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A CRITICAL STUDY OF THOMAS OTWAY'S PLAYS

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Jessica Munns

SUMMARY

The later tragedies of Thomas Otway have frequently been regarded as forerunners of the pathetic mode. Such a view has rested in part on neglect of the comedies which are acknowledged to be unsentimental and harsh. The analysis of all his known plays undertaken in this thesis reveals that although the comedies are works of lesser density than the tragedies they are related to the tragedies in terms of common thematic concerns, plot structures, character types and imagery.

Here it is further argued that Otway intimates an absolute morality which is registered through depictions of moral violations and conveys a pessimistic view of man's ability to live in terms of a moral framework. A profound sense of disorder permeates his works which show man regressing down the Chain of Being towards primitive and animal states of existence. This Otway diagnoses as stemming from fallen man's divided nature and a destructive interaction between physical and rational impulses. The plays illustrate this by depictions of the erosion of man's rational faculties and the collapse, mockery or misuse of the institutions, ceremonies and rituals which enshrine a common morality.

Otway began working within the heroic mode but gradually liberated himself from its assumption of human potential for greatness. His later works are broadly based examinations of human nature in terms of the individual and society as a whole. It is suggested that his work as a comic writer provided him with a wide range of literary techniques and social concerns. Otway is seen as combining the literary styles and some of the philosophic ideas of his period into a uniquely flexible whole which produced emotionally and intellectually satisfying drama.

INTRODUCTION

The life of Thomas Otway has been described by R.G. Ham in his study of Otway and Nathaniel Lee, Otway and Lee. Biography from a Baroque Age.¹ Versions of his life have also been given in the two twentieth century editions of the complete works of Otway: by Montague Summers and by J.C. Ghosh.² Summers's account is very romantically coloured and in places wildly inaccurate while Ghosh's account is brief and reliable. The major contemporary sources of information upon which these accounts draw are Anthony à Wood's description of the poet's life and works in Athenae Oxonienses (1691), Parish, school, college and army records, contemporary satires, poems and letters and his own semi-autobiographical poem, The Poet's Complaint of His Muse (1680).

Thomas Otway was born in 1652 in Sussex. His father was Rector of All Hallows, Woolbeding, Sussex and came from a well connected northern family. Otway was briefly educated at Winchester

- 1 R.G. Ham, Otway and Lee. Biography from a Baroque Age (first published Yale 1931, reprinted 1969).
- 2 The Complete Works of Thomas Otway, edited by Montague Summers, 3 vols (London 1926) - hereafter Complete Works - Vol.I, Introduction. The Works of Thomas Otway, Plays, Poems and Love Letters, edited by J.C. Ghosh, 2 vols (Oxford 1932, reprinted 1968) - hereafter Works - Vol.I, Introduction. Throughout this thesis all quotations from the works of Thomas Otway are taken from this edition.

(1668-69) and then went up to Christ Church Oxford, entering the college in 1669 and leaving it without a degree in 1671. His father died in that year and from Otway's reference in The Poet's Complaint, to the death of his 'Senander' (3:71) and his subsequent removal to London (4:73-79), it seems probable that his father's death and a consequent failure of funds led to his leaving without taking a degree. From his own account he then spent two years in 'fulsome Follies' in London (4:85-97) before turning to writing. His first play, Alcibiades, was performed at the Duke's Theatre in 1675 and from then until his death in 1685 he worked as a dramatist, poet and translator. He wrote ten plays, all of which were produced at the Duke's Theatre, and was apparently working on another, now lost, just before his death.³ An interval in his literary career was provided by his brief period of military service from 1678-79, during some of which time he served in Flanders. His experience of the soldier's life, or in a sense, lack of experience, for he saw little of either action or money, informs his comedy The Souldiers Fortune.

There is little doubt that, despite the success and popularity of many of his plays, particularly Don Carlos, The Souldiers Fortune, The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd, Otway was very badly off for most of his life. His early works enjoyed the patronage of the Earl of Rochester; his support of Alcibiades and Don Carlos is referred to in the Preface to Don Carlos and Otway's next two plays, Titus and

3 Thomas Betterton and William Smith advertised for the return of an unfinished play by Otway in The Observator on 27 November and on 4 December 1686 and in the London Gazette 25-29 November 1686, See Ghosh, Works, I, pp.62-63.

Berenice and The Cheats of Scapin were dedicated to the Earl.⁴

Rochester, however, was turning away from the stage in the last years of his life and was dead by 1680. After Rochester Otway never seems to have found a consistent or generous patron for his works and his bitterness over this failure is expressed in his unusual and outspoken dedication of The Souldiers Fortune to his bookseller, Richard Bentley.

In the eighteenth century legends grew up around the bare facts of Otway's life, endowing him with an unrequited passion for the leading lady of many of his plays, Elizabeth Barry,⁵ and filling out with gruesome details, which distressed Dr. Johnson, the circumstances of his early death.⁶ Otway's annexation by the eighteenth century as an exponent of pathos in his drama and an example of pathos in his life has been well described by A.M. Taylor in her chapter on his

- 4 Rochester's own opinion of Otway's work is less glowing than that attributed to him by the poet. He refers slightly to Alcibiades in 'An Allusion to Horace', dated by David Vieth 1675, and pours scorn on Caius Marius for its deviations from Plutarch in his 'Epigram on Thomas Otway', dated by Vieth to January 1679/80. See The Complete Poems of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, edited by David Vieth (New Haven, Conn. and London, second printing 1974).
- 5 Otway's love-letters were first published in Familiar Letters: Written by The Right Honourable John late Earl of Rochester ... With Letters Written by the most Ingenious Mr. Thomas Otway (1679). His letters are printed without any indication of the recipients in this edition but Mrs. Barry's name is inserted in the 1712 edition of the letters and later collections. In any case the fact that Otway's letters are glowingly referred to by Thomas Brown in the Preface to the 1697 edition does not create confidence in their authenticity. There are no strictly contemporary accounts of Otway's love for Mrs. Barry. William Oldys's manuscript annotations in 1727 to Langbaine's An Account of the English Dramatic Poets (1691) refer to the poet's love for Mrs. Barry and her scorn for his love, but these notes were written twenty-nine years after Otway's death and fourteen years after the death of Mrs. Barry.
- 6 Harrowing accounts of Otway's death are given by Theophilus Cibber in Lives of the Poets, II (1713), p.334, and by Joseph Spence in Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters ..., edited by Edmund Malone (1820), p.100. Johnson includes these accounts in his life of Otway in Lives of the English Poets, I (London 1925, 1958), pp.143-44.

reputation in Next to Shakespeare.⁷ For the Romantic writers of the nineteenth century Otway could be seen as the type of the neglected artist, and it is in this light that Coleridge classes him with Chatterton in his 'Monody on the Death of Chatterton' (1803).⁸

These pathetic and romantic accretions to the life of Otway are of significance since they have contributed to a still current interpretation of his works as pathetic. In his own day Otway was admired for his tragedies and also for his comedies. Matthew Prior paid tribute to his power to move audiences in both genres:

There was a time when Otway charm'd the Stage;
Otway the Hope, the Sorrow of our Age!
When the full Pitt with pleas'd attention hung,
Wrap'd in each Accent from Castalio's Tongue:
With what a laughter was his Soldier read!⁹

The author of A Comparison between the Two Stages (1702) also praises Otway's gifts in both tragedy and comedy and Robert Gould in A Satyr Against the Play-House refers to the popularity of The Cheats of Scapin;

I grant with many worthy of that Praise:
The Cheats of Scapin, one, noble thing,
What a throng'd Audience does it always bring.¹⁰

- 7 Aline Mackenzie Taylor, Next to Shakespeare. Otway's Venice Preserv'd and The Orphan and Their History on the London Stage (Durham, North Carolina 1950, reprinted 1966), pp.245-270.
- 8 Cited by A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, p.249. Otway was also classed with Chatterton by William Hazlitt. See the excerpt from Fugitive Writings, 'Otway and Chatterton were seen lingering on the opposite side of the Styx, but could not muster enough between them to pay Charon his fare', see Next to Shakespeare, p.248.
- 9 From Satyr on the Poets, lines 155-59, in The Literary Works of Matthew Prior, edited by H. Bunker Wright and Monroe K. Spears, 2 vols (Oxford 1959), dated by the editors 1687.
- 10 See R. Gould, Poems Chiefly consisting of Satyrs and Satyrical Epistles (1689).

However, interest in Otway's works rapidly narrowed to those tragedies which could be interpreted pathetically. The post-Collier age increasingly ignored the comedies. In the eighteenth century The Cheats of Scapin, a short farce which could serve as an afterpiece, was the only comedy to be performed regularly on the London stage. A revival of Friendship in Fashion in 1750 failed disastrously. The early, more heroic and therefore old fashioned, tragedies were also dropped with the exception of Caius Marius, which can be said to have endured, in a sense, through Theophilus Cibber's version of Romeo and Juliet (1748); a play which leans almost as heavily on Otway as on Shakespeare.¹¹

Otway's reputation came to rest, as it still largely does, on only two works; his last two tragedies, The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd. The stage histories of these plays have been admirably traced by A.M. Taylor, who shows the ways in which they were adapted, acted and critically interpreted to suit prevailing literary and dramatic fashions.¹² By the nineteenth century it was recognised that, despite substantial excisions from the texts, the two tragedies

11 See The London Stage, Part 4: 1747-1776, 3 vols, edited by G.W. Stone (Carbondale, Ill. 1960-68), Vol.1, pp.169-70. From the account given there in an excerpt from the General Advertiser, it would seem that the failure was due to rivalries amongst the actors rather than the obscenity of the text. The Souldiers Fortune was performed irregularly during the first two decades of the eighteenth century; see The London Stage, Part 2: 1700-1729, 2 vols, edited by E.L. Avery, Vol.1, pp.94-431, but by the mid-century had dwindled into a farce. See The London Stage, Part 4 for a performance in March 1748, as a two Act afterpiece, Vol.1, p.35. Don Carlos was occasionally performed during the first two decades of the eighteenth century; see The London Stage, Part 2, pp.44-360. Caius Marius also enjoyed some popularity in the early part of the century. See The London Stage, Part 2, Vol.1, pp.10-449, before being replaced by versions of Romeo and Juliet. The Cheats of Scapin, The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd, however, can be seen to have formed a regular part of the London theatre repertories. Apart from The London Stage, see A.M. Taylor's Appendix B to Next to Shakespeare, which lists London performances of The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd.

12 See throughout A.M. Taylor's Next to Shakespeare.

exhibited sensual qualities which were increasingly considered to be unacceptable.¹³ The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd, which had provided generations of actors and actresses with starring roles, were dropped from the London stage repertories by the mid-century. Another aspect of the decline in Otway's reputation, to which A.M. Taylor points, was the growing distaste for the 'artificial' nature of the plays of the late seventeenth century.¹⁴ With Otway's two most moving tragedies being condemned as obscene and artificial there was certainly no room for any revival of interest in the comedies.

Despite Charles Lamb's heroic effort to lift Restoration comedy out of the gutter and into 'cloud-cuckoldland'¹⁵ the prevailing attitude of the nineteenth century toward the Restoration and its comic drama was expressed in terms of severe disapprobation by Lord Macaulay.

A period of wild and desperate dissoluteness followed [the Restoration of the monarchy]. Even in remote manor-houses and hamlets the change was in some degree felt; but in London the outbreak of debauchery was appalling; and in London the places most deeply infected were the Palace, the quarters inhabited by the aristocracy, and the Inns of Court.

13 Leigh Hunt wrote of Venice Preserv'd 'Sensuality takes the place of sentiment, even in the most calamitous passages. The author debauched his tragic muse ...', in Dramatic Essays, edited by Archer and Lowe, cited by A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, p.227. See also the reviews of the 1815 revival of The Orphan cited by Taylor, as above, p.139. William Hazlitt objected to Jaffeir's 'mixture of effeminacy, of luxurious and cowardly indulgence' and to the 'voluptuous effeminacy of sentiment' in The Orphan. He noted that in that play the plot turned 'on one circumstance, and that hardly of a nature to be obtruded on the public notice', Lectures on Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth (London 1821), Lecture VIII, pp.336-38.

14 See A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, pp.267-70.

15 Charles Lamb, 'On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century', Essays of Elia (Oxford 1954), pp.205-14.

It was on the support of those parts of the town that the playhouse depended. The character of the drama conformed to the character of its patrons. The comic dramatist was the mouthpiece of the most deeply corrupted part of a corrupted society.¹⁶

John Genest was the only nineteenth century critic to write with any enthusiasm about plays by Otway other than The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd; however, since he also noted the obscenity of Otway's comedies, his comments could do nothing to encourage interest in those plays.¹⁷

When interest in Otway began to revive in the late nineteenth century criticism followed the by now traditional lines in admiring the naturalism and pathos of the last two tragedies, largely ignoring the earlier tragedies and deploring the comedies. Alexandre Beljame in his pioneering study of the relationship between literature and patronage in the Restoration and eighteenth century saw Otway as a victim of Restoration depravity with The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd indicating what he might have achieved more generally had he lived in a less dissolute age.

Le puissant talent dramatique d'Otway a gaspiller dans les compositions indignes de lui la plume qui pouvait écrire L'Orpheline et Venise Sauvée.¹⁸

For Edmund Gosse, Venice Preserv'd was 'simply the greatest tragic drama between Shakespeare and Shelley' but his comedies were 'simply

16 Lord Macaulay, 'Dramatists of the Restoration', first published in 1841, reprinted in The Restoration, edited by Joan Thirsk (London 1976), pp.187-90.

17 Genest wrote 'Otway's merit as a Comic writer has not, of late years, been sufficiently attended to - this is an excellent play [The Souldiers Fortune], but very indecent, particularly in the character of Sir Jolly Jumble', Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830, 10 vols (Bath 1832), I, p.313.

18 Alexandre Beljame, Le Public et Les Hommes de Lettres en Angleterre au Dix-huitième Siècle 1660-1744 (Paris 1897), p.135.

appalling'.¹⁹

The renewed interest in Restoration drama in the first half of the twentieth century led to two editions of Otway's complete works, by Montague Summers in 1926 and by J.C. Ghosh in 1932. R.G. Ham's study of Otway, in his literary biography Otway and Lee, also attests to renewed interest felt in the dramatist. During the second half of this century studies of Otway's dramas have greatly increased but remain centred on his last two tragedies. The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd have been published separately in the Regents Restoration Drama Series²⁰ and Venice Preserv'd in numerous collections of Restoration drama. None of Otway's comedies ^{has} been separately printed.²¹

In the late twentieth century neglect of the comedies cannot be explained in terms of a horrified recoil from their obscenity. The sensuality which Leigh Hunt deplored in Venice Preserv'd has been explored in articles by Gordon Williams, David Hauser, William McBurney and Derek Hughes.²² Hughes's article, in particular, has

19 Edmund Gosse, Seventeenth-Century Studies. A Contribution to the History of English Poetry (London 1897), pp.238-317. Gosse also expressed admiration for Don Carlos, which he described as 'the best English tragedy in rhyme' and 'a crutch that might have supported the failing fashion [for rhymed tragedies] for years', p.311.

20 Venice Preserv'd, edited by Malcolm Kelsall (Lincoln, Nebraska and London 1969) and The Orphan, edited by Aline Mackenzie Taylor (Lincoln, Nebraska 1976, London 1977).

21 The Souldiers Fortune is an exception since apart from the collected editions it may be found in Roden Noel's Mermaid edition of selected plays by Otway, first published in the late nineteenth century (1888).

22 Gordon Williams, 'The Sex-death motive in Otway's Venice Preserv'd' Trivium, II (1967), pp.59-70, David R. Hauser, 'Otway Preserv'd: Theme and Form in Venice Preserv'd', Studies in Philology, LV (July 1959), pp.481-493, William H. McBurney, 'Otway's Tragic Muse Debauched: Sensuality in Venice Preserv'd', Journal of English and Germanic Philology, LVIII (1959), pp.380-99, Derek W. Hughes, 'A New Look at Venice Preserv'd', Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, XI, no.3 (1971), pp.437-57.

demonstrated the close structural and thematic relationships between the comic scenes and the totality of the play.²³ Bonamy Dobrée recognised early that The Souldiers Fortune 'must be understood if an insight is to be obtained into the emotional material which forms the basis of his later tragedy'.²⁴ However, a comment by Dobrée on another of Otway's plays, '"Tender Otway!" - the epithet rises almost inevitably to the lips upon reading The Orphan'²⁵ is indicative of a common view of Otway's mood and style which is detrimental to readings both of his tragedies and of his comedies. Emphasis on Otway's last two tragedies as moving, tender and pathetic frequently leads to a view of his comedies, which are brutal, savage and satiric, as uncharacteristic of his style and untrue to his real intentions. Beljame's view of Otway bowing to the low tastes of his age still holds ground. R.G. Ham considers Otway's comedies in a chapter entitled 'Potboilers' and assumes that they were primarily the product of economic necessity. Kenneth Muir describes Otway's comedies as unoriginal and 'apparently written against the grain' and only grants that in the comic scenes in Venice Preserv'd 'do we have something genuinely his own'.²⁶

An assumption frequently underlying the criticisms of the comedies is that Otway was trying, and failing, to write comedies in the comedy of manners style of Etherege. This assumption informs Gosse's reaction to the comedies - 'an ugly thing drawn by an unskillful

23 See Derek Hughes, as cited above, especially p.454, and also R.E. Hughes's short article '"Comic Relief" in Otway's Venice Preserv'd, Notes and Queries (February 1958), pp.65-66 which argues that the comic scenes work to produce a 'double-take' reaction to the tragic materials.

24 Bonamy Dobrée, Restoration Tragedy (Oxford 1929), p.138.

25 Bonamy Dobrée, Restoration Tragedy, p.142.

26 Kenneth Muir, The Comedy of Manners (London 1970), pp.63-66.

hand'²⁷ and Ghosh's heated denunciation of the comedies for their 'dull, featureless, purposeless vacuity'.²⁸ The assumption that Restoration comedies are all more or less comedies of manners has been most forcibly expressed by Kathleen Lynch:

... by 1676 the dramatic mode of the Restoration comedy of manners had become so authoritative that all dramatists felt the pressure of their unwritten laws.²⁹

This acceptance of manners comedies as providing the 'unwritten laws' of the genre has been challenged by a number of critics. Harold Love, A.H. Scouten and, at considerable length, R.D. Hume have argued for the diversity of Restoration comedy and the importance of farce, satire and sex-comedy in the 1670s and early 1680s.³⁰ James Sutherland has much that is penetrating to say about the stylistic mixture of Otway's comedies, but presumes that their form was not freely chosen by the dramatist:

left to himself, Otway would probably have chosen to write satirical comedy: what he did in fact write, having to please the players and the playgoers, was farcical comedy uneasily streaked with satire.³¹

27 Edmund Gosse, Seventeenth-Century Studies. A Contribution to the History of English Poetry, p.318.

28 J.C. Ghosh, Works, I, p.44.

29 Kathleen Lynch, The Social Mode of Restoration Comedy (Macmillan 1926, reprinted New York, London 1967), p.182.

30 See Harold Love's review of the Regents Restoration Drama Series in The Journal of the Australasian Universities Language and Literature Association, XXVII (1967), pp.106-08, A.H. Scouten's 'Notes Towards a History of Restoration Comedy', Philological Quarterly, XLV (January 1966), pp.62-70, and R.D. Hume's 'Diversity and Development in Restoration Comedy, 1660-1679', Eighteenth Century Studies, V, no.3 (Spring 1972), pp.365-97. R.D. Hume develops his argument at greater length in The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century (Oxford 1976); see especially Chapter I, 'What is 'Restoration' Drama?' and Chapter 3, 'The Nature of Comic Drama' for his dismantling of the hitherto dominating manners view of Restoration comedy.

31 James Sutherland, English Literature of the Late Seventeenth Century (Oxford 1969), p.141.

He goes on to state that the realistic scenes in the comedies, which he commends, show what Otway could have done in this form 'which would have been the counterpart to his domestic tragedies'.³² There are a number of underlying assumptions here; the view that Otway was more confined by his audience and actors in writing comedies than in tragedies and, not least, the view that what Otway was doing in his tragedies was producing 'domestic tragedy'.

Otway was a professional dramatist all his life; in either genre he wrote to keep himself. Professionalism should carry no stigma and the existence of dramatic conventions need not weaken creativity. In fact, Otway's manipulation of dramatic conventions is one of his strengths. In both comedies and tragedies Otway worked both with and against conventions, most notably by offering up, in play after play, endings which, whilst containing the characteristic elements of a formal conclusion—marriage, the death of protagonist and 'malefactor'—also indicate that nothing has been resolved.

In the only article devoted solely to the comedies, R.D. Hume's 'Otway and the Comic Muse',³³ Hume departs radically from many of the views already discussed by asserting that the comedies are works of greater originality than the tragedies:

... the comedies are perhaps a truer indication of Otway's feelings and view of the world than are the tragedies, where conventional themes loom larger.³⁴

Such a view is equally distorting, and is not borne out by analysis. In both genres conventional elements 'loom large' but are ironically manipulated. The 'heroic nobility' which Hume sees as distracting

³² James Sutherland, as cited above, pp.141-42.

³³ R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', Studies in Philology, LXXII (January 1976), pp.87-116.

³⁴ R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.112.

from and softening³⁵ the meanings of the tragedies is, I shall argue, treated with increasing irony and doubt as his work develops. In the comedies the heroic attitudes of Beaugard and Courtine or Theodoret and Gratian are derided rather simply; the tragedies provide a more sustained and profound analysis of the nature of the heroic impulse - its roots in human nature and its consequences for human society.

In Hume's view the comedies represent the other side of the coin to the high idealism of the tragedies.³⁶ In this he echoes the views of earlier critics who, when not castigating the comedies as commercial ventures, see them as an idealist's revenge on a society which has mistreated him. Hume quotes with guarded approval Montague Summers's very romantic interpretation of the relationship of the comedies to the tragedies:

He [Otway] was above all a sentimentalist, and when he found his dreams shattered, his ideals degraded, his friendship betrayed, his love strumpeted and mocked, what wonder that his fair affections turned to gall in his bosom and that his mouth was filled with fierce stinging words? There is no more hot scorner of mankind than the disillusioned sentimentalist. And so he drew in the comedies the men and women of his world as he truly saw them, licentious, brutal, false, hard, and above all inordinately self-centered and selfish.³⁷

This view of a strong dichotomy between Otway's comic and tragic vision, based on a highly biographical interpretation of the works, is also expressed by R.G. Ham:

35 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', pp.112-13.

36 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.111.

37 Montague Summers, The Complete Works of Thomas Otway, I, p.lxvi, cited by Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.112.

One recalls the tenderly nurtured child beside the Rother stream, the mildly puritan cast of his earliest education, and then one turns to this latter portrait wherein the disillusioned sentimentalist gazes upon his creatures with disgust. The one, with its Jaffeirs and Belvideras, was the embodiment of all he ever dreamed of in life; the other, with its Claras, Squeamishes, and Antonios, all that he saw.³⁸

Hume differs from earlier critics in assigning excellence to the comedies and regarding Venice Preserv'd as over-rated,³⁹ not in any fundamental rethinking of the nature of Otway's dramatic vision or the relationship of his comedies to his tragedies.

Basic to the view that Otway's treatment of the two genres reflects different impulses towards idealism or disillusionment is the view that Otway is primarily a pathetic dramatist. Thus for Hume he escapes from softening pathos with the harsh realism of his comedies; for other critics he shakes off degrading cynicism when he writes moving tragedies. The interpretation of Otway's works as pathetic took root, as we have seen, in the eighteenth century. For literary historians one of the most attractive aspects of this interpretation is that it provides a link between heroic drama and the sentimental drama of the eighteenth century. If one ignores the comedies, Alcibiades and Don Carlos can be seen as weak heroic plays, Titus and Berenice as a mere translation of little significance, Caius Marius as a mess, but The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd (with the Nicky Nacky scenes omitted from discussion) as the progenitors of a pathetic mode. A.H. Scouten, for instance, in his discussion of Otway in The Revels History of Drama in English 1660-1750, stresses

38 R.G. Ham, Otway and Lee, p.106.

39 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.88.

that Otway's significance stems from 'the fact that his plays set the direction towards the pathetic which later tragedy was to take'.⁴⁰

The idea that a gradual movement towards the pathetic and sentimental can be traced in Otway's tragedies informs Hazel Batzer Pollard's interpretation of his works and significance in From Heroics to Sentimentalism: A Study of Thomas Otway's Tragedies.⁴¹ Dr. Batzer Pollard traces from the early plays onwards the gradual abandonment of heroic motifs and structure, and sees these as being replaced by the desire to provoke pity and tears and a concentration on pity-provoking depictions of distressed innocence.

The abandonment of the heroic can certainly be seen in Otway's work, as in the work of many of his contemporaries. However, it is important to note the way in which the heroic form and the heroic ethos are abandoned, as in Otway's works we can see an increasing exploitation of the ironic elements of heroic drama. The ability to provoke pity and tears, of which Otway boasts in his Preface to Don Carlos, need not, Eugene M. Waith has pointed out, be interpreted as a sign of weakness or a softening of the mood of a play. 'Tears of Magnanimity' can be seen as a sign of greatness of soul and an heroic ability to suffer and feel emotions intensely.⁴² Otway's dramas increasingly question man's heroic or noble potential but the tragedies would lose intensity if the memory of man's potential for greatness were entirely lost. The undoubted emotional

40 The Revels History of Drama in English, Volume V, 1660-1750, edited by T.W. Craik (London 1976), p.272.

41 Hazel M. Batzer Pollard, From Heroics to Sentimentalism: A Study of Thomas Otway's Tragedies, Salzburg Studies in English Literature, Poetic Drama and Poetic Theory, 10 (Salzburg 1974).

42 Eugene M. Waith, 'Tears of Magnanimity in Otway and Racine' in French and English Drama of the Seventeenth Century. Papers read at a Clark Library Seminar (Los Angeles 1972).

impact of Otway's tragedies (particularly the last two) has tended to obscure his intellectual concerns; leading to the depiction of Otway as a writer revelling in the display of emotion for its own sake.⁴³

Sutherland commends Otway's 'touching simplicity' and his 'avoidance in general of that declamatory utterance which describes rather than expresses emotion'.⁴⁴ He goes on to comment on Otway's grasp of reality, which he sees displayed in his preference for treating love in terms of marriage rather than the convention of love at first sight. For Sutherland, however, these strengths are also weaknesses; they limit the dramatist's range to the emotional and domestic:

No one has ever questioned the power of 'moving Otway' to touch the heart; but his domestic tragedy suffers from the inevitable tendency of its kind to become merely harrowing. He had little of Dryden's intellectual range or his interest in dramatic ideas; he was interested primarily in personal relationships ...

45

43 A.M. Taylor has suggested that the critical emphasis on Otway's ability to move the passions can be traced back to Dryden's comments on Otway in the Preface to his translation of The Art of Painting; see Next to Shakespeare, pp.249-50. Dryden wrote that

I will not defend everything in his Venice Preserved; but I must bear this testimony to his memory, that the passions are truly touched in it, though perhaps there is somewhat to be desired, both in the grounds of them and in the height and elegance of expression; but nature is there, which is the greatest beauty.

In Of Dramatic Poesy and Other Critical Essays, edited by George Watson, 2 vols, vol.2, p.201. Dryden's criticism certainly may have been influential, but as A.M. Taylor herself illustrates in her description of attitudes towards The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd, developments in acting styles and in dramatic and critical sensibility led to the emotional presentation and appreciation of Otway's plays and can explain the trend without reference to Dryden.

44 James Sutherland, English Literature of the Late Seventeenth Century, p.80.

45 Sutherland, as cited above, pp.80-81.

It is significant that Sutherland finds the comic scenes in Venice Preserv'd scenes of 'abject comedy' and a 'distraction'.⁴⁶ Dr.

Batzer Pollard omits the comic scenes from her discussion and thereby avoids the problems they present to a pathetic interpretation of the play. Eric Rothstein, with considerable subtlety, argues that the works of both Otway and Lee display a movement towards emotionalism but that Otway's works more obviously move off in the direction of the pathetic. Rothstein notes the psychological depth and realism of Otway's characterisations, particularly in his depictions of the mental vacillations of his heroes, Castalio and Jaffeir. He argues that the subjective perceptions of the heroes come to dominate the form of the plays: 'Otway's criterion of inclusion has to do with the hero's way of feeling, not with the simple narrative line or, as in the heroic play, with the hero's show of prowess'.⁴⁷ He goes on to develop this point in relation to Otway's use of symbolism,

Otway ... carries to its psychological extreme the elements of passivity and introversion that the pathetic play involves, so that his tragedies take on symbolic shape dependent not upon the rules of the genre but at least partially on the hero's consciousness elevated into law.⁴⁸

Rothstein's interpretation is useful in drawing attention to the extent to which the characters in Otway's plays project their inner turmoil onto the world; but the assumption that 'empathy makes public the hero's subjectivity, and becomes a principle of form'⁴⁹ is misleading. Partly through the use of humour and partly through the

46 Sutherland, as cited above, p.81.

47 Eric Rothstein, Restoration Tragedy, Form and the Process of Change (Madison, Milwaukee, London 1967), p.103.

48 Rothstein, Restoration Tragedy, p.110.

49 Rothstein, Restoration Tragedy, p.104.

typically balanced structure of his dramas, Otway avoids a close audience identification with his heroes' sufferings and perceptions. The heroes' subjective views of the world are placed against opposed or neutral interpretations of the dramatic situation. Thus in Caius Marius there is a strong contrast between Caius Marius's perceptions of the aridity of Nature, Lavinia's sense of its fecundity and the herdsmen's simple experience of the countryside as a place of work. The Orphan develops this technique, displaying a series of ironically contrasted interpretations of experience. In Venice Preserv'd the parallel between the relationship of Jaffeir and Belvidera and that of Antonio and Aquilina provides a comment, outside the scope of Jaffeir's vision, on the driving forces informing the hero's subjective perceptions. Even in his first play, Alcibiades, Otway employs irony and humour to control our reactions to the hero's words and actions. Otway's wit is, in fact, more effective in his tragedies, where it provides a mechanism to deflate the hero's subjective articulation of the world, than in the comedies, where the limitations of the characters and their perceptions is immediately apparent. In the tragedies the comic scenes can also provide telling analogies to the mood of the 'heroic' action: 'Nurse' Noakes's licentious droolings over Lavinia's body in Caius Marius, the comic inadequacy of the Chaplain's sense of vocation in The Orphan, and, indeed, the debased sensuality of Antonio in Venice Preserv'd. In the comedies this comparative dimension is largely lost and the result is a rather monochrome depiction of vice and folly. However, the comedies and tragedies differ in terms of depth and density of theme rather than mood or dramatic vision. In both genres Otway is far from displaying the benevolence towards human nature

upon which sentimental drama depends.⁵⁰ Otway certainly invokes sympathy for his tragic heroes from Alcibiades to Jaffeir, but sympathy is not the same as empathy and need not preclude a sense of the hero's limitations.

In terms of his linguistic devices, themes and dramatic structures, Otway's work, although developing and maturing, is remarkably consistent. T.B. Stroup, in what is still one of the best general articles on Otway, notes the ubiquity of his ironic and snarling tone, which he also sees developing as early as Alcibiades.⁵¹ Stroup draws attention to the burlesquing or debasing of rituals and ceremonies in both comedies and tragedies and the plethora of broken oaths to be found throughout the works, all of which contribute to the general sense of man's instability. From Friendship in Fashion onwards Otway develops the use of animal imagery to express his characters' sense of their own and others bestiality and man's self-destructive potential to regress down the chain of being toward an animal and anarchic State of Nature. An important theme, which is introduced in Friendship in Fashion, is man's destruction of fragile pastoral idylls. In Friendship in Fashion this takes the form of the characters' unruly activities in the 'Night-garden'. In later plays the idea of fake or disintegrating Edens, rural

50 For discussions of the theoretical basis of sentimental drama see Ernest Bernbaum's The Drama of Sensibility: A Sketch of the History of English Sentimental Comedy and Domestic Tragedy 1696-1780 (Boston 1915). The development of theories of man's essentially good and benevolent nature and their relationship to sentimental drama are discussed by R.S. Crane in 'Suggestions Toward a Genealogy of the "Man of Feeling"', English Literary History, I (1934) pp.205-30.

51 T.B. Stroup, 'Otway's Bitter Pessimism', in Essays in English Literature of the Classical Period Presented to Dougald MacMillan, edited by Daniel W. Patterson and Albrecht B. Strauss, Studies in Philology Extra Series, no.4 (North Carolina 1967), pp.54-75.

landscapes or pastoral retreats. becomes more overt and is an important vehicle for the writer's concern with man's fallen status and inadequate idealism. Structurally, the dramatic clashes of men and ideas in Otway's dramas are never one sided. Jaffeir's situation, caught between a corrupt government and a tawdry and degraded conspiracy, is only an extreme example of Otway's characteristic ambiguity.

Otway's ethical stance does not differ in comedy and tragedy. Deceit and disguise, for instance, do not work in terms of comic therapy in the comedies, as perhaps Horner's disguise or Olivia's deceptions do in Wycherley's The Country Wife and The Plain Dealer. In Friendship in Fashion Goodvile's deceptions are transparent and are soon penetrated by those he would deceive, and the results of deception and penetration do not produce any type of comic correction. Throughout Otway's works, and most disastrously in The Orphan, deceit and disguise are seen in terms of self-deception as much as the deception of others, and are treated as mental weaknesses and moral failings. The treatment of chaos and confusion also does not differ radically from comedy to tragedy. There is no sense of festive disorder resolving itself into strengthened order in the comedies. With the exception of The Atheist, Otway's plays have ambiguously inconclusive finales which suggest that the disorders charted in the previous acts will continue to dominate the lives of the characters (or those of the characters left alive).

Otway certainly wrote with great emotional intensity and with a strong sense of theatrical effectiveness, but these exciting and moving qualities should not be seen as somehow detrimental to thought, organisation and intellectual concern. Otway thinks dramatically; he does not provide his plays with argumentative prefaces explaining his intentions; the intentions are there embedded in the

dramatic action. There is not a substitution of feeling for thought in his works but a dramatic enactment of mental processes. Otway's strong sense of reality shows as he treats the abstractions of politics or love and honour with psychological veracity as well as intellectual vigour. In this way his dramas intensify concern over these issues as their broad human significance is demonstrated.

Far from narrowing down in focus as his works develop, I maintain Otway increasingly broadens his scope. After Titus and Berenice Otway moves away from the typical heroic setting of princely courts and the medium of the rhymed heroic couplet towards the wider world of the city and the state and the more flexible and realistic forms of blank verse and prose. The Orphan, with its setting and story - a rural estate, internecine disputes - can appear to suggest a movement toward the domestic. However, as John M. Wallace usefully points out, the play's structure and setting can also be seen as a characteristic of the political fable.⁵² More than this, as I try to demonstrate in my discussion of the play, its meanings radiate out beyond a particular family and its domestic relations, or the state of England in 1680, to consider the proper nature of man and the inherent and tragic divisions of human nature. Otway's intense concern with the conflicts between man's rational impulses and instinctive drives leads him to a psychological treatment of individual natures and, in particular, to penetrating studies of human perversity. However, along with the intensity of concern with the individual and the anomaly, there lies a broad social and political concern with how men function in terms of their relationships

52 John M. Wallace, 'Dryden and History: A Problem in Allegorical Reading', English Literary History, 36 (1966), pp.284-85.

with each other, in groups, and in social and political organisations. In moving from the heroic Otway was not simply replacing the paraphernalia of courts and kings with hearth-side traumas. He was evolving a style for an exploration into the forces of disunity and disruption in human nature and human society. Derek W. Hughes's article, 'A New Look at Venice Preserv'd' is important in relating Otway's critique of the heroic to his sense of man's primitive and instinctual nature. It is also important to note the broader social and theological implications of this critique as the dismantling of the heroic becomes a demonstration of man's fallen nature and a means of talking about the corruption of government.

To whatever extent fashion and necessity influenced Otway's decision to write comedies, the type of comedy he wrote - harsh and satirical depictions of social worlds in which the forms of order are subverted and denied - allowed him to develop his critique and analysis of human nature and society. Otway's involvement with comedy marks the end of his treatment of the heroic within the conventional framework of heroic drama. In abandoning that framework Otway also abandoned assumptions, inherent in its format, about the flawed but perfectible nature of the hero and of man's potential for progress. In Caius Marius, the tragedy Otway wrote after Friendship in Fashion, the depraved world of the Goodvilles' household is projected out onto a whole society and the betrayals, dissensions and self-deceptions which mar the smaller social group of the comic world are shown in tragic action in the State.

In embracing the wider themes of social interaction and chaos Otway was surely influenced not only by the broad social and satiric implications of comedy but by the desperate political situation in England in the late 1670s and early 1680s. Otway's sense of politics is shown in more than his character assassination of the

Earl of Shaftesbury in Venice Preserv'd.

Otway's

dedications, prologues, epilogues and poems fervently support the Court party and, in particular, the Duke of York. However, his dramas display a thoughtful awareness of man's limitations as a political animal. Theodore K. Rabb has defined the 'crisis' of the seventeenth century as revolving around questions of authority:

To the question "where does authority come from?" or "what is authentic authority?" there were a number of corollaries: "are there any solid and stable certainties?" or "what is order and how certain is it?" or "what is truth and how is it achieved?" or, most extreme, "can one rely on anything?". Throughout these metamorphoses the basic concern remained the same - in a world where everything had been thrown into doubt, where uncertainty and instability reigned, could one attain assurance, control, and a common acceptance of some structure where none seemed within reach?⁵³

The Popish Plot and Exclusion Crisis raised most of these questions in relation to the monarchy, legislature and judiciary; religion and conformity, the individual and personal conscience. Otway's later plays, written under the pressure of contemporary events, are increasingly investigations into authority and control and their antitheses, revolt and disorder. The contest between these forces is never simple, as Otway shows the ease with which authority, undermined and perverted by passion, shades into tyranny and the ways in which the processes of control and restraint can dangerously repress and pervert passion. Otway, therefore, does not simply regret lapses in authority; he investigates the nature of authority as manifested in the men and politics of his age and questions man's ability to achieve stability in the self and in the State. Questions

53 Theodore K. Rabb, The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe (New York, Oxford 1975), p.33.

of identity come to be of paramount importance in Otway's plays and these relate not only to the identity of individuals but the identity of the worlds they live in.

