary theatre raise a number of profound questions about the ways that scholars approach complex and elusive texts. The demands they make on readers are in many ways unique, and prompt us to reflect on the adequacy of our normal critical tools of historical and literary analysis. The reliance on scenery and music, in particular, causes us trouble when it comes to visualising how works like *The Siege of Rhodes* or *The Tempest* may have impacted on audiences on their initial runs. More problematic for modern critics still is the fact that that music and scenery is largely lost—while small samples of both scenery and music do survive, it is impossible to fully reconstruct the theatrical production *as performance*. Davenant, though, worked on the premise that his text would be modulated through such dramaturgical structures, and this would have invariably changed the way that the texts read. Opera libretti are very rarely celebrated for their literary quality, but set as part of a larger theatrical and musical whole and they prove extremely effective, emotionally powerful, and intensely dramatic.

Given the methodological challenges presented by these works, we have to ask how we might navigate the contours of the period. Here, I have argued that by situating the works within their immediate political and cultural contexts, and by attempting to reconstruct the

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Remapping the Mediterranean World in Early Modern English Writings, ed. by Goran V. Stanivukovic (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 208–26.

performance conditions in which they were staged, we might get closer to understanding Davenant's intentions with these revolutionary works. We need to deliberately wear multiple hats in assessing this work if we are to properly register Davenant's unique contributions to the period. Davenant himself makes this point in his letter 'To the Reader' in *The Siege of Rhodes*: 'You may inquire,' he writes,

> being a *reader*, why in an heroic argument my numbers are so often diversified and fall into short fractions, considering that a continuation of the usual length of English verse would appear more heroical *in reading*. But when you are an *auditor* you will find that in this, I rather deserve approbation than need excuse: for frequent alterations of measure […] are necessary to recitative music for variation of airs. (pp. 195–6; my italics)

Readers familiar with the conventions of English literature—as set out in principle in texts like Sidney's *Defence of Poesy*—expect to find Davenant working within certain forms and traditions (heroic language, iambic pentameter). Thus, he anticipates that his 'fractions'—shortened lines—might disconcert them. To *auditors*, those that listen and watch his shows, such criteria reveal themselves to be misplaced and unnecessary: the music fills in any deficiency left by the verse alone. Modern critics must be wary of this tendency to privilege literary over theatrical interpretations and engagements with Davenant's text as well.

Davenant died at his home, attached to the Lincoln's Inn Fields theatre, on 7 April 1668; he was buried in Westminster Abbey two days later.[7] Confronted with the death of such an important if ribald figure, contemporaries were quick to have a say on his reputation. In his highly satirical 'Poetical Fiction', *Sr William Davenant's Voyage to the Other World* (1668), for example, Richard Flecknoe depicts the recently deceased Davenant descending to the Underworld and encountering 'never a Poet there, Antient nor Modern, whom in some sort or other he had not disoblig'd by his discommendations, as Homer, Virgil, Tasso, Spencer, and especially Ben. Johnson'.[8] Getting into a particularly nasty scrape with John Donne the Younger, who did in reality mock Davenant in verse, the laureate is put on trial

[7] Samuel Pepys was at the King's Theatre when news arrived of Davenant's death; he went to see the funeral cortege leave from Lincoln's Inn Fields to the Abbey on the 9 April (*Diary*, IX, pp. 156–8). John Aubrey too attended to the funeral and wrote about it in his brief life of the poet: 'I was at his funeral. He had a coffin of walnut tree. Sir John Denham said it was the finest coffin that ever he saw. His body was carried in a hearse from the playhouse to Westminster Abbey, where, at the great west door, he was received by the singing men and choristers, who sang the service of the church to his grave, which is in the south cross aisle, on which, on a paving stone of marble, is written, in imitation of that on Ben Jonson, "*O rare Sir Will Davenant*"' (John Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, ed. by Richard Barber [Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1975; rpt. 1982], p. 93).
[8] Flecknoe, *Sr William Davenant's Voyage*, p. 8.

before the judges of the dead, Minos, Aeacus and Rhadamanthus for crimes against poetry.[9] Momus, the god of satire and mockery, accuses him of being a poor poet, whose 'high-sounding words' are akin to empty hogsheads: 'the higher they sounded, the emptier still they were'.[10] Despite his vehement attempts to condemn Davenant, the judges favour the poet, and allow him to become the Master of the Revels ('Superintendent of […] Sports and Recreations') at Pluto's court in recognition of his talents on earth.

Flecknoe's intention in this work was no doubt to lampoon Davenant; the two had been near-rivals in the scramble to create a morally reformed theatre in the 1650s.[11] But the mockery is playful here, even affectionate, rather than hostile. Flecknoe writes his satire, so he says, because no other poet 'would afford him [i.e. Davenant] so much as an Elegie', and he includes 'anonymous' verses that in fact celebrate the playwright as the 'Atlas-*like*' figure who '*By force of Industry and Wit*' established the modern theatre.[12] The mock-trial itself resembles moments in Davenant's real life, when he was brought before the Parliamentarian courts and tried for his life, only to be released, miraculously, to resume his professional interests. *Sr William Davenant's Voyage* displays a good knowledge of Davenant's *oeuvre*, referencing plays and poems from the entire span of his writing career, as well as details from his life—even the title plays on the bathetic journey to the New World he never quite made.

Even in jest, then, Davenant's central place in the development of the Restoration theatre cannot be dismissed. While Flecknoe, like Dryden, recognised that Davenant's works were sometimes flawed, this was only to be expected. I have declined during this thesis to argue for Davenant's singular excellence as a writer. What I have done, I hope, is to demonstrate that these works sensitively engage with issues pertinent to the seventeenth century, and that through them we can register precisely how such an important figure could successfully negotiate the political turmoil of the period. In a touching moment of reflection, John Aubrey concludes his life of Davenant with a description of his funeral. Looking on as the coffin is placed in rest, Aubrey cannot help but draw attention to one specific detail, or rather the lack of one: 'methought it had been proper that a laurel should have been set on his

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[9] See John Donne the Younger, 'To Sr William Davenant, February 1651 [1652]', BL Thomason 669.f.15 (82) fol. 1. For a discussion of the poem, see Rachel Willie, 'Inscribing Textuality: Milton, Davenant, Authorship and the Performance of Print', in *Making Milton: Writing, Publication, Reception*, ed. by John Garrison, Emma Depledge, and Marissa Nicosia (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming). I am grateful to Dr Willie for sharing a copy of her chapter in advance of publication.

[10] Flecknoe, *Sr William Davenant's Voyage*, p. 11.

[11] Clare, *Drama*, pp. 29–35.

[12] Flecknoe, *Sr William Davenant's Voyage*, pp. 6–7.

coffin—which was not done'.[13] Davenant has been often neglected, forgotten, and ridiculed, since his death, but his works remain vitally important for any understanding of seventeenth-century theatre. His represents a unique corpus of works that offers surprising and intriguing links between the theatre of Shakespeare and that of Dryden and Purcell, all the while remaining entirely and uniquely part of his own imagination.

[13] Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, p. 93.

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