In his poem, The Poet's Complaint, the Duke of York appears as the very type of the noble and self-sacrificing hero (stanzas 19-21) - he is in fact referred to as an 'Hero' (21:706). In his Dedication of The Atheist to the son of the Earl of Halifax Otway displays political optimism by referring to Halifax's oratory as saving the English Eden. Dramatically, however, such confidence in the delineation of an hero or optimism in regard to the restoration of grace disappears. The type of order established at the end of The Atheist represents a tolerable, but perhaps only temporary, victory over the forces of disorder and is far from suggesting the establishment of an English Eden. Otway's idealism can only be found outside his dramas, and is there usually presented in negative terms: The Poet's Complaint ends with the exile of the hero; the dedication to The Atheist stresses the seductive powers of the 'Infernal Serpent'. In his dramas no heroes emerge with the qualities necessary to pull society back from the brink of destruction. In his greatest tragedies, Caius Marius, The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd, Otway depicts landscapes of the mind and wastelands of the state and demonstrates the subtle interaction between human nature and the societies created by and projected by human nature. Man is shown caught hopelessly in a vicious circle, bound by his impulses and thwarted by his self-created circumstances.

The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd are true tragedies in the sense that in these plays the tragic dilemma is absolute and human, and the protagonists, Castalio and Jaffeir, emerge as heroes only as they recognise the tragic nature of their world and that their

disasters are the result of their own natures and not of fate, providence or chance. There is no sentimentality or pathos here. Otway does not look forward to an era of universal benevolence but is rooted in his own time and in the universality of the tragic vision as he depicts man in terms of the inescapable paradoxes of his own nature.

In this work my approach is largely chronological, although departures from chronology have been made in the light of thematic consistency. Titus and Berenice is regarded as Otway's swan-song to the heroic mode. Written in heroic couplets and set in the small enclosed world of the Court, it both creates and dismantles the traditional image of the hero as it traces Titus's disintegration as a ruler and as a man. Titus and Berenice is placed with Alcibiades and Don Carlos in the section dealing with Otway's early dramatic productions. The Cheats of Scapin, performed at the same time as Titus and Berenice, is placed in the following section which looks at his first original comedy and at Caius Marius as examples of Otway's experimentation with dramatic form. This is not meant to suggest that The Cheats of Scapin is a product of a later date than Titus and Berenice (it is not known which was written first) but to draw attention to the significance of Otway's movement into comedy. The two later comedies, The Souldiers Fortune and The Atheist are grouped together, although they were separated by three years and by the production of Venice Preserv'd. Similarly, The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd are grouped together although Venice Preserv'd was performed two years later than The Orphan and after the production of The Souldiers Fortune. As would be expected from my earlier comments, this grouping is not meant to suggest that in his later years Otway's comedies and tragedies were developing along separate lines. Since The Atheist is a sequel to The Souldiers Fortune it seemed reasonable

to look at them together. This grouping also reflects my view that the comedies, although worthy of analysis and greater interest than has been shown up till now, are works of lesser density and complexity than the tragedies. It therefore seemed more satisfactory to consider these two comedies together, referring to their relationship to the tragedies, and then move on to an uninterrupted discussion of Otway's last two tragedies. Although I find great consistency in Otway's dramatic concerns and style, I have tried to treat each play as a separate entity and not to impose on the playwright's productions too strong a sense of moving toward the ultimate goal of Venice Preserv'd. The plays display different aspects of Otway's exploration of human nature and society; the underlying unity of the works becomes apparent as the analysis progresses.

I

THE EARLY YEARS

i

ALCIBIADES

Whether or not Otway died of starvation and in the fully pathetic circumstances elaborated by eighteenth century biographers,¹ there seems little doubt that for most of his life he was hard up and unfortunate in his patrons.² However, he began his career as a dramatist quite successfully. His first plays, Alcibiades and Don

- 1 Dr. Johnson describes with compassion two accounts of Otway's death in his Lives of the English Poets, I, 143-44. The account of Otway choking to death on a bread-roll is drawn from Theophilus Cibber's The Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland etc. II, 334. The version that he died of a fever contracted whilst pursuing the murderer of a friend is found in Joseph Spence's Observations, Anecdotes, etc., edited by E. Malone, p.100. Contemporary accounts such as Anthony à Woods's in Athenae Oxonienses: An exact history of ... Writers and Bishops who had their education in ... Oxford, 2 vols. (London 1691), I, 292, are less harrowing but attest to his poverty.
- 2 Otway's failure to find a consistent or generous patron is shown by his bitter, if tactless, dedication of The Souldiers Fortune (1680) to his bookseller, Richard Bentley; see also J.C. Ross's article 'An Attack on Thomas Shadwell in Otway's The Atheist', Philological Quarterly, 52, (Oct. 1973), pp. 753-60 for speculations on ways in which Otway might have offended his early patrons.

Carlos, on his own evidence were well received:³ they enjoyed the support of the Earl of Rochester and his third tragedy and first comedy, Titus and Berenice and The Cheats of Scapin, were dedicated to the Earl.

Alcibiades was produced at Dorset Garden towards the end of September or the beginning of October 1675 and a performance was attended by the King and Queen.⁴ The play was strongly cast with Thomas Betterton and his wife taking the roles of Alcibiades and Timandra, Harris that of Theramnes and Samuel Sandford and Mary Lee, specialists in villainous and passionate roles, playing Tissaphernes and the Queen of Sparta. The strength of the cast suggests that Otway was well known and trusted by the Duke's Company and supports the tradition that Otway filled in some time between leaving Oxford in 1671 and emerging as a dramatist, acting with the Duke's Company.⁵

- 3 See the Preface to Don Carlos, lines 31-46 and 'The Poet's Complaint of His Muse' verse 6, 144-47 in The Works of Thomas Otway, Plays, Poems and Love-Letters, edited by J.C. Ghosh, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1932, reprinted 1968). References to Otway's writings in the text and to Works hereafter are to this edition unless otherwise indicated. Rochester, however, in 'An Allusion to Horace', (dated by Vieth to the winter of 1675, see The Complete Poems of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, edited by D. Vieth (New Haven and London, 1974), p.120, 207), suggests that 'puzzling Otway' labours in vain to 'divert the rabble and the Court'. Despite Rochester's criticism it seems from the Preface to Don Carlos that he lent his critical esteem and social influence to Alcibiades and it was successful enough to encourage the author to pursue his chosen career.
- 4 See The London Stage 1660-1800, edited by William Van Lennep and others, 11 vols. (Carbondale, Illinois, 1960-68), Part I, ... 1660-1700 (1965), p.239, the play is on the L.C. list, 5/142, p.81: 'King and Queene at Alcibiades and a box for the Mayds of Honor'.
- 5 Downe's account in Roscius Anglicanus (London, 1708), p.34, seems to suggest that Otway only acted once, in Aphra Behn's The Forc'd Marriage, first performed in 1670, before Otway left Oxford, so the performance he played in was perhaps a revival in 1672, see J.C. Ghosh's discussion in Works, I, p.12, footnote 1. Despite Downe's vivid description of his stage fright, it seems probable that Otway acted more than once. Anthony à Wood describes Otway as leaving Oxford for London 'where he not only applied his Muse to Poetry but sometimes acted in plays', Athenae Oxonienses, I, pp.291-92. Charles Gildon wrote that during his early days in London Otway survived on

In his Preface to Don Carlos Otway rather archly describes the genesis of Alcibiades,

... I must confess I had often a Tittillation to Poetry, but never durst venture on my Muse, till I got her into a Corner in the Country, and then like a bashful young Lover when I had her private I had Courage to fumble, but never thought she would have produc't any thing, till at last I know not how, e're I was aware, I found myself Father of a Dramatique birth, which I call'd Alcibiades. (16-22)

However, the processes of composition cannot have been as artless and unconscious as Otway's mocking self-disparagement implies. Alcibiades is a remarkably fine first play and one which shows signs of his later thinking and style. Furthermore, it demonstrates his thorough knowledge of contemporary drama and dramatic tastes and also of the particular strengths of the company for which he was writing.

Alcibiades caters to the Duke's Company's ability to stage spectacular scene shifts, such as in Timandra's vision of Elysium in Act V, and it also responds to the taste of the seventies for musical scenes.⁶ It contains two songs (IV.37-54, V.110-26) and two musical masque-like scenes (II.220-43, V.259-303). The play is highly derivative in terms of style and incidents. Dryden's Epilogue to Tyrannic Love (1669) and

5 (continued) 'a small Allowance and Sallery from the Playhouse ... (for he was first a Player)' The Lives and Characters of the English Dramatic Poets (London, 1699), p.107. The author(s) of 'A Session of the Poets' (1677), seems to have assumed that Otway's career as an actor was well known enough to be lampooned,

But Apollo had seen his Face on the Stage,
And prudently did not think fit to engage

The Scum of a Playhouse for the Prop of an Age.

See Poems by John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, edited by Vivian de Sola Pinto, The Muses' Library (Cambridge, Mass. and London, Second Edition 1964), p.106, l. 57-59. The attribution is uncertain.

6 R.D. Hume describes the competition the theatres felt during the season 1673-74 from 'opera', The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century (Oxford, 1976), p.206. The Duke's Company had staged the spectacular musical Davenant-Dryden-Shadwell version of The Tempest in 1674 and the extravagant Court production of Crowne's Calisto in 1675 indicates the taste for elaborate staging and music, (see Eleanore Boswell, The Restoration Court Stage, 1660-1702 (London, New York, 1960, repr. of 1932 Harvard Press edition).)

Lee's Prologue to Nero (1674) may have suggested to Otway his witty and debunking Epilogue which, like Dryden's, calls for the resuscitation of a slain character. The Queen of Sparta in her lust and delight in bloodshed is reminiscent of Mary Lee's earlier starring role as the Empress of Morocco in Settle's play of that name (1673). The scene in which Timandra instructs Draxilla to tell Alcibiades she is dead recalls Cyara telling Britannicus she is dead in Nero, while the Queen's attempted seduction of Alcibiades is taken from Lyndaraxa's attempt on Almanzor's virtue in The Conquest of Granada, II (1670), (III.iii), although the heroes' reactions are very different. In addition, in this scene the rejection of an offer of sibling love comes from the first part of The Conquest of Granada, I, (V.ii), and, throughout, Alcibiades's attempts to mollify the Queen recall the behaviour of Cortez to Almeria in The Indian Emperor (1665). Other borrowings can easily be traced or, at least, conjectured.

Timandra's death by drinking a bowl of poison recalls the deaths of Massinissa and Sophonisba in Lee's Sophonisba, or Hannibal's Overthrow (April, 1675), and Timandra's forgiveness of the dying Theramnes is similar to Almahide's forgiveness of Zulema, The Conquest of Granada, II, (V.ii). The main point is that in themselves most of the incidents are unoriginal and conventional, as is much of the language. Otway also borrowed lines liberally from Shakespeare,⁷ but there is nothing very Shakespearean about the tone or mood of the play. Dr. Batzer Pollard and R.G. Ham have greatly exaggerated Tissaphernes's debt to Iago, which is only faintly discernible in Act IV (349-55), and

7 See IV.206, V.140-41,145,239,301-02, for borrowings from Macbeth and Hamlet. The placings of these borrowings in the last Acts of the play suggests that Otway went to Shakespeare for dramatic heightening; for striking lines rather than overall mood.

R.D. Hume has placed the play in his category 'The Villain on Display: Horror Tragedy'.¹¹ There is certainly a dramatic use of horrific effects in the play with the on-stage deaths of the King, the Queen and Alcibiades and the gruesome emphasis laid on Timandra's painful death throes. In all, seven of the ten named characters are dead by the end of the play-which does make it something of a blood-bath. However, this mode is not, on the whole, characteristic of Otway's style, although he is always capable of producing striking visual effects such as the death of Pierre and Jaffeir in Venice Preserv'd. He minimised the importance of the villains in his next play, Don Carlos, and even here their significance has been over-emphasized by critics.¹² The lust and ambition of the Queen and Tissaphernes motivate the plot mechanics but there is more to the play than a display of villainy.

Apart from the villains the play displays a general ambivalence over man's capacity for goodness, and a sense of the misuse and abuse of language which goes beyond the villains' obvious duplicity. A striking feature of the play is the characters' limited understanding of their circumstances or themselves. Tissaphernes is confident of his powers as a villain but is out-plotted by the Queen. The King repeatedly congratulates himself on the friendship and loyalty of those around him (I.261-66, III.159-60), and is only disabused during the second and successful attempt on his life. Alcibiades throughout displays great confidence in his innocence (IV.285-88, 303, 441-42) but the play opens with the news of his acts

11 R.D. Hume, The Development of English Drama, p.199.

12 See Hume, cited above, p.200 and Batzer Pollard, cited above, p.31 who both see the play as dealing with a sharp conflict between good and evil.

of sacrilege during a drunken orgy and his defection to the enemy camp. There is a gap between what people say and what they are: between talk and action and between ideas of greatness and actual actions. Early in Act I, Timandra declares, 'I Love, am Mad, and know not what I do' (I.30), and there is a strong streak of irrationality in all the characters' actions.

The main notions which the play examines through the concepts of love, honour and friendship are those of passion and restraint. The play opens with four scenes of passion. First, there is the news that Alcibiades has led 'The Bacchanals all hot and Drunk with Wine',

... to the Almighty Thund'rers shrine,
And there his Image seated on a Throne
They violently took and tumbled down.
(I.5-8)

Although Alcibiades's act of impiety is only referred to once more in the play, when Alcibiades accuses the gods of visiting their vengeance on Timandra rather than himself (II.88-93), it must affect our whole response to Alcibiades's character. In his Preface to Don Carlos Otway agrees that his Alcibiades bears little relation to the historical figure.¹³ However, given the fact that Otway has (to a large extent) 'cleaned-up' Alcibiades's character,¹⁴ regularising his relationship with Timandra and cutting out his liaison with the Queen of Sparta, it is significant that he makes no attempt to gloss over Alcibiades's sacrilege. This sacrilege is given prominence as the play opens with the servant's description of it. This news is followed

13 Preface to Don Carlos, p.173, 24-28.

14 Otway's source was most probably Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch, The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romaines, which was republished in London in 1657.

by a scene showing Timandra's jealous impatience to join Alcibiades. Her feelings of love and jealousy are equated with madness when Draxilla reasonably points out that Timandra has no grounds to distrust Alcibiades' love of her and Timandra replies

Alas! goe ask of Mad-men why they Rave.
What more could Fate do to Augment my Woe?
I Love, am Mad, and know not what I do.
(I.28-30)

Draxilla's suggestion that the gods have wisely decided to temper Timandra and Alcibiades' happiness,

Lest should it in its high perfection come,
Your soul for the Reception might want roome.
(I.41-42)

is countered by Timandra's question whether 'Woman e're complain'd of too much Love?' (I.44). Timandra also dismisses the thought that Alcibiades might have withdrawn to attempt to control his 'Rage' (I.53-58). Throughout this scene the voice of patience and reason, represented by Draxilla, is systematically rejected. Religious consolations are denied or ignored and friendship is invoked (I.75) as an aid to the passionate enterprise of stealing in disguise to the Spartan camp. This scene of passion is followed by Theramnes's entrance and his unwanted protestations of love.

Just as Timandra has rejected Draxilla's advice, Theramnes, after his snubbing treatment by Timandra, rejects his friend's attempts to urge patience on him;

Patience! Whats that? The Mistress of tame Fools,
That can in nothing else employ their souls.
(I.167-68)

The final scene of passion introduced in the first act shows Tissaphernes, the Spartan general who has been demoted in favour of Alcibiades, working himself up into a passion of jealousy. In a soliloquy he broods on the injustice done to him and ends in a classic 'rant' as he challenges the furies,

Envy and Malice from your Mansions flie,
Resign your horrour and your Snakes to me;
For I'll act mischiefs yet to you unknown;
Nay, you shall all be Saints when I come down.
(I.297-300)

The scene is set therefore in the first Act for an examination of the role of passion in the characters' lives, and a pattern is established for the rejection of ideas of control. Passion, we can see, is not confined to the villains but is implied in Alcibiades's actions and is present in Timandra's words. The pattern is also established for the very imperfect role of religion in the characters' lives. Alcibiades has destroyed sacred images; Timandra has rejected religious consolations and declared that all she asks of Heaven is 'To meet a faithful Lover, or a Grave' (I.86). Theramnes courts Timandra in language which is blasphemous in its equation of holy and sexual devotion (I.100-102) and Tissaphernes has directly challenged the gods.

The rejection of control is most apparent in the villains' behaviour and actions as they plot rapes and murders. They, however, are extreme cases rather than unique manifestations. With the villains the situation develops great clarity as they explicitly formulate ideas of greatness which deny the importance of restraint. In fact they define greatness in terms of a lack of restraint. The two main villains, Tissaphernes and the Queen, are actors as none of the other characters, except Alcibiades, are. The violence and licence of their true feelings are both disguised and emphasized by the lip-service they pay to conventional notions of behaviour. Tissaphernes, for instance, manages to feign sudden illness when offered the poisoned goblet by the King in Act II (252-60), and embraces Alcibiades and Patrocles in Act III after an aside deploring his son's embrace of Alcibiades (III.146-47). He recovers himself

well later on in Act III when he realises that his son will not join him in his hatred of Alcibiades and cannot share his own scepticism towards 'Embraces! Love! and kindness!' (III.213). The Queen also acts well and skilfully - turns the tables on Tissaphernes in Act V when, having murdered the King, she puts on a convincing show of shock and sorrow (V.186-217), and has Tissaphernes arrested for the murder. Their acting abilities on the one hand illustrate the gap between their professions and their real feelings but, more uneasily, their skills also demonstrate the ease with which the mask of honour can be assumed and the language of restraint manipulated. The gap between words and thoughts is illustrated very clearly when the Queen ably supports her husband's views on the benefits of monarchical rule in Act III and pours scorn in Hobbist terms on the power of mere states,¹⁵ 'In States those monstrous many-headed pow'rs/Of private int'rest publick good devours.' (III.17-18). However, the Queen is not, like her husband, a good Hobbist and a supporter of absolute rule and order (III.9-16). Her real inclinations are quite opposed to such a state and are, in fact, for a return to the State of Nature as a state of licence. Earlier she briskly dismissed the concept of majesty as 'Th'ill-natur'd pageant mockery of fate' (II.145), and she also rejects honour in Falstaffian terms as 'a very word; an empty name' (II.183). Fame and conscience are also disposed of in a speech which longs for a return to the first amoral condition of man;

15 The Queen's lines are clearly drawn from Leviathan, 'where the publique and private interest are most closely united, there is the publique most advanced', Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, edited by C.B. Macpherson (Penguin Books, 1972), Chapter XIX p.241 .

How dully wretched is the Slave to fame!
Give me a Soul that's large and unconfin'd;
Free as the Ayr, and boundless as the Wind:
Nature was then in her first excellence,
When undisturb'd with puny Conscience,
Mans Sacrifice was pleasure, his God, sence.
(II.184-89)

In all the villains' speeches the belief is expressed that the soul's greatness lies in being 'unconfin'd'. When urging Theramnes to escape and rape Timandra, Tissaphernes advises him to put aside, as unworthy, twinges of conscience. Conscience is defined in libertine terms as a 'trick of State, found out by those /That wanted power to support their laws ' (III.354-55). It is a 'bug-bear' (III.356) and a 'fallacie' (III.357). Like the Queen, Tissaphernes appeals to the pre-civilized condition of man as an authentic state of true freedom and to Nature as a source of freedom from the limitations of human conventions. He tells Theramnes that 'we'

That know the weakness of the fallacie,
Know better how to use what nature gave.
That Soul's no Soul which to it self's a slave.
(III.357-59)

Theramnes, as we have seen, has already rejected patience as a quality cultivated by 'fame Fools' with inadequate souls (I.167-68). He is persuaded by Tissaphernes's inverted reasoning and later he goes on to reject Timandra's pleas that he respect her honour, by arguing that intemperance and despair are both signs of a great soul:

... I am too unhappy to be good.
Let vertue to dull Anchorites repair,
Who ne're had Soul enough to know despair.
(IV.196-98)

The idea that there is a sort of grandeur in despair is also taken up by Tissaphernes when, having rejected warnings from Hell, he meditates that 'there's yet some brav'ry in despair' (V.24).

The villains, and the half villain, Theramnes, have inverted the premise that greatness of soul and action lies in feeling passions but controlling them,¹⁶ by insisting that merely feeling passion and acting on that feeling is a sign of greatness. The ability to control the passions is equated with a weakness in the passions felt. Strong passions, they imply, cannot and should not be controlled. In effect, they elevate irrational impulses, lust and jealousy, into signs of greatness. In doing so they are elevating human weaknesses, not strengths, and all are to a large extent dupes to their own passions, which blind them. Theramnes becomes one of Tissaphernes's tools for his revenge against Alcibiades and dies in his unsuccessful attempt to rape Timandra. Tissaphernes himself falls victim to the Queen, whose talents for plotting he underestimates. And the Queen, even as her plots are successfully carried out, and the King and Timandra are dead or dying, is defeated by aspects of the human heart which are beyond her understanding or control. The doctrine of the passions is in no way endorsed by the play and indeed Otway just begins here to go into the psychology of an irrational and passionate temperament in his characterisation of Tissaphernes.

R.D. Hume commenting on Tissaphernes says he is 'simply a fiend - and naturally hates Alcibiades'.¹⁷ But this is an underestimation of Tissaphernes's character, as well as suggesting an

16 See David R. Hauser's useful description of heroic qualities in 'Otway Preserved: Theme and Form in Venice Preserv'd', Studies in Philology, LV, (1958); 'a hero in heroic drama gains his exalted position not by great deeds and noble birth alone, but also through great self-control, a necessary premise to heroic action', p.482.

17 R.D. Hume, cited above, p.200.

over-clear confrontation between 'fiendishness' and goodness.

Tissaphernes's character is given a certain perverse psychological basis as Otway expands Tissaphernes's hatred of Alcibiades into a more general (and more irrational) refusal to accept old age (I.288-92), and a longing for a return of youth. In a singularly vampiric speech Tissaphernes tells Theramnes that-

I'll make my age a step to a new youth:
Such murders and such cruelties maintain,
I'll from the blood I shed grow young again.
(III.347-49)

Later the longing for youth is carried further into a desire for immortality itself;

I'll act such things whilst here I have abode,
Till my own Trophies raise me to a God.
(V.32-33)

In both cases an unnatural cruelty is the medium through which Tissaphernes hopes to effect his transformation. There is a constant contrast between the tributes the King pays to his aged retirement (I.246-53, III.148-51), and his own angry violence. Theramnes too draws our attention to the incongruity of such passions residing in an elderly frame (III.340-45). Tissaphernes is a figure of inversion. His white hairs do not represent wisdom and calm but 'threaten ruin death and war' (III.345). He is the first of Otway's gallery of unsatisfactory father figures. He provokes his own son into disowning him (III.253-55), and later on even fights him (IV.209). He displays a typical feature of Otway's mad old men, when he shows a tendency towards sexual voyeurism as he works himself into an 'extasie' (IV.152) at the thought of Theramnes raping Timandra (IV.149-51). In other words, although a 'fiend', Tissaphernes is not simply so. His fiendishness is given roots in an aberrant psyche and the unnaturalness of uncontrolled passionate behaviour is given a striking form in this portrait of a man refusing to accept the

limitation of time.

Tissaphernes is a malcontent in the Renaissance tradition in many ways; a satiric figure who is cynically aware of his own and other people's duplicity,

Embraces! Love! kindness! what are these?
The outward varnish that our hearts disguise.
Hast thou so long with Courts conversant been,
The various turns of power and greatness seen,
And hast thou not this mystery yet found,
Always to smile in's face we mean to wound?
(III.213-18)

He is also a more archetypal figure of revolt who represents a form of anarchy which leads to madness in its rejections of the fundamentals of human existence. The 'Snakes' Tissaphernes calls for in Act I (298) are symbols of insanity as much as 'Envy and Malice'.

Tissaphernes steps over the thin line separating ambition and insanity when he defies Hell and sees his own actions as leading to his immortality (V.32-33). His madness becomes fully apparent in Act V when he accepts responsibility for a crime he did not commit, and is almost gleeful in his appreciation of the Queen's duplicity, (V.217-18,230-35). There is a hint here of the cynicism and insanity with which Caius Marius and Sir Davy Duncce greet their downfalls.¹⁸ In the face of a world turned upside down grim hilarity becomes a typical response, even - or indeed more especially - from those who have actively helped to bring about the inverted state.

Compared to Tissaphernes the Queen is a more single-minded and simply motivated creature. She is driven by her lust for Alcibiades and her contempt for her husband's sexual prowess (II.157-60). The main point which the Queen illustrates is the vast destructiveness

18 Caius Marius, III.457-62, The Souldiers Fortune, V.687-92.

of uncontrolled sexual passion. There is also a hint of madness in the barbaric logic of her elimination of the obstacles between her and Alcibiades. Methodically, and bloodily, she clears her road to Alcibiades's bed, and in the process manages to reduce the victorious Spartan camp to near chaos. Ironically, at the end, her anarchic sense of monarchy as the 'ill-natur'd pageant mockery of fate' (II.145), is echoed by Patrocles, who finds himself the unwilling King of Sparta. He sees his election as an example of the malicious turns of fortune (V.532) and, 'My Friends, my Mistress, and my Father, lost!' (V.530), the crown he is offered is 'but the shadow of a happiness' (V.534). Much less strongly developed here than later on in Otway's work, but nonetheless apparent, is Otway's sense of man's capacity to reduce order to chaos, and undermine the institutions which, however imperfectly, give form and meaning to life. It is significant that the play does not end on a note of triumph with the satisfactory restoration of order. As Patrocles says, he has lost everything which made life meaningful to him, and Patrocles himself is too minor a figure for his coronation to represent the restoration of order. The play, like Lee's Sophonisba, ends on a depressed and muted note.

The villains are structurally important because their plots initiate the action. They are also thematically integrated into the overall patterns of the play, as they represent models for the triumphs of passion over reason, or rather, the perversion of reason by passion. For the villains have expressed their revolt in terms of inverted logic. However, as I have suggested earlier, they do not and cannot totally dominate the play. Their enslavement to passion makes them essentially weak characters. Villains can never be very exciting or emphatic characters for Otway. He does not

create colourful monsters like Lee's Nero or adroit intellectual villains like Dryden's Maximin. Tissaphernes and the Queen are essentially static characters and in the end their ideas are without subtlety; they simply espouse contrary modes of behaviour. Tissaphernes' declaration of his religion of evil (V.237-46), which has been implicit throughout, is less interesting than Alcibiades' impiety, but sense of innocence, or the processes by which Theramnes, who declares his heart is 'spotless and sincere,/As the chaste Vows of holy Vestals' (I.93-94), turns into a brutal rapist.

Otway's villains pursue inadequate and irrational goals. In his next play the villains' importance is minimised; and in both plays there is a tendency for the villains to look foolish or sound comic rather than horrific (Alcibiades, II.157-60, IV.56-64, V.6,15). Antonio, a foolish, sexually enslaved and perverted member of a corrupt Senate, is a logical extension of Otway's view of evil as a manifestation of human weakness. The Queen, in her sexual lust, and Tissaphernes, in his longing for youth, are both bound and limited by physical bodily needs and longings. Alcibiades does not contain the body of animal imagery which becomes one of Otway's characteristic methods of indicating the primacy of bodily instincts and a regression towards primitive and bestial states of existence. However, in the libertine expressions and impulses of Tissaphernes, the Queen and Theramnes, Otway presents their wickedness in terms of retreat from or rejection of civilized and rule-bound modes of behaviour.¹⁹

19 I am not suggesting that Otway is unique in treating a lack of control as a source of evil behaviour, but there is something original in treating the villainous characters as faintly comic in their passion, though there is a precedent here in Tyrannick Love and Nero.

The concepts of order which the villains reject out of hand are also shown under pressure in the activities of the other characters. The three main concepts which are under review and which are shown to be challenged by the passions are love, friendship and honour. These concepts are inter-related insofar as, in their ideal form, they are all based on virtue and honour. So an examination of friendship, which is an ideal professed by Alcibiades, Timandra and Theramnes, will involve both love and honour, virtue, steadfastness and honesty. There are three friendships depicted in the play: those of Theramnes and Polyndus, Timandra and Draxilla and Alcibiades and Patrocles. Otway does not introduce any direct conflict between love and friendship, friendship and honour/duty,²⁰ but he does show ways in which all these ideals are undermined and devalued. They impinge on each other rather than conflict with each other and more fundamentally the very basis of the ideals, as expressed in this play, is shown to be dubious.

In the case of the friendship of Theramnes and Polyndus the problem raised by their friendship is indicated by a gap between their declarations and Theramnes's actual actions. Thus they address each other in conventional friendship terms which suggest a relationship based on virtue and honour. Polyndus calls Theramnes his 'noblest Friend' (I.147) and Theramnes refers to Polyndus as 'worthy and so brave' (I.191) and as a 'noble generous Youth' (I.188). These terms may be

20 Patrocles, for instance, has no hesitation in preferring his friendship for Alcibiades to a filial duty to hate him. The possibility that he might be faced with a real conflict between his duties to friend and to father later on is eliminated as Tissaphernes has him removed from the scene in Act IV and he only reappears at the very end of the play when all the action is over.

appropriate to Polyndus ^{since} he is a shadowy figure who only appears briefly in Act I, but Theramnes, by his own admission, is already involved in 'Policy' and 'Plots' (I.163-64). More disturbing than this however is the use of heroic terms to gloss over unheroic emotions. Polyndus tells Theramnes not to let his 'soul be so opprest' (I.165) by his passion for Timandra and urges patience on him. Theramnes, we have seen, rejects patience and by implication answers that such an oppression of the soul is a sign of greatness. Polyndus, however, interprets Theramnes speech, which goes on to initiate martial action against Alcibiades (I.167-72), as a sign that Theramnes has controlled his passion; 'Now Sir y'are brave- / Already y'ave disarm'd Timandra's charms' (I.173-74). Nothing in Theramnes's speech has suggested this conclusion. Martial action, in the context of his impatience, is merely an extension of passion and not an alternative. The friends speak at cross-purposes, and this sense that Theramnes is engaged in activities which are not heroic and which do not involve an heroic mastery of passion undermines Polyndus's eager and heroic engagement of himself to his friend's cause (I.184-87). There is no suggestion that Theramnes is deliberately misleading Polyndus. Otway's characters wilfully mislead themselves, or perhaps it is truer to say that he demonstrates how language, when loosely used, offers ample opportunities for misunderstanding.

The feeling of unease with the way language is used here (and elsewhere) is heightened by certain repetitions of phrases. In the scene proceeding Theramnes's entry Timandra urges Draxilla to help her flee to the Spartan camp 'Born on the wings of Jealousy and Love' (I.82). Polyndus almost repeats this when he encourages Theramnes to fight his rival carried 'o'th'Wings of Love and honour'

(I.176). Honour and jealousy, through the closeness of the phrases, become terms which can substitute for each other and, in fact, jealousy rather than honour motivates the pursuit of 'th'insulting Enemy' (I.177). The phrase 'noble generous Youth' becomes similarly ambiguous. It is repeated in the next scene when, 23 lines after Theramnes's use of it, the King of Sparta applies it to Alcibiades (I.211). All that Alcibiades has done at this stage to deserve this encomium is desert his native state after defiling statues of his gods. In the one case the speaker's moral position is equivocal; in the other the object's status is questionable. The total effect is to devalue the phrase and to show such expressions as drawn from particular circumstances (both Theramnes and the King of Sparta need allies) rather than from a more universal moral framework. Finally, the love which is motivating Theramnes's 'heroic' pursuit of Alcibiades is even at this stage dubious. He has apparently used 'Policy' and 'Plots' against his rival and, although the language he uses to court Timandra is in many ways courtly and conventional, it also verges on the blasphemous. However, the conventionality of the language should also be stressed. For what one sees in the two scenes, the scene in which he courts Timandra and the following scene in which he complains to his friend, is the process by which an unsatisfied love is turning into a dishonourable passion.

Alcibiades's friendship with Patrocles is similarly fraught by the sense that Alcibiades, at least, does not particularly merit the language which his friend generously applies to him. It is for instance odd, given the nature of our knowledge about Alcibiades, to hear Patrocles defending Alcibiades to his father in these terms,

Do but look on that life you would destroy,
See if it ben't as spotless and serene
As that which in their heav'n blest Saints enjoy,
Pure and untouch't but with a thought of sin.

(III.233-36)

This seems strange praise, with its use of religious language, for a man exiled from his native land for his impiety. The reader, although perhaps not an audience, is further alerted by the phrase 'spotless and serene', which echoes Theramnes's vow to Timandra that his heart is 'spotless and sincere' (I.93). It is not simply that these over-laps in language equate Theramnes and Alcibiades (although there clearly are similarities between the two Athenian generals, each supplied with a loyal friend and both in love with Timandra), but they suggest a failure to use language meaningfully. There is throughout a disturbing way in which language does not fit the facts and fails to adequately respond to the complexity of the situation. The villains do have an alternative language, one which is at times earthy (II.157-60), and is sincere in its adherence to license. But the other characters, at times, seem to be locked into a language which is almost consistently inaccurate.

Patrocles's defence of Alcibiades is echoed by Alcibiades himself:

What have I done that could be call'd a wrong?
No I've a guard of innocence too strong.
Whilst I unspotted that and friendship bear,
No danger is so great that I need fear.
(IV.285-89)

and

By all above Sir I am innocent;
I ne're knew what the thought of Treason meant.
(IV.441-442)

It is true that Alcibiades is innocent of the particular crime he is accused of ^{since} he has not been disloyal to the King of Sparta. But, on a more general level, the protestations of innocence and denial of any understanding of treason are not convincing from one who has defiled his gods and fought against his country.

But not all Alcibiades's flaws of character are to be found

in events antecedent to the play. He shows a singular lack of heroic fortitude as he attempts suicide on hearing the false news of Timandra's death (II.94-98). In this scene Alcibiades also questions the justice of the gods (II.88-93), although the supposed events reflect on his own behaviour rather than the operations of divine providence. Further Alcibiades's behaviour towards the Queen of Sparta represents a very real lapse in his heroic status. The temptation scene is highly conventional and derivative. Alcibiades's behaviour recalls that of Cortez towards Almeria in The Indian Emperour (Act IV), while the Queen's lustful rejection of Alcibiades' offer of sibling love (IV.85-90) is similar to Almanzor's rejection of Almahide's offer in The Conquest of Granada, I, (Act V). In Dryden these scenes reflect badly on the heroes, and here, although obviously the Queen's lustful rejection of offers of virtuous love reflect worst on her, Otway contrives the scene so that neither of them come off very well. Otway felt obliged to joke in his Preface to Don Carlos about his hero's unhistorical and unlikely behaviour in rejecting the Queen's advances, but he by no means makes him a totally 'squeamish Gentleman'. Alcibiades admits to the Queen that he has libertine propensities (IV.95-96) and in an aside to himself he acknowledges the Queen's attractions (IV.105-06), and throughout the scene he does not employ straightforward methods but resorts to various insincere offers of virtuous love. His motives for acting (instead of simply rejecting the offers as Almanzor rejects Lyndaraxa's in the parallel scene in The Conquest of Granada, II (III.iii)), seem to stem in part from a misguided courtesy. Like Dorimant he could claim 'Good nature and good manners corrupt/me' (II.ii.188-89).²¹ For as the Queen approaches Alcibiades finds

21 George Etherege, The Man of Mode, edited by W.B. Carnochan (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1966, London, 1967).

himself in a social quandary; 'What's to be done, which way shall I conclude?/I must abuse my King, or must be rude' (IV.30-31). There is a note of comedy throughout this scene as Alcibiades responds weakly to the Queen's blatant passes (IV.55) and it is surely comically deflating to find the hero seriously wondering if he should commit adultery out of good manners. After all, Alcibiades is rather squeamish his considerations here are over-nice and over-scrupulousness in such questions of propriety results in a failure to distinguish the obvious and adequate moral response. When all his other attempts have failed Alcibiades resorts to a 'stratagem' (IV.109), disastrously; he tells the Queen that were she not married to the King and were he not wedded to Timandra, he would love her (IV.110-17). Alcibiades avoids the pitfalls of ill-manners or sexual misbehaviour but only to lay the foundations for the deaths of the King and Timandra as the Queen in her simplicity proceeds to eliminate these obstacles. The scene is an example of the characters' inability to understand each other or themselves. When the Queen later reminds Alcibiades of his promise and points out that the conditions have now been fulfilled (V.411-15), Alcibiades's response is to admit that 'then' he 'the blessing knew, but not the loss' (V.416). By the end of his scene with the Queen Alcibiades does recognise some of the problems involved in the pursuit of honour in a dishonourable world (IV.141-46), and his own method, which has turned politeness into duplicity, is one of the 'ills' of honour (IV.143).

Alcibiades's rather problematic defence of his virtue is strongly contrasted by the following scene in which Timandra defends her honour as she is nearly raped by Theramnes. Alcibiades, of course, is not physically threatened by the Queen, who cannot literally rape him. Nevertheless, there is a contrast between Timandra's

straightforward plea to Theramnes to 'Save but my honour, and my life destroy' (IV.194) and Alcibiades's evasive and devious behaviour. Perhaps the most telling, deflating and ironic comment on the stupid ineffectuality of Alcibiades's behaviour here comes from the Queen when he later rejects her outright, hearing that Timandra is dead. Contemptuously the Queen draws back the curtain to show him Timandra in her death-agonies saying 'Go dotard in, enjoy thy bride' (V.421). Clearly the remark reflects on the Queen's callous nature, but it also means that at the climax of the play, as the hero watches in acute distress his wife die in pain, he is treated as a fool: as someone who through a careless and even libertine manipulation of the language of vows and love has helped to engineer his own and others' destruction.

Earlier, in Act III, attention has been drawn to Alcibiades' skill with words and a contrast drawn between his good manners and the frank though bad-tempered behaviour of his captive, Theramnes. Having defeated the Athenian army Alcibiades courteously resigns the laurels and fruits of victory to the King as he hands over to him Theramnes, whom he has taken prisoner (III.72-77). Theramnes rudely and sharply cuts across Alcibiades and the King's formal exchanges with a pithy couplet, 'Yes, and in this you have o'ecome him too, / He cannot talk Sir half so fast as you' (III.78-79). The effectiveness of this sally depends on two points, partly the sheer deflating comedy of equating strength of arm and speed of tongue, and partly because it does draw attention to the smoothness of Alcibiades's language. Theramnes accuses Alcibiades of 'pride' (III.82) in his speech and draws attention to their rivalry in love and politics (III.90-92, 97-99). Theramnes in this way shifts the conflict from the lofty and rather abstract plane on which it has

been pitched by the King and Alcibiades (III.9-16,72-77) to a personal conflict of sex and status. The battle, which has been described in conventional epic terms by the Messenger (III.43-65), suddenly descends to the level of a primitive 'flyting', similar to the feminine exchanges of Zenocrates and Zabina in Tamburlaine, I. Theramnes threatens and Alcibiades sneers cheaply back at him, 'Rave on; know of your threats no sence I feel,/I'd laugh at 'em, wer't not to loose a smile' (III.105-06).

The scene primarily shows Theramnes's passion and his failure to behave like a noble captive but Alcibiades's status is also impugned as he descends to his level. The whole order and ceremony of the scene, which opened with the proud procession of Alcibiades leading in his captive and then with elegant courtesy inverting his role as conqueror to kneel before the King (stage directions after line 65), is dissolved in the face of this outburst of passion and the responses it provokes. The whole nobility of the preceding battle is lessened as the Generals snarl at each other; and this in turn reflects on Alcibiades's subsequent speech on the battle and his friendly insistence that Patrocles deserves the 'Lawrells' of victory (III.131-36). The criticism here is subtle and indirect; it is not that one doubts that Patrocles fought bravely or that Alcibiades admires him, but rather that suddenly the whole basis for couching the encounter in heroic terms has been questioned. It is also significant that, although Alcibiades first makes over the 'Trophies' of victory to the King and then the laurels to Patrocles, Act IV finds him brooding on the fact that the Queen's lustful behaviour threatens his hard won 'Trophyes' (IV.5-8). Theramnes's digs at Alcibiades's pride and fluent speech seem justified. The Alcibiades we see and the Alcibiades Patrocles describes (III.233-36) quite simply are not the same person. Between Tissaphernes's unreasoning hatred and Patrocles's unreasoning

idealism lies a reality which is falsified by both characters.

The third friendship is that of Timandra and Draxilla and it is also expressed in highly conventional terms as they describe the friendship and mingling of their souls (II.7-10,33-42). However, this friendship is rather insiduously challenged by love. Rather pathetically Draxilla tells Timandra that 'in your Lover I a Brother lost' (II.16), and describes herself as 'like an Orphan destitute and bare' (II.17), until Timandra became her friend. There is a striking sense here of the exclusiveness of a love which to this extent cancels out fraternal affection. Timandra, meditating on Draxilla's expressions of willingness to die for her, remarks with what sounds like surprise, 'What vast and boundless flights does Friendship take!' (II.37). However, she then goes on to develop a platonic view of the harmony of souls united by friendship (II.39-42). Nevertheless, it is quite apparent that for Timandra her friendship with Draxilla is a very poor substitute for the loss of Alcibiades. Directly her speech celebrating their friendship ends Alcibiades appears and, as Draxilla points out, 'yonder he comes who must retrieve/Your drooping hopes, and your faint joyes revive' (II.43-44). While it is perfectly natural that a woman separated from her lover should be primarily concerned to see him again, the transition here between a glorification of friendship and the 'swelling passions' (II.50) of love is too abrupt. Timandra's transports over friendship begin to sound like a civil response to Draxilla rather than a felt emotion. As Timandra and Alcibiades are united Draxilla drops out of the scene. Her presence on the stage, totally ignored by the two lovers, would surely be a very graphic illustration of the fact that she is still emotionally an 'Orphan' and 'destitute and bare'. It is significant that Draxilla, who so warmly advocates friendship and who appears as a voice of

reason and restraint in the first Act, avoids passion, at least, in terms of a heterosexual relationship. When Alcibiades suggests that she might think about falling in love with Patrocles (III.172-80), she denies the power of a sudden passion remarking austerely that 'Love rarely Conquers with a sudden force' (III.182). Interestingly enough, given the play between good manners and insincerity in the work, she goes on to suggest that Patrocles's protestation of love may be a 'Complement to you' (III.184), and concludes that 'I may believe it gallantry, not Love' (III.186). With Patrocles himself she shrinks from the confidence of his addresses (III.378-81) and from the possibility that courtship might involve sexual favours (III.384-85).

R.G. Ham has suggested that Timandra is a proto-type Otwayian heroine,²² but Draxilla is also highly typical. As in The Orphan, we have an innocent young woman, Serena/Draxilla, who is alienated by the play of passion from her female friend, who has plunged into the life of passion, and from her brother(s), who is/are similarly involved. Patrocles, the sturdy warrior, also has a counterpart in the bellicose Chamont, who arrives to disturb Serena's serenity. A combination of the characteristics of Timandra and Draxilla would produce a heroine typical of Otway's later tragedies. A woman both drawn by and distrustful of passion (like Monimia), 'Distracted' (V.518), perpetually wandering and fleeing (IV.186, V.519) and lonely (II.14-17): haunted like Lavinia, Monimia and Belvidera by images of destitution (II.17), and filled with longings for 'retreats safe and humble' (IV.294). Already, in other words, the characterisations contain the outlines, both psychological and moral, of Otway's mature dramas.

22 R.G. Ham, Otway and Lee, p.144.

The clearest way to indicate more fully the kind of limitation in aspiration the characters display is to refer to the context Otway provides, that of religion. Although the supernatural plays quite a large part in the play, with Tissaphernes's warning visit from Theramnes's ghost (V.5-14) and Timandra's vision of Elysium (V.259-303), the characters remain remarkably earthbound. Tissaphernes reacts rather humourously to his visitation from Hell, remarking as the ghost descends, "'Twas an odd speech, but be it so:/ Pish; Hell it self trembles at what I do' (V.15-16). The tremendous coolness of his reactions rather diminishes the ghost's fearfulness or effectiveness. The villains' villainy, in fact, is partly expressed by their contempt for eschatological horrors. Tissaphernes decides to treat the ghost as a rather importunate ambassador (V.16-18) and also dismisses it contemptuously as idle superstition (V.19), and the Queen, when dying, remarks with confidence that she is going to Hell, which will be a new and highly suitable kingdom for her to rule over (V.510-14). However, if Tissaphernes is granted a vision of Hell which he dismisses, Timandra in the same Act is shown Elysium, and this vision of bliss does strengthen her for her ensuing ordeal. She faces her death with equanimity, scornfully rejecting the possibility of resigning Alcibiades to the Queen (V.323-27, 329-40). She even produces a kind of wry humour as she is given the bowl of poison, remarking that she had 'thought t'ave had a more Heroick fall' (V.353), and then drinks it off with élan (V.358-60). In this scene, in the vision of Elysium, the marriage ceremony, and indeed throughout the play, religious language is frequently associated with the language of love and is used to elevate that emotion. This is highly conventional and yet there is a lack of distinction between the kind of language used by Timandra and Alcibiades and that used by Theramnes which qualifies the

confidence with which the lovers use divine terms to express their passion. Further, except in Timandra's last speeches, where love and heaven are united, there is a consistent rejection of heaven for love. The King, as he is dying, rebukes the Queen for betraying his love, and himself for having loved her too much,

I lov'd you far above that life y've spilt,
Till ev'n my passion was become my guilt:
I for your sake depriv'd heav'n of its due,
Took adoration thence to pay it you.

(V.164-67)

The ideas expressed in the King's speech are not unique in the play. In Act I Timandra declares that 'the only thing of Heav'n I crave' is to 'meet a faithful Lover, or a Grave' (I.85-86). Theramnes and Alcibiades use rather similar terms and images to express their feelings for Timandra, and for both of them adoration of her becomes a substitute religion. Theramnes treats Timandra as a goddess when he offers up to her the 'Sacrifice' of his heart (I.91-94), and he tells her that the 'love' and 'Adoration' he feels for her is comparable to that which the 'Holy' feel for God (I.100-02). Both Theramnes and Alcibiades refer to Timandra as 'Divine one' (I.95, II.57) and both develop the inaccurate idea that she represents a guard of safety comparable to that endowed by a 'sacred image' (IV.172) or 'Guardian Angels' (IV.240). In Theramnes's case the idea of Timandra's divinity which he develops is both inaccurate and blasphemous, since he attributes his escape to her power over his chains (IV.172-75), which recalls Peter's escape from Herod's prison as related in Acts, 12:6-8. In fact, Theramnes's freedom is due to help from the 'old feind' (III.309), Tissaphernes. Finally, Theramnes is wrong in his assertion that Timandra's presence alone makes him safe (IV.178-79); shortly afterwards he is dispatched by Alcibiades. Dr. Batzer Pollard attaches great significance to

Theramnes's dying repentance and Timandra's forgiveness which she interprets as an example of Timandra's capacity for religious 'pity' and sees the whole scene as an example of Otway's incipient sentimentality.²³ But the essential point about Theramnes's repentance is that it is totally worldly and inadequate. As he dies Theramnes continues to mingle divine and sensual language. To die in front of Timandra becomes a pleasure 'My Soul will leave me in an extasie' (IV.232) and at the same time he has no desire for his soul to leave Timandra; 'Here 'tis my Soul would make her latest stay' (IV.235). Timandra's forgiveness of Theramnes is presumably prompted by pity for the man dying at her feet but her forgiveness, although generous, is not unqualified; 'Be happy as your penitence is true' (IV.228). That Theramnes's penitence is not true, or at least not true enough, is indicated by his appearance from Hell in Act V. His confidence that, starting from Timandra, his soul must fly to heaven, is misplaced (IV.236-38). Although the characters may see aspects of the Divine in each other the operations of the Divine do not confirm the veracity of their perceptions. In Alcibiades's case the belief that Timandra is a Divine charm against danger (IV.238-41) is also incorrect, as are his own assurances that his innocence is a guard. Divinity and innocence are not qualities which are shown to be inherent in the characters.

The most striking example of Alcibiades's substitution of Timandra for Heaven occurs in Act IV. As Timandra and Alcibiades are about to be led away to their separate prisons Timandra consoles him with the thought that 'we at least in Heav'n shall meet again' (IV.500). The thought, however, does not console Alcibiades but

23 H. Batzer-Pollard, From Heroics to Sentimentalism, p.31..

provokes him into questioning the whole idea of obedience. Further, he questions the power of the gods and then the desirability of exchanging mortal bliss for heavenly consolations,

Obedience cannot be a vertue here.
If so ye Gods ye have such precepts giv'n,
That an example would confound your Heav'n,
You duties beyond your own omnipotence enjoyn;
Can you forsake your Heaven, or I leáve mine.
(IV.504-08)

Although Alcibiades goes on to describe the impossibility of being parted from Timandra since their souls will surely meet in Heaven (IV.511-13), the emphasis here is less on the permanence of spiritual communion than on the strong impetus of mortal passion, which can challenge the power of deities. Alcibiades's speech follows the general trend and movement of the play in its rejection of ideas of restraint - which are given physical form in the resistance he puts up to his arrest (IV.516) - and its sense that the heaven which counts is the heaven which can be achieved on earth. The paganism of the world Otway depicts, through the bizarre marriage ceremonies and the frequent reference to sacrifice,²⁴ is perhaps a factor in the characters' failure to rise to spiritual heights. Otway does not, like Marlowe, refer to the gods 'in sundry shapes, / Committing heady riots, incest, rapes',²⁵ but Alcibiades' speech quoted above rests on the assumption that the rules of order are not so very particularly obeyed in heaven. Throughout, Alcibiades's attitude towards the gods is aggressive, from his opening act of impiety to his tirade against the gods' justice in Act II (87-93). In the

24 See I.90-92, II.29-30, 107-08, 187-89, 211-13, IV.461-62.

25 Marlowe, 'Hero and Leander', Sestiad I, 143-44, The Complete Poems and Translations, edited by Stephen Orgel (Penguin Educational 1971).

last Act as he contemplates Timandra's body he raves 'mildly' (stage directions after line 472), in what is an almost parodic version of Timandra's vision of a lovers' Elysium with the pagan world's sensual gods and angels turned into potential seducers and rivals;

Yonder she Mounts, tryumphant Spirit stay:
See where the Angels bear her Soul away!
Now all the Gods will grow in love with her:
And I shall meet fresh troops of Rivals there.

(V.474-77)²⁶

With the exception of Timandra's speeches in Act V ideas of heaven do not moderate or refine passion; rather, heaven or hell are brought down to a human level and characterised in terms of ambassadorial ghosts, vacant thrones or rival lovers.

Timandra, as we have seen, begins the play by rejecting Draxilla's religious consolations. These consolations themselves betray a rather dubious concept of the mysteries of faith. Draxilla begins conventionally enough by emphasizing the weakness of the human intellect in its endeavours to 'Read Heaven's decrees' (I.36). With less orthodoxy she goes on to suggest that the gods' mystery is a matter of self-protection. The gods' wishes are

... writ in Mystick sence;
For were they open lay'd to Mortal Eyes,
Men would be Gods, or they no Dieties.

(I.36-38)

This is in many ways a remarkably overreaching speech; the gods' mystic code if cracked would make all men gods, all gods men.

Draxilla is prepared to accept a state of incomprehension but her speech, with its innate scepticism, offers a clue to the thinking of

26 This speech is highly conventional, as for instance in Crowne's The Destruction of Jerusalem, II (London, 1677), Phraates, raving over Clarona's body, sees the sun rolling lecherously towards her ascending spirit (V.i.). Significantly, Phraates, like Alcibiades, has a libertine, free-living and thinking aspect.

the other characters. Tissaphernes, the Queen and Theramnes all reject the mystiques of convention and claim to possess their own souls. Tissaphernes in a sense takes up the challenge implicit in Draxilla's speech and claims to be able to reach a god-like status. Alcibiades moves in another direction, speaking contemptuously of the gods' 'Images, those Pageant Glorys' (II.91), and later rejecting outright obedience to heaven (IV.504-08). Essentially, and despite Timandra's vision and Theramnes's ghost, this is a world without gods. The language of religion remains, but the sense of it articulating a moral code or spiritual alternative is missing. Alcibiades's sense of innocence is explicable in terms of a world in which defiling 'Images, those Pageant Glorys' can be construed as youthful misbehaviour rather than sacrilege.

A corollary to the failure of ideas of heaven to generate genuine spiritual alternatives is the attempt to regard this world with a kind of blind optimism. This is as true of the villains, who are confident of their ability to turn back the clock to a state of primitive liberty, as of the other characters, who display an ostrich-like tendency to bury their heads and ignore danger. Alcibiades and Timandra, it is true, are both briefly drawn to the idea that a humble retreat from the world might be the best solution (IV.9-13, 293-98), but the more general tendency is to dismiss or ignore or fail to observe dangers. The King is given to praising Tissaphernes (I.246-53, II.244-47, III.148-50) and the loyalty and friendship of those around him (I.261-66, III.159-60). Even as plots ramify around him, when he is alerted to danger he picks on the wrong man. Timandra mistily sees her union with Alcibiades as providing a sort of celestial model for all future lovers (II.126-39) when it is in fact provoking the Queen in bloody plots. Alcibiades throughout refuses to believe

that his situation is critical (IV.238-41,285-88,303-06), even dismissing Patrocles's unhappy warning that it is his own father who is Alcibiades's worst enemy (IV.260-88).

A striking example of the characters' desire to imagine themselves as safe is found in their use of storm and calm imagery. Theramnes, Timandra, Patrocles and Alcibiades all use variations of this image to suggest that after efforts or dangers, peace and happiness have been achieved. In nearly every case the sense of safety and calm is illusory. The 'storm' has not passed over them, or rather the calm is only a temporary lull. Theramnes uses the image when courting Timandra (I.117-18), and here it refers to his belief that Timandra is about to tell him she loves him - instead she tells him how much she loves Alcibiades (I.119-20). Timandra and Patrocles' use of the image is correct insofar as it refers to their unshaken affection for Alcibiades (II.118-19,III.284-85), but the words also serve as a prelude to further disasters. Alcibiades uses the image with great confidence, shortly before his arrest by the King (IV.244-47), and also as he embraces Patrocles, who has come to tell him that all his ills come from his own family (IV.260-64). The final use of the image occurs as Timandra dies. Given the inaccuracy of the image up to that point a question mark must hang over Timandra's assurances that, 'Now the black storms of fate are all blown o're, / And we shall meet, and ne're be parted more' (V.452-53).

The final Act works as a means of revealing what is actually the nature of the world the characters inhabit. The King awakens from his slumbers and complacency to find the Queen stabbing him to death. His confessional speech referring to his guilty passion for the Queen (V.164-67), rather effectively (tact was not Otway's strong point) undermines his earlier speech on the orderly nature of monarchical

rule (III.9-16). The passionate criminality of Tissaphernes and the Queen is openly revealed as each proclaims in effect that evil is their good (V.238-46,506-14). Alcibiades too, is violently prodded out of his complacency as the Queen calls on him to fulfil his promise to her. He now realises that his light and flirtatious treatment of the Queen was based on a failure to understand or respond to the reality of the situation (V.415-16). Timandra finds that her death for love is not to be an 'Heroick fall' (V.353) with 'noblest tortures' (V.354) but a slow and painful death by 'dull poison' (V.355). Finally, for Patrocles there is the gloomy recognition that he must live on in a flawed and imperfect world which has been stripped of meaning (V.529-37).

Alcibiades charts the triumph of the destructive power of passion. Passion motivates the villains in their plots and undermines the moral framework of the heroic as excess is, at points of conflict, valued over restraint. Ideals of friendship are invoked, but do not regulate action, as both Alcibiades and Theramnes reject their friends' advice and Timandra abandons Draxilla for Alcibiades. Physical love usurps heaven and ideas of virtue. Both Timandra and Alcibiades are prepared to reject honour for love (I.45-48, II.58-59), while the Queen dismisses honour explicitly and Theramnes does so implicitly. Villains and heroes are thus driven by the same forces and the distinctions between them are a matter of degree rather than type. The similarities between the language and ideas, and even turns of phrase employed by the villains and the 'good' characters emphasize the basic flawed humanity they all share.

Derivative though the play is, Otway uses his stock motifs with intelligence. At times perhaps he is consciously playing on the audience's knowledge of the original scene. Thus in Act V the

Queen unveils herself before Alcibiades as Almahide does before Almanzor in The Conquest of Granada, (III.i). Unlike Almahide's, the Queen's intentions are lustful, and again unlike Almahide's gesture, the Queen's has an adverse effect on the hero. Far from being subdued by the Queen's eyes (and she, of course, would want him to be aroused not subdued), Alcibiades is simply horrified by the face revealed (V.381). Throughout the play, as in this scene, there is a play of irony as heroic gestures and situations are debased. Ceremonies are constantly disrupted; the marriage ceremony sees Tissaphernes's first attempt at murdering the King and Alcibiades's triumphal presentation of his captive turns into a slanging match. The effect of these disruptions and ironic debasements is that there is a strong sense of a gap between articulations of heroic ideals and the flawed human reality. Alcibiades is not a very original or brilliant play, and perhaps its greatest proof of Otway's dramatic abilities lies in its liveliness and intense theatricality. However, the critique of the heroic in terms of human fallibility, the sense of the human capacity for self-delusion and the psychological violence of a character like Tissaphernes do give the play a claim to serious consideration. These are all themes which are taken up in Otway's next and far better play, Don Carlos, where they are dealt with more coherently.

I

THE EARLY YEARS

ii

DON CARLOS

Don Carlos was produced less than a year after Alcibiades in June 1676.¹ It represents a highpoint in Otway's career as a dramatist; it ran for a phenomenal ten days² and when published was dedicated to the Duke of York.³ Don Carlos is provided with the only Preface to the reader which Otway ever wrote, in which he proudly refers to the opinion of 'a great many', including 'those I am sure of good Judgement', that this was 'the best Heroick Play . . . written of late'.⁴ Although Otway claims he does not share this view, he does 'modestly boast', as

... the Author of the French Berenice has done before me in his Preface to that Play, that it never fail'd to draw Tears from the Eyes of the Auditors, I mean those whose Souls were capable of so Noble a pleasure.⁵

This passage has been taken by some critics as an indication of Otway's lachrymose and sentimentalizing tendencies, which here

1 The London Stage, I, p.245.

2 Downes describes the play's success: '... all the Parts being admirably Acted, it lasted successively 10 days; it got more Money than any preceding Modern Tragedy', Roscius Anglicanus, p.36. The financial benefits which accrued to Otway from the run are referred to unkindly in 'The Session of The Poets': 'Don Carlos his pockets so amply had fill'd, / That his mänge was quite cur'd, and his lice were all kill'd'.

3 This is also the period of Otway's patronage by the Earl of Rochester and the poet refers to the Earl's efforts in recommending the play to the King and the Duke in his Preface, Works, I, p.174.

4 Preface, Works, I, p.174.

5 Preface, Works, I, p.174.

disqualify the work as an 'Heroick Play'.⁶ As R.D. Hume says, referring to tears provoked by dramas, 'confusions here are natural. Pity=Tears=Pathetic drama is a common equation'.⁷ And he points to Otway's Preface and play as a refutation of the equation. The relevant point here is Otway's insistence that the tears shed over his play come from 'Souls ... capable of so Noble a pleasure'. Tears do not necessarily denote a weakening of the heroic ethos but can be described in Eugene M. Waith's term as 'tears of magnanimity'.⁸ Professor Waith has argued that an emphasis on pity and tears was derived from Aristotle and that the arousal of such emotions and reactions was widely and generally held to be the legitimate end of tragedy. The tears shed, by audience or characters, could be seen not only as an aristocratically high souled response to scenes of pity but also as an indication of a capacity for emotional intensity denied to lesser souls. The élitism of Otway's concept of tragic

6. See R.G. Ham, Otway and Lee, pp.64-81, Ham sees the play as making a 'decisive break with all the more notable machinery of heroism, save only the tag of rhyme', p.76. Hazel M. Batzer is particularly struck by the significance of the Preface in From Heroics to Sentimentalism ..., pp.62-100, where she also argues, rather strangely, that the themes of revenge and ambition pull the play away from the heroic "mould", p.90. Other critics however, have noted that in its essentials the play is a conventional heroic drama, (see A.H. Scouten, The Revels History of Drama in English, Vol.V.pp.272-73) while Edmund Gosse believed that Don Carlos was 'the best English tragedy in rhyme', and a 'crutch that might have supported the failing fashion [of rhyming tragedies] for years', Seventeenth-Century Studies: A Contribution to the History of English Poetry, (London,1885), p.311.

7 R.D. Hume, The Development of English Drama ..., p.180.

8 Eugene M. Waith in 'Tears of Magnanimity in Otway and Racine' in French and English Drama of the Seventeenth Century, (Los Angeles, Calif.,1972), pp.1-22. The outline of his views on pity and tears in drama is drawn from this article. He goes on to argue that the tears provoked by The Orphan on the other hand, are tears of pathos. Hume's false equation still seems to me to hold true for that play, and if tears are not tears of magnanimity it is not necessary that they be tears of pathos; there are also bitter and frustrated tears.

tears is indicated by his slighting reference to those he was not interested in entertaining; 'such as only come to a Play-house to see Farce-fools, and laugh at their own deformed Pictures'.⁹

The ability to understand and provoke the passions is admirably referred to by Dryden in relation to his younger contemporaries, Otway and Lee,¹⁰ and he was, perhaps, influenced by their more emotional style. The belief that strong emotions can be best appreciated by those endowed with large and noble souls means that a drama of high emotional intensity can provide both the experience and the example of the heroic capacity for feeling. However, without control, even noble passions can become tragic flaws, and in such circumstances tears are, perhaps, provoked by the spectacle of nobility tragically overcome by the very forces which in part constitute nobility. Lee's Alexander in The Rival Queens is a study in the disintegration of a noble warrior and his decline is demonstrated in terms of his inability to control either his pride or resentment.¹¹ The best heroic plays display a certain amount

9. Preface, Works, I, p.174

10. Commenting on Venice Preserv'd, Dryden commends Otway's ability to touch the passions, in "Preface of the Translator, with a Parallel of Poetry and Painting", Prefixed to De arte graphica: the Art of Painting, by C.A. de Fresnoy' (1695), in Of Dramatic Poesy and Other Critical Essays, edited by George Watson, 2 vols (London and New York, 1962) II, p.201. In Dryden's poetic tribute to Lee published with The Rival Queens (1677) he comments 'We only warm the head, but you the heart./Always you warm', (36-37), in P.F. Vernon's Edition of the play (Lincoln, Nebraska, London, 1970).

11. As he dies, Clytus, who has been speared by Alexander, repents that he 'so urged' his 'noblest, sweetest nature', The Rival Queens, edited by P.F. Vernon, IV.ii.219. This tribute to Alexander's nature is not entirely grotesque, despite the circumstances. Quick resentment to insult and swift action are features of the heroic nature, but as Alexander realises, this time he has overreached himself and broken every needful restraint, violating the laws of friendship, kingship and hospitality (IV.ii.224-34).

of irony in their depiction of heroic passion, which is revealed as an equivocal quality, certainly in terms of the quantities bestowed on the heroes. Almanzor's passions have to be tempered with Christian virtue as his mother's ghost warns him away from Almahide's chamber (Conquest of Granada, II,IV.iii).¹² In Aureng-Zebe a more complex situation is created as Aureng-Zebe, in a situation not dissimilar to Don Carlos's, publicly protests his conquest of resentment at his father's appropriation of Indamora, and then contradicts this in an aside, Aureng-Zebe (II,21-30). In this he displays something of the paradox of the heroic as he both denies and confirms the strength of his passion and offers contrasting interpretations of greatness - submission and resentment: obedience and tenacity. Otway's play clearly owes a great deal to Dryden, certainly to Aureng-Zebe and Tyrannic Love, in terms of direct borrowings of lines and situations¹³ and a critique of the operation

12 Dryden, Three Plays, edited by George Saintsbury (New York, 1964), the Act references for both Aureng-Zebe and The Conquest of Granada come from this edition.

13 The situations of Berenice and Porphyrius in Tyrannic Love and Aureng-Zebe and Indamora in Aureng-Zebe are similar to that of Carlos and Elizabeth. In From Heroics to Sentimentalism, Hazel Batzer Pollard draws attention to the many verbal similarities between the exchanges of Berenice and Porphyrius and those of Carlos and Elizabeth, pp.62-73. As she notes, Berenice and Porphyrius express a greater submission to duty than do Carlos and Elizabeth, who are more rebellious. Apart from the situation of a son in conflict with his father who is also his ruler, Otway borrows lines from Aureng-Zebe as in Philip's comments on Carlos's radiant virtues, in a triplet, (V.424-26) which are very reminiscent of the Emperor's triplet homage to Aureng-Zebe's virtues (I.i.334-36). Despite similarities of situation Aureng-Zebe and Don Carlos develop very differently. Nourmahal is a much more competent villainess than Eboli and the whole situation is less extreme since the Emperor has not married Indamora. Morat's mixed character perhaps suggested Don John although he also surely owes something to the influence of the Earl of Rochester and a consequent moderately sympathetic view of libertine ideas. Situations such as Eboli's unsuccessful propositioning of Don Carlos (IV.49-100), are conventional. Otway had used this situation before in Alcibiades (IV.17-140), although in Don Carlos the hero feels no inclination at all for his temptress and is in no mood to be tactful. Apart from the influences of contemporary drama, Don Carlos also shows signs of Shakespearean and Jacobean influence. Bonamy Dobrée has pointed to a similarity between Philip's

of the rule of passion. However, the play also shows a clear development from Alcibiades and examines much more vigorously the themes of passion and restraint, heroic duplicity and failures in language and perception. Many of the themes are heroic but it is an heroicism which has gone awry.

For Don Carlos Otway went for the first time to the works of Saint-Réal, drawing on Don Carlos : or, An Historical Relation of the Unfortunate Life and Tragical Death of that Prince of Spain (1674).¹⁴ As in A Conspiracy of the Spaniards Against the State of Venice (1675) Saint-Réal's method is to present, with a certain detachment, the various sides in the conflict he details. Although Saint-Réal's ostensible aim is to justify the memory of Philip II's French Queen and deny accusations of adultery and incest, Carlos and Elizabeth's great love for each other is not denied and their indiscreet and injudicious behaviour is chronicled. Although, as in Otway's play, their love is never physically consummated, there is little doubt

13(continued) speech in Act II, 109-15 and a speech in Chapman's The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois in Restoration Tragedy 1660-1720 (Oxford, 1929, re-issued, corrected, 1959), p.143. The general atmosphere of Court intrigue and treachery is reminiscent of Jacobean tragedy and Rui Gomez's comment at the end, 'in a Cloud I'm lost' (V.277), reminds me of Flamineo's 'Oh, I am in a mist' (V.vi.263), in Webster's The White Devil in Three Jacobean Tragedies, edited by Gamini Salgado (Penguin Books, 1965). Resemblances to Othello are not profound but are obvious and there are echoes of speeches from Lear in Don John's speech on Nature and the King's final curse. Sutherland suggests that the situation in Don Carlos is 'as if the King in Hamlet had married Ophelia', English Literature of the Late Seventeenth Century (Oxford, 1969) p.79. Certainly, Carlos's moodiness at his father's marriage celebrations is reminiscent of Hamlet's inability to share in the festive atmosphere at the Court.

14 The original version was published in France in 1672, the version above was 'Englished' by 'H.I.' As Ghosh points out, since there are no verbal echoes to either the French or the English version it is impossible to tell which one Otway used, Works, I, p.41.

that their feelings towards each other could reasonably arouse jealousy. Saint-Réal's Don John, unlike Otway's, is an outright villain who helps to engineer Carlos's downfall; however, Saint-Réal also describes him as a proper Prince and truly the son of the great Emperor, Charles V.¹⁵

Otway greatly reduces and conflates his source materials, concentrating the action into the hours around the marriage of Elizabeth and Philip.¹⁶ However, in cutting down the action and omitting Saint-Réal's numerous sub-plots and digressions, Otway simplifies the plot line but not the moral ambiguities. As in Venice Preserv'd, Saint-Réal's mixed sympathies are incorporated into the dramatic structure, thus leading to a flow of sympathy to and from the main characters. In the Prologue Otway explains the problems he found in tackling his material:

... The Characters he shows to Night,
He found were very difficult to Write:
He found the ~~F~~ame of France and Spain at stake,¹⁷
Therefore long paus'd and fear'd which part to take;
Till this his judgment safest understood,
To make 'em both Heroick as he cou'd. (9-14, italics reversed)

15 Don Carlos: or, An Historical Relation, p.24.

16 In the source the events are spread over many years during which time Elizabeth presents Philip with two daughters. In the play the sense of Elizabeth's chastity is heightened by the fact that neither her marriage nor her love for Carlos are consummated. J.C. Ghosh gives a fuller description of Otway's deviations from his main source, Works, I, pp.41-42, although I cannot agree with his interpretation of the effect of the changes, which Ghosh sees as softening the original. Otway certainly is far less interested in the complicated political intrigues Saint-Réal delights in, and concentrates on the love-jealousy triangle; but the effect is of intensification rather than any weakening or softening, in relation to this essential conflict.

17 The problem was perhaps less that of the 'fame' of France or Spain than the possible political implications for England of the materials. There is an indication of the possible political relevance which could be found through an identification of Carlos and the Duke of York, when Carlos snubs Rui-Gomez calling him a 'Patriot' (I.114, Otway's italics). Saint-Réal's material is much more obviously relevant insofar as it shows Don Carlos inclining towards the protestant cause and thus alarming King and Court, while in 1673 following the Test Act, James had demonstrated his catholicism by resigning all his offices. So both heirs to the throne espouse a religion contrary to that of the state. Southerne's much more overtly political play, The Loyal Brother: or, The Persian Prince (1682), uses a rather similar plot outline, with the King alienated from his brother through his sexual jealousy, which is stimulated by the machinations of evil courtiers.

Since, as Otway also explained in the Prologue, he was not going to make any of his royal characters 'Villains all, or Fools' (8), the drama has to emerge less through the ability of the villains to dupe the royal characters and more through some way in which the royal characters' undoubted 'Heroick' qualities can generate conflict. One effect of making the main characters heroic and then showing them destroying themselves and each other is that in the end they emerge as a little less than heroic, or, at least, a reassessment of what constitutes the heroic is provoked.

Don Carlos is provided with villains, but they are comparatively ineffectual. They do not, as in Alcibiades, provide the plot structure and precipitate the catastrophe. The attempt which is made in the last Act to place the blame for the events on Eboli and Rui-Gomez is unconvincing and the main flaw in the play. Rui-Gomez limitations are indicated in the first Act. Although he prides himself on his immense cunning, comparing himself to the 'subtle Bee' (I.210), not actually a very fearsome creature, or more generally to beasts of prey (II.81),¹⁸ the effect is diminished when his wife contemptuously remarks at his exit, 'In thy fond policy Blind fool go on,/And make what hast thou canst to be undone' (I.216-17). Eboli makes use of a similar language of snares and

18 The bee image is justified when the King listening to Rui-Gomez remarks, that he is 'stung' (II.166). Nevertheless, the image is of something irritating not dangerous. Rui-Gomez uses snare imagery again with reference to his plans for Posa (III.134-37). His status as a villain-predator is bolstered by references to him which echo his own language. Posa refers to his 'subtlest snares' (III.199), calls him a wolf (III.147) and more dramatically, compares him to Satan, likening him to 'lurking Serpents' (III.146). At the height of the King's jealousy and association with Rui-Gomez we find him using similar hunting metaphors (IV.318-19), which is the strongest indication of Rui-Gomez's influence with the King.

'subtile baits' (II.77) to describe cuckolding her husband and seducing Don John (II.76-80). At times, Rui-Gomez emerges less as a crafty villain and more as the slippered pantaloon of comedy, unsuccessfully sueing for a place in his wife's bed (I.181-82), and dismissed by her as 'An old Imperfect feeble dotard, who/Can only tell Alas! what he would do' (I.225-26). Telling what he is going to do, rather than actually doing all that much, is a feature of Rui-Gomez's character. Further, his boasted subtlety does not prevent most people from seeing through him. Carlos tells him that he wears 'a too thin disguise' and that he knows the 'Falshood' of his 'Soul' (I.103-04). Posa also assures him that he sees through his 'smiles, and careless port' (III.162), and the King warns him not to think that he can 'blind [him] with dark Ironies,/The Truth disguis'd in Obscure Contraries' (II.172-73).

Rui-Gomez has been compared to Iago,¹⁹ but although there is a similarity between his methods and those of Iago (and his goal to excite jealousy), his role is that of a sounding-board for the

19 See Ghosh, Works, I, p.40, R.G. Ham, Otway and Lee, p.80, T.B. Stroup, 'Otway's Bitter Pessimism', p.57, see bibliography. Ruth Wallerstein has described Otway as following 'in detail the minutiae of the exchange of speech between Iago and Othello in Iago's temptation; the elements, however, are no longer in coherent relation to each other, to the King's character, or to actual psychological truth', 'Dryden and the Analysis of Shakespeare's Techniques', Review of English Studies, 19(1943), pp.165-85. It is an exaggeration to say that the minutiae of the exchange are followed; what is followed is the general method of indirect statement and the damning retraction. The elements are certainly in a different relation to one another as Rui-Gomez's role is quite different from Iago's and he has only to keep the already anxious King in a state of high irritation. He does not have to invent jealousy and a suitable object for that jealousy out of nothing. It is difficult to see, however, how these changes falsify the psychology of either the King or Rui-Gomez. Otway in no way improves on Shakespeare but the situation he shows avoids the great problem of Othello; how anyone could be as diabolically brilliant as Iago or as noble but gullible as Othello.

King, rather than an instigator of his jealousy. Rui-Gomez does not have to invent the grounds for jealousy. He merely has to 'advance' (I.204) the suspicions which the King, with some reason, already harbours (I.200-204). His wife's suggestion that he spy on Carlos and Elizabeth does not introduce a new element into the plot but only amplifies the King's order to Rui-Gomez to 'observe the Prince' (I.46). Rui-Gomez is in no way the master of fate he imagines himself to be in Act IV (404-05). Elizabeth and Carlos lay themselves open to suspicion by the quite lunatic fit of optimism with which they repair to Elizabeth's apartments (IV.392-95), while Rui-Gomez, hoping to find them in flagrante, instead finds his own wife embracing Don John. The central irony of his situation lies, as he recognises, in the way that 'Whilst I was busie grown/In others ruines, here I've met my own' (IV.443-44). His protests at the end of the play that he was set by the King to spy on Don Carlos (V.279) and that he has throughout merely obeyed the King's orders (V.273-75, 277-84) are not without justification.²⁰ Rui Gomez is certainly an evil figure but his machinations are of secondary importance to the development of the plot.

Much the same can be said of Eboli's status as an villainess. Certainly she offers to help Carlos see the Queen once more - a violation of Elizabeth's promise to refrain from seeing the Prince (III.420-21) - and the ensuing interview leads directly to the bloody conclusion. However, the method she employs of telling the Queen

20 Rui-Gomez undoubtedly exceeds his orders, although not perhaps the spirit of Philip's persecution, when he adds poison to Carlos's bath (V.325). However, Carlos had already determined on suicide and cut his wrists. Rui-Gomez action cannot add an element of 'if only ...' to Carlos's death since without Elizabeth it is difficult to see how Carlos, as characterised here, could have gone on living.

quite truthfully that Carlos intends to flee the Court and lead the Flemish rebels (IV.329-33) provokes such a passionate series of orders and excuses to see Carlos (IV.335-41) that Eboli's role here as a manipulator is minimised. Anyway, the Prince arrives unbidden. Eboli's outstanding evil act is her murder of the Queen. The action takes its particularly evil flavour from her description of the Queen embracing her and calling her a 'Friend' (V.28) as she drank the poison. The decision to poison the Queen, however, is the King's and it is also his cruel inventiveness which suggested telling the Queen that the Prince was released from arrest and coming to visit her (IV.655-56, V.25-27). At this point in the play Eboli, disgraced by her liaison with Don John, has become the King's tool (IV.650-51); he manipulates her. The significance of the Rui-Gomez/Eboli intrigues lies partly in the rather Jacobean miasma of treachery and corruption they help to create: 'All are false' (IV.554), as the King exclaims as Rui-Gomez broods over his wife's infidelity; and more importantly their actions also provide parallels and contrasts with the activities of the main characters.

There is a parallel between Eboli, married to an old man she does not desire and hankering after Don John and Carlos, and Elizabeth, also unhappily married to an older man and in love with Carlos.²¹ On one level the situation reveals how much more honourably Carlos and

21 Both women have been disappointed in their marriage expectations. Eboli expected to marry the King (I.219-22) and Elizabeth expected to marry the Prince (II.193-99). Eboli uses outright the satirical language of comedy to describe the sexual inadequacy of her old husband (I.225-26), and whilst Elizabeth's language is more dignified, she listens with apparent complaisance to a speech by Henrietta on the subject of elderly and sexually cold husbands (II.187-92); a speech which could have come from the mouth of Lady Dunce or Sylvia in The Soulders Fortune.

Elizabeth behave. Whilst Eboli and Don John satisfy their passing lust for each other, Elizabeth and Carlos refrain from consummating their genuine love for each other. In Act II there are amorous encounters between Eboli and Don John and Carlos and Elizabeth. The Eboli and Don John meeting is almost a parody of the later meeting between the genuine lovers. Eboli pretends to a virtue she does not possess and to a reluctance she does not feel and Don John acts out the role of a passionate lover, even going down on his knees and offering up 'Vows and Prayers if ever I prove false' (II.53). This is an offer, which, as T.B. Stroup points out, is entirely cynical since the encounter has been preceded by a speech in which Don John claimed that as a bastard he is exempt from the normal obligations of society.²² The problem with parody is that it can work in more than one direction. Don John and Eboli do appear lustful and insincere compared to Carlos and Elizabeth, but Carlos can seem a little comic with his penchant for falling on his knees after Don John's parody of this traditional lovers' pose. There is also a similarity in the way that both encounters conclude with the lover kissing his lady's hand. In both cases the young men metaphorically describe the way this has increased their desires. Don John as he leaves compares himself to a dying man:

... a sick wretch that on his death-bed lyes
Loath with his friends to part, just as he dies,
Thus sends his Soul in wishes from his eyes. (II.70-72)

Carlos describes his feelings as those felt by damned souls 'Who in sad Flames, must be for ever tost, / Yet still in view of the lov'd Heav'n th'ave lost' (II.323-24). The similarity of their choice of religious metaphor is one of the many ways in which a rather ironic

22 T.B. Stroup, 'Otway's Bitter Pessimism', pp.61-62.

parallel is drawn between the libertine Don John and the heroic Carlos. It is, of course, typical that for Don John Eboli is an earthly pleasure he is unwilling to exchange for any afterworld, whilst for Carlos Elizabeth is a vision of heaven. Carlos's comparison is the more elevating, although the heaven he has lost is, in this instance, undoubtedly a sexual heaven whose bliss has been indicated by the arousing pleasure of kissing Elizabeth's hand (II.304-05). Both the Queen and Eboli are aware of a power in their lovers' words and actions which threatens their own powers of control, although their situations here are ironically reversed, Eboli seems to fear she might actually fall in love instead of merely feeling lust (II.51-52), while the Queen has to acknowledge that physical desire has overcome her attempt to articulate her love on a spiritual plane (II.299-302). The Queen flees the temptations which Eboli consciously encourages and Don John retires in triumph whilst Carlos is left in a state of sexual frustration (II.304-06, 309-12, 319-24). The parallelism of the scenes while contrasting the love affairs also serves to indicate the powerful, if repressed, sexuality of Carlos and Elizabeth's relationship.

Other parallels between the sub and main plot are also ironic. Rui-Gomez and Philip have in common the fact that they are married to young wives who do not love them. But whilst Rui-Gomez, until the revelation of Act IV, is blissfully confident of his wife's virtue, Philip is throughout convinced that his wife is unfaithful when, in fact, she is chaste. Thus Rui-Gomez meets his ruin when he discovers that his wife is unfaithful, while Philip meets his ruin when it is proved that his wife has not made love to Carlos. Both husbands display in antithical ways the traditional infirmities of elderly husbands: ^{et} doting blindness and chronic jealousy. Our knowledge of Eboli's cuckolding of Rui-Gomez and Elizabeth's chastity

colours every scene in which Rui-Gomez seeks to inflame the King's jealousy. Both men are unperceptive and misled.

The other parallels and contrasts which are of more consequence than these ironic inversions of situation relate to the treatment of and attitudes towards the processes of passion and restraint experienced by the characters. Don John is an important character here, representing, in his rejection of restraint for himself, one extreme in the range of emotional responses charted in the play. Don John is rather a problem character, clearly important but structurally dispensable. Allardyce Nicoll describes him briefly as an 'Edmund like villain',²³ but although his first speech recalls Edmund's 'Thou Nature, art my Goddess' speech in Lear (I.ii.1-22), Don John is not a villain. He is one of the most likable and reliable characters in the play: a good friend to Carlos, a staunch defender of Elizabeth and a voice of restraint to the King. Unlike Edmund, Don John does not claim that the vigorous circumstances of his conception qualify him to usurp an enervate legitimate stock. On the contrary, he sees the freedom of his birth as giving him the privilege of opting out of the political realm. He sees himself as heir to his father's sensual liberty but not his crown (II.17-18). On the basis of his illegitimacy Don John does claim for himself nobility: the nobility of unfallen man who lived according to natural law and not according to the corrupted man-made laws opposed to Nature which have developed since the Fall (II.1-4). Before 'Man's Corruptions made him wretched' (II.3) there was no need of

23 Allardyce Nicoll A History of English Drama 1600-1900, revised edition 6 vols (Cambridge, 1952-59), Vol. I Restoration, reprinted (Cambridge, 1961) p.121.

law, as men ruled themselves; 'Each of himself was Lord; and unconfin'd/Obey'd the dictates of his Godlike mind' (II.5-6). Since a bastard is born outside the confines of human law he can be seen as closer to uncorrupted man than those bound into the legal system at birth. The free pursuit of sensual pleasure can be seen as obeying the 'dictates' of a 'Godlike mind' and Don John compares himself as a lover to the vigorous and adulterous gods of classical antiquity (II.34-36, IV.236-39). Don John moves, or at least sees himself as moving, in noble independence through the Court. He is 'Freeborn' and does not 'depend' on the King (IV.139) and is 'oblig'd to none' (IV.140). He follows the dictates of his mind whether it be to make love to another man's wife or befriend the disgraced Carlos (IV.133-42). Don John's pursuit of 'Pleasures' (II.18) rather than glory in some ways relates him to Eboli. For although she hankers after power she is content to 'Let others toyl for Greatness: whilst I love' (I.236). Later, when Don John is tiring of her, she insists to herself that she is 'As much a Libertine as He./As fierce my will as furious my desires' (IV.242-43). But if Eboli can see a resemblance between herself and Don John, Don John sees a close link between himself and Carlos; 'The King your Father is my Brother, true,/But I see more that's like myself in you' (IV.137-38). At this moment, he is addressing Carlos as the Prince rebels against his father's authority and is preparing to lead the Flemish revolt. Carlos does indeed sound like Don John at times, especially at the beginning of the play when he rejects obedience as a 'false Notion' (I.14) invented by Priests 'when they found old

Cheats decay'd' (I.15).²⁴ Both Don John and Carlos have a relationship with another man's wife; although the one relationship is constrained by law, the other is not. Don John's rejection of the world of dull morals (III.1) leads to an easy manipulation of the language of vows and prayers, while Carlos's rejection of obedience gives an ironic indirection to his formal pledges. The association of law and obedience with the fall of man and the corruption of institutions casts an interesting light on the activities of Carlos and Elizabeth and Philip, whose struggles are occasioned by the operations of law and authority. As Don John stresses, his liberties spring from his status outside the rule of law, but Carlos is bound into the conventional world as legitimate son and heir to the throne. This makes his revolt serious and subversive. The connections drawn between the three characters endorsing antinomian attitudes indicates the dangerous anarchy which lies behind the rejection of law, even if law is human and fallible.

Nevertheless, it is significant that, although Don John will reject his libertine position at the end of the play (V.501-04), the license he allows himself, whether it be to follow his base lust or his 'generous' friendship for Carlos (IV.135), does not make him into a figure of passion. Act III opens with Don John happily describing his sexual fulfillment after making love to Eboli and comparing his satisfactory situation with the misery of those bound to a single mate (III.1-20). His easy situation is compared in this Act with the repressed passion of the King, who has denied himself his wife's

24 Both Don John and Carlos sound rather like Tissaphernes in Alcibiades, as they reject law and obedience; see Alcibiades, III.354-55, while Don John's views on pre-civilized man relate him to Tissaphernes and Deidamia.

bed, and Carlos, who is denied her bed. Don John's fancy for Eboli certainly distorts his perceptions for she is scarcely a 'tender Lamb' (III.10), but it does not control him. His freedom from any tyranny in love is expressed by his courtship of Henrietta (III.357-59 and accompanying stage directions), and is bitterly noted by Eboli (IV.240-41). Don John, in fact, is one of the few genuine voices of restraint in the play.²⁵ He is amazed at the 'frenzy' which possesses the King (III.54-55) and in the last Act points out to the King that he has become a slave to his 'abject passions' (V.62) and to those that play on them (V.95). The King sees in Don John the calm and ease whose loss he laments throughout the play²⁶ as his 'passions drive [him] to and fro' (III.73). Hoping to regain control over his passions the King has decided to murder his wife and he assures Don John that after that he will be 'calm' and 'happy and gay as thou' (V.59-60). Don John, however, denies this, indicating that his brand of 'ease' cannot be gained through acts of violence but depends on a certain mental attitude;

No Sir! my happiness you cannot have,
Whilst to your abject passions thus a slave.
To know my ease you thoughts like mine must bring,
Be something less a man, and more a King. (V.61-64)

25 Posa is a voice of restraint to Carlos (II.313-18). Rui-Gomez is an insincere voice of restraint, telling the King that he should not be 'passions slave' (II.19) and cynically advising Posa to 'Learn better how your passions to disguise' (III.182). Rui-Gomez's actual inability to hide or control his own passions is indicated by his murder of his faithless wife.

26 The play opens with the King praising the 'Gentlest calms of rest/ And Peace' (I.4-5). At III.101 he painfully rejects 'ease' and at IV.272 he believes he has found 'quiet'; he longs for 'rest' in Act IV (665) and 'ease' (IV.667). His soliloquy, which opens Act V, for the first ten lines is devoted to his loss of sleep and 'rest' and his loss of repose is lamented again at line 19. The Queen, when dying, wishes him 'everlasting peace' (V.423) but Philip, as he goes mad, declares 'There's no such thing as peace' (V.459).

To be a mere man is to be a fallen creature incapable of being 'lord' of himself. Given Don John's licence and freedom from passion, there is a suggestion here that it is the process of repression which makes passion dangerous and degrading. The king's attempt to regain control over himself turns him into a sadistic murderer: the repression of Carlos's love for Elizabeth turns him into a political rebel. At the end the only person left in control is Don John. Don John's position is not uncritically endorsed. There is some justice in the King's remark, 'Thou living free, alas, art easie grown,/And think'st all hearts as honest as thy own' (V.91-92). Don John is 'honest' to himself, if not to his ladies, but this leads to a certain naïvety. At the end he discovers that Eboli is not a 'tender Lamb' or the Queen of Love (IV.238), but a murderess and a 'Vile prostitute!' (V.310). Equally, Don John's assurances that Carlos is a 'loyal Son' (III.303) are not born out by Carlos's words or actions. Don John is simply incorrect in imagining he can live free in an unfree and complex world of mutual dependencies.

At the opposite extreme to Don John is the King, the embodiment of authority and law. As ruler, father and husband, the King represents everything Don John believes he is independent from, and which Carlos rejects in the course of the play. However, the King is only briefly glimpsed in the first few lines of Act I in terms of all these roles functioning smoothly as he ceremoniously presents his homage to the Queen. Here briefly his roles appear to be unified and stately: as King and husband he has found the 'Gentlest calms of rest' (I.4), and as Carlos's father he is about to provide him with 'Heroes' to adorn his Court when with due right he succeeds him (I.21-22). His assurance, however, is quickly undercut by Carlos's rebellious aside (I.12-17), by the Queen's appreciation of and share in the unruly passion which torments Carlos (I.32-34), and by his own growing

suspicious (I.46). By the second Act onwards his Kingliness, both in terms of his justice and his rule over himself, is in decline. The King from the first recognises that his passionate sexual jealousy is demeaning to his role as a monarch, 'I who o're Nations have Victorious been,/Now cannot quell one little Foe within' (II.113-14). The King rejects the possibility of controlling his passion, 'To strive for ease would but add more to pain' (III.101). His solution is either to submit to sexual deception (and, when briefly reconciled with the Queen, he asks her to 'Cheat [him] quite' (III.405)), or else to regain 'ease' through vengeance. Although sexual jealousy cannot be elevated into a noble passion, it is possible to treat the passion for revenge more heroically. The King compares himself to the gods in the power and strength of his vengeance (III.75-76), and indeed, sees himself as setting a model for heaven for 'just revenge' (III.105-107). Revenge is elevated to justice with a resultant perversion of any human, even kingly, authority.

By the fourth Act the King declares that he has completely recovered from his sexual infatuation or from any soft inclinations towards mercy as 'O're Love and Nature I've the Conquest got' (IV.663). For his 'honour' and his 'rest' (IV.665), however, he now finds it necessary that the Queen should die. The impossibility of his position, and his boast of rational control, is indicated by his request to Gomez to 'ply my rage and keep it hot' (IV.662), and his own recognition that murder is unlikely to be conducive to rest: 'But oh what Ease can I expect to get,/When I must purchase at so dear a rate' (IV.666-67). The King retains sympathy, partly because he does have grounds for jealousy, if not for his assumption of actual unchastity, and partly because he is aware, at times, of the vicious circle his passions have led him into. Act V opens with the King

brooding on his total lack of repose, which either prevents him from sleeping or gives him troubled dreams (V.1-9). He feels shocked by his decision to kill the Queen and starts 'to think what I have done' (V.11). However, he quickly tears his mind away from such thoughts and shores himself up again with thoughts of his reputation, 'I forget how I that Phillip am, /so much for Constancy renown'd by fame' (V.12-13). Even if he dislikes the action, 'stedfastness will make the Act extoll'd' (V.17). What is happening is that the language and sentiments which can constitute the heroic; the conquest over baser nature (IV.663), a determination to retain honour (IV.665), and a determination to act in a constant and steadfast manner, are all perverted. He is deluded in thinking he has gained control over himself. Love has been converted into jealousy and his nature has become warped and cruel. Obsessed with his own authority and convinced that the laws of marriage have been abused, the King misuses his power to persecute his son and wife. Like other of Otway's father figures he is an unnatural father: he provokes his son into disowning him (IV.162), and part of his hostility towards Carlos is the hostility of age for youth (II.143-44, III.26-27, IV.495-96). Significantly, the King shares in the suffocating repressed sexuality of Carlos and Elizabeth. He enthusiastically looks forward to his wedding night with Elizabeth (I.41-51), feeling the 'Impetuous sallies' of his 'Blood' (I.51), but then restrains himself and forgoes his pleasure. Sexual desire is transformed into sadism as the King plots physical and psychological torments for the Queen (IV.652-68, V.31-38), and as she defies him he gloats that 'I ne're had pleasure with her till this Night' (V.190). By seeking to drive out passion with passion the King unseats his reason. At the end of the play he goes mad and 'runs off raving' (V. stage directions by line 498). Although this is somewhat

melodramatic, the ground is well laid. The King's total madness follows on his abject repentance; a repentance and glorification of Carlos and Elizabeth which is just as irrational as his earlier jealousy and persecution. The combination of unruly passion and misguided attempts to restrain passion and regain 'calm', 'ease' and 'rest', turn the King into a monster.

Carlos and Elizabeth,²⁷ however, are by no means the passive or pathetic victims of the King's irrationality. They provide the interesting middle ground between Don John's rejection of restraint and the King's violent attempts to regain control through the ultimate restraint of death. Caught between their love for each other, and the indisputable fact that through Elizabeth's marriage to the King any continuation of the love they now feel would be adulterous and incestuous, Carlos and Elizabeth are forced into a series of false positions through their conflicting obligations to each other and the King. The opening scene provides an example of the sort of ironies and deceptions produced by the clash. After the King has paid homage to the Queen he calls on Carlos to congratulate him and show some enthusiasm. Carlos's method of obeying the King and his own rebellious passion is to employ irony. He kneels to the Queen, not the King, and states that he admires the King's happiness, 'As much admire it as I rev'rence you' (I.29). Given Carlos's earlier speech rejecting obedience and ending on a despairing 'A Father oh!' (I.16), the scene becomes loaded with double meanings. Carlos is almost as capable of 'dark ironies'

27 It is perhaps worth noting that the role of the Queen of Spain was taken by Mary Lee, an actress particularly famous for her passionate roles. In Alcibiades she played the lustful Queen of Sparta.

and the 'Truth disguis'd in Obscure Contraries' (II.172-73) as Rui-Gomez. The difference is that Carlos uses indirection not to change or advance his situation but as a means of remaining where he is; true to his love.

Later on in the first Act Carlos tells his friend, Posa, that he never 'learnt the dissembling Art' (I.131). Nevertheless, deceit is something Carlos can use from the start and which he continues to use. His situation is such that to protect his love for the Queen, a kind of higher truth, various sorts of deceptions become necessary. Persuaded by Posa that his honest belligerence towards Rui-Gomez could rebound on the Queen, Carlos agrees to make his peace with him. There is no possibility that either Rui-Gomez's or Carlos's oaths of friendship can be sincere. The long-standing hostility between them is fully outlined in Carlos's angry speech to Rui-Gomez (I.103-16). Rui-Gomez makes his oath heavily ironic, binding him not to friendship but to remaining Carlos's most bitter opponent, as he hopes Carlos will 'we're find worse Enemies than me' (I.159). Carlos does not use irony in his oath, but as Rui-Gomez approaches he calls on 'Falshood' to 'assist' him and subdues the promptings of 'Rebel passion' (I.142). Here not to follow the promptings of passion, and to submit, makes Carlos wonder if he can 'do this abject thing and live?' (I.145). This striking scene therefore shows both the villain (of whom we would expect such behaviour) and the hero perjuring themselves. Carlos's oath is perhaps false to himself - the truth of his passion - rather than to Rui-Gomez, since he appears to feel genuinely indignant later on to hear that Rui-Gomez continues to plot against him, asking if he has his 'Innocence betray'd?' (III.198). Given Carlos's call for 'Falshood' to assist him and his awareness of Rui-Gomez duplicity, the remark seems, at the least, a little disingenuous. Carlos's

sense of his own innocence (and the assertion is repeated in Act III as he declares that he comes before the King 'Bold in [his] Innocence' (III.292)), is not born out by either his actions, secret meetings with the Queen, or his words. Both Carlos and Elizabeth have a gift for representing themselves as the injured parties as they violate oaths, vows and the rules of duty. This ability in itself, which culminates in their protests in the fourth Act, comes to seem a kind of lie, or at least the product of a very blinkered vision of reality.

As Carlos and Elizabeth complain throughout the play, the King's marriage to Elizabeth has put them in a false position.²⁸ Elizabeth complains at the way 'Fate' has treated them:

How foul a game was play'd us by our Fate!
Who promis'd fair when we did first Begin,
'Till Envyng to see us like to Win:
Straight fell to Cheat, and threw the false Lot in. }
(III.453-56)

One of the ways in which the falsity of their present situation is demonstrated is through the references to Elizabeth's vows of love to Carlos, which predated her vows to the King. Carlos hints to Elizabeth in the second Act that these vows have been broken (II.238) and in the next Act, as Carlos and Elizabeth face total separation, the Queen tells him that 'My Vows to You I now remember all' (III.457). However, in remembering her vows to Carlos she is also breaking the vow she made to the King, less than fifty lines earlier, that 'by all above, / 'Tis you, and only you that I will love' (III.408-09), and this vow in turn broke her slightly earlier vow to hate the King (III.281-82). The King's ironic comments to her later, 'a stock of tears like Vows you have, / And alwaies ready when you wou'd deceive'

28 For their complaints over the king's marriage to Elizabeth see, I.61-82, II.193-99, 234-35, III.453-56, IV.7-8, 324-26, V.147-152.

(IV.596-97) and 'Vows you had alwaies ready when you spoke,/How many of 'em have you made and broke?' (V.139-40), are not without justice. Elizabeth explains to Carlos that her submissive behaviour towards the King was motivated by her love for him and was 'More to preserve your safety then my own' (III.438), so that there is a sense in which Elizabeth's vows to love the King, like Carlos's vow of friendship to Rui-Gomez, become short-term expedients. The language of vows is becoming devalued as the words can represent a politic response to immediate situations.

The only way in which Carlos and Elizabeth could retain their integrity towards their own love and also fulfil their obligations as son, wife and subjects would be through a sublimation of their love to a non-physical plane, motivated by an over-powering sense of their duty to the King. This is the position Posa tells the King Carlos has reached:

Sir, I am proud to think I know the Prince,
That he of Virtue has too great a sence
To cherish but a thought beyond the bound
Of strictest duty: He to me has Own'd
How much was to his former passion due,
Yet still confess'd he above all priz'd you. (II.152-57)

This, however, is a well intentioned lie. What we have heard Carlos telling Posa is that:

A cruel Father thus destroys his Son;
In their full height my choicest hopes beguiles,
And robs me of the fruit of all my Toyles. (I.78-80)

The passion of Carlos and Elizabeth cannot be relegated to the status of a 'former passion'. Elizabeth will remember her vows to Carlos and when Posa tells Carlos at the end of Act II that he must 'all resign' to his father (II.318), (the position he had assured the King Carlos had reached), Carlos can only reiterate moodily his central complaint, 'But e're he rob 'd me of her she was mine' (II.319).

In Act II Carlos and Elizabeth do try to sublimate their love. Carlos tries to convince the Queen that his love is entirely chaste - 'knew you but the Innocence I bear, / How pure, how spotless all my wishes are' (II.262-63). However when, in response to this plea, she gives him her hand his sexual passion becomes obvious (II.270-75). Her own attempt to describe their love in Platonic terms as a 'Flame so pure, such chaste desire' (II.296) fails, and she breaks off and leaves. Throughout her speech Carlos has been 'eagerly' (stage directions by lines 295-98) kissing her hand, and the Queen flees before she loses all power to leave Carlos (II.300-02). Far from having effected any transmutation of their passion onto a spiritual plane the scene ends in disorder and on Carlos's sense of maddened sexual arousal and frustration:

If such transport be in a taste so small,
How blest must he be that possesses all!
... I'm more Impatient than before,
And have discover'd Riches, make me mad.
(II.304-05, 311-12)

At the same time for all the intense sexuality of their love there is never any suggestion of an illicit liaison. When Carlos thinks that Eboli is suggesting this he sternly tells her that 'Angel Honour ... stops my Entrance into Paradise' (IV. 52, 54). The repetition of a similar scene with variations in Acts II and III, with Carlos and Elizabeth meeting, admitting their passion and then dragging themselves away, heightens the awareness of tension and repression. As James Sutherland points out, the protracted partings of Carlos and Elizabeth make for an 'oppressive' sense of 'inhibited action'.²⁹

29 James Sutherland, English Literature of the Late Seventeenth Century, p.79.

By the end of Act III an impasse has been reached.

Carlos and Elizabeth have now fully acknowledged their love for each other but they also obey the King's orders to part. Carlos ends the Act with a speech which acknowledges an element of error in following the dictates of passion. His speech is reminiscent of the Earl of Rochester's satire on reason,³⁰ only here it is not reason which misleads and deludes, but passion;

Thus long I wander'd in Loves crooked way,
By hope's deluding Meteor, led astray:
For e're I've half the dang'rous desert crost,
The glimm'ring light's gone out, and I am lost.
(III.515-18)

Their love cannot be consummated and attempts to elevate it to a spiritual level have failed but an attempt to sublimate sexual passion into physical action is now made as Carlos decides to flee the Court and lead the Flemish rebels. The link between engaging in active rebellion and repressing sexual desire is made at the beginning of Act IV as Carlos hesitates outside Elizabeth's apartments. He briefly gives way to despair (IV.9-11) but then redirects his energies, 'No: Dull despair this Soul shall never load' (IV.12) and resolves to 'have' his 'Fate' (IV.19) by engaging in action. In rejecting despair as unworthy of his soul, Carlos does not fall into the errors of judgement made by Theramnes and Tissaphernes in Alcibiades when they elevate despair into a noble emotion (IV.196-98, V.24). Carlos's rejection of despair here recalls the earlier scene in which the Queen told him not to despair since 'Hope's the far nobler passion of the Mind' (III.222). However, 'Hope' converted into rebellion is a passion of dubious nobility, and Carlos's following rejection of 'Patience' as a virtue

30 See 'A Satyr Against Reason and Mankind' in The Complete Poems of John Wilmot Earl of Rochester, edited by David M. Veith (New Haven and London, 1968, second printing 1974) lines 12-20.

suitable for Gods but unrealistic for humans (IV.13-15) is reminiscent of Theramnes's rejection of patience (Alcibiades, I.167-68). Carlos's sense that the flawed nature of life on earth excuses intemperate behaviour is a highly unethical piece of special pleading. Passion, in fact, has not been rejected but redirected. Although the political implications of Carlos's action are clear from his insistence that 'I am a Prince have had a Crown in view,/And cannot brook to loose the prospect now' (IV.31-32), the decision is also treated on a purely personal level as if politics were an irrelevance. Carlos's language as he explains his scheme to the unfortunate Posa is Almanzor-like in its indifference to the sides in the dispute. He denies that he is joining the 'rebels'; 'th'are Friends, their Cause is just,/Or when I make it mine, at least it must' (IV.25-26). In this sense, by denying the full implications of joining the rebels, Carlos can treat his action as a sort of heroic compromise, removing him from sexual temptation and also from the humiliation of suffering his father's persecution (IV.27-32,150). However, the heroic nature of Carlos's action here is distinctly dubious and the problems involved are indicated by the uneasy shifts between the personal and the public in Carlos's language and the necessity of redefining the rebels as friends. He combines 'Honour and Ambition' (IV.29) now as two positive qualities, although earlier Carlos complained that Rui-Gomez used to misinterpret him to the King so that his 'forward Honour was Ambition call'd' (I.108). It is also typical of the uneasy indirection of Carlos's language that when he reveals his plans to Don John he words them rather differently. Despite the fact that they embrace in friendship and despite Carlos's oath not to hide from Don John the 'Secrets of [his] Soul' (IV.144), what he actually tells him is, at the least, worded ambiguously: 'for Flanders I

intend my way, /Where to th'insulting Rebels I'll give Law' (IV.148-49). The impression given by these words is not that he intends to head the rebels but rather that he will vanquish them. The fact that Don John warmly supports Carlos's intention to leave the Court illegally for the military front, and prevents his arrest (IV.133-42, 166-67), further qualifies the action. For although on the one hand Don John's support can be seen as disinterested, on the other it can be seen as irresponsible, and the way in which this scene is followed by an encounter between Eboli and Don John supports the latter interpretation.

This act of rebellion by Carlos in some ways briefly clears the air and cuts through the tension accumulated in the previous Acts through the inhibition of action. However, this act too is suppressed. Dramatically it is a prelude to the united rebellion of Carlos and Elizabeth which concludes Act IV. Elizabeth prevents Carlos from carrying out his action. The words with which she greets the news of his design, 'Will he then force his Destiny at last?' (IV.334), suggest a deep-rooted desire on her part to remain in a state of suspended animation. The thought of a complete action and a total break is regarded by her with horror and leads to her breaking her promise not to see Carlos and sending to him a series of lying messages to prevent his departure (IV.335-41). In agreeing to abandon his Flanders project Carlos submits to the power of love and here, as throughout the play, the act of submission is treated as potentially dishonourable. His injustices have 'rous'd the sleeping Lion in [his] heart' (IV.378) and it is only the thought that he is submitting to Elizabeth and love which lessens the dishonour (IV.389-91) of reassuming his role of a dutiful son which he earlier equated with slavery (IV.160-61). At this point by remaining true to Elizabeth he violates his honour and either way, by following his

honour into rebellion or his love for Elizabeth into submission, he offends against the King. Elizabeth's conviction that this will have a 'happy issue' (IV.393) is difficult to fathom, except in terms of a willing blindness to consequences. The Flanders episode is interesting: in terms of the play, because it is a prelude to the climax, and also because it bears some resemblances to Jaffeir's engagement with the conspiracy in Venice Preserv'd. In both cases the hero's lines of action seem closed and whichever direction he moves in his actions becomes dishonourable. There is a similar mixture of motives: a reaction against public humiliation, as Carlos is deprived of his rights as a Prince and a personal sense of violation stemming from the treatment of the heroine. Carlos, like Jaffeir, is persuaded to abandon the engagement with the rebels out of love, although to do so seems 'tame' to both men (Venice Preserv'd, IV.87, Don Carlos, IV.390). Passion can be seen operating to provide motives for engaging in a revolt and for leaving it. It is also noticeable that in both plays the hero's submission to the forces of authority, which have been shown to be unjust, is not rewarded. Jaffeir does not win the Senate's forgiveness for his fellow conspirators and Carlos does not win his father's forgiveness for himself. Otway's sense of the imperfections of human institutions is matched by his despair over individual processes of control. Consistently his plays display an open-minded (and pessimistic) scepticism over human life in the public and personal realms.

Ironically, Carlos goes through the process of humbly submitting to his father just as the King has discovered the treasonable dispatches (IV.453-60). His unwilling submission is therefore vitiated from the start and is quickly abandoned as the King fails to respond to him. When the King curses the memory of

Carlos's mother, Carlos rejects in wonderment his abject position (kneeling) and words, 'Submission, which way got it entrance here!' (IV.471). Carlos makes a distinction, however, between his duty to Philip as a subject and his duty to him as a son and casts away his sword because Philip is 'my Father still' (IV.488). His ties of kinship over-ride the ties of obligation. The mechanisms of restraint, in fact, do not only emerge from the world of law, but also from the natural world. This little sequence is itself a comment on the naivety of the rebellion Carlos articulated in the first Act, equating obedience only with corrupt law, as well as a comment on Don John's over-facile distinctions between natural and human law.

In the confrontation between Carlos, Elizabeth and the King which follows we see a conflict between honour and duty articulated in purely personal terms and the King's more legalistic and social view of obligation. Whilst the King keeps the political implications of the Flanders episode to the forefront, stressing the treason involved (IV.472,487,495-96), neither Carlos nor Elizabeth ever respond on that level. Their statements of intention are couched in personal terms which transcend politics and they are indignant at the King's inability to enter into their perception of the affair. Carlos explains that he was driven to act by the injuries to his 'Honour' (IV.502) and strongly gives the impression that he was going to fight in Flanders for the King, 'There in your right, hoping I might compleat, / 'Spight of my wrongs, some Action truly great' (IV.513-14). The Queen right^eously seconds him:

And can this merit hate! he would forgo
The joyes and charms of Courts to purchase you:
Banish himself, and stem the dang'rous Tide
Of Lawless outrage, and rebellious pride.

(IV.517-20)

Emphasising that Carlos was prepared to leave the Court, they overlook the fact that he had already been banished from the Court. It is difficult not to see these speeches as deceptive. Carlos's intention of joining the rebels was clear and Eboli told the Queen plainly that Carlos was going 'To head the Rebels, whom he stiles his friends' (IV.331). Carlos and Elizabeth shift the emphasis from the rebellion involved onto the provocation provided by the King's jealousy (IV.492-94,509-10), the laudable self-sacrifice Carlos showed (IV.511-12,517-20) and the duty he showed in his submission (IV.544-48). In fact, from their point of view, it becomes difficult to see why any submission is necessary. The characters seem almost to be speaking in different languages, or at least in different codes, and Carlos complains of the King's 'misconstructions' of his words and intentions (IV.497). Carlos and Elizabeth express themselves personally and emotionally, whilst the King uses the controlled form of ironic wit to deflate their language and play on their words. When Carlos tells the King he was going to Flanders to 'work your peace' (IV.494), the King picks him up on 'peace' and replies sarcastically, 'Thinking my Youth and Vigour to decrease,/You'd ease me of my Crown to give me peace' (IV.495-96). Similarly, when the Queen brings into play her femininity, weeping, and reminding the King that she is a 'woman still' (IV.589), Philip responds by ironically agreeing that she is a typical woman, 'Th'art Woman, a true Copy of the first,/In whom the race of all Mankind was curst' (IV.590-91). The curse of the Fall is thus shown to fall equally on human institutions (II.3-9) and on human passions, here on sexuality.

Paradoxically now, as the King manifests his jealousy, Carlos and Elizabeth express their sense of the injustice of his accusations by embracing. Visually the scene must be very striking, with Carlos and Elizabeth locked in each other's arms, surrounded by

armed guards (an extreme manifestation of the authority ranged against them), whilst Rui-Gomez and the King stand by, for the moment helpless, commenting angrily and ironically on the scene. There is a parallel between the King witnessing the embrace of Carlos and Elizabeth and the scene earlier in the Act when Rui-Gomez saw his wife in Don John's arms (IV.439-45). The difference between Carlos and Elizabeth's embrace is not that it is less carnal; the Prince goes into raptures over Elizabeth's breasts - 'Oh soft as Blossoms! and yet sweeter far' (IV.625) - but that it is not secretive. By embracing openly Carlos and Elizabeth avoid the stigma of an illicit passion such as Don John's and Eboli's. Elizabeth points out that 'Carlos! the sole Embrace/ You ever took, you have before his face' (IV.606-07). The play reaches its climax at this point as Carlos and Elizabeth openly defy the King. Their embrace at last breaks through the agonising repression of their senses imposed on them up to this point. The forces of repression are now externalised into the guards and their axes and, as such, can be defied without a loss of honour (IV.614-18, 640-42). Throughout the play the King has urged Rui-Gomez to show him Carlos and Elizabeth secretly making love (III.71-72, IV.317-19), but what he now witnesses is far more subversive: open defiance and the glorification of the rule of passion. The situation is replete with ironies; Elizabeth defends her chastity by embracing Carlos, Carlos shows his honour defying the King as father, ruler and husband, and the King maintains his justice by planning murder. The implications of the fourth Act are of a world so organised that ideals become perverted. In the clash between passion and control neither triumphs but each contributes to the perversion of the other. The ideals generated in the course of the clash are shown to be dubious, both in their provenance and in action.

The fifth Act, although dramatic with its protracted death-agonies and emotional reconciliations, is something of an anti-climax. The implications of chaos and the debasement of idealism of the fourth Act are not taken up until the final moments of the play. Instead emphasis is laid on the evil machinations of Rui-Gomez and Eboli. The process by which the play backs away from the more general criticism of human nature shown up until then begins with the Queen's explanation of her situation:

When I arriv'd to be the Prince's Bride,
You then a Kind Indulgent Father were:
But finding me Unfortunately fair,
Thought me a prize too rich to be possest
By him, and forc't yourself into my breast;
Where you maintain'd an Unresisted pow'r:
Not your own Daughter could have lov'd you more:
Till Conscious of your Age my faith was blam'd,
And I a lewd Adulteress proclaim'd. (V.148-56)

This account, which presents the Queen as an entirely dutiful wife whose husband's affections have been strangely alienated from her, leaves the way open for the view that Rui-Gomez is at fault for stimulating the King's unnatural and unjustifiable jealousy of the 'beauteous Queen and Loyal Son' (III.303). However, this account does not strictly tally with the events we have seen. From the first scene of Act I the Queen has shown the continuing strength of her 'Passion' for Carlos (I.32-33) and repugnance at the thought of consummating her marriage with Philip (I.52-53). At no stage have we seen the King maintaining an 'unresisted' power in Elizabeth's heart. His jealousy has not so much alienated her daughterly affections, which were never in evidence, as provoked her into open declarations of hatred (III.282, IV.604). The denouement begins as Eboli enters dying from a wound inflicted by her jealous husband and determined not to die until her 'sad Secret's Told' (V.228). Again there is a discrepancy between her 'confession' and the sequence of events we have seen:

Led by my lust I practis'd all my Charms,
To gain the Prince Don Carlos to my Arms:
But there too cross't, I did the purpose change,
And pride made him my Engine for Revenge: (To R-Gomez)
Taught him to raise your growing Jealousie. }
Then my wild passion at this Prince did fly, } (To D. John)
And that was done for which I now must die. } (V.239-45)

This is the first that we hear of any attempt on Carlos before the seduction of Don John. The implications of Eboli's previous speeches were that her ambition had been to marry Philip (I.220-22, IV.101-04). Her sexual passion for Don Carlos is neither revealed nor rejected until Act IV (49-100), by which time the intrigue is well advanced. This speech suggests that Eboli was more devious than has been shown although nothing she says can really be said to add up to a 'sad Secret'. Rui-Gomez, although seized on by all as the villain of the piece after Eboli's 'exposé', does not really have much to confess either. He admits to poisoning Carlos's bath (V.324-26) but this merely accelerates Carlos's death ^{and} does not cause it. Rui-Gomez protests with much truth, 'How have I this deserv'd, / Who only your Commands obey'd and serv'd?' (V.273-74), since despite the King's insistence that Rui-Gomez tell him the truth (V.271-72), there is really very little Rui-Gomez can add to this. His guilt is proved when Don John points out that he looks like a villain (V.263-68). Quite suddenly the guilt for the whole vexed situation is placed on the shoulders of Eboli and Rui-Gomez. Insults are hurled at them - 'Curst Dog! Vile prostitute! Revengeful Fiend!' (V.310) - whilst Elizabeth and Carlos are now praised. Elizabeth is 'the fairest purest Creature Heav'n e're made' (V.295) and Carlos is 'excellently good' (V.415). As the guilt for the King's jealousy is placed on these secondary villains the main characters become cleansed of imperfections. Emphasis is now laid on the undisputed fact that Carlos and Elizabeth did not make love.

Their violent language, forbidden meetings, Carlos's political rebellion and their adulterous embrace, are now all forgotten. The King mourning over their bodies exclaims that he has 'Murder'd a Loyal Wife and Guiltless Son' (V.479).

The orgy of forgiveness and reconciliation reaches its climax as Carlos and Elizabeth sink onto their knees in front of the King, blessing him and in the process humbling him as, at last, they pay to him the submission denied him throughout. Their submission now is, in fact, an elevation, a kind of living apotheosis, which demonstrates their magnanimity and dazzles the King: 'No more; this Virtue's too divinely bright' (V.424). It could be argued that Carlos and Elizabeth are cleansed by their repentance but Carlos is the only one who repents:

I was a wicked Son, Indeed I was;
Rebel to Yours as well as Duties Laws.
By head-strong will too proud to be confin'd;
Scorn'd your Commands, and at your Joyes repin'd.
(V.406-09)

This confession, which has considerable justice in its recognition of the rebellion against the natural laws of kinship as well as external authority, is not however accepted by the King, who treats it as an example of Carlos's magnanimity;

Why wert thou made so excellently good;
And why was it no sooner Understood?
But I was Curs't, and blindly led astray.
(V.415-17)

Even so Carlos places most of the blame on 'Fate' (V.404) just as the King places most of the blame on the way he was led 'astray'. The statements the characters make about each other (and themselves) throughout this scene are mostly mistaken or perversions of the truth. Thus Carlos, who throughout the play has with reason complained about the King's treatment of him, now exclaims 'H'as done no wrong to

me' (V.407). while the King can say, even as Carlos and Elizabeth reiterate their love for each other, 'how might I have been blest!' (V.400). The King now bitterly repents his jealousy, which he treats as groundless. Neither here nor at any stage in the play does he accept, or refer to, Carlos and Elizabeth's central complaint that by marrying Elizabeth he has stolen his son's betrothed wife. Even as the King watches Carlos and Elizabeth amorously die in each others arms, Carlos leaning on the Queen's breasts and saying 'Thus all o're bliss the Happy Carlos dies' (V.447), the King can describe his loss in terms of a 'Loyal Wife, and Guiltless Son'. Words and actions do not cohere and there is a basic incompatibility between the King's position and that of Carlos and Elizabeth. In Alcibiades a weak resolution is provided to the tragedy as most of the characters die and a secondary character, Patrocles, is declared King but regards his elevation as a hollow triumph. In Don Carlos there is no resolution and the last moments of the play return us to a state of violence and chaos. The King goes mad and wishes his own confusions on the world (V.455). The celestial note struck in Carlos and Elizabeth's death (V.440-45) is over-ridden by the King's questioning of divine providence (V.288-89), by his curse and desire for the triumph of Hell (V.449-55) and by Don John's comment, 'Despair! how vast a Triumph hast thou made?' (V.500).

Carlos and Elizabeth, who sought but failed to find a compromise between passion and restraint, die. The King, who represented order, goes mad and Don John, who began by welcoming the free play of passion, now rejects 'Loves Enervate charms' (V.501). The last lines of the play are given to Don John and in some ways his dispassionate view of human institutions and his role as a semi-outsider make him an appropriate commentator. At the same time the fact that the erstwhile libertine Don John is left at the

end giving responsible orders for the care of the King and Henrietta is a damning indictment of the nature of the passions which tormented the main characters. Don John now rejects the libertine pursuit of love and the nobility he saw in the rejection of restraint is now replaced by the harder heroism of military action (V.504). However, Don John's words do not indicate any resolution of the tragedy and the play ends with him in flight from the scenes of horror around him.

Don Carlos is a highly emotional play and its emotionalism lies to a great extent in its suffocating and claustrophobic atmosphere. The sense of inhibited action and dangerous repression is heightened by the repetition of scenes. The central repression of the love of Carlos and Elizabeth is emphasised as Acts II and III basically replay the same scenes; the lovers meet, struggle with their passions and then agonisedly part. Act IV again re-enacts this situation, only now more violently, as they defiantly declare their love and are physically torn apart. Confrontations between Carlos, Elizabeth and Philip take place in Acts III, IV and V and again basically replay similar arguments. Only in Act III the scene concludes with the King's reconciliation with Elizabeth and Carlos's banishment, Act IV with the King's fake forgiveness of Elizabeth and Carlos's arrest and Act V with forgiveness all round followed by the deaths of Carlos and Elizabeth. Structurally, therefore, the play creates a sense of the characters moving in circles without progression. A pessimistic sense of human limitation is further conveyed through failures in communication, the inappropriateness of language and the impossibility of action. Speeches relating both the corruption of institutions and the destructive nature of passion to the Fall of man (II.1-9, IV.590-93) effectively condemn man to a state of imperfection whether he endorses restraint or passion or

attempts a reconciliation or compromise between these impulses. Throughout the play Carlos and Elizabeth refer to each other in angelic terms,³¹ although the limitation of their view of heaven is also indicated by the carnality of their celestial language.³² The King also uses angelic or heavenly imagery for Elizabeth but in his language her angelic qualities are always questioned or tainted - 'Can Angels in perfection sin?' (II.140), 'chuse a Devil for a Saint' (III.266), 'your great Lord the Devil taught you pride,/ He too an Angel till he durst rebel' (IV.593-94).³³ This terminology with its sense of perfection and debasement helps to emphasise the sense of human potential flawed by human fallibility which the play displays. Don Carlos nowhere shows the kind of psychological depth of a play like The Orphan, which it resembles in its depiction of a family unit destroyed through sexual passions, nor does it develop the clash between reason and passion into a central human paradox. However the play does show Otway's thinking developing, not simply in terms of the tragic predominance of passion over reason, but working towards a view that the tragedy of human nature lies somewhere in the interaction of reason and passion. Uncontrolled passion may be destructive but the processes of control warp both reason and passion and here the clash results in death, lunacy and flight.

31 See, II.208, III.236, 514, IV.387.

32 See, II.322-24, IV.53-54, 96, 626-27, V.446-47.

33 Carlos is also associated with fallen man/angels when the King describes him as a 'Rebel..to Heav'n' (III.41).

I

THE EARLY YEARS

iii

TITUS AND BERENICE

Since, as Ham observes, Otway was to be called 'the English Racine',¹ it is particularly interesting to note what Otway actually did when he undertook a translation and adaptation of a play by Racine. The play he chose was Bérénice,² a work which had been performed at the Hôtel de Bourgogne in November 1670 and printed in January 1671. In his Preface to Don Carlos Otway had already indicated his interest in Bérénice, or at least, in Racine's Preface

- 1 R.G. Ham; Otway and Lee, p.76, referring to the article 'Otway and Racine Compared', British Magazine (1760), I.462. Comparisons between Otway and Racine have been made more recently. Bonamy Dobrée finds similarities between the sensibility displayed in The Orphan and that of Racine, Restoration Tragedy, p.142, while A.M. Taylor finds structural similarities between that play and works of Racine, 'A Note on the Date of The Orphan', English Literary History, vol.12-13 (1945-46), p.321. In an unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 'Thomas Otway and the Poetics of late Seventeenth Century Tragedy', University of Colorado (1971), Saiyid Ale Nabi argues (unconvincingly) that Otway was in the vanguard of a movement among English dramatists who were turning to Racine rather than Corneille as a model. I hope to show that Otway's debt to Racine was superficial, or rather oblique; he reacts against Racine's demonstration of the operations of the passions.
- 2 The only play by Racine previously translated into English was Andromaque, Andromache, printed in 1675 with an Epistle to the Reader signed 'J.C.', John Crowne, who claims to have merely polished a translation executed by another gentleman. At the same time that Otway was working on Bérénice, Crowne was also adapting the play, much more conventionally, interweaving Racine's materials into the more crowded canvas of The Destruction of Jerusalem, II (January 1677).

to Bérénice.³ That Otway should, in fact, have studied Bérénice while working on Don Carlos seems a reasonable supposition. The whole of Bérénice and a considerable proportion of Don Carlos, deals with the agony of a man and a woman who are deeply in love but are forced to part from one another. However, in Don Carlos the necessity for parting is due to external circumstances, Elizabeth is married to Philip, while in Bérénice the decision to part, although resting on obligations to the rule of law, is essentially an internal and voluntary decision. Further, Don Carlos with its luridly bloody ending emphatically denies Racine's contention in the Preface to Bérénice that 'Ce n'est point une nécessité qu'il y ait du sang et des morts dans une tragédie'.⁴ The debt to Racine in Don Carlos is certainly not structural in terms of the overall shape of the play but the meetings and sudden partings of Carlos and Elizabeth, encounters which are charged with emotion but are essentially static, are suggestive of Racine's technique in Bérénice.

In re-working Bérénice, Otway had the opportunity to examine in more detail the actual processes involved as two lovers part from each other. Moreover, the parting now is to be voluntary, a subject to which Otway was clearly drawn since he returns to this

3 Works, I, p.174. The Preface is briefly mentioned in the previous chapter. In his Preface Otway applies to himself Racine's remark in the Preface to Bérénice that the play provoked tears, and he rendered into English as 'so Noble a pleasure', Racine's dictum that it is 'cette tristesse majestueuse qui fait toute la plaisir de la tragédie'. As a Preface to a controversial play which contained hardly any action and no bloodshed, Racine's statements are significant, but in the context of Don Carlos, these remarks are conventional and do not constitute a new poetic.

4 All citations from Racine, and page and line numbers, are taken from Racine, Oeuvres Complètes, Aux Éditions Du Seuil, Paris (1969) p.165.

in all his subsequent tragedies.⁵ Instead of using Bérénice as one strand in the more typical multi-layered plot-structure of English drama (as Crowne does in The Destruction of Jerusalem, II), Otway kept to Racine's single plot and cut down the text turning the five Act play into three Acts.⁶ He also retitled the play, calling his version, Titus and Berenice, a title which is indicative of the underlying changes Otway made to the play. The evening's entertainment was filled out with his adaptation of Molière's farce, Les Fourberies de Scapin. Otway thus provided the town with a double-bill programme of fashionable French drama and also trumped at one go two playwrights, Ravenscroft and Crowne, whose adaptations

5 The painful parting of lovers who find that duty or circumstances prevent the fulfilment of their love is, of course, a highly conventional subject in Restoration (and French) drama. However, the aspect which Otway returns to in his tragedies is not that of lovers who are forced apart by parents, rival lovers or the exigencies of war but situations in which the man, like Titus, decides voluntarily to separate himself from the woman he loves. Marius jr. in Caius Marius volunteers to deny himself his wedding night with Lavinia (III.240-44) and Jaffeir abjures Belvidera's bed when he commits himself to the conspiracy (II.367-424). Castalio's whole relationship with Monimia is dictated by his refusal to admit that they are lovers and, after his marriage, he repudiates her (IV.140-43). In each of these cases the partings, or hesitations in commitment, spring as much from anxiety over the nature of sexual passion as a sense of conflicting duty. Indeed, these scenes occur at moments when what 'duty' is, is anything but clear. Traditional plot materials are twisted into new shapes in Otway's hands as the grounds for conflicts are changed and internalised.

6 I am not concerned in this chapter to carry out a line by line, verse by verse comparison of Bérénice and Titus and Berenice, but am trying rather to pick out the large thematic variations which distinguish the works from each other. A summary of Otway's use of Racine's verses is given in André Lefevre's article 'Racine en Angleterre au XVIIe siècle. 'Titus et Berenice' de Thomas Otway', Révue de la Littérature Comparée, XXXIV (1960), p.251-57.

of these plays were performed some months later at the rival house.⁷

Titus and Berenice and The Cheats of Scapin were performed at the Duke's theatre around December 1676⁸ and, according to Downes, they did well, 'This Play, with the Farce, being perfectly well Acted; had good success'.⁹

Subsequently, however, the play has had less success with the critics.¹⁰ Bonamy Dobrée remarks that in his translation Otway 'shortens just where he should let himself expand, and lengthens just where he should be pithy'.¹¹ Ghosh feels that the play was radically weakened by Otway shifting Antiochus's revelation to Titus of his love for Berenice from the fifth Act to the second,¹² and Hume remarks tersely that the play 'is simply an indifferent verse recension of Racine's tragedy'.¹³ This is a remark which echoes Crowne's more lengthy,

- 7 John Crowne, The Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus Vespasian, I and II, January, 1677, Edward Ravenscroft, Scaramouch A Philosopher, Harlequin a Schoolboy, Bravo, Merchant and Magician, May, 1677. Both these plays are five Act plays which integrate the materials from Racine and Molière with other plot strands. Both playwrights were put out by Otway's action in racing them to the boards: Crowne especially so as he was under contract to the Duke's House at the time but had his play refused by them since they had Otway's version. The play was then produced by the King's Company and the Duke's Company compounded their sins by insisting on the rival Company buying off their claim to the work, see Ham, Otway and Lee, p.96.
- 8 The London Stage, I, gives December 1676 as a likely date for performance but in 'Dating Play Premières from Publication Data, 1660-1700', Harvard Library Bulletin, 22 (1974), 374-405 (p.388), Judith Milhous and R.D. Hume suggest November or earlier in 1676 as a more likely date.
- 9 Downes, Roscus Anglicanus, p.38.
- 10 An exception to the chorus of disapproval which follows is found in D.F. Canfield's assessment of Otway's work in Corneille and Racine in England, A Study of the English translation of the two Corneilles and Racine with Special reference to their presentation on the English Stage, (New York, 1904), p.92-101. Mrs. Canfield praises the accuracy of Otway's translation but also admires what she feels to be the increased pathos Otway gives to the work.
- 11 Bonamy Dobrée, Restoration Tragedy, p.137.
- 12 J.C. Ghosh, Introduction to Works, I, p.43.
- 13 R.D. Hume, The Development of English Drama, etc., p.313.

aggrieved, comments on the play in his Epistle to the Reader in The Destruction of Jerusalem, I.¹⁴ However, although Otway has not added new plot materials to his version of the play and despite its closeness to the original work, Titus and Berenice is more than simply an heroic couplet abridgement of Bérénice. The characters are the same in both plays and the subject matter is the same: the parting of the Roman Emperor Titus from Berenice, Queen of Judea. Further, Otway renders many of the speeches from Racine's play with great accuracy. In both plays the authors are concerned to explore the consequences of an adherence to an absolute morality and for both playwrights absolute values cannot be cashed in for one another. The situation which is presented in both plays is of a genuine tragic dilemma. The demands of love and the demands of Empire are both total demands and in this situation irreconcilable.

The divergences which set in therefore are not over whether or not there is a choice but over what happens to human beings in the process of making such choices. The major differences in Otway's play, Titus's growing bitterness, his submission to Berenice and his final transformation, all demonstrate the difference between Otway's and Racine's view of human nature and the way human nature develops under strain. In Bérénice Racine elevates the processes of making

14 In his Epistle to the Reader in The Destruction of Jerusalem, I, John Crowne defends himself against charges of stealing from Racine by arguing that Otway's play is an example of straight translation as opposed to a creative reworking of a text. '... a Gentleman having lately translated that Play, and expos'd it to publick view on the Stage, has saved me that labour, and vindicated me better that I can myself. I wou'd not be asham'd to borrow, if my occasions compell'd me from any rich Author: But all Foreign Coin must be melted down, and receive a new Stamp, if not an addition of Metal, before it will pass current in England, and be judg'd Sterling.'

decisions and choices. He treats them as the moments at which his characters become fully authentic beings. For Racine's Titus the moment of decision has occurred antecedent to the play. As Lucien Goldmann says, Titus is 'already a tragic character when the curtain rises'.¹⁵ At his father's death the reality of his situation became apparent to him in a moment of revelation akin to a conversion and the position he reached then is one from which he does not waver:

Mais à peine le ciel eut rappelé mon père,
Dès que ma triste main eut fermé sa paupière,
De mon aimable erreur je fus désabusé:
Je sentis le fardeau qui m'était imposé;
Je connus bientôt, loin d'être à ce que j'aime,
Il fallait, cher Paulin, renoncer à moi-même;
Et que le choix des dieux, contraire à mes amours,
Livrait à l'univers le reste de mes jours.
(II.ii.459-66)

This speech is omitted from Otway's version, and with reason, for Otway's Titus is still struggling with the choices before him and undergoing radical changes in character as the burden of choice wears him down. For Racine's Titus the real agony before him lies in imparting his decision to Bérénice and persuading her to share his tragic vision. The play takes its name from Bérénice because her ability to rise to the situation is pivotal. If she cannot rise then Titus will commit suicide with her; it is never an option for him to renounce Empire. What matters to Titus is that Bérénice accepts, of her own volition, the burden of loving him and leaving him. To quote Goldmann again, 'what the play describes, in fact, is the entry of Berenice into the universe of tragedy'.¹⁶ However maimed their lives will be in future, the moment of making the decision represents a

15 Lucien Goldmann, The Hidden God. A Study of Tragic Vision in the Pensées of Pascal and the tragedies of Racine. Translated by Philip Thody (London, 1964), p.339.

16 Goldmann, The Hidden God, p.339.

moral triumph for both characters. This is symbolically embodied in the stage directions as Bérénice rises from the chair into which she has collapsed (V.v.1362,V.vii.1468) to accept the new structure of reality.

For Racine the choices before Titus from the start, and Bérénice by the end, have all the clearness (and tragic intensity) of Kantian categorical imperatives. Consequences are treated in logical terms and the conclusion is impeccable as the course of action which is undertaken is the only one which can fully embrace the alternatives, love and duty, equally and without compromise. For Otway, however, the moments of choice are not moments of elevation and transcendence but moments of failure. The pressure of choice does not result in integration and authenticity but disintegration and betrayal of the self. As the pressure on Titus mounts in the final Act, Otway's Titus exclaims to Berenice, as Racine's could not,

This art to torture souls where did you learn?
Or was it in your nature with you born?
Oh Berenice! how you destroy me! (III.353-55)

The fact that Otway's Berenice eventually accepts that Titus does love her but that she must leave him can do nothing to save Titus. In Otway's more human and realistic drama the actual experience of suffering marks and warps people. In testing them to the depths of their character it brings to the surface the darker impulses, in Titus's case, cruelty, which lurk there.

In Racine's play there is a sense in which the process of making a choice does not essentially change the characters' personality. The moment of choice brings Bérénice's personality into full fruition; her potentiality as a human being is completely realised, not changed. For Racine it is possible to conceive of personality as standing as an independent arbitrator reviewing the

proffered alternatives raised by the conflict between love and duty: submission, suicide, renunciation; and then choosing the pathway, the transcendental pathway, which in fact truly expresses all the significant aspects of selfhood. Racine's drama, in effect, is deterministic; the human potential for change and variation is limited. But for Otway's characters the choices which confront them cannot be articulated in isolation from their effect on personality. The choices are integrative of each other, and whichever direction Otway's Titus moves in, opting for love or Empire, his sacrifice of the one is likely to distort his performance of the other. There is no obviously correct transcendental pathway to follow which will, paradoxically, unite the antagonistic elements by holding them in separation. For, in the way in which Otway has conceived of the situation, the elements are already related and, given the circumstances, the relationship can only become destructive. As in the speech already quoted (III.353-55), the claims of love over Empire are destroying Titus and also leading to a reappraisal of love and the loved one as Titus sees cruelty as a possibly innate feature in Berenice's nature.

The major difference in the way the antagonistic elements - public demands and private desires - are dramatised in the two plays is demonstrated in the opening speeches of both plays. Racine's play opens with Antiochus literally setting the scene as he explains to Arsace the moral and dramatic significance of the space they now occupy.

Arrêtons un moment. La pompe de ces lieux,
Je vois bien, Arsace, est nouvelle à tes yeux.
Souvent de ce cabinet, superbe et solitaire,
Des secrets de Titus est le dépositaire.
C'est ici quelquefois qu'il se cache à son cour,
Lorsqu'il vient à la reine expliquer son amour.
De son appartement cette porte est prochaine,
Et cette autre conduit dans celui de la reine.
(I.i.1-8)

The whole play takes place in this setting, which, as Goldmann says, is 'between the place where authority reigns and that where love holds sway'.¹⁷ The sense of the separate realms of love and Empire is thus given physical shape in terms of the wings. The 'cabinet', the main acting area, is the neutral debating ground and the characters, as they enter and depart through their separate doors, will turn by turn outline their position here in terms of their points of entry. In Otway's version there is no neutral ground, essentially no middle position or ground on which it can be worked out. His play opens similarly with Antiochus setting the scene for Arsaces but the scene is different.

Thou my Arsaces art a Stranger here,
This is th'Apartment of the Charming Fair,
That Berenice, whom Titus so adores,
The Universe is his, and he is hers:
Here from the Court himself he oft conceals,
And in her Ears his charming story tells.
(I.i.1-6)

Here Otway is relating the location of the ensuing action solely in terms of Berenice's apartments. This does not mean that Otway is being more romantic than Racine but that he is not separating the realms of love and duty. These realms are not treated as distinct but as co-existent and interwoven states of being: 'The Universe is his, and he is hers'. Titus's identity as Emperor and as lover cannot be separated into distinct roles. For Racine's Titus, the dispositional/emotional character of love is institutionalised so that it does have the same role-like character as statesmanship. When he reacts to the pressures of Roman public opinion it is with a series of antithetical statements, 'Ah, Rome! Ah, Bérénice! Ah, prince malheureux!/Pourquoi suis-je empereur? Pourquoi suis-je amoureux?' (IV.vi.1225-26). The conflict is expressed in a kind of

17 Goldmann, The Hidden God, p.339.

equation; Rome+Empire - Bérénice+love = prince malheureux. The quantities which make up the equation are, of course, separate entities and not fractions of each other. But Otway treats love as a permanent emotional state which constantly affects the way Titus functions as Emperor. Therefore the renunciation of a fulfilling love does not simply entail suffering; it results in fundamental changes in character.

Racine's Titus has become, in effect, a Port Royal solitary; a man voluntarily in exile from the world, who will, nevertheless, perform his functions in the world faultlessly. As he tells Bérénice, '... mon coeur de moi-même est prêt à s'éloigner; / Mais il ne s'agit plus de vivre, il faut régner' (IV.v.1101-02). Typically, Otway renders these lines more doubtfully; 'And now I would not a dispute maintain, / Whether I lov'd, but whether I must Reign' (III.80-81). In Otway's interpretation of the situation the reality of being in love must affect Titus's ability to reign and his attitude towards reigning. Throughout the third Act Otway shows Titus developing an increasing hostility towards the Roman people and his role as their Emperor. He reacts violently to Paulinus's suggestion that Berenice is 'contented to be gone' (III.188) by cursing his 'Roman Rudeness' (III.189). For Racine's Titus the world is always a spectator; he cannot understand the world nor does he seek to, he accepts without question the way in which the demands of the world are mediated to him through Paulin (II.368-42). He can and will function according to those demands. When the tribunes, consuls and senate arrive to beg for Bérénice's departure he accepts that it is his duty to see them - 'de ce devoir je ne puis me défendre' (V.viii.1252) - rather than visit and comfort the distracted Bérénice. Otway's Titus, however, is far more part of the world, even insofar as he is at odds with the world. Although he too accepts the necessity of seeing the delegation,

his first reactions are angry, engaged and resentful, 'Toyle me no more, disperse that clamorous Rout' (III.241). He cannot simply assume the mantle of duty; in obeying the demands of Rome, writing to Berenice dismissing her and seeing the delegation, he is aware of terrible changes which are taking place within him as he violates his own being.

Would I had never known what 'tis to live,
Or a new Being to myself could give;
Some monstrous and unheard of Shape now find,
As Salvage, and as Barbarous as my mind.
(III.252-55)

Essentially and fundamentally, as Otway's Titus moves towards the apparently heroic position of subduing personal desires in the interest of the public good he fails personally, morally and politically in terms of the public good. The heroic position only leads to disaster or rather, the heroic position disappears as Otway's Titus comes to question the nature of his choices. When Racine's Titus is told that the Roman people are celebrating Bérénice's imminent departure from Rome (IV.vi.1220-24), he does not question their behaviour but objectively characterises their activities in terms of the demands of Rome and Empire (IV.vi.1220-25). But Otway's Titus responds to the news by condemning the Romans; 'By that their Salvage natures they betray,/For so wild beasts roar o'r their murder'd prey' (III.220-21). He then goes on, in a speech which has no parallel in Racine, to question the 'sweets of power' (III.222):

... who by Greatness e'r did happy grow?
None but the heavy Slave is truly so,
Who travels all his life in one dull road,
And drudging on in quiet, loves his load;
Seeking no farther than the needs of Life,
Knows what's his own, and so exempt from strife,
And cherishes his homely careful wife;
Lives by the Clod, and thinks of nothing higher;
Has all, because he cannot much desire.
Had I been born so low, I had been blest,
Of what I love, without controul possest;
Never had Honour or Ambition known,
Nor ever to be Great, had been undone.
(III.224-36)

Otway's Titus is bringing new criteria to bear on the situation here as he compares the quality of his own life with the lives of the people. He is not simply noting the alternatives before him; Berenice or Rôme, but looking at the pursuit of happiness and the nature of happiness. A human dilemma emerges which is different from that examined by Racine. This is not a comparison of the demands of law and the demands of love, but an examination of the quality of life produced if either path is followed. With the Roman people characterised as savage and bestial, responding to their demands takes on a new colouring. On the other hand, the pursuit of happiness in love is also characterised as a limited and degraded activity. Were Titus not who he is, one of the 'Great', he 'had been blest' and able to enjoy the life and loves of a 'heavy Slave' with his 'homely careful wife'. Against this life controlled by the limited viewpoint of those that live 'by the Clod', Titus places the knowledge of 'Honour' and 'Ambition', which as the opposite to a blessing (III.233), must be a curse. But whichever direction Titus surveys; to be 'Great' and exercise 'controul' over his love, or to be 'born ... low', the options look grim. Neither love nor honour as defined in terms of the real world in which Titus lives emerge as elevated alternatives.

The demands made on Titus by the world change his attitudes towards the world, his love and himself. To function in response to those demands as either a lover or an Emperor is to destroy and degrade himself. Obeying the dictates of the world, he describes the form taken by his mind in terms similar to those he used to describe the world; his mind has become 'Salvage' and 'Barbarous'. The dramatic emphasis in Otway's play is not on the decision, or on how Berenice grows to accept that decision, but on the transformation taking place inside Titus as he forges a new personality in response to the process

of choice. Racine's play is rightly called Bérénice, for the transfiguration of the lovers depends on her decision. But Otway's play could as well be called Titus as Titus and Berenice. Berenice's role is that of a catalyst; she helps to set processes in motion which turn Titus from a man to a monster. In treating the moment of Titus's accession as the moment in which he turns from a man into a monster, Otway was diverging from the commonly held historical evaluation of the reign of Titus. Suetonius's history of Titus traces the development as taking place, miraculously, in the opposite direction. From having been 'profligate as well as cruel'¹⁸ in the period before his coronation he turned into an Emperor notable for his humanity and clemency. Josephus's account in his history, The Jewish War, is more ambiguous. He does pay considerable tribute to Titus's mercy and his distress at the destruction of Jerusalem but also notes the cruelty shown by Titus and the Roman army toward the Jewish people at the infamous 'Jewish Games' held at Caesarea after the fall of Jerusalem.¹⁹

Crowne, in The Destruction of Jerusalem II, shows Titus moving towards the acts of cruelty, such as the crucifixion of the Jewish prisoners of war, as his inclinations toward clemency are overridden by political expediency. Titus's unease at such acts is contrasted with Tiberias's encouragement of cruelty as a means of demoralizing the enemy (I.140-68, III.90-103).²⁰ Titus feels that

18 Suetonius, The Twelve Caesars, translated by Robert Graves, Penguin Classics (first published 1957, reprinted 1976), p.290, for the account of Titus, see pp.287-293.

19 Josephus, The Jewish War, translated by G.A. Williamson, Penguin Classics (1959), see p.342 and pp.263-351.

20 All references to The Destruction of Jerusalem, II, are from the edition in Five Heroic Plays, edited by Bonamy Dobrée (London, Oxford, 1960).

the obstinate defiance of the Jews leads him into ugly acts which 'distort [his] nature, wrest [his] mind' (III.102). Crowne's account of Titus's character involves a far greater display than Otway's of Titus the soldier and developments in his character are as much for the result of his conduct of the war as his relationship with Berenice. The play is divided between the Roman camp and the besieged city. Although John and Eleazar are portrayed as evil bigots, the interest and sympathy aroused by Clarona, Matthias and Phraates lessens the feeling of triumph at Titus's victory. A further qualification of Titus's character occurs when he appears to accept the prophecy of the coming of a great king as a reference to himself (V.344-57). At the end the departure of Berenice renders his triumphs hollow and he describes his future life as a 'tedious death, which men wou'd feign/Guild with the specious title of a Reign' (V.504-05). While Crowne's version of the Titus and Berenice tale is very different from Otway's in its structure, concerns and methods of questioning the heroic, it is closer to Otway's sense of the dubiety of grandeur than Racine's account. There is, however, an enormous difference between Crowne's muted ending with its insistence on Titus's failure towards Berenice and the emptiness of fame and Otway's depiction of Titus's decision to make his fame ugly; 'through ruin purchase fame,/And make the world's as wretched as I am' (III.478-79).

One of the most obvious differences between Racine's and Otway's plays is that where Racine concludes his play with Bérénice's speech of renunciation (applauded mournfully with Antiochus's 'Hélas!'), Otway's play closes with Titus's savage resolution to 'try how much a Tyrant [he] can be' (III.474). As fundamental as the difference between Racine's characters' nobility and Otway's depiction of Titus's cruelty is the difference between the plays' senses of an ending.

The decision to renounce the world taken by both Titus and Bérénice at the end of Racine's play means that effectively they cease to exist. The play truly comes to an end, for as sentient beings Titus and Bérénice now have no roles to play in the world. They leave the stage on which the decision was made to enter the pantheon of legendary lovers. As Bérénice says to Titus and Antiochus,

... Servons tous trois d'exemple à l'univers
De l'amour la plus tendre et la plus malheureuse
Dont il puisse garder l'histoire douloureuse.
(V.vii.1502-04)

They have entered history and left human time behind them. But there is no such finality to Otway's play. His lovers part and immediately we are shown the human consequences of that parting in Titus's final speech. There is no ending here but a new beginning. Titus, in effect, is on the way to becoming Caius Marius; we have witnessed the birth pangs of tyranny. Racine's play deals with a completed action and the play ends as an artistic and literary work. Otway's play in contrast is a discussion of a kind of reality. We are shown a phase in the life of Titus and that life will go on. Otway's play is a moment in a continuum.

The play deals with process and is also part of a process; the process by which Otway emancipated himself from the assumptions about human potential underlying the heroic ethos. Otway's play feeds creatively off Racine's, shifting the emphasis, twisting the characterisations and finally moving off in directions directly contrary to those taken by Racine. There is, perhaps, a certain 'tristesse majestueuse' about Otway's depiction of Titus's fall from greatness but fundamentally his play is horrific where Racine's is elevating. In using Racine, Otway moves far from Racine and towards the development of a voice of his own, articulating his own tragic

vision of man's life in the world in terms of disillusionment and decline. Titus and Berenice is the last play in which Otway deals with the enclosed world of Princes and their courts. The heroic ideal embodied in the character of the Prince, King, Emperor has been exploded. As the heroic ideal totters, so does personal identity which is conceived of in terms of that ideal. Titus's instability (Berenice remarks on his 'unsteady anxious mind' (III.133)) and metamorphosis are internal reactions to a world in which the forms of order have lost significance. This theme, relatively lightly touched on here in Titus's contempt for the tribunes, senate and consuls, and hostility to the people of Rome, becomes a major theme in Otway's subsequent works in which personal failure and public disorder are closely interwoven. The collapse of man as a social animal and the decay of the state as a dramatic theme and as a mode of thinking about human beings have a wider significance that cannot easily be dealt with solely in terms of courts. In his later tragedies Otway moves out into the larger world of the city to examine this theme in greater depth and complexity.

II

EXPERIMENTATION

i

THE CHEATS OF SCAPIN AND FRIENDSHIP IN FASHION

Otway's first attempt at comedy was The Cheats of Scapin, a translation and adaptation of Molière's Les Fourberies de Scapin. This three act farce was performed with Otway's adaptation of Racine's Bérénice, Titus and Berenice, in the winter of 1676.¹ The taste for foreign farce was probably stimulated by the troupe of Tiberio Fiorelli, (known in England as Scaramouche) from the Palais Royal which played in London during the summer and autumn of 1673 and again in the summer of 1675.² The interest in, and popularity of, this sort of drama is indicated by the race between Otway and Edward Ravenscroft to produce versions of Molière's farce for their

1 The London Stage, I, suggests a performance date in December, 1676 or January, 1677, p.252. However, Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume suggest November, 1676 as a more likely date, see 'Dating Play Premières from Publication Data, 1660-1700', Harvard Library Bulletin, vol. 22, (Oct. 1974), p.388.

2 On the visits of Scaramouche and his troupe see The London Stage, I, pp.197-98 and p.219 and Eleanore Boswell, The Restoration Court Stage, p.118. J.H. Wilson's article 'A Theatre in York House', Theatre Notebook, vol. 16 (1962), pp.75-78, draws attention to the commercially competitive aspects of the troupe's visit; Sybil Rosenfeld's Foreign Theatrical Companies in Great Britain in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (London, 1955), is of interest in relation to the threat felt by native companies in the face of foreign troupes.

rival theatres. Ravenscroft's version, Scaramouche a Philosopher, Harlequin A School-Boy, Bravo, Merchant and Magician, was produced at Drury Lane in May 1677. Its Prologue refers bitterly to delays in production and to the 'slipery trick' played on it by the other theatre's Scapin. In many ways Ravenscroft's play is the more interesting in terms of dramatic experimentation in its attempt to introduce the style of commedia dell'arte to the English stage but Otway's brief and amusing farce seems to have been the more successful.

Robert Gould's 'A Satyr Against the Play-house' refers to the play's popularity,

The Cheats of Scapin, one, a noble thing;
What a throng'd Audience does it always bring?³

Downes noted of the joint performance of Titus and Berenice and The Cheats of Scapin that the plays 'being perfectly well Acted; had good success'.⁴ For R.D. Hume the interest of The Cheats of Scapin lies 'largely in a historical freak',⁵ since instead of expanding the plot materials of Racine's play, Otway slightly condensed the tragedy and filled out the evening's entertainment with a short farce. In this he anticipated the eighteenth century theatrical tradition of furnishing a tragedy with a farcical afterpiece. Indeed, The Cheats of Scapin had the longest success of any of Otway's comedies on the London stage and was performed as an afterpiece into the nineteenth century. The high good humoured antics of the comedy do certainly

3 Robert Gould, Poems Chiefly consisting of Satyrs and Satyrical Epistles (1689).

4 Downes, Roscius Anglicanus, p.38.

5 R.D. Hume, The Development of English Drama, etc., p.313. Hume also refers to the play's innovatory status as an anticipation of the afterpiece in 'Otway and the Comic Muse', Studies in Philology, vol. lxxiii (Jan. 1976), p.92.

provide a release of tension after the essentially static emotionalism of Titus and Berenice but it is not at all clear that Otway had an innovatory theory of dramatic entertainment in mind when he combined the adaptations into a single bill of fare. The fact that Otway did not, as was more usual on the Restoration stage, expand his plot materials, is perhaps partly due to the fact that he was racing two playwrights from the rival house: Crowne with The Destruction of Jerusalem (performed at Drury Lane in January 1677), as well as Ravenscroft. Otway pulled off a double coup with his plays. It is also possible that while Otway was attracted to the intensity of Bérénice and did not want to dissipate it with a proliferation of sub-plots, the comic materials of Les Fourberies de Scapin did not really attract him and encourage him to turn that play into a five act comedy.

The Cheats of Scapin keeps closely to the original play. John Wilcox, referring to this translation/adaptation, calls Otway a 'competent workman'⁶ and Hume describes the translation as 'workmanlike'.⁷ The location is shifted from Naples to Dover and the characters' names are anglicized; but, as Hume notes, the setting is only 'nominally English'⁸ - universally farcical. The tricks Scapin plays are the same in Molière's and Otway's plays. Scapin extracts money from the two cautious merchant fathers by playing on the cowardice of one and the reluctant paternal feelings of the other. In both plays the centrepiece is a virtuoso farce scene in which one of the fathers hidden in a sack is repeatedly

6 John Wilcox, The Relation of Molière to Restoration Comedy, (1938, repr. New York, 1964), p.144.

7 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.92.

8 Hume, op.cit. p.92.

beaten by Scapin, who, assuming a variety of accents, pretends he is a number of assailants. In Otway's version the fun lies in observing Scapin's command of regional diction and accents as he imitates Welsh, Irish and Lancashire men. As Genest pointed out 'Scapin is a capital part, but it requires a first rate actor'.⁹ The part was created by Anthony Leigh, a first rate farceur, and in fact the play must have been very much written for Leigh as a vehicle to display his particular talent for imitation.¹⁰ Wilcox notes that Otway was concerned to simplify and not to elaborate the action.¹¹ Otway's play is a little shorter than Molière's: he cuts down the satire on the law and greatly reduces Scapin's mock confession in Act II. Otway changes and condenses the material dealing with the two girls, who are turned from a gypsy waif and a penniless orphan (apparently) into two pert London girls who have run away from their governesses. Although this helps to speed up the action, and speed is the essence of farce, it actually makes the plot logic rather tenuous. In Molière's play the girls do not know their own parentage, which is revealed in one of those discovery scenes in which tokens are recognised and old servants come forward to reveal the necessary information. Improbable though this is, it is quite in keeping with the general display of improbable tricks. It is even more unlikely that Otway's Clara and Lucia, who do know their own names and identities, should not have worked out that they are

9 John Genest, Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830, 10 vols. (Bath, 1832), Vol. I, pp. 205-06.

10 Leigh played Malagene in Friendship in Fashion, where there are 'in-joke' references to his gift for imitation and Scaramouche type roles, (III. 88-91, 165-70).

11 Wilcox, The Relation of Molière to Restoration Comedy, p. 144.

married to each other's brothers. But it is just a matter of choosing your improbabilities. In some ways the girls' London background gives a slight gain in realism and the absence of long discovery scenes speeds up the finale and concentrates attention more fully on Scapin and his tricks. The play moves far too swiftly for logic to matter.

Otway adds only a few touches of his own. As T.B. Stroup points out, there is a light version of Otway's ironic wit in Shift and Scapin's dialogue in Act I (49-54), in which they elaborately mock-praise each others roguery.¹² Shift's earlier praise of Scapin's qualities is an interpolation and has a harder and more factual edge to it than anything in the original (I.37-42). Similarly, the description of the imaginary bully-brother is expanded so that he becomes a regular London hector (II.245-55). However, The Cheats of Scapin with its essentially humane and tolerant view of humanity is not at all typical of Otway's usual dramatic mood. Scapin, despite his beating of Gripe, is a good-natured trickster; all the characters are genuinely reconciled at the end. Folly, greed and cowardice are the butts of the play but are by no means savagely dealt with. Human ingenuity triumphs overall and circumstances arrange themselves happily. The Cheats of Scapin is undoubtedly the most light-hearted and good-natured of Otway's comedies and as such it is a tribute to his skill as a translator and his sense of the original in terms of mood. As R.D. Hume says, the play 'gives no hint of what Otway would do on his own'.¹³ The success of the play, however, may have encouraged Otway to write a comedy on his own, for his next play, performed more than a

12 T.B. Stroup, 'Otway's Bitter Pessimism', p.60, footnote 8.

13 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.92.

year later in April 1678,¹⁴ was his first original comedy, Friendship in Fashion.

This play, however, is not remarkable for either a good-natured view of human folly or a lightness of touch. Although Otway may have learnt from The Cheats of Scapin something of how to handle comic dialogue and farcical incidents, the humour of Friendship in Fashion is more related to the ironic and deflating wit of his tragedies; the characterisation, to his sense of the grotesque and psychologically disturbed, illustrated in characters like Tissaphernes, Rui-Gomez and Philip of Spain. Neither did Otway learn, as he could have done, much about comic structuring from The Cheats of Scapin, which is a neatly organised well-paced play. Friendship in Fashion is not very well structured, As Hume points out the first half of the play is mostly conversation and while this serves to introduce us to the unpleasant nature of the world the characters inhabit, it slows down the action too much.¹⁵ The play's structure is not dissimilar to that of Don Carlos, with three acts of conversation with a leisurely development of an intrigue, a fourth act of chaos and disorder and an anti-climax in the fifth act. The first three acts of the comedy, however, totally lack the tensions

14 London Stage, I, p.269. A.M. Taylor has suggested that during this quite lengthy period of apparent inactivity Otway wrote a first draft of The Orphan. See her article 'A Note on the Date of The Orphan', English Literary History, 12-13 (1945-46), pp.316-26. Her dating, however, either on stylistic or casting grounds is highly unconvincing; see R.D. Hume's comment in 'Studies in English Drama, 1660-1800', Philological Quarterly, 56 (1977), where he points out the improbability of Otway writing a blank verse drama as early as 1677 and adds that he has 'trouble in believing that the chronically impecunious Otway would sit on so stage-worthy a play for three years', pp.448-49.

15 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.95.

and reversals of Don Carlos. There is a crusading intensity in Otway's desire to show just how nasty all his characters are before plunging them into the chaos of the fourth act, which is novelistic rather than dramatic in its detail.

Otway seems to have made up the plot of the play himself, although most of its elements and characters are drawn from the common stock of Restoration comedy. Gerard Langbaine describes the play as 'very diverting' and states that it was 'acted with general applause'.¹⁶ But as Hume points out the lack of any printings of the play beyond the first edition, or any records of revivals apart from a disastrous one in the eighteenth century,¹⁷ does not suggest that it was a great success.¹⁸ Otway dedicated the play to the Earl of Dorset, to whom he had dedicated Alcibiades, and his wording suggests great anxiety. He protests against the 'unlucky censures some have past upon me for this Play' and, rather obscurely, hopes that the Earl remains convinced that the playwright is not 'guilty' of 'the thing' he has been accused of.¹⁹ R.G. Ham speculates that someone in the Dorset circle, possibly Shadwell, since the friendship between him and Otway appears to have ceased at this time, was offended by the play.²⁰ These speculations have been taken up by J.C. Ross, who has suggested that Truman's seduction of Mrs. Goodvile could have been seen by Shadwell as a satirical

16 G. Langbaine, An Account of the English Poets (1691), p.398.

17 See The London Stage, Part 4, pp.169-70. The play was revived in January 1750 at the Drury Lane Theatre. The London Stage cites a comment from the General Advertiser that the play had 'Not been acted in 30 years' suggesting a revival in the 1720's. The reasons for the riot which took place in the playhouse when Friendship in Fashion was performed are not clear but seem in part to have been due to rivalries between the actors; see the comment in the General Advertiser and Foote's reply in the Daily Advertiser, 26 Jan. 1750.

18 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.92.

19 Epistle Dedicatory, Works, I, p.333.

20 R.G. Ham, Otway and Lee, p.102.

reference to a rumour circulating about him.²¹ Certainly, Friendship in Fashion seems to mark a downward turn in Otway's career in terms of patrons. No other plays were dedicated to Dorset, and Rochester, whose support had helped Otway to establish himself as a writer, by 1678 was turning away from an interest in the stage and towards his philosophic and theological debates with Charles Blount and Gilbert Burnet. There is also a pained sense of the ugliness of human nature and a bitterness in Friendship in Fashion which, in such intensity, was absent from Otway's previous works but is very much part of all his subsequent plays. Friendship in Fashion seems to mark an emotional and intellectual watershed. There is a certain amount of biographical evidence suggesting that this was an unhappy period in Otway's life,²² possibly, as Hume suggests, a period in

21 J.C. Ross, 'An Attack on Thomas Shadwell in Otway's The Atheist', Philological Quarterly, vol.52, no.4 (Oct.1973), pp.753-60.

22 A little earlier Otway was lampooned in 'A Session of the Poets'. The date is uncertain; Ham and Ghosh date the poem to 1677, Otway and Lee, p.108, Works, I, p.18, but J.H. Wilson argues very convincingly for a date around December 1676, in 'Rochester's "A Session of the Poets"', Review of English Studies, Vol.22 (1946), pp.109-16. Otway appears to have bitterly resented the lampoon and to have believed Elkanah Settle to have been responsible. Otway is presumably referring to the satire in his Epilogue to Friendship in Fashion (7-20), and he later lampooned Settle in 'The Poet's Complaint of his Muse', (stanza 8, 224-32). He also seems to have attempted to challenge Settle to a duel. The affair was bruited long after the event, during the aftermath of the Popish Plot in a pamphlet war, A Character of the True Blue Protestant Poet: or, the Pretended Author of the Character of a Popish Successor (1682), and in Remarks upon E. Settle's Narrative (1683), and in Settle's indignant A Supplement to the Narrative. In Reply to the Dulness and Malice of two pretended Answers to that Pamphlet (1683). The affair is also referred to in the anonymous satire 'The Tory Poets', (inconclusively attributed to Shadwell, see J.M. Byars "'The Tory Poets" Anonymous' Notes and Queries, 22 (June, 1975).

In 'The Poet's Complaint of his Muse', Otway's Bard refers to an unhappy period of his life when he experienced a sudden loss of friends, favour and inspiration following on a period when his first works were a success (stanza 6, 144-52 and stanza 7, 169-73). His phrase referring to his early plays 'Such as have pleas'd the noblest minds, / and been approv'd by Judgements of the best' (6.146-47), recalls the language he used in his Preface to Don Carlos, Works, I, p.174. In February 1678 Otway obtained a commission in the Duke of Monmouth's Foot Regiment which was due to see service in Flanders.

which Otway looked back with regret and disgust at his earlier debaucheries.²³

There is a general assumption that Otway turned to writing comedy, against his better taste and inclination for tragedy, out of the necessity to make money.²⁴ Hume describes him as responding to the vogue for sex comedies inaugurated with Betterton's The Amorous Widow (c.1669), but that 'ever unlucky he got onto the bandwagon too late'.²⁵ However, Hume sees that whatever the commercial motivations,

22 (continued) Perhaps Otway hoped to pursue a steadier career in service as a soldier; his Prologue to Friendship in Fashion warns parents against letting their children turn poets (18-21). In the event the troops did not sail until July and Charles II's attempt to intervene in European politics was a failure. A peace was negotiated in August and the troops were withdrawn and disbanded in March 1679. The after effects of this fiasco, in terms of Charles's difficulties in paying off his troops and the distrust of the population for a standing army, are vividly treated in Otway's next comedy, The Souldiers Fortune.

In 1677 Mrs. Barry had a child by the Earl of Rochester and if, as tradition holds, Otway was in love with her, this event may have affected his relations with Rochester and generally increased or, indeed, started his misery.

- 23 R.D. Hume 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.97, Hume is perhaps partly thinking of stanza 4 of 'The Poet's Complaint of his Muse'.
- 24 Alexandre Beljame sees pure economic necessity as forcing Otway to waste his talents in writing comedies and describes this as one of the 'crimes littéraires' of the Restoration; Le Public et Les Hommes de Lettres en Angleterre au Dix-huitième Siècle, 1660-1744 (Paris, 1897), p.135. R.G. Ham in Otway and Lee deals with all the comedies in a chapter entitled 'Potboilers' and assumes they simply pandered to popular taste. Kenneth Muir in The Comedy of Manners (London 1970), supposes that the comedies were 'written against the grain', p.63.
- 25 R.D. Hume 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.92. A reaction against sex-comedy seems to be indicated by the ban on Dryden's The Kind Keeper; or Mr. Limberham, which was staged shortly before Friendship in Fashion at the same theatre in March 1678. Mrs. Behn's play Sir Patient Fancy (D.G. January 1678), seems to have provoked some criticism since she defended herself against charges of immorality in her Preface to the edition licensed in January 1678. The movement away from sex-comedy is traced and described by John Harrington Smith in 'Shadwell, the Ladies and the Change in Comedy' in Restoration Drama, Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. John Loftis (Oxford, 1966).

Otway used the sex-comedy formula for his own purposes. James Sutherland also sees an element of commercialism and constraint in Otway's comedy writing, suggesting that

Left to himself, Otway would probably have chosen to write satirical comedy: what he did in fact write, having to please the players and playgoers, was farcical comedy uneasily streaked with satire.²⁶

Throughout his life Otway wrote to make money and to please the players and playgoers and the constraints, if such they were, that this imposed cannot be really said to have made him a very compromised or compromising writer. As Arthur Scouten has pointed out, even though Otway deals with 'the same materials as his fellow dramatists - arranged marriages and wedlock for economic security - his treatment is quite different'.²⁷ There is no reason to suppose that farcical elements were distasteful to Otway as a dramatic device. They occur in comedies and tragedies alike,²⁸ and become an appropriate means of depicting worlds which are chaotic and turned upside down. Otway's satire is directed against social abuses but takes off to probe psychological depravities and deviations. These explorations of the irrationality lurking beneath the surface call for the kind of madhouse scenes he creates through farcical incidents. Whatever Otway's reasons were for writing comedy - the hope of cashing in on the success of The Cheats of Scapin and the sex-comedy boom, or unease over an appropriate tragic form following the changes signalled by The Rival Queens (March, 1677) and All For Love (December, 1677) -

26 James Sutherland, English Literature of the Late Seventeenth Century, p.141.

27 Arthur Scouten, The Revels History of Drama in English, VIII vols. (London 1976), Vol.V. p.204.

28 Apart from the Nicky-Nacky scenes in Venice Preserv'd, I am thinking of Tissaphernes's business with the poisoned goblet in Alcibiades, the 'Nurse Noakes' scenes in Caius Marius and the use of the bed substitution trick in The Orphan.

Otway's comedies show important developments in his style. In his three tragedies up to this point Otway had dealt with the passions and pains of Princes. Turning to comedy he enlarged his scope, methods and dramatic vision and the effect can be felt on his later tragedies which are more overtly satirical and, with the exception of The Orphan, strongly socially based. Comedy, as it were, is a way of learning to write with the gloves off.

Generally, as Hume notes, Friendship in Fashion, has not been kindly treated by the critics, who have tended to declare themselves appalled or bored by the play.²⁹ Sutherland, for all his caveats about popularism, is an exception. He is worried by the way the play 'oscillates precariously between farce and disturbing realism'³⁰ but goes on to make a valid comparison between Goodvile and Horner, pointing out Otway's achievement in creating an unpleasant but thoroughly believable character in Goodvile.³¹ However, apart from Summers's vague praise³² and Stroup's thoughtful identification of irony and burlesque in the play,³³ the most significant appreciation of the play is Hume's article 'Otway and the Comic Muse'. Here Hume cuts through the prejudices to argue for

29 In 'Otway and the Comic Muse' Hume outlines the critical neglect or dislike of the play, pp.88-90. One of the most outraged comments comes from Otway's editor, J.C. Ghosh, who declares himself bored by the play but reveals himself rather as shocked, Works, I. p.44. Edmund Gosse called all Otway's comedies 'simply appalling' and noted that the characters' sins 'fill us with mere loathing' but assumed that this was a mistake on the author's part, Seventeenth Century Studies. A Contribution to the History of English Poetry (London, 1897), pp.317-18.

30 Sutherland, English Literature of the Late Seventeenth Century, p.141.

31 Sutherland, op.cit., p.142.

32 Montague Summers, The Complete Works, I., Introduction, pp.lxvi-iii, lxxxii-iv.

33 T.B. Stroup, 'Otway's Bitter Pessimism', p.58. A. Scouten's comments on Otway's comedies in The Revels History of Drama in English, Vol.V, pp.204-05 are sensible and to the point.

Otway's right to be considered as a comic dramatist in a class with Etherege, Wycherley, Southerne, Vanbrugh and Congreve.³⁴

Hume's claim is based on the seriousness of Otway's theme as well as the stark realism of his treatment of marriage. Hume describes the play's subject as 'fashionable friendship - and the libertine and social code behind it', and rightly points out that the title is ironic and a 'double entendre'. '(1) This is what friendship is in the "fashionable" world, and (2) This is the sort of friendship now in vogue'.³⁵ Otway's satiric goals extend beyond false friendship and wretched marriages but Hume is correct in seeing an analysis of libertine social codes as lying at the heart of the play. Anne Barton has described the attraction of 'the handsome but rather frightening rake, dowered explicitly in more than one play with an active case of the pox'.³⁶ Otway's achievement is to strip the rake of glamour. His characters may well be poxy but it is their mental sickness which is dwelt upon and which causes the sense of revulsion. Wycherley's Horner, and even Lee's Duke of Nemours, retain a certain amount of sympathy partly because their intrigues and deceits reveal the follies and hypocrisies of others. Their dupes generally seem to deserve the treatment handed out to them³⁷ but in Friendship in Fashion there is no one to fool and hypocrisies and deceits cancel each other out. By making the central rake figure, Goodvile, a cuckold as well as a seducer Otway turns him

34 Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.113.

35 Hume, op.cit. p.95.

36 Anne Righter Barton, 'William Wycherley', in Restoration Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, no.6. ed. John Russell Brown and Bernard Harris (London,1965), p.89.

37 An exception is, of course, Nemours's treatment of the Prince of Cleve, which reflects badly on Nemours even if the Prince appears ridiculous.

into a figure of contempt and ridicule as well as demonstrating the self-destructive results of disregarding social conventions. In The First Modern Comedies, Norman Holland describes the way in which Restoration comedies set up two competing realities: a false social and a true emotional reality,

This interplay between two kinds of reality leads, naturally enough, to two kinds of action in the play. The first - I will call it the unravelling - peels off bit by bit the surface appearances to get at the real facts of emotion underneath. The second, which I will call the emancipating, sets up a new social structure based on these underlying emotional realities.³⁸

Although one may wish to argue with some of Holland's neat classifications of plays, it is justifiable to see in the plays he looks at, by Etherege, Wycherley and Congreve, some social codes as restricting and the truths of the heart as a release from false values. In Otway's play, however, whilst an unpeeling process certainly takes place, the effect is of unpeeling an onion; nothing is left at the end. No new social realities are forged. At the end of the play the cast reassembles on the stage to celebrate friendships which do not exist and marriages which are without meaning. The characters are neither creators nor rebels, but parasites who live off the social body they are undermining. They are in fact creatures without a future.

The main technique Otway uses to explore his characters' delinquency is that of inversion. What he presents in Friendship in Fashion is a society in which all the fundamental bonds which hold groups together are abused and undermined. The tone is set in the

38 Norman N. Holland, The First Modern Comedies. The Significance of Etherege, Wycherley and Congreve (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), p.237.

first act as Valentine jestingly refers to the possibility that Goodvile might 'spend this day in Humiliation and Repentance/for the sins of the last' (I.20-21). Religious language is used ironically throughout the play, working on the idea that it is essentially humorous to imagine that any of the characters has a sense of sin, or, indeed, salvation. Truman opening his flirtation with Mrs. Goodvile offers to be her 'Confessor ... very indulgent and lavish of Absolution/to so pretty a Sinner' (III.381-82). By the end of the play Truman is elevated beyond the priesthood to celestial spheres as Mrs. Goodvile refers to him as her 'Guardian Angel lover' (V.400). In either role the joke lies in the fact that the activities of Truman and Mrs. Goodvile are directly opposed to any sense of religious morality.³⁹

The unlikeliness of religion being any sort of guide or consolation to the characters also informs the humour of Mrs. Goodvile's phoney tirade against her husband in Act IV, in which she claims that when he left her alone at night she 'contented' herself with 'Prayers for [his] safety' (IV.323). 'Oh! Lord, Prayers!' (IV.324), Malagene remarks in an ironic aside, for this is of course the very last and most improbable activity to be imagined. Goodvile, who stands at the centre of the play, systematically violates all the basic codes of society. He treats his marriage as a casual affaire and concentrates his main attention on his debauchery (I.73-78). He disregards the sanctity of the family and has seduced the kinswoman living in his house under his

³⁹ For a further ironic reference to sins and repentance see Truman's remark on Valentine's misery as Goodvile makes up to his girl (III.385-86).

protection. His friendships are a sham, cultivated solely to be abused. When he expresses his ideas on friendship to Camilla they emerge as a crazy mixture of heroism and hedonism:

A Friend is a thing I love to eat and drink and laugh
with all: Nay more, I could on a good
occasion lose my life for a Friend; but not
my pleasure. (III.467-70)

It is impossible to believe that Goodvile would ever sacrifice his life for a friend or that he could even recognise a 'good occasion'. On one level this sort of confusion of ideas helps to give Goodvile reality but, more significantly, the effect is also to devalue the meaning of the term friend by running together the heroic extremes of friendship and a cynical disregard for normal ethics. In Goodvile Otway has created a monster of egotism whose anarchic behaviour cannot be said to spring from a thought-out philosophic position, but from his own passionate and blinkered pursuit of immediate pleasures. His high opinion of his own, actually rather transparent, methods is referred to by the other characters (I.127-30, III.424-27, V.401-02). There is a kind of naïveté about his selfishness and his indignation when he discovers that others are as capable of trickery and deception as himself:

... abused by Victoria!
and with Valentine too, Truman's friend whom I thought
should have marry'd her! (IV.166-68)

In fact, his perceptions are clouded here. It is not his mistress who has been seduced by Valentine but his wife who has been laid by Truman. At the centre of Otway's critique of violations of order is a belief that they are also violations of sense. Goodvile snarls at his wife - 'Ceremony is the least thing I take care of' (V.60) - and the absence of any care over the rules and rituals of order clears the space for the confusions of passion.

Goodvile's violations of social codes are outstanding but he is distinguished from the other characters by the intensity and violence of his behaviour, not by his mode of behaving. For Mrs. Goodvile too, marriage is a sham (II.15-20). The study of marriage, like that of friendship, is one of the hinges on which the play is hung. The Goodviles' marriage is observed in detail as it deteriorates from mutual contempt to open hostility. As this marriage collapses, Camilla and Valentine move towards the goal of matrimony. The effect, however, is not one of balance. As Hume says, Camilla and Valentine represent evidently a tolerable if unadmirable way of the world.

They are not so stupid or pretentious as the minor fools, nor so evil as Goodvile. They do little, however, to suggest a genuine positive norm in the world of the play.⁴⁰

Further, their marriage is, in effect, damned as Goodvile welcomes Valentine's news of his marriage with the thought that he has 'fallen into the snare' (V.744) with him. Goodvile goes on to warn Valentine bitterly against letting his wife's beauty corrupt his friend (V.746-47). Had Otway felt moved to write a sequel to Friendship in Fashion as he did to The Souldiers Fortune, it would be no surprise to find Valentine and Camilla acting out the Goodviles' roles of unfaithful husband and frustrated wife.

The questionable felicity of Valentine and Camilla's match is also outweighed by the ugly absurdity of Victoria's marriage to Sir Noble Clumsey, a man she had correctly characterised as a 'Ridiculous Oaff' (V.219) a little earlier. The terms in which Sir Noble announces his marriage make it clear that he envisages no startling reformation of his boorish habits as a result of

matrimony: 'Ay Sir, I am Marry'd, and will be drunk again/too before Night, as simply as I stand here' (V.760-61). For the 'minor fools', marriage is a game or a joke. Malagene and Lady Squeamish look forward to observing Mrs. Goodvile's seduction (I.505-08), Caper plays with the idea of marrying Victoria (III.240), and Sir Noble obscenely offers his thirteen year old sister, 'a pretty hopefull Lady ... but she has had two Children already' (V.215-16), as a wife to Malagene.

In such a context Goodvile's wretched marriage seems to represent the norm and much the same may be said for his cynical disregard for kinship and friendship. For Mrs. Goodvile the only value of these bonds lies in their abuse. She explains that her best choice of a lover would be a friend of her husband's as 'such a one has a double/Obligation to secrecy, as well for his own Honour as mine' (II.60-61). Honour in such circumstances only means secrecy. This term, like all the others which have idealistic connotations, is systematically debased in the course of the play. Mrs. Goodvile is equally dismissive of the bonds of kinship and refuses to be shocked by the thought that her husband has debauched their kinswoman,

... the nearness of
bloud is the least thing considered. Besides, as I have
heard, 'tis^{almost} the onely way Relations care to be kind
to one another now a days.
(II.50-53)

By invoking the outside world Mrs. Goodvile contexts herself: she is not unique^{for} her way is the way of the world. The world has been turned upside down but there is no world beyond the immediate play world to reassure us that this is a mad trip to the Antipodes and that powerful external social forces will come into play in the end. The idea of kinship is further degraded by Malagene's attitudes towards his family, 'the nearest Relation of which', he informs Goodvile, he

'would go fifty miles to see hang'd' (IV.562-63). According to Truman, and he seems to be correct, Malagene is a 'general Disperser of nauseous/Scandall tho' it be of his own Mother or Sister' (I.47-48) and one who would 'pimp/for his Sister, though but for the bare pleasure of telling it/himself' (I.143-45).

Most of the friendships in the play are less than worthless. They are thinly veiled hostilities. 'I know you are my friend' (II.160) Mrs. Goodvile coos to Victoria who in fact she knows is her husband's mistress. The term 'friend' is rarely used other than ironically in the play. Mrs. Goodvile's hypocrisy is typical, as is Camilla's mocking question to Valentine, 'What, distrust your friend the honourable worthy Mr./Goodvile!' (III.526-27). Lady Squeamish, like Malagene, takes pleasure in exchanging gossip about her circle and taunting her 'friends'. The friendship of Truman and Valentine is not challenged in the course of the play but it amounts to little more than Valentine's 'dry pimping' (IV.95) for Truman. Goodvile's comment to Valentine at the end of the play, warning him to keep Camilla from society and to 'trust her not with thy dearest Friend,/She has Beauty enough to corrupt him' (V.746-47), is a reflection on both the young wife and Valentine's friends - in this context, Truman. Nothing one sees in the play would contradict this. For although attention is centered on Goodvile's double duplicity towards Truman and Valentine, it is worth noting that Truman has resigned himself to cuckolding Goodvile before he knows about his hypocrisy (II.250-53, 509-13).

Understandably the social occasions embarked upon by such a group are entirely unpleasant. A long party unrolls before the audience from Act II to Act IV, picking up again drearily in Act V. As Stroup notes, ceremonies are burlesqued throughout the play and he points to Lady Squeamish's mock formal exit in Act I and entrance

in Act II.⁴¹ Clearly, all forms of order are a joke to the characters and both Goodvile and Malagene attest to their disregard for ceremony (II.497, V.60). The party itself is launched with a mock ceremony as Mr. Goodvile suggests to his wife that they pretend to be indifferent to one another (II.255-58), (pretend the truth, in fact) and the party separates into pairs, Truman to Mrs. Goodvile and Goodvile to Camilla for the pledge to 'Love and Wine' (II.263). These dispositions indicate the betrayals, or attempted betrayals, planned for the evening (Truman has just received a broad hint from Mrs. Goodvile), so that an apparently friendly pledge is really the first move in an underground war.

Apart from the initial shock of the revelation of Goodvile's baseness, the real shock value of the play lies in the depiction of a group of people bound to each other, not by conventional social ties, which they all disregard, but by dislike. For apart from the attempts to cuckold and betray each other the main social activities are various plans to humiliate each other. Lady Squeamish, soon after her arrival, embarks on the public humiliation of her ex-lover, Valentine (II.380-86), while Goodvile maliciously plans with Malagene to get Sir Noble drunk and set him on Lady Squeamish 'to make some sport' (II.501). Camilla and Valentine arrange for the humiliation of Goodvile and Lady Squeamish by sending them off to meet each other by mistake at false assignations. Mrs. Goodvile hugely enjoys the opportunity she gets to berate and shame her husband (IV.287-93,ff). Goodvile plans at the end to catch his wife with her lover and gain grounds for separation. He comes armed with prostitutes to mock and shame her but is himself trumped and

41 T.B. Stroup, 'Otway's Bitter Pessimism', p.58.

humiliated.

The final moments of the play witness Goodvile's elaborately planned revenge on Caper and Saunter, whom he has tied up and exposed to ridicule. Dr. Barton has objected that the scene is 'grotesque and excessive'.⁴² Grotesque it certainly is, but part of its point lies in this and in the way that it ends the play with a gesture both futile and cruel, and also horribly in keeping with the general mood of the work. The desire to humiliate and shame is the obverse side of the heroic cult of admiration and honour and what Otway portrays here is a society which has replaced honour by shame.

Apart from inversion, Otway uses other methods to 'unpeel' the society he depicts. One method is, quite simply, the comments the characters make about each other. They are mostly coolly clear-sighted about each others' failings and capable of penetrating social disguises. Mrs. Goodvile cynically pinpoints self-satisfaction as the key characteristics of her husband and prospective lover (II.32-33,71-74). Camilla and Truman also note Goodvile's complacency (III.424-27, V.401-02). Everyone has a full understanding of Lady Squeamish's character; Truman and Valentine wittily produce accurate portraits of her in Act I (90-98), and Malagene, and even the maid Lettice, can imitate her effectively (I.520-24, IV.25-26). The characters unmask each other: Truman tells Goodvile that he sees through his friendship; 'the daubing was too course, and the Artificiall Face/appeared too plain' (IV.258-59). Later Goodvile uses similar terms to assure his 'Dear jocound/witty Devil Wife' (V.112-13) that he sees through her protestations of love for Victoria; 'the gayness of your Face is too thin to/hide the rancour of your Heart' (V.111-12).

42 Anne Righter Barton, 'William Wycherley', in Restoration Theatre, p.89.

Even the minor characters are capable of penetrating observations. It is Caper who alerts Valentine to Goodvile's designs on Camilla (III.238-42), and Sir Noble can rouse himself from his drunken stupor to remark accurately to Victoria, 'These are Rogues my Dear, arrant Rogues' (III.404). This is a society without illusions and this makes the characters' manipulations of social customs mechanical; a kind of dreary game that offers no surprises. Lady Squeamish expects the world to be double-faced, indignantly remarking when Malagene insults her openly,

Uh! gud, I always thought Mr. Malagene had been better bred than to upbraid me with any such base thing to my face, whatever he might say of me behind my back: But there is no Honour, no Civility in the world.
(III.182-85)

Dale Underwood has described the 'honest' libertine's use of deception as part of his attempt to 'attain his naturalistic state of grace in a society of unnatural and restrictive customs'.⁴³ This thesis is, I think, dubious with reference to most Restoration comedies, even those of Etherege, with whom Underwood is primarily concerned. The case for the fundamentally conventional nature of Restoration comedy has been well put by P.F. Vernon.⁴⁴ Here the point about the social customs is that they are not restrictive, they are flouted with impunity. Marriage has not tied Goodvile down to one woman, nor does his wife have any compunction about cuckolding him; kinship is without taboos, friendship without obligation. That is why the reassertion of 'order' at the end is so farcical and meaningless. There is no sense that Goodvile is achieving grace or

43 Dale Underwood, Etherege and the Seventeenth-Century Comedy of Manners, (New Haven, Conn.1957), p.36.

44 P.F. Vernon, 'Marriage of Convenience and the Moral Code of Restoration Comedy', Essays in Criticism, Vol.12 (1962), pp.370-87.

some natural inner freedom as he seeks to betray his wife and friends. His actions spring from a mixture of base passion (he is incapable of distinguishing between the ladies he lays) and drunkenness and both contribute to the chaos of the fourth Act. Nor can this chaos be seen as a curative festive upheaval which results in improved social relations or a new understanding of each other's ^{character}. Goodvile can bawl out 'Victoria has been my Mistress, is/my Mistress, and shall be my Mistress' (IV.355-56), and nothing really happens. A husband is found for Victoria^{and} the Goodvile marriage remains the wretched business it always was. There is nothing joyous about the fourth Act with its mistakes in identity, hurried copulations and violence. The only results are that Mrs. Goodvile learns to value her 'Angel Lover', Goodvile grows to hate his wife and Lady Squeamish can add another lover to her list. Whatever changes are effected by the wild activities in the 'Night-garden', they are entirely negative.

As Sutherland noted, the realism with which the characters are depicted shades into farce; but the farce is not an alternative to their reality but a dramatic extension of it as inclinations become actions. The characters are unmasked as Goodvile's duplicity is acknowledged (IV.250-59), his seduction of Victoria made public, Mrs. Goodvile's affair with Truman discovered (IV.607-10) and Lady Squeamish's itching sensuality confirmed. These are not constructive truths of the heart but the base truths of passion. Further there is no sense of liberation in revealing even these truths, since in fact they are already known.

From the first the 'Artificial Face' barely concealed the characters' true nature. This nature as it is revealed in the play demonstrates the need for control, order and restrictions. For the first time in his plays, Otway introduces a large body of animal imagery into the language and at some stage each character is given

an animal identity. Goodvile describes himself, rather inaptly, as a 'galled Lyon' (IV.177); the heroic epithet is ludicrously inappropriate in the circumstances - his conversation with a woman he has just made love to by mistake. Elsewhere, more loweringly, he describes himself as 'Chicken-brain'd' (III.1). Mrs. Goodvile is contemptuously referred to by her husband as a 'wanton Ape' (I.75), Lady Squeamish is twice described as an 'old Kite' (I.324, IV.122) and Sir Noble is variously described as an 'Animal' (II.290), a 'Toad' (II.569) and a 'Swine' (V.231). Caper and Saunter are repeatedly characterised as vermin (III.392, IV.193-95, V.287). Along with Malagene they are also castigated as dogs (IV.393,405). The majority of the animal insults come from Goodvile and this use of language indicates his own increasing loss of control and also it reveals the base nature of the world as he views it in sub-human terms of 'Buggs and Moths' (III.392), 'Rogues and/Owles' (IV.193-94). Animal epithets are found in most density in Act IV, the Act of chaos, but from the first the Goodviles' house is something of a zoo. Camilla enters 'squeaking' and exclaiming 'Mr./Goodvile, 'tis safer travelling through the Desarts of Arabia,/then entring your House : Had I not ran hard for it, I had/been devour'd' (II.168-71). This sort of lightly flirtatious language and the hunting and herding imagery which follows, as Truman, Valentine and Goodvile flirt with the ladies (II.73-86), is less typical than the simply insulting and degrading use of animal terms. A contemptuous sense of identity in animal terms is constantly erupting so that the characters' social activities take on a degraded, sub-human aspect. As Valentine and Truman watch their mistresses flirt with Caper and Saunter, Truman remarks dispassionately that 'A woman/loves to play and fondle with a Coxcomb sometimes as naturally as with a Lap-Dog' (II.339-40). And Lady Squeamish is mockingly told to

accept as inevitable the insults and cruel jokes of Malagene; 'A woman should bear with the unlucky Jerks/of her Buffoon or Coxcomb, as well as with the ill manners/of her Monkey sometimes' (III.188-90).

The animal identity given to the characters places the nature of their passions and frequently feeds into their language. The minor fools' grasp on language is from the first tenuous. Caper expresses himself in dance, Saunter in various songs, usually sung in strange accents so that no one can hear or understand the words (I.491, III.322-24). Malagene, when drunk, proudly boasts of his ability to imitate and act; gifts which apart from commedia del'arte impersonations include a bizarre catalogue of noises, 'the rumbling of a Wheelbarrow' (III.91) and 'a Sow and Piggs, Sausages/a broiling, a Shoulder of Mutton a roasting: ... a Fly in a Honey~~pot~~' (III.94-96). Apart from being a brilliantly accurate picture of the party bore, this speech, along with his description of the 'merry fit' (III.80) in which he knocked down a cripple, reveals the sub-human level at which Malagene exists.

Lady Squeamish, who is most penetratingly described in terms of physical movement, 'a restless Dancer ... never out of motion' (I.97-98), has a disjointed manner of speaking punctuated with pointless laughter. ^{Lady Squeamish is} When aroused by the thought of making love to Valentine her speech loses all logical coherence and is characterised in print with a series of dashes and exclamations (III.646-55). Goodvile's language deteriorates in the fourth Act as he responds to his wife's taunts with a noise, 'Whirr' (IV.352), and then to a medley of his wife's rebukes, Sir Noble's bluster and Caper and Saunter's babble, with violent hunting cries (IV.404-07) followed by violent gestures as he hurls the offending company at his wife (stage directions, IV.407). Even when language is articulate it can be stripped of meaning, as in the meaningless reiterations of the word

friend, Sir Noble's concept of tragedy (III.149-57), or the ridiculous moment in which Goodvile and Truman fight, ostensibly over the 'Honour' (IV.281) of Lady Squeamish.

The use of language as a means of deception can become so extreme that the words lose all relationship with any reality. Lady Squeamish after making love to Goodvile calmly denies to him that anything has happened and refers mildly to the event as a 'frollick' (IV.218). Even Goodvile is rattled by this calm assurance, remarking sourly, 'Frollick with a Pox! - if these be her Frollicks, /what the Devil is she when she is in earnest?' (IV.219-20). But the point of the joke is that this is about as earnest as Lady Squeamish can get. Given her level of existence, mistakes, humiliations and betrayals can barely touch her. There is about the minor characters all the resilience of a very low order of life. Animal characteristics and inarticulacy, or the misuse of language, all indicate the debasement of the characters' humanity as they disregard the social mores that in part, at least, distinguish the social life of man from that of the animals.

The base nature of the passions animating many of the characters is further indicated by the association of drunkenness with the growth of passion. The opening pledge to 'Love and Wine', which is accompanied by a grim little drinking song (II.268-80), indicates the influence wine will have on 'love' in the play. The action is punctuated with drinking bouts and references to drinking and drunkenness.⁴⁵ Goodvile opens both Acts III and IV remarking

45 See, I.23-25, II.472-507, III.1-4,12-20,73-74, IV.1-3,14-17, V.32-36.

on both his inebriation and his lust for Camilla. In Act IV his recognition that he is drunk is immediately followed by his confusion of his wife, on her way to her assignation with Truman, for his mistress Victoria jealously following him (IV.3-6). Goodvile's drunken passion makes him a figure of ridicule as he blunders around the stage. He is easily cuckolded and the blurring of his perceptions reaches its height as he fails to distinguish between the virginal Camilla and the practised Lady Squeamish. Otway drives home his points by showing that drunkenness and debauchery lead to self-deception and humiliation. Goodvile is trounced and the equally drunken Sir Noble manages to get himself married to a notoriously 'cast' mistress. There is no liberation here, only confusion.

In most Restoration comedies, the characters who possess wit are sharply distinguished from those that lack it and the witty characters do eventually use their intelligence to achieve a compromise between individualistic impulses and social demands. But in Friendship in Fashion, although there is a distinction between the minor fools and the major characters in terms of wit, it does not result in any greater control of life or particularly elevate the 'witty' characters. As in Goodvile's case, intelligence can be knowingly suppressed in favour of drink and debauchery (III.1-9), with the result that his behaviour cannot be greatly distinguished from that of a Malagene or Sir Noble. The deception of Goodvile by his wife and Truman is easily achieved, given his drunken imperception and single-minded pursuit of Camilla. One is glad he is cuckolded since he is so thoroughly unpleasant and deserving of such treatment but there is no sense of triumphant wit about it. Wit is only used destructively by the main characters. It enables them to see through their society cynically but it offers no salvation. There can be no

compromise between degraded passion and hollow rules. The characters simply see the ugliness of their world and act accordingly, 'What a damn'd Creature man is!' Truman remarks with reference to Goodvile, and proceeds with his plans to cuckold him. Constraint, rules and conventional ethics having been wittily dispensed with, all that remains is the chaotic and debased life of passion.

The brilliance and pessimism of Otway's portrait of Goodvile lies in his depiction of someone grotesquely misusing his human potential. Having destroyed the social fabric of his familial and social world, Goodvile is increasingly oppressed by the scenes of disorder he finds around him. His own licence depends on the freedom he gives to his wife (I.64-66), but it becomes increasingly clear that the one freedom cancels out the other. As a libertarian experiment in married tolerance it fails as Mrs. Goodvile's 'Consort of Fools' (V.366) swamp the house and hinder Goodvile's plans. From Act III onwards Goodvile is concerned with clearing his house. Malagene is expelled in Act III (360-62) and repeatedly Goodvile is obsessed with the idea that his house has been taken over,

...surely I have Fools that rest and
harbour in my house, and they are a worse plague than:
Buggs and Mothes: shall I never be quiet?
(III.390-92)

More violently he even wishes destruction on his house as a means of clearing it:

How am I continually plagu'd with Rogues and
Owles! I'll set my house o'fire rather than have it haunted
and pester'd by such Vermine.
(IV.193-95)

In Act IV he is 'overwhelm'd with Fools and/Blockheads' (IV.392-93) and flees the scene. In Act V he quits his house, telling Victoria that 'his House is infected, and no man that values his/Health will stay in it' (V.130-31). The frenetic violence of Goodvile's sense of the oppression of the minor fools leads to his savage treatment of Caper and Saunter, 'Rats that run squeaking/from House to House'

(V.749-80), but the point about this gesture is its futility. Caper and Saunter aggravate the chaos; they do not create it. The disease and infection Goodvile sees in his household does not come from the fools that visit it but from within. Order cannot be restored by violence and the 'quiet' Goodvile longs for is not the quiet of domestic harmony but peace and quiet to pursue his own disorderly plots (III.360-64). The imagery of plagues, diseases and vermin⁴⁶ helps to stress the sickness of the whole society depicted here. They are all sick and they are all parasites.

The final touch of nightmare Otway gives to his play is the impossibility of escape from the mad-house world he has created. Goodvile's struggles are unavailing. He cannot dissolve his marriage; he returns in triumph in Act V to effect his separation and stays on in bitterness and shame. Despite the expulsion of Caper and Saunter, the minor fools cannot be removed and they bounce back fearlessly. Malagene, when he turns up in Act II, is intrepidly returning to a house he has been warned away from. Thrown out in Act III he turns up confidently in Act IV. Lady Squeamish, publicly shamed and defamed in Act IV, turns up merrily for a party in Act V. It seems reasonable to expect that Caper and Saunter will also be dancing and singing at the wedding party. Indeed, rather than ridding his household of fools, Goodvile at the end is faced by a new series of relationships with the fools that haunt his house, as Lady Squeamish tells him,

46 See also Mrs. Goodvile's speech in which she describes Caper and Saunter as 'Diseases and Visitations' which help to 'sweep away the noisome Crowds that infest and/incumber the World' (IV.432-43). In this speech Goodvile is one of the crowd.

Dear Mr.

Goodvile be pleas'd to give my Kinsman Sir Noble, Joy:
He has done himself the Honour to marry your Cousin
Victoria, whom I must now be proud to call my Relation.
(V.755-58)

She is talking to the man she made love to by mistake about the woman they all know is his mistress, who has married a man they all consider a sot. Insofar as there is movement and a conclusion to the play it is to bind together more closely the more unsympathetic characters; Lady Squeamish is now a member of the Goodvile extended clan. Relationships, friendships and marriage all remain a hideous travesty and yet these hollow forms have their own dark power. The debauched 'new Modell' of the 'Family' (V.591) and the 'Consort of Fools' have usurped more rational and meaningful forms of social organisation. Having robbed their lives of significance, the characters nevertheless have to go on living in the world they have made. Hideously the party goes on as Goodvile announces on hearing about the weddings that 'This Day shall be a Day of Jubilee' (V.764). The comic principle of inclusion is turned on its head: it no longer signifies harmony and adjustment but disharmony and continuing disorder.

Friendship in Fashion is an extraordinarily savage and pessimistic play. Otway does not give his characters any let outs or allow them any redemming qualities. Truman's comment 'What a damn'd Creature man is!' is amply illustrated. This is a society where passion and intelligence are debased and the characters fool their way to destruction. The humour of the play depends on however humorous one finds the spectacle of human degradation, whether it be Sir Noble losing his wig on the door hinge (V.235) or Goodvile's self-disgust at his own 'depraved palate' (IV.123). The spectacle of human futility shown here far outdoes anything Otway

had conveyed in his tragedies up to this point.

The underlying themes, however, are not dissimilar to those broached in the tragedies as he concentrates on the debasement of passion and the failure of reason to control - or here to even seek to control - the unruly life of the senses. The play is not tragic, not because the themes are not serious but because the characters are too jaded and disillusioned for the spectacle of chaos to cause deep or lasting anguish. Here there are no illusions to be shattered and no struggles against passion to be lost. This is not to suggest, as Hume does, that the tragedies are more optimistic and idealistic than the comedies.⁴⁷ It is rather that different questions are asked: how do people live in a world they know is meaningless? or, how do people find out that their world is meaningless? Otway's tragedies become tragedies of recognition as the characters discover their own natures and the nature of their world. But his comedies are works of exposition in which depraved natures are put on display. As Otway's style matures these methods come together in the tragedies. In Venice Preserv'd Jaffeir discovers the reality of his world while Antonio enacts its depravity. And in his next play, Caius Marius, a strange and bitter play about politics, there are few illusions to be shattered as the combatants begin with a cynical disregard for the ideals they pay lip-service to. Caius Marius certainly shows the influence of Friendship in Fashion as it displays on a much larger scale a demoralized and anarchic society.

47 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', pp.112-13.

Otway's main preoccupation with the nature of human ideals and the struggle of reason and passion and his sense of man's imperfect and fallen nature are apparent in his first play. There is considerable thematic unity running through all his works. However, Friendship in Fashion marks a departure in terms of method and mood. The bitter note which is struck here becomes a typical feature of all his works. The ideal of friendship has been shown to be shaky before but this is the first play in which Otway depicts flagrant and conscious betrayals of friendship. The techniques of inversion, animal imagery and hectic farce introduced here also become characteristic of his subsequent works. Violations, betrayals and a strong sense of man's potential, in terms of a decline down the scale of creation, colour his later works and create the darker mood of the plays written around the political crisis of the late 1670's-early 80's. Friendship in Fashion also demonstrates Otway's skill in dealing with his characters in terms of social groupings. Goodvile dominates the play but Otway's dramatic thinking is not concentrated on heroes (or even anti-heroes), but rather on social interactions. I do not wish to suggest that Otway is a 'domestic' writer,^{however,} he shows great skill in depicting the functioning of social groups whether they be political agitators, secret societies, family groups, as in The Orphan, or depraved socialites like the Goodviles or Sir Jolly Jumble and his circle. Increasingly Otway is interested in human nature in terms of social processes whether in the familial or political realm or both. Friendship in Fashion is an important comedy in its own right and one of the most devastating satires on contemporary mores of the period produced. In terms of Otway's development, its parody of literary conventions, as it produces an unappetising rake and mocks the 'happy'

ending of marriage and a dance, is indicative of his concern with realism in drama. This is not the bourgeois factual realism of sentimental drama but a realism which is concerned with stripping away layers of illusion. This kind of realism is closely associated with satire and satire plays a more considerable part in Otway's dramas after this play.

II

EXPERIMENTATION

ii

THE HISTORY AND FALL OF CAIUS MARIUS

The three plays grouped in this section, The Cheats of Scapin, Friendship in Fashion and The History and Fall of Caius Marius, were written between 1677-1679. ^{These were} years in which England was first drifting and then speeding towards political violence. It is not coincidental that these were also the years in which Otway's essentially tragic view of mankind was crystalizing and finding an appropriate dramatic form. The first of these plays, The Cheats of Scapin, as a fairly close adaptation of Molière's comedy, can only show by default the direction in which Otway's style and thought were moving. His original comedy and Roman tragedy, however, show Otway experimenting with style and finding his own voice. In Caius Marius he translates into the tragic mode the scepticism with human nature which informed Friendship in Fashion. Otway is no longer concerned with the problems of the heroic or the nature of the hero in terms of man's potential for greatness. Instead, he concentrates on showing a panoramic view of the flaws in human nature, seeing the ideal of greatness as in itself a dangerous delusion. Public and personal events (in the sense of personal experience of public events)

contributed to the form and ideas of this play, which shows the intensity of Otway's fear and dislike of hollow rhetoric and violent action.

Caius Marius was performed at the Duke's Theatre in the autumn of 1679.¹ In between writing this play and Friendship in Fashion, Otway had served in Flanders, experiencing at first hand the fiasco of Charles II's attempt to assert himself in European politics. On his return, some time early in 1679, he must also have experienced the hostility and suspicion with which the too slowly disbanded army was treated in England.² During Otway's brief absence, England, and in particular London, was plunged into the turmoil of the Popish Plot. Otway was probably back in England when the elections of February 1679 gave the country its first new parliament in eighteen years. It was during this parliament that Shaftesbury introduced the idea of Exclusion, in May, after which the parliament was promptly prorogued and dissolved. The election which followed in August and September was fiercely contested, as the former had been.³ According to J.R. Jones the 'main development'

1 A precise date for the première is not known. The London Stage, I, suggests October 1679 as a probable date, pp.281-82.

2 The failure to disband the army following the Treaty of Nijmegen on 31 July 1678 revived traditional fears of a standing army. Possibly with justice, J.R. Jones speculates that Danby may have been considering using the army in conjunction with a dissolution of parliament, to maintain his own and the King's authority, see Country and Court, England 1658-1714 (London, 1978), pp.194-95. In The Souldiers Fortune Otway describes the abortive expedition to Flanders from the soldiers' point of view (I.186-94) and the popular reactions to the returning army (I.205-11).

3 Both elections in 1679 were fought with great bitterness and the whig operations were directed by Shaftesbury from his headquarters in the City of London, see J.H. Plumb, The Growth of Political Stability in England, 1675-1725 (London 1967, Penguin University Books, 1973), p.52, on seats contested, and J.R. Jones, The First Whigs, The Politics of the Exclusion Crisis, 1678-1683 (Oxford, 1961; reprinted 1966), pp.34-48 on the first elections and pp.92-106 on the second, which he considers to have been more strongly organised along party lines.

of these elections was

the unprecedentedly large output of electoral propaganda in the form of pamphlets and newspapers which depicted those who voted against Exclusion as betrayers of the liberties and religion of the nation - some (especially former pensioners of Danby) as conscious traitors, others as the dupes of the court.⁴

This political upheaval in the nation forms more than the background to Otway's work. His concern with the growth of faction and the nature of political propaganda is shown in the satiric poem, 'The Poet's Complaint of his Muse', which he must have been writing at about the same time as Caius Marius.⁵ In this work a large section is devoted to the genesis and development of the 'Monster' Libel (250-534), which revives the revolutionary doctrines of the civil war period (478-95). Caius Marius opens onto an evocation of political chaos (I.1-10) and continues with a heated description of electoral malpractices (I.19-45). It seems probable that Caius Marius is, to a certain extent, modelled on Shaftesbury, but neither side's policies or actions are endorsed in the play and it is not possible to read the play off as a straightforward satire of the whig

4 J.R. Jones, Country and Court, p.210.

5 The poem concludes with a mournful depiction of the Duke and Duchess of York embarking for their exile in Brussels. Charles sent his brother to Brussels in March 1679 and he did not return until September of that year. Presumably, had the Duke returned while Otway was still writing the poem he would have included a section on his triumphant return. The poem was entered in the Term Catalogues for February 1680 but, given its content, was probably written between March and September 1679. At about this time Otway would have been working on Caius Marius. His jocular suggestion in the Epilogue that the play was written while he was serving as a soldier in Flanders (7-10) need not be taken too literally (as it has been by R.G. Ham, Otway and Lee, pp.121-22, and J.C. Ghosh, Works, I, pp.45-47). It is unlikely that whilst in Flanders Otway would have been sufficiently well-informed of the crisis back in England to see the relevance (or had the opportunity) of adapting Plutarch's histories to England's politics; or that, without that incentive, he would set about adapting Romeo and Juliet.

challenge to the court.⁶ As in Venice Preserv'd, Otway's political

⁶ In the course of the play Caius Marius's low birth is stressed by his opponents (I.58-61, III.380-81), and used by him as a rallying cry to the people (II.435-36). He is accused of bribery in the elections and characterised as combining ambition and diseased old age (I.100-101). All these points have a source in Plutarch but are also typical of contemporary attacks on Shaftesbury. J.R. Moore in 'Contemporary Satire in Otway's Venice Preserv'd', Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, hereafter PMLA, Vol. 43 (1928), pp.166-181, thinks that these references to Caius Marius's birth and use of bribes may be an 'oblique' attack on Shaftesbury but that on the whole the play is not topical. In this he is surely under-estimating the relevance of the scenes of violence to the situation in England in 1679, as well as overlooking further specific references, like those at V.199-200, to religious hypocrisy, which make more sense in an English context than a Roman one. Ham assumes, as does Ghosh, that the factional struggle is meant to represent the opposition of whigs and Tories (Ghosh, Works, I, p.46). Ham, unable to identify Caius Marius^{primly} with Shaftesbury, suggests that it is 'doubtful whether or not Otway perceived his position in the great controversies' at this early stage, Otway and Lee, pp.121-22. H. Batzer Pollard identifies Caius Marius with Shaftesbury but feels that his treatment in the play is at times sympathetic, which she attributes to the fact that Shaftesbury's political position was unclear at this time, 'Shakespeare's Influence on Otway's Caius Marius', Révue de L'Université D'Ottawa, vol. XXXIX (1969), pp.533-61 (p.541). Ham's view that Otway's political position was unformed in 1679 is not born out by 'The Poet's Complaint of his Muse' which is Yorkist and anti-whig. The point is that what we are looking at here is a more sophisticated view of politics than that afforded by simple parallelism. Batzer Pollard's suggestion that Shaftesbury's politics were still obscure is unhistorical. His position was clear during the February elections and quite unambiguous following his introduction of Exclusion as a political solution in May. J.R. Jones points out that when Shaftesbury accepted office in 1679 he was at pains not to be associated with the court and lose his supporters in Parliament and country. He described himself as serving as 'Tribune of the People', The First Whigs, p.76. The phrase reminds one of the naturalness for this period of casting contemporary events in a classical mould and reinforces the supposition that Caius Marius is concerned to draw political analogies. In the play Sulpitius is Tribune of the People (II.415-16). If Otway was aware of Shaftesbury's claim this suggests that he was more concerned with tendencies rather than direct political lampooning. While it is reasonable to suppose that Caius Marius is at times characterised in a manner which recalls attacks on Shaftesbury, he also fits into the conventional mould of the ambitious soldier/statesman. Otway is creating a type, aspects of which would be recognisable to his public, and he is drawing analogies rather than parallels. He is, I think, trying to look at the underlying forces at work; at the human nature which creates politics and not just politics itself; hence faction becomes a symptom and not a cause and direct satire is useful but limited.

analysis is carried out within the context of a crumbling republic.⁷ This allows him to attack factional politics in general and concentrate on his main interest, which is the nature of political and social instability.

More fundamental than specific references or satiric portraits is the whole structure of the play which demonstrates the 'dark Disorders/Of a Divided State' (I.147-48), as anarchy embraces public and private life and spreads outwards from the city to the country as the state declines. The nominal (for neither side can consolidate their position) authority over Rome moves from faction to faction throughout the play, as force of arms, political miscalculations or sudden reversals of fortune reveal the insufficiency of the self-proclaimed rulers.

Otway's political fable is cast in the form of a Roman history and traces the violent contest between Caius Marius and Sylla (sic) for the war consulship against Mithridates. His materials are drawn from Plutarch's lives of Gaius Marius and Sulla, into which are worked scenes from Romeo and Juliet dealing with the forbidden love of Marius, son of Caius Marius, for Lavinia, the daughter of Metellus, one of the leaders of Sylla's faction. Perhaps to modern ears, as R.D. Hume points out, the substitution of Roman names for the household names of Romeo and Juliet, which produces lines like 'Marius, Marius! wherefore art thou Marius?' (II.267), can 'only seem ridiculous'.⁸ Nevertheless,

7 In The Classical Republicans: An Essay in the Recovery of a Pattern of Thought in Seventeenth Century England (Evanston, Ill., London, 1945), Zera S. Fink draws attention to the disrepute in which republics and republican theory were held by later seventeenth century Tories. He relates this to Venice Preserv'd but does not mention Caius Marius, although the plays are remarkably similar in theme and form.

8 R.D. Hume, The Development of English Drama, p. 322.

the mixture seems to have been successful in its day and indeed long after as Otway's treatment of the Romeo and Juliet story replaced Shakespeare's on the London stage until the mid-eighteenth century.⁹

Otway's harnessing together of Plutarch and Shakespeare has been considered odd and audacious. Odell describes the combination as an 'astounding idea',¹⁰ and Ghosh writes the play off as a 'clumsy patchwork with the seams staring'.¹¹ However, the parts of the play are much more successfully harmonised than this suggests, although it is difficult, given the familiarity of the Romeo and Juliet scenes, to get sufficiently used to the material to see the parts as a whole. Structurally the play lacks coherence, not because of the love interest being taken, at times, verbatim from another author, but because Otway is trying to cover so many fields at the same time. The balance between main-plot and sub-plot is not quite right: just because the Marius/Lavinia scenes are in part familiar they could easily unbalance the play. Thematically it works; there is an

9 According to Genest, Otway's play was performed 'not infrequently' until the revival of Romeo and Juliet at the Haymarket in 1744, Some Account of the English Stage, I, p.285. Theophilus Cibber's and David Garrick's versions of Romeo and Juliet, of 1744 and 1748 respectively, make use of Otway's major innovation; the awakening of Lavinia/Juliet before Marius/Romeo's death. Cibber's version (published 1748), leans very heavily on Otway's play, especially in the first and last Acts, where whole speeches are taken directly from Caius Marius. Otway's version was still seen as an improvement in the early nineteenth century, at least by his editor, Thomas Thornton, who wrote in his preface, 'the diction of Shakespeare has been polished and improved without losing the spirit of his meaning', The Works of Thomas Otway, 3 vols (London 1813), vol.II, p.110. According to Montague Summers it was not until 1845 that an unamended version of Romeo and Juliet was presented on the London stage, The Complete Works, I, p.IXXV. Trevor Nunn's production of Romeo and Juliet for the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford in 1976 struck a traditionally Otwavian note as it showed Juliet stirring in Romeo's arms even as he killed himself.

10 G.C.D. Odell, Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving, 2 vols. (London, 1921), vol.I, p.51.

11 J.C. Ghosh, Works, I, p.46.

underlying consistency in what Otway is doing with Marius and Lavinia and what is happening in the Roman scenes but this play is a bold experiment rather than a total success.

In using Plutarch, Otway was using Shakespeare's main source for his Roman plays and his treatment of the Roman materials seems to be quite consciously Shakespearean. Apart from the Romeo and Juliet scenes the borrowings are not so much of direct lines¹² as general ideas and effective theatrical confrontation. The very scope Otway is aiming at here with his inclusion of citizens and herdsmen, the very old and the very young, town and country, suggests a debt to Shakespeare. Like Shakespeare in his Roman plays, Otway makes effective stage use of ceremonial entries and activities¹³ and the

12 In Act I lines 424-25 recall Julius Caesar, II.i.22-23; Caius Marius's curses and oaths at II.505-07 and III.470-74 and bloodthirsty designs at V.94-96 recall Antony's curse in Julius Caesar, III.i.263-74, and Timon's curse on Athens in Timon of Athens, IV.i.1-40. The scene with the Roman ambassadors before the gates of Rome, V.1-56, is similar in idea but not in result to Coriolanus's reception of the embassy before Rome, Coriolanus, V.iii. Otway's use of the rabble also indicates a debt to Shakespeare's Roman and History plays. Shakespeare's treatment of the crowd had already been absorbed by Restoration dramatists; see Eric Rothstein's discussion of Wilson's Andronicus Comnenius (1664) in Restoration Tragedy, Form and the Process of Change (Madison, Wisconsin, London, 1967), pp.69-70. Otway has already demonstrated his interest in Shakespeare in Alcibiades and Don Carlos, which freely draw on effective lines and hints for characterisations. In Caius Marius Otway is using Shakespeare in a much more mature manner, not simply as a quarry, but thematically and to counterpoint ideas.

13 There are nine ceremonial entries in the play: in Act II after lines 414 and 447 and in Act III at line 351, there are entries by Caius Marius and Sylla followed by Quintus Pompeius's entry with the Lictors at 446. Further entries are found at IV.448 and V.1 and the fifth Act also has the entry of the Elders and Virgins and Caius Marius's entry as Consul, at line 117. Ceremonial activities are found throughout the play and include Sulpitius's formal introduction of Caius Marius to the people of Rome, II.415-23, the formal oaths of revenge taken by Caius Marius, his sons and followers, III.465-78 and Cinna's order to the Lictors and Guards to present homage to Caius Marius, IV.449-52.

exercise of formal rhetoric for political persuasion. Otway uses blank verse for the first time in this play and in this too he signals a debt to Shakespeare - as well as to the trend towards Shakespearean drama and blank verse established by Dryden's All For Love (1677).¹⁴ In his direct adaptation of Shakespeare, in the Romeo and Juliet scenes, Otway is not adapting according to neo-classic canons. He modernises the language at times and omits some obscenities but the comic treatment of the nurse is not toned down but rather heightened

14 Dryden indicated that he would break with the use of the heroic couplet in tragedy in the Prologue to Aureng-Zebe (1675), stating that he had 'grown weary of his long-loved mistress, Rhyme'. His next tragedy, All For Love, helped to establish the new style. Lee had already moved in the direction of blank verse tragedy with The Rival Queens (March 1677), which uses both blank verse and heroic couplets. Although the use of the heroic couplet had never been universal (nor was it totally abandoned) 1677 marks a watershed in the use of rhyme and as early as January 1677 we find Crowne apologising in his Epilogue to The Destruction of Jerusalem I for his use of rhyme: 'For his Rime he pardon does implore,/And promises to ring these Chimes no more' - a promise he did not keep. The political crisis stimulated the interest in Shakespeare as dramatists saw the possibility of using his Roman or history plays to point to historical parallels. This is certainly the case with Crowne's adaptation of parts of Henry VI as The Misery of Civil War (Feb.1680) and Henry the Sixth (April 1681). Ravencroft's Titus Andronicus; or, The Rape of Lavinia (Autumn 1678) may have been hindered rather than helped by the political upheaval as the Preface to the 1687 edition states that it was successful 'tho' it first appeared upon the Stage, at the begining of the pretended Popish Plot'. Nahum Tate ran into trouble with his adaptation of Richard II, with its unnerving depiction of a King deposed and murdered and, even when renamed The Sicilian Usurper (Dec.1680) and The Tyrant of Sicily (Jan.1681), the play was stopped. He was careful to spell out his political affiliations in his next adaptation, The Ingratitude of a Common-Wealth; or, The Fall of Caius Martius Coriolanus (Dec.1681). By no means all the adaptations of this period appear to be directly politically inspired; for instance Durfey's contribution, a version of Cyberline, The Injured Princess; or The Fatal Wager (March 1682), makes no political points. Dryden's Troilus and Cressida; or, Truth Found out too Late (April 1679) and Shadwell's Timon of Athens, The Man Hater (January 1678), although not overtly political, show a concern with corruption and chicanery.

and coarsened and certainly no happy ending is supplied. However, Otway is not simply trying to produce an imitation Shakespearean blank verse drama with clowns and on-stage battles. The play is in the fullest sense an adaptation; as Shakespeare's style and materials undergo a sea-change to fit them to the temper of the times.

The nature of the change is indicated by Otway's prologue to the play. Here he describes with nostalgia the 'Ages past, (when will those Times renew?)/When Empires flourish, so did Poets too' (1-2). Such ages produced poets like Ovid, Horace and Shakespeare, writers of feeling, thought and 'Fancy' (5-6,16,24), all of whom enjoyed royal or noble patronage. A connection is drawn here between political stability, indeed, greatness - Empire - and the genius of poetry. Otway postulates that the future may (possibly) bring a return of such greatness when 'Peace and Plenty flourish' and 'The joyfull Muses of their Hills shall sing/Triumphant Songs of Britain's happy King' (42-45). But, in the present, Otway the poet of a troubled age mourning his Caesar's absence (35)¹⁵ can only be aware of the deficiencies of his era in terms of political stability or wit. Otway suggests that the audience will easily note the

15 Otway is referring to Charles's illness in September-October 1679. Compare Otway's pessimism over the progress of art and politics with Dryden's optimistic attitude towards verse (translations) and human progress in his 'Essay on Translated Verse' (1684), especially in the lines culminating in praise of Roscommon,

The wit of Greece, the gravity of Rome,
Appear exalted in the British loom;
The Muses' empire is restor'd again,

In Charles his reign, and by Roscommon's pen. (26-29)

Otway, writing at the height of the Popish Plot crisis, can only hope that the Muses' and Charles's empire will be restored some time in the future. On Dryden's views on progress, see also Earl Miner, 'Dryden and the Issue of Human Progress', Philological Quarterly, vol.40, no.1 (1961), pp.120-29.

difference between his own style and that of Shakespeare ,which 'Amidst this baser Dross' will 'shine/Most beautiful, amazing and Divine' (32-33). This humble note is not entirely humbug. It is central to Otway's sense of the reality of decline that it effects thought and feeling, language and action.

Throughout the play, in both the love scenes and the political scenes, Otway uses Shakespeare ironically to point to the corruption and decadence of the characters and the age he is portraying. The heroic turns vicious, civic brawls turn into civil wars and young love becomes base and sensual as feelings are coarsened and perverted.¹⁶ It is through a rather monochrome view of debasement that the different plots worlds are linked. It is not simply that Otway shows the domestic world mirroring the public world in disorder, or that the unrest of the public world disturbs the domestic realm which runs counter to it. Rather both worlds intermesh and display similar flaws - just as the country will not turn out to be substantially different from the town. The love plot is entirely controlled by the main plot. Marius falls in love with Lavinia when his father orders him to (I.323-29) and he struggles to subdue his love when his father forbids it (I.358-59). He gives up his wedding night when his father threatens to disown him (III.233-44) but then consummates his marriage with his father's permission (III.479-80). Although

¹⁶ The effect is similar to the debasement of the plot of Twelfth Night and the character of Olivia in Wycherley's The Plain-Dealer. Only here there is no Fidelia to resuscitate the lost values of romance - even at the cynically unrealistic level at which Wycherley works his conclusion. Otway's use of Shakespeare is consistent with Restoration practise for it is also possible to interpret All For Love in terms of a conscious belittling of Antony and Cleopatra. The adaptive process becomes a form of imitation with the original work forming a basis for comparisons and ironic analogies.

Lavinia does question her father's authority to force her into marriage 'Into a lawful Rape' (II.107), Marius does not question his father's authority, only his own ability to live up to him. So that emotionally whatever Caius Marius stands for in the main plot determines the status and quality of the love plot.

From the first Marius defines his love for Lavinia in derogatory terms. It reduces his manhood 'softening [him] to Infant Tenderness' (I.306) and is a 'Weakness' into which he has been bewitched (I.323). Consistently he speaks of his love in terms of slavery and chains. He acknowledges to his father that he is not 'That haughty Master of myself you'd have me' (I.338), and if the 'haughty' is dubious and suggests that such mastery is not desirable the alternative is no romantic assertion of self. Instead Marius describes himself as 'the Slave of strong Desires,/That keep me struggling under' (I.339-40). Unlike Romeo, Marius's love for the daughter of his father's enemy never leads him to rethink his position with regard to the destructive rivalries which threaten his happiness. He joins in his family's general revilings of the opposite faction (I.178-83,228-29) and simply regrets that Lavinia has 'Bin born' or wishes that 'Metellus had not got her' (I.242-43). In an extraordinarily narrow minded and imperceptive definition of heroic action and greatness, he can respond to his father's hope that their hands will meet 'in the Heart of Sylla or Metellus' (III.266) by imagining his happiness after this event with Lavinia (III.267-74). His love, therefore, is never an alternative to disorder but a manifestation of a deeper failure within a general context of chaos. Hence the way in which Marius seems to linger over his self-portraits of debasement, slavery, whips, chains and torments (I.340-44,379-81, III.227-28) which represent his assessment of his uncontrollable passion for the 'base Puddle of that o're-fed Gown-man' (I.317).

His love cannot elevate him above the brawls and conflicts to a higher form of life but can only confirm him as 'This most inglorious Son of Caius Marius' (III.194-234).

When Marius seeks to prove to his father that he is worthy of his name he offers to give up his marital rights and claims that he is 'Master of a Mind unfetter'd yet' (III.239). The offer recalls Jaffeir's action in handing over Belvidera to the conspirators and abstaining from her bed.¹⁷ Similarly these acts of muddled heroism involve the heroes in setting out to kill their father-in-law, and similarly the offers of sexual abstinence come to nothing: Jaffeir meets Belvidera and is persuaded to renege on his oath, Marius, in some ways more humiliatingly, is carelessly hurried off to his wife's bed by his father. His sexuality is not in his own control, either in terms of his actual inability to tear his mind away from Lavinia (III.267-74,475-78), or his ability to decide when he will or will not exercise control. The whole basis for the heroic gesture of control is dubious-and anyway it transpires that the whole issue is unimportant. Significantly, Caius Marius's revengeful desire to destroy Rome does not require acts of sexual abstention from his sons. As a father figure, Caius Marius is no symbol of control; on the contrary, one of his most horrific threats is that he will bring 'Horroure, Confusion, and inverted Order' (II.506) to Rome. Otway undermines Marius's claims and actions whichever

17 Venice Preserv'd (II.367-434). The scene is echoed by Lee in Lucius Junius Brutus, when Titus tells his father he will give up his wedding night with Teraminta, Lucius Junius Brutus, edited by John Loftis, Regents Restoration Drama Series (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1967, Great Britain, 1968), (II.393 - 400). Titus's mind, however, does control his passions and his horror at his subsequent act of treason renders him impotent (IV.169-73).

direction he moves in: control is never a realistic option.

Marius's bondage imagery feeds into his encounters with Lavinia when he swears that if he is unfaithful to her - 'May I be hither brought a Captive bound, / T'Adorn the Triumph of my basest Foe' (IV.70-71). Again uncontrolled sexual impulse is associated with humiliation and now whether Marius is faithful or unfaithful to Lavinia, his status is that of a slave/captive bound by his desires.

Lavinia's love language follows a similar strain of abject imagery and, in her case, it is also endowed with a hint of perversity. When she is captured and returned to her father she responds eagerly to his threats to send her bound to Sylla and urges him to punish and humiliate her, 'Do, bind me, kill me, rack these Lims: I'll bear it' (IV.498). Lavinia is constantly aware of the effects of her passion in terms of social humiliation and the loss of common humanity. To her father, Lavinia does not claim to control her passions but sinks beneath them, painting a harrowing picture of her debasement among humans and her wanderings amidst the inhospitable elements (II.142-58), should she be disinherited for disobedience. With Marius she swears to control her passion and remain faithful to him but at the same time describes in detail her state should she err,

And if I live not faithfull to the Lord
Of my first Vows, my dearest onely Marius,
May I be brought to Poverty and Scorn,
Hooted by Slaves forth from thy gates, O Rome,
Till flying to the Woods t'avoid my Shame,
Sharp Hunger, Cold, or some worse Fate destroy me;
And not one Tree vouchsafe a Leaf to hide me.
(IV.72-78)

This speech follows the same pattern as her previous speech to her father with its depiction first of social humiliation followed by images of Nature as cold and hostile. Marius's response to this is a rather puzzled, 'What needs all this?' (IV.79). There can be no need beyond Lavinia's awareness of the strength of her own passions and

their ability to dominate her life and diminish her humanity. Her language here is reminiscent of Monimia's to Polydore (I.357-59) in its fearful recognition of the disfiguring violence of passion, although Lavinia, unlike Monimia, seems not so much in retreat from passion as half drawn to it as she elaborates on her projected misfortunes. Marius's assertion that Lavinia is as yet 'untainted' with the 'Joy of Sense' (I.321,322), is not born out by her words here or by her ready defiance of her father, a defiance which he, not incorrectly, interprets in terms of her sexual stirrings - 'Debaucht already to her Sexe's Folly' (II.100). He is only wrong by a matter of lines in his assumption that her nocturnal wanderings are due to conversations with a 'sensual lewd Companion of the Night' (II.112). In the light of Lavinia's aroused sexuality, the Nurse's indiscriminating praise of both Sylla and Marius (II.180-88) is less of a betrayal, as in Romeo and Juliet, and more in the nature of a temptation. Lavinia's response to the Nurse is not angry rejection but again a quasi-masochistic reverie on Marius's 'rough and fierce' nature (II.189) and the possibility that he might respond to her passion with 'scorn and hate' (II.191). Lavinia's fears that her passions might lead her to forsake her family home and wander alone¹⁸ through Nature are really enacted in Act IV when she follows Marius into exile. Here, in fact, she finds Nature less hostile than man. The gap between the reality of her existence in the wilderness and her descriptions of her state should her passions exile her indicates the extent to which her understanding

18 Lavinia's distressed speeches nearly always centre on the idea of loneliness and isolation (II.145-53, 206, IV.57-63, 72-78, V.450-51) as her unhappy passion exiles her from the community. Marius becomes the focus of her identity as she can only locate herself in terms of her commitment to passion.

of Nature is subjective. Geoffrey Marshall, commenting on Lavinia's speech to her father, sees it simply as an exercise in the rhetoric of persuasion:

Lavinia is imaginatively creating a scene in order to move her father to pity and paradoxically it is her rhetorical control which disturbs us.¹⁹

As Marshall later recognises, he is bringing modern criteria of versimilitude to bear in his comments on such speeches.²⁰

However, apart from recognising that such speeches are conventional in terms of a non-realistic drama, it is important to note that they are not merely 'sentimental vignettes'²¹ providing moments of heightened emotion. Lavinia's two major self-pitying speeches do not advance the action, in the sense that her father is not moved and her husband is merely puzzled. However, they do provide insights into Lavinia's character and motivation. Her pitiful self-descriptions, like Marius's, reveal the ambiguity of her reactions to passion. Lavinia fantasises over the horrors and loneliness of her life should she abandon herself to passion, yet she does quite literally pursue her love as, 'desperate, and resolv'd to Death' (IV.163), she follows Marius into exile. The scene in which Lavinia wanders into the countryside after her husband is one of Otway's greatest deviations from Romeo and Juliet. It is an act of abandon unimaginable for Juliet; and in terms of the plot structure it is rather clumsy. It involves Otway in arranging for Lavinia's capture at the end of Act IV and her return to her father's house in Rome so that she can be faced with her father's insistence that she

19 Geoffrey Marshall, Restoration Serious Drama (Oklahoma 1975), p.101.

20 Marshall, Restoration Serious Drama, p.219.

21 Marshall, Restoration Serious Drama, p.219.

marry Sylla. This overcrowds the fourth act and does little directly to change the situation or advance the action. However, thematically the scenes are relevant: they put into action the passionate tendencies in Lavinia's character and bring into prominence the themes of exile, loss and problems of identity.

These themes, along with the sense of the disorders of passion, connect the plot worlds so that the debasement of the tragic love of Romeo and Juliet into the troubled passions of Marius and Lavinia.²² becomes part of a larger-scale demonstration of the poverty of ideals and feeling. H. Batzer Pollard suggests that it is a fault in the play that it is 'difficult to determine, rationally and emotionally, which characters should claim our sympathy'.²³ However it is not necessary to assume that the play is trying and failing to capture the audience's sympathy for any particular group of characters. It is no more desirable to take sides in this play than in Friendship in Fashion or Venice Preserv'd. As T.B. Stroup points out, commenting on Caius Marius's curses and Metellus's curse on his daughter (II.165-69), 'a kind of balance is maintained between the opposing factions, even in their imprecations; and there are

22 Consistently when Otway deviates from the text of Romeo and Juliet the effects he achieves are of debasement. Lavinia, for instance, begins Act IV with a fairly close version of Juliet's speech to Romeo in III.v.1-5, insisting that the lark is the nightingale. She goes on, however, to use a highly material metaphor as she describes herself as a 'poor compounding Creditor ... forc'd/To take a Mite for endless Summs of Joy' (IV.16-17). Apart from the unromantic connotations of the financial language, the sexual urgency and impatience she displays here is significant. At times a note of overt parody is intruded. When the Nurse finds Lavinia apparently dead her language, when she deviates from the text, is comically deflating: Lavinia is 'dead as a Herring, Stock-fish, or Door-nail' (V.135). There is a note of comic eroticism too about 'Nurse Noakes' assertion that she/he will 'stick a Flower in/every part about thee ...' (V.154). Such scenes and turns of phrase clearly work against the romanticism associated with young love.

23 H. Batzer Pollard, 'Shakespeare's Influence on Otway's Caius Marius', p. 541.

many'.²⁴ Metellus proves to be a cruel father and an unscrupulous politician (IV.113-23) and Caius Marius deserves most of the criticisms hurled at him. Interest, it is true, is not evenly distributed across the two factions. Attention is focused on the Marians: on Sulpitius's savagery and bitter wit, on highly dramatic scenes like the curse on Rome by the Marians (III.465-78) and on Caius Marius himself. Caius Marius is a dominating and interesting character. He cannot simply be dismissed as evil but his interest lies in a disturbing depiction of a waste of human life and energy.

From the second scene in the first Act onwards it is clear that the play is not working to vindicate either faction's line of action but to reveal the qualities which make both groups dangerous. In the two juxtaposed scenes which open the play, the opposing factions enter and denounce each other. If sympathy has been given to the Patricians following on Metellus's striking plea for order (I.1-11) and his graphic description of the troubled state (I.147-50), it wanes as the Marians enter and put their case. It is not that the Marians now win sympathy but the similarity of the terms used by both groups, combined with their total contradiction of each other on such points as who won the war against Jugurtha, induces an instant scepticism towards both factions in the reader. Both groups use similar metaphors to characterise the confusion created by the opposing faction. Metellus denounces the Marians as 'Goblins of the Night, / Confusions Night' (I.146-47), while Caius Marius describes his opponents as 'Daemons ... / Witches in ill weather' (I.165-66). Animal epithets are used as terms of abuse by the two factions with the result that both groups emerge as unruly and savage. Sulpitius is described as a

24 T.B. Stroup, 'Otway's Bitter Pessimism', p.63.

'mad wild Bull' (I.135) and Caius Marius as a 'Havocker,/That with his Kennell of the Rabble hunts' (I.119-20). The Patricians, on the other hand, are 'lazy Droans that feed on others labours' (I.179), Cinna is a 'Bell-wether of Mutiny' (I.185) and Metellus an 'old barking Senate's-Dog' (I.281).

Here, and throughout the confrontation scenes between the factions (II.448-79, III.352-423), we are faced with a series of blank contradictions. The Patricians claim Sylla won the war against Jugurtha (I.156-58, III.386-87); Caius Marius claims he really did (I.172, III.388-91). The Patricians abuse Sulpitius (I.133-37), Caius Marius praises him (I.365-70). Cinna delivers a panegyric on Sylla (I.161-64); Caius Marius contemptuously dismisses him (I.195). Each group claims a monopoly of honour and the care for liberty; neither group displays any honour or concern with liberty. Caius Marius tells the people that he is a 'Lover of your Liberties and Laws,/Your Rights and Privileges' (II.437-38) but Metellus warns them that he stands for 'Oppression, Tyranny, Avarice and Pride' (II.450). Both are shown to be hypocritical in their apparent concern for liberties. Despite Caius Marius's protest that he does not 'come hither arm'd to force your Suffrage' (II.429), he has thoughtfully assembled his guards and armed followers before the election (I.409-11) and does not hesitate to use force. The Patricians, however, are also prepared to use force to over-ride the election (Metellus enters with his guards in Act II stage directions 447) and Sylla arrives with an army to back up his claim. The Marians, when in power, carry out vicious proscriptions but when Sylla's faction triumphs Metellus emerges as a cynical political manipulator, contemptuous of the people and of his fellow Patricians (IV.113-16, 121-23).

On both sides, underlying the political debate, which is expressed in abstract terms, there are personal animosities and

rivalries. Caius Marius and Sylla's debate soon descends to an exchange of insults (III.380-98), and Metellus's hatred of Caius Marius is rooted in their past rivalry over the Jugurthine war (I.88-92). Caius Marius, more interestingly, is consumed with ambition and in part motivated by a furious refusal to accept his age, so that the contest between him and Sylla becomes a struggle between age and youth (I.195-96, III.392). Against this the people's cries for liberty become a hollow mockery. The lack of any real criteria for choice is given expression by the ease with which the crowd changes allegiance with the cry 'no Marius! no Marius! Liberty! Liberty!' (II.490) replacing the earlier cries of 'Liberty! Liberty! Marius and Sulpitius!' (stage directions I.). Nor are the people shown as capable of judgement. For the herdsmen in the country the changes in government are a matter of indifference, 'Tis all one to me, I must pay my Rent to/some body' (IV.231-32). While, for the citizens of Rome, support of Caius Marius means an opportunity to assault the aristocrats who debauch their wives (II.393-414). Either way, there is anarchy and misrule.

Changes of allegiance are not only a characteristic of the mob. The Patrician party when in power speedily disintegrates. Cinna, described by Metellus at the beginning of the play as 'Rome's better genius' (I.53), is later characterised by him as 'a busy fellow,/Knows how to tell a story to the Rabble' (IV.115-16) and is later denounced by another Consul (IV.460-65). Cinna's change of sides is a complete volte face of staggering cynicism which demands a total reversal of language by Caius Marius as well as Cinna. Caius Marius, who had proscribed him in Act II, greets him when he has turned coat as 'great Cinna' (IV.455) and Cinna, who had torn Caius Marius's character and origins to shreds earlier (I.93-96), now fawns over him (IV.449ff). The language of political ideals is

debased, as are all the ceremonials which give outward form to abstractions. The axe and fasces, symbols of authority and order, are possessed by whichever leader has roused the mob, heads the strongest force, or is prepared to betray his trust (Cinna), and become symbols of political chaos and vindictive power. For Caius Marius the fasces represent the 'Rod of my Revenge' (I.297) and Sulpitius gives a sexual and sadistic gloss to the rods when he gloats after the massacre in Act II that Rome 'begins to know the Rod of Pow'r;/ Her wanton Blood can smart' (III.2-3).

The ceremonies which punctuate the play are a reminder of the order which has been lost. The form remains but has become meaningless. There are nine ceremonial entries in the play and after six of them chaos ensues and fighting or a massacre takes place. In Act II Caius Marius and his followers enter ceremoniously (II.414ff). Caius Marius is just demanding that he be formally invested with the axe and fasces when Metellus and his party make their formal entrance, challenge him, sway the crowd and are attacked by the Marians. Similarly, in Act III Caius Marius and his party and Sylla and his supporters enter with a flourish from either side of the stage (stage directions at the head of the scene) for a parley which ends in fighting. In the final Act Caius Marius's formal entry and investiture in the Forum and the entry of the Elders and Virgins (Stage directions after line 177), is an intermission in the general massacre which is taking place. On the other occasions when formal entries take place they are undermined by the surrounding action or treated ironically. When Quintius Pompeius enters with Lictors to deliver the sentence of banishment on the Marians (III.447-56) the solemnity of his words are mocked as Caius Marius responds with bitter wit to the sentence.

I thank ye, Gods, upon my knees I thank ye,
For plaguing me above all other men.
Come, ye young Hero's, kneel and praise the Heav'ns,
For crowning thus your youthfull Hopes. Ha, ha, ha!
(III.457-59)

Caius Marius has already promised to bring about 'inverted Order' (II.506) and it is appropriate that he now inverts a prayer to the gods. His opening line (III.457) echoes his sincere thanks to the gods in the previous Act (II.491) which underlines the insecurity of power held by force of arms alone. More strikingly, as the scene progresses, Caius Marius and his followers perform a dark ceremony of destruction calling on 'th'Infernall Powers' (III.466), 'the Destinies' (III.467) and 'the Furies, and the Fiends' (III.468) to aid them in their revenge on Rome (III.470-71). The oath, as it were, ritualistically undoes the banishment placed on the group as they swear to return and be revenged on men, gods and the city itself (III.467-75). The infernal 'anti' ceremony is far more impressive than the formal ceremonies which attempt to embody order. It is also in its way successful. Appropriately the next appearance of the Lictors occurs when Caius Marius is invited back to Rome by Cinna (IV.451-52). Significantly, from this point on, ceremonies are demanded and offered but are bitterly mocked. When Cinna urges the Lictors to pay homage to Caius Marius he responds with mock-modesty 'Away: such Pomp becomes not wretched Marius' (IV.453). The Ambassadors who come to plead for mercy for Rome are ridiculed for their 'ill-order'd Pomp and awkward Pride' (V.12) and Caius Marius contemptuously refers to the delegation of Elders and Virgins as 'Pageantry' (V.179). The descent into the total anarchy of the last Act is therefore accompanied by the erosion of language, ideals and the forms of order.

At the very heart of this decay, in the structures and forms which give meaning and order to life, is a confused sense of identity.

The sudden and frightening changes in the rulership of Rome and the alternating cries of 'a Marius', 'no Marius' are indicative of the failure of any one leader to impress his personality upon the city. The equality in the nature of the insults and praise handed out to each other by the two factions blurs individuality. At the same time the question of identity forms the core of the disputes between the factions. As Sylla and Caius Marius confront each other in Act III, their argument keeps returning to their self-definitions and definitions of each other. Sylla claims to be the 'Friend of Rome' (III.360) and Caius Marius denies his right to that name (III.364-65). Then Sylla and Caius Marius dispute over which of them should be called 'Tyrant' (III.366-75) and move onto the question of Caius Marius's origins, which make him unworthy of office - or prove his intrinsic greatness (III.380-85). As Geoffrey Marshall says, 'The question "What art thou?" is thematic to the entire play'.²⁵ The question, literally in that form and in variants, punctuates the play,²⁶ as the characters seek to understand and identify each other amidst the domestic and civil disorders.

This powerful theme is introduced in the first lines of the play as Metellus calls on the gods 'To fix the Order of our wayward State, / That we may once more know each other' (I.2-3). The speech goes on to stress the link between knowing others and the knowledge of place, function and form in the public realm.

25 Geoffrey Marshall, Restoration Serious Drama, p.111.

26 The question 'what art thou?' is found at II.482, III.359, IV.315, 394, 436. There are also variants like 'Who art Thou?' (II.283), 'wnat are those?' (IV.242), 'Who are you?' (IV.244) and 'Whoe're thou art' (V.322). It is not surprising that the questions are found with greatest frequency in the fourth Act as the characters exiled from Rome, the city which gives them meaning, wander in the countryside.

That we might once more know each other; know
Th'extent of Laws, Prerogatives and Dues;
The Bounds of Rules and Magistracy; who
Ought first to govern, and who must obey?
(I.3-6)

Without such knowledge men live in the dark and lose their sense of purpose and direction,

... men know not where
Or how to walk, for fear they lose their way,
And stumble upon Ruine. (I.148-50)

The view Otway is putting forward here and demonstrating throughout the play is that without a civil polity there can be no recognisably human and civilised form of life. As the state disintegrates so do the human beings who make up the state. Personalities become hazily defined, split or degenerate. Hannah Arendt, writing about the public and private realms as political and philosophical concepts, points out the importance of permanence in the establishment of a coherent realm,

... the existence of a public realm and the world's subsequent transformation into a community of things which gathers men together depends entirely on permanence. If the world is to contain a public space, it cannot be erected for one generation and planned for the living only; it must transcend the life-span of mortal men.²⁷

Without that order in the state which depends on permanence and a sense of custom and continuity not only do ceremonies become meaningless but people lose coherence. The lack of permanence in the state means that identity is constantly shifting. Cinna is reviled by the Marians when he belongs to Sylla's faction but greeted as 'great Cinna' when he changes sides. Caius Marius agreed that Lavinia was 'charming' (I.330) when he hoped his son would marry her

27 Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition (Chicago, 1958, sixth impression, 1970), p. 55.

and cement an alliance with Metellus but, Metellus having refused the connection, she is a 'base Puddle' (I.317). Later he will acknowledge her as his daughter when she brings him food and comfort in his exile (IV.348). Later again, ^{when he has} regained the Consulship and slaughtered her father, both their senses of identity falter. Caius Marius is no longer called 'Father' (IV.324) by her, but 'Tyrant' (V.414) and he is puzzled to recall her name or face in the altered circumstances (V.414,417). Lavinia herself at this point denies her name, replying to Caius Marius's question if she is called Lavinia (V.417), with 'Once I was:/But by my Woes may now be better known' (V.417-18).

For Marius and Lavinia, the conflicts in the state produce the problems of identity which threaten their relationship. Marius forgoes his wedding night after Caius Marius has denied that he is his father if he loves Lavinia (III.193-97). In the same scene, Lavinia's faltering sense of identity is outlined by Marius,

... She's scarce

more

Metellus Daughter now then Your's: our Hands
Were by a Priest this morning joyn'd.

(III.214-16)

Significantly, Marius is incapable of defining Lavinia simply as herself or as his wife, so that she emerges in these lines as a kind of orphan. However comic Lavinia's cry of 'Marius, Marius! wherefore art thou Marius?' may sound, Shakespeare's lines here fit wonderfully well into Otway's theme. It is central to their love that it can only work if both are prepared to doff their names and deny their origins; but at the same time to do this is to degrade themselves and diminish themselves as human beings. There is, in fact, a great deal in a name. When Lavinia meets Caius Marius in the countryside, her introduction of herself is hesitant and indirect. She first describes herself as 'a poor unhappy Woman' (IV.318) and

then, having addressed Caius Marius as father, explains her right to this relationship conditionally; 'I am your Daughter, if your Son's my Lord' (IV.329). Although Caius Marius does acknowledge the relationship, he first violently repudiates the suggestion that he has a daughter, 'My Offspring all are Males, /The Nobler sort of Beasts entitl'ed Men' (IV.327-28). When he has identified her his first reaction is to call her a 'thing' (IV.332). By using this word he stresses the oddness of her action in leaving her 'Father for a banisht Husband' (IV.333). She is also, perhaps, an anomaly; a 'thing' because she is 'kind and doting' (IV.332), which is unusual in a world in which men are beasts. However, the word also carries a sense which is reinforced by Marius and Lavinia's subserviant love language, that her pursuit of love and rejection of her home have reduced her to a sub-human level.

Both Marius's self-abasing speeches and Lavinia's self-pitying depictions of exile can, in part, be understood in terms of their loss of authentic identity. They meet as a slave and an outcast, not as a man and a woman. Marius and Lavinia do not take their identities from each other as husband and wife but from their unruly and contentious fathers. Because of this, their identities are from the start contingent upon political movements, alliances and conflicts. Instability in the public realm weakens personal identity and life becomes a chaotically varied day to day affair. In the course of the play Lavinia is first simply Metellus's daughter then, when threatened with repudiation, no-one's daughter; briefly she becomes Caius Marius's daughter, finally she is alone - no-one's daughter or wife. Her final speech is a recognition of her utter nullity as a human being (V.450-52) while her curse embraces for herself and the world the irrationality which replaced coherence, continuity and order in her world; an irrationality which she

endorsed when she opted for passion. The curse is an extension of her own experience; 'now let Rage, Distraction and Despair/Seize all mankind, till they grow mad. as I am' (V.456-57). Suicide becomes for both Marius and Lavinia the only solution to a life which has hardly been worth living. There is about their deaths nothing of the 'if only ...' of Romeo and Juliet's suicides. The mistakes with drugs and poison become part of their pattern of misfortune but not a tantalizing pattern of mistiming. Had Marius and Lavinia lived, their love would have remained imperfect and their situation intolerable. Hence, the awakening of Lavinia before Marius dies, but after he has taken poison, cannot weaken the end. Their last speeches, appropriately, are about death (V.378-92) not life; they heighten the dramatic tension but they do not change anything. Nor do their deaths, like those of Romeo and Juliet, hold out any kind of hope for the future. Caius Marius knew (as Romeo and Juliet's parents did not) that his son was married to his enemy's daughter — and this relationship did not prevent him from slaughtering Metellus. Sylla, as Marius's rival for Lavinia, is not likely to be melted to common humanity by the news that Marius was Lavinia's husband. Marius and Lavinia die amidst a massacre and their death is followed by the news that in yet another reversal of power, Caius Marius's troops are defeated and Sylla is advancing on Rome. The see-saw of violent politics goes on. The power of love is debased in the course of the play and holds out no special powers of reconciliation. The civil disorders have been created by men but by now they have a momentum of their own which engulfs mere individuals.

Even Caius Marius's strong personality wavers in the face of the civil disorders around him. The fourth Act shows him losing his grip on himself but this moment is prepared for carefully. His age is an important factor in his characterisation. From his enemies'

point of view the fact that he is old makes his actions, ambition and energy obscene and unnatural. Metellus complains that

Ev'n Age can't heal the rage of his Ambition,
Six times the Consul's Office has he born:
How well, our present Discords best declare.
Yet now agen, when time has worn him low,
Consum'd with Age, and by Diseases prest,
He courts the People to be once more chosen,
To lead the War against King Mithridates.
(I.97-103)

Another patrician grumbles that Caius Marius does outstrip the youth of Rome in 'warlike Exercise' (I.106). Caius Marius is another of Otway's unsatisfactory father figures who refuses to accept old age or behave like an old man. Beaugard's old father in The Atheist presents a comic version of this phenomenon. In all these portraits, those of Tissaphernes, King Philip, Caius Marius or old Beaugard, there is a similar sense of inversion and role reversal as the fathers outdo their sons, be it in rage, lust, ambition or debauchery.

Caius Marius's sense of his age fuels his resentment against Sylla, a mere 'Boy' (I.195, III.392), who 'flouts [his] Age' (I.196). To the end Caius Marius is unreconciled to the natural processes of aging and dying and, even when broken and defeated at the end, describes himself as 'bound for the dark Land/Of loathsome Death' (V.482-83). However, even if resented, Caius Marius's age and accumulated experiences also form the basis for his self-assertions. He is the man who saved Rome (I.173-77) and captured Jugurtha. His first speech asserts these points and yet it is on these points that his enemies attack him and deny his claims. From the first there is something neurotic about Caius Marius's assertions of self. In a typical angry speech he repeats the personal pronoun, refers to himself in the third person, personifies himself and parenthetically compares himself to a god,

... I, I Marius rose, the Soul of all
The Hope sh'had left, and with unwearied Toil,
Dangers each hour, and never-sleeping Care,
(A burthen for a God) oppos'd my self
'Twixt her and Desolation. (I.204-08)

Here Caius Marius associates his godlike status with his bravery and 'Care' for Rome. But more usually his superhuman visions of himself are associated with powers of destruction. In Act II he promises that

Horror, Confusion, and inverted Order,
Vast Desolation, Slaughter, Death and Ruine
Must have their Courses e're this Ferment settle.
"Thus the Great Jove above, who rules alone,
"When men forget his Godlike Pow'r to own,
"Uses no common means, no common ways,
"But sends forth Thunder, and the World obeys.
(II.506-12)

William Myers comments that 'The two great seventeenth-century political bugbears were arbitrary power and anarchy'.²⁸ These two political extremes are united in Caius Marius's speeches like the one above, in his wild challenge to the gods in Act III (457-71) and his comparison of his vengeance with the elemental forces of Nature in the last Act (V.98-101). At these points in associating himself with superhuman powers, gods or the elements, Caius Marius loses personality to become a blind force for destruction. The power he craves is arbitrary, in the sense that it is without any discrimination and hence anarchic and without rule or order. It is Caius Marius's loss of personality which is frightening at such moments as Otway illustrates the perversion and destruction of the self wrought by the frenzied exercise of power.

At the opposite extreme to Caius Marius's vaunting assertions of pure energy are his moments of damaged and self-pitying definition

²⁸ William Myers, Dryden (London, 1973), p.79.

which occur in Act IV. In his more 'normal' moments of vaunting Caius Marius's sense of himself depends on the recitation of his triumphs and achievements. ^{When he is} / Defeated and exiled it is as if the whole basis of his identity is diminished. In the countryside he becomes old, incompetent and dependant. Caius Marius's view of Nature is strongly contrasted with Lavinia's. Where Caius Marius sees nothing fruitful around him, only 'Drought! parching Drought!' (IV.281), Lavinia finds peaches and pomegranates (IV.339) and a 'Crystall Spring' (IV.343). For Lavinia the countryside is a place of hope since she may find Marius there but for Caius Marius the (possibly) idyllic surroundings only mean defeat and despair. His inner essentially arid mental landscapes are projected onto the landscape around him. Stripped of the trappings of power which confirm his memory of his greatness he becomes an animal 'hounded up and down the World' (IV.258). To the soldiers who hunt for him he is an 'old Droan' (IV.270) and, a bit more heroically, he sees himself as a 'lion' by 'Dogs emboss'd' (IV.282). His self-images now, however, are in no way heroic but deeply self-pitying and degraded. He is 'that wretched Creature Marius' (IV.316), 'poor old Marius' (IV.237), 'poor Marius' (IV.300) or 'unhappy Marius' (IV.405). In this weakened state the 'tender Foolishness' (III.82) and 'Softness' (V.234) which has a place in Caius Marius's character emerges and he is gentle and grateful to Lavinia. However, there is no indication that this is essentially Caius Marius's 'true' character. His character is made up of the turns and changes of fortune, unstable and unreliable. Comforted by the prophetess Martha's assurances that he is about to be recalled to Rome, Caius Marius sleeps and dreams of glory. These dreams, it appears, are extremely vicious dreams of revenge and bloodshed. Ironically, Caius Marius falls asleep saying 'O Rest, thou Stranger to my Senses,

welcome' (IV.421). But whilst he sleeps a man enters seeking to murder him and Caius Marius's own sleep is far from restful as he dreams of having Metellus thrown into the Tiber and murdering other of his enemies (IV.424-34). When he awakes it is to the news that Rome is in a state of disorder and Cinna arrives to welcome him back to Rome. Here his disorderly dreams become fact (in the spirit of the dream if not the detail, Metellus is stabbed, not drowned), as his nightmare inner-self is released onto the city.

Banishment and humiliation do not mellow Caius Marius but after his banishment there is a new note in his characterisation. His self-descriptions are now tinged with bitter sarcasm. With mock humility he waves away the Lictors who pay him homage and urges Cinna to lead him 'where thy Foes have wrong'd thee,/And see how thy old Souldier will obey' (IV.455-56). Later, with calculating cruelty, he turns aside the ambassadors' pleas for mercy, describing himself as a 'simple Banisht man,/Driv'n from my Country by the right of Law' (V.52-53). The cynical moral of power politics and the self is spelt out by Cinna at the beginning of Act V;

...How many Slaves,
Traitors, and Tyrants, Villains was I call'd
But yesterday? yet now their Consul Cinna.
Oh! what an excellent Master is an Army,
To teach Rebellious Cities Manners!

(V.1-5)

Caius Marius's own version of this philosophy of might is less jubilant and betrays a deep pessimism. In the speech beginning 'I know ye all, great Senatours' (V.185) he outlines their changes of political and religious conviction (V.186-200) which undermine the stability of the state. There is a strong sense by now of the interaction between the instability of the people and the violence and instability of their leaders. It is as if having lived through the triumphs and reversals of politics shown in this play, Caius

Marius's character has finally lost all coherence. His mercy is as quixotic as his vengeance. The scene with the little boy who pleads for mercy and is spared by Caius Marius does not function as a 'sentimental vignette',²⁹ but rather as another example of arbitrary power. The elders are ordered to death, the virgins 'spared' to be raped by his 'Warriours', Ancharius is killed, his grandson is allowed to live. At this point Caius Marius is enacting his godlike fantasies and the power over death is only confirmed by the power over life.

His character crumbles suddenly and dramatically in the last scene, set in Lavinia's tomb. In a sense he has fulfilled himself, or what he has become, for in finally killing Metellus, 'The Core and Bottom of [his] Torment's found' (V.241). He has turned into a monster of destruction animated only by hatred and without hate to give him purpose he is nothing. Lavinia's words, which she forces on him (V.420), now revive in him the memory of the time of defeat and despair (V.430) when he lay

... fainting on the dry parcht Earth,
Beneath the scorching heat of burning Noon,
Hungry and dry, no Food nor Friend to chear me.
(V.440-42)

Caius Marius ends in a state of despair and misery which parallels his earlier wretched state. He reverts to weakness and self-pity and towards animality as he swears he will 'howl away [his] life in Sorrows' (V.461). Metellus is now described as a 'good Old Man' (V.463) and Caius Marius imagines how 'We might have all bin Friends, and in one House' (V.466). These statements recall King Philip's sudden change of character at the end of Don Carlos and his

admiration of the son and wife he had been persecuting throughout the play. Caius Marius's repentance is no more rational or possible than the King's. Metellus has not shown himself to be a 'good Old Man' and there was never any chance that they could all live happily together. Caius Marius issues a warning to statesmen in his last speech,

Be warn'd by me, ye Great ones, how y'embroil
Your Country's Peace, and dip your Hands in Slaughter.
Ambition is a Lust that's never quencht,
Grows more inflam'd and madder by Enjoyment.

(V.477-80)

But the view the play has expressed has been more complex and subtle than this. Caius Marius's ambition has been shown growing and turning perverse in the course of the upheavals he has lived through. Events and the man have interacted to provoke the dark and tyrannical side of his nature. Chaos has thrown up the man rather than the man having created chaos single handed. It is therefore appropriate that the play ends on Sulpitius's sneering defiance of repentance, rather than on Caius Marius's self-abnegating curses and regrets. Caius Marius's repentance becomes one more variation in character - although undoubtedly the last - and Sulpitius's joking words are a reminder that the defiance and fighting will go on. The play ends because most of the characters we have been shown are dead or dying. But, once again, there is little sense of a conclusion or resolution. The 'Rabble' are in 'new Rebellion' (V.472) in favour of Sylla who is marching on Rome. Nothing we have seen of Sylla or the 'Rabble' makes this seem more than a temporary swing in the political life of Rome.

There can be no permanent peace because human nature, as it has been revealed in the play, is too flawed to achieve resolutions in the self or the state. Despite the 'patchwork' effects produced by the inclusion of scenes from Romeo and Juliet, Caius Marius is

Otway's most profound and effective tragedy before The Orphan. In Caius Marius Otway extends his dramatic range. His awareness of emotional turbulence is extended beyond the passions of a hero to form the basis for an understanding of men and the way they live. Otway is clearly experimenting here with his style and dramatic form. His play includes solemn rhetoric, snarling invective, satire, bawdy humour and pastoral prettiness. These elements are successfully linked by his powerful sense of theme as each element demonstrates an aspect of man's inability to articulate himself or the world coherently.

The scenes in the country in Act IV are in some ways dramatically clumsy. Theme dominates over form here, perhaps, as Otway moves half his characters to the country, and then has to move them back again before the end of the Act for the bloody finale in Rome. However, these scenes are effective as a demonstration of man's violation of his world. A briefly idyllic moment, as Marius and Lavinia are united and Caius Marius is benevolent, speedily disintegrates as Caius Marius is offered first the dream and then the reality of political power. Lavinia is captured and the perceived beauty of the scene is formally repudiated as Marius curses 'all these Regions round us' (IV.475). These scenes are loaded with biblical and paradisaical connotations which work to heighten our awareness of the characters' imperfections. Caius Marius wonders if the birds will feed him (IV.293), a wild query which only draws attention to the fact that this is no Elijah in the wilderness (I Kings 17:6) fighting oppression, but a fallen man suffering as he deserves. As Lavinia approaches, Caius Marius wonders if she is a 'deadly Snake' (IV.310), subsequently deciding that she is an 'Angel' (IV.341). Both terms tell us more about Caius Marius and his totally subjective perceptions than about

Lavinia, who is neither devil nor angel but simply a flawed woman. In Caius Marius's agony amidst the plenty the country offers, in Marius's curse and even in Lavinia's happiness, Otway shows the way in which character and experience mould perceptions. There are no real common grounds or shared experiences or that 'community of things which gathers men together'.³⁰ Otway's dramas are increasingly about men's isolation from each other and from the warmth of social community.

Caius Marius covers much of the ground which will be more tightly and coherently charted in The Orphan and Venice Preserv'd. In all of these plays the family as a unit of identity and social cohesion is shown in a state of disintegration. Monimia is already isolated as an orphan and Castalio and Polydore break the fraternal bonds which have bound them together. Belvidera has been disowned by her father and the other characters, Jaffeir, Pierre and Aquilina, are rootless and without fixed loyalties. In Venice Preserv'd, as in Caius Marius, the action takes place amidst rebellion and civic disorder, in a State in which none of the opposed factions can command respect. The Orphan greatly extends the idea of the violation of the pastoral touched on in Caius Marius. Problems of identity in the fullest sense of knowing oneself, the nature of others and the nature of the world, form a major theme in all these plays. But whilst in Caius Marius (and Don Carlos) the main characters are left in various states of bewilderment, in his last two tragedies Otway achieves the full tragedy of recognition; given the nature of the recognition, they are also tragedies of total disillusion.

30 Hannah Arendt, already cited, from The Human Condition, p.55.

III

LATER COMEDY

i

THE SOULDIERS FORTUNE

Otway's last two comedies, The Souldiers Fortune (1680) and The Atheist (1683) are infinitely better plays than his first attempts at comedy. In both plays Otway opts for multi-layered fast moving plots which get off the ground in the first scenes of the play and thus avoid the longvers of Friendship in Fashion. In The Souldiers Fortune we follow the adventures of two recently disbanded officers, Beaugard and Courtine. Beaugard successfully cuckolds Sir Davy, the husband of the woman he loved before he became a soldier. Courtine courts and wins an heiress, Sylvia, and Sir Davy is involved in a plot, connected to the cuckolding plot, to murder Beaugard. As Langbaine and most subsequent critics have noticed many of the incidents which Otway uses in these three plot strands are taken from earlier plays or stories.¹ However, William McBurney's

1 See Langbaine, An Account of the English Dramatick Poets, p.399, Allardyce Nicoll, A History of English Drama, 1660-1900, I, p.258, Montague Summers, Complete Works, I, p.xxxii, J.G. Ghosh, Works, I, p.54 for identifications and discussions of the sources. Langbaine traces the use of an unsuspecting dupe as go-between to Boccaccio's Decameron, Marston's The Fawn (1605-07) and Rhodes's Flora's Vagaries (1663). Nicoll adds Fane's Love in the Dark (1675) to the-list of plays using this device. Undoubtedly this device is of common European stock but the play which Otway quite clearly did go to in

1 (continued) his use of this trick is, as Ghosh notes, Molière's L'École des Maris, where Molière repeats the device which he had already used in Sganarelle ou le Cocu Imaginaire. Otway also borrows an insignificant detail from the Sganarelle of L'École des Maris when he makes Sir Davy blind in one eye. There are some verbal similarities between the two plays: Sganarelle and Sir Davy profess to feel sorry for their young rivals and Isabelle and Lady Dunce use similar arguments to prevent their dupes from opening the letters they are sending 'back' to their lovers. Langbaine and Ghosh are again surely right when they trace the Courtine/Sylvia balcony scene to Fletcher's Monsieur Thomas (1615). The love-hate relationship of Sylvia and Courtine may owe something to Thomas and Mary's turbulent wooing, but there are so many examples of contending lovers in the literature of this period that it is unnecessary to try to pin one set down. (Otway may well have picked up a hint for The Atheist from this play in Fletcher's portrait of Thomas's rumbustious old father, who is disconcerted by his son's sobriety and sexual abstinence.) As Ghosh has noted, Shakerley Marmion's unwieldy comedy The Antiquary (1635) provides the under-plot of the attempted murder of Beaugard. Bloody-Bones strongly resembles Marmion's Bravo in his speech habits and in the fact that he is a fake murderer. Bravo's phoney repentance is transferred to Sir Davy - whose repentance, however, is real. Sir Davy's sudden appearance from the closet to find Lady Dunce and Beaugard embracing and Lady Dunce's explanation of the embrace as an attempted rape may, as both Langbaine and Summers suggest, be drawn from Scarron's Comical Romance (translated into English and published 1676) - a source Otway was to use again in The Atheist. Sir Jolly Jumble, as Nicoll says, may in part be based on Pandarus in Dryden's Troilus and Cressida (c. April 1679). The character also resembles Old Aldo in Dryden's The Kind Keeper; or Mr. Limberham (possibly performed March 1679, published 1680). Pandarus, like Sir Jolly Jumble, was played by Anthony Leigh and Old Aldo is also a Leigh part. Sir Jolly is most like Old Aldo in his relationship to his troop of whores.

More generally one can note that Otway's treatment of the commercialisation of marriage recalls Aphra Behn's in plays like The Town Fop; or, Sir Timothy Tawdrey (1676), particularly in the clear link which is drawn between marriage and prostitution. Otway's down and out disbanded soldiers who are a far cry from the elegant young men about town in plays like The Man of Mode or The Mulberry Garden may perhaps owe something to Mrs. Behn's wandering penniless sailors in The Rover (1677). Beaugard, like Willamore and also like Loveby in Dryden's The Wild Gallant (1663), receives a bag of gold from an unknown female admirer. The materialistic basis of love and marriage was, however, a common theme for satire in Restoration drama and verse (see P.F. Vernon's excellent article 'Marriage of Convenience and the Moral Code of Restoration Comedy', Essays in Criticism, vol.12 (1962), pp.370-87). Otway may have gone to the particular plays mentioned; what is significant is that his play aligns itself with the harsh plays of the Restoration. Devices like the proviso scene between Courtine and Sylvia which can occur in 'happy' comedies receive in this play an unromantic and materialistic treatment. Otway also works into his play references to Shakespeare and Marlowe. Courtine's phrase 'of all Strumpets Fortunes/the basest'

comment on the play that 'once again Otway's lack of wit, his bitter raillery, and obvious pilfering of situations reveal a lack of true comic talent',² is over harsh. Restoration comedy is extremely formulaic and plot materials are limited. Otway pilfered, as most writers did, and what counts is not so much where plot devices come from but what use is made of them. Professor Wilcox's remark with regard to Otway's borrowings from Molière can be applied more generally to his 'pilfering' practices. He goes to his sources for 'petty borrowings of unimportant tricks of plotting'.³ On the whole, it is the incidents which are borrowed and not the general mood of the plays.⁴ Otway's treatment of the materials lifted from other plays is consistently harsher than the original. Sir Davy is a disgusting old pervert and not just an obstinate old man like Sganarelle from the source, Molière's L'École des Maris. In the scene taken from

1 (continued) (I.186-87), echoes Hamlet's 'in the secret parts of fortune? O/most true; she's a strumpet' (II.ii.234-35). Bloody-Bones's ranting speech concerning his pact with the devil (IV.371-74) recalls Marlowe's Dr. Faustus, as does Sir Davy's desperate offer to repent and desire to hide himself when he believes Satan is coming for him (V.222-25). Bloody-Bones's ranting speeches (IV.337-40, 350-53, 371-74) and Sir Davy's (III.572-76) are funny just because they are old fashioned. The heroic manner mocked in the speeches of these debased characters is that of the tragedies of the last age and not contemporary heroic drama.

2 William H. McBurney, 'Otway's Tragic Muse Debauched: Sensuality in Venice Preserv'd', Journal of English and Germanic Philology, LVIII (1959), p.383.

3 John Wilcox, The Relation of Molière to Restoration Comedy, p.146.

4 An exception, perhaps, is Aphra Behn's comic style and intentions. Although there are no direct borrowings from any of her plays discernible in The Souldiers Fortune, Otway's movement towards the comedy of intrigue and farce possibly owes something to her example - as well as the general trend of comedy in the late seventies and eighties. Tradition identifies Mrs. Behn with the tolerant and witty lady of the Dedication and there is enough evidence to show that Otway and Mrs. Behn were good friends. Most recently these links have been traced by Maureen Duffy in The Passionate Shepherdess, Aphra Behn, 1640-89 (London, 1977).

Fletcher's Monsieur Thomas, Sylvia, unlike Mary, has plotted the trick to humiliate her lover and takes malicious pleasure in his discomfort. The fake murder, taken from Shakerley Marmion's The Antiquary, is part of a plot to arrange a cuckolding not a marriage. However, one cannot say that in The Souldiers Fortune, as with the scenes from Romeo and Juliet in Caius Marius, there is a conscious interaction between the original and the reworked version. Attention is not drawn to the source materials, which are too numerous and various to constitute any particular comic mode beyond that of the comedy of intrigue and farce. Otway takes scenes and adapts them to his needs; density of plot lines and extravagant scenes clearly appealed to him. He skilfully welds his materials together into a form which is characteristically his own and which owes more to his own tragic style than to the comedies from which he has lifted scenes.

Critics have noted similarities between The Souldiers Fortune and Venice Preserv'd.⁵ This is not simply due to the fact that Otway uses comic materials in Venice Preserv'd, but also because of the underlying seriousness of the themes explored in the comedy, which also relate the play to his previous tragedies. The Souldiers Fortune was

5 Bonamy Dobrée points out that The Souldiers Fortune 'must be understood if an insight is to be obtained into the emotional material which forms the basis of his later tragedy', Restoration Tragedy (Oxford 1929), p.138. In 'Otway's Tragic Muse Debauched: Sensuality in Venice Preserv'd', William McBurney draws attention to many of the scenes and characters and turns of phrase that the plays have in common.

performed in June 1680⁶ and was the last play to emerge from a period of intense creativity following on Otway's return from Flanders. Within a space of nine months Otway had two tragedies, Caius Marius (autumn 1679) and The Orphan (March 1680) as well as the comedy The Souldiers Fortune performed on the London stage. He also published a long poem, The Poets Complaint of his Muse (January 1679), during this fertile period. The speed with which Otway worked, with the plays following each other onto the stage at less than six monthly intervals, has led Mrs. A.M. Taylor to suggest that The Orphan was probably substantially written before Otway's departure for Flanders in early 1678.⁷ However, her evidence for this, both internally and externally, is highly unconvincing. It is less difficult to accept that this was simply an hardworking and productive period for Otway. From his remarks in the Epilogue to Caius Marius, calling for help for a 'poor Disbanded Souldier' (27), his sardonic letter of Dedication to Richard Bentley and his comments on 'starving Poets' in the Epilogue to The Souldiers Fortune (27-28), it would seem that grim necessity

6 This is the performance date given in The London Stage, I, p.287. There is some ambiguity over the date of the first performance since an entry in the L.C. 5/145, p.120 lists a performance for 1 March but leaves the year in question. However, the Prologue (by Lord Falkland) censures the audience for deserting the Duke's theatre to see Settle's The Female Prelate (9-21) which was performed at the King's Theatre from 31 May 1680. The Epilogue refers to complaints about the Penny Post service (29) which was started on 1 April 1680 so that a date in mid-June seems likely. The play was entered in the Term Catalogues in November 1680 and published in 1681. The editors of The London Stage conjecture that the 1 March entry refers to a revival in March 1680/81 and list a performance for March 1681 on page 294.

7 See Aline Mackenzie Taylor's article 'A Note on the Date of The Orphan', English Literary History, 12-13 (1945-46), pp.316-26 and Appendix A of her edition of The Orphan, Regents Restoration Drama Series (Lincoln, Nebraska 1976, London 1977). See also R.D. Hume's brief comment on the improbability of Mrs. Taylor's conjectural re-dating in 'Studies in English Drama 1660-1800', Philological Quarterly, 56 (1977), pp.448-49.

aided inspiration. The three plays are too closely related for one of them to have been written two years earlier. This refers not only to the style, to Otway's growing facility with blank verse and lively dialogue, which progresses from play to play, but to the plays' thematic preoccupations. The Souldiers Fortune bears the imprint of Otway's concern, evident in Caius Marius and The Orphan and The Poets Complaint of His Muse, with disintegrating or fake Edens and with man's capacity for both self-deception and self-disgust. It also pursues, as does Caius Marius, the theme of problems in identity. Sir Davy Dunce enacts a burlesque version of Caius Marius's disintegration of the self as he suffers hallucinations and finally discovers a new and humiliating identity as a cuckold. Beaugard and Courtine spend much of the play meditating on the implications of the play's title as they note the change in fortune which has transformed them from gallant soldiers to Rogues in Red (I.186-211).

However, it was most probably as a good example of the well-paced comedy of intrigue, sex and farce that the play enjoyed its considerable contemporary popularity. Downes classed the play with Durfey's highly popular A Fond Husband (1677), describing them both as plays which 'took extraordinary well, and being perfectly Acted; got the Company great Reputation and Profit'.⁸ The perfect acting of Leigh and Nokes as Sir Jolly Jumble and Sir Davy Dunce remained vivid in the memory of Colley Cibber, who described Leigh's performance as

8 Downes, Roscius Anglicanus, p.36.

... all life and laughing humour; and when Nokes acted with him in the same Play, they return'd the Ball so dexterously upon one another, that every scene between them seem'd but one continual rest of excellence.⁹

The play was reprinted three times in the seventeenth century (in 1683, 1687 and 1695) and Matthew Prior draws attention to the play's popularity as a text when he remarks 'With what a Laughter was his Soldier read!'.¹⁰ Part of its popularity with the Court, at least, may have sprung from its partisan position on the tense political situation prevailing in the summer of 1680.¹¹ The noxious Sir Davy is firmly identified as a whig (I.461-66) and supporter of the rebellious City of London (III.447-51) and Beaugard and Courtine's railing scene in Act II is largely devoted to satirical portraits of whig supporters (II.383-425). However, on close examination, Otway's typical ambivalence on political issues emerges. Aspersions are

9 Colley Cibber, An Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber, Everyman Edition (London 1938), pp.147-48.

10 Matthew Prior, Satyr on the Poets, In Imitation of the Seventh Satyr of Juvenal, line 159, in The Literary Works of Matthew Prior, vol.I, edited by H. Bunker Wright and Monroe K. Spears, 2 vols. (Oxford 1959).

11 If the play was first performed in June 1680 this was a very tense month indeed in which the whigs demonstrated their confidence by attempting to have the Duke of York presented by the Westminster grand jury for trial as a recusant and the Duchess of Portsmouth as a prostitute. Royal approval of the play is shown by the revivals in the early spring of 1681 which are entered on L.C. lists. The play was performed before and after the Oxford Parliament (summoned on 21 March 1681), on 1 March (see footnote 6) and 18 April, see The London Stage, I, pp.294-95. Otway appears to have enjoyed the favour of the Royal household, or at least one member of it, during the summer of 1680, since his signature is extant on a document in which Nell Gwynne granted a power of attorney to one James Frazier (see A Memorial of Nell Gwynne and Thomas Otway, edited by W.H. Hart (London 1868)). A contemporary satire, An Essay of Scandall, B.M. Harley 6913 identifies Otway as a tutor to Charles Beauclerk, Nell Gwynn's son by Charles II,

Then for that Cub, her Son, and Heir,
Let him remain in Otway's Care,
To make him, (if that possible to be)
A viler Poet and more dull than he.

cast on the King's gratitude towards his loyal subjects in Beaugard's pithy remark that 'Loyalty and Starving are all one' (I.15). This is a comment which, when weighed against Beaugard's later claim that an ardent Commonwealth man was able to extort enough money during the inter-regnum to buy his pardon at the Restoration (II.395-98), says little for the King's justice. Despite Otway's intense commitment to the philosophy of conservatism, it is not surprising that he failed to acquire a permanent or powerful patron at Court. His scepticism over human nature and human affairs, which is part of his conservatism, consistently makes his satirical comments on political issues even handed.

R.G. Ham is probably correct in attributing the decline in the play's popularity by the eighteenth century to its indecency.¹² Genest, writing in the third decade of the nineteenth century, is remarkably approving of the play although he adds a qualification with respect to its indecency¹³ which, as R.D. Hume comments, 'cannot have encouraged the Victorians to investigate the subject'.¹⁴ A later Victorian, Edmund Gosse, indeed has nothing to say about the play beyond a blanket condemnation of all three original comedies as 'simply appalling'.¹⁵

Most later criticism has not been enthusiastic. Ham remarks that the play has perhaps been unjustly neglected but feels that neither The Souldiers Fortune nor The Atheist 'add measurably'

12 R.G. Ham, Otway and Lee, p.105.

13 Genest wrote that 'Otway's merit as a Comic writer has not, of late years, been sufficiently attended to - this is an excellent play, but very indecent particularly in the character of Sir Jolly Jumble', Some Account of the English Stage, I, p.313.

14 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.88.

15 Edmund Gosse, Seventeenth-Century Studies. A Contribution to the History of English Poetry, p.317.

to Otway's stature as a dramatist.¹⁶ Both Ghosh and Nicoll have praised the liveliness of Sir Jolly's characterisation but both critics dismiss the other characters. Ghosh states that they 'tend to degenerate into cardboard' and Nicoll describes them as 'negligible'.¹⁷ Nicoll notes Sir Jolly's perversities but fails to note Sir Davy's similar sexual deviations, instead suggesting that by the end of the play the old man has become a pathetic character who is treated with sympathy by the author.¹⁸ R.D. Hume with more accuracy, if less charity, describes Sir Davy as an 'old swine' who cannot claim our sympathy.¹⁹ Hume's critique of the play in his article on Otway's comedies is one of the most substantial analyses of the play. In it he lays stress on the realism with which the Dunces' unhappy marriage and Beaugard and Courtine's poverty are treated. There is a tendency in Hume's treatment of comedy in general to equate unhappy comedies with realism and to assume that unhappiness and realism automatically endow a work with excellence.²⁰ Certainly, what Sutherland calls Otway's 'sense of the actual' permeates the play.²¹

16 R.G. Ham, Otway and Lee, p.104.

17 J.C. Ghosh, Works, I, p.54, A. Nicoll, A History of English Drama, 1600-1900, I, p.258.

18 A. Nicoll, A History of English Drama, 1600-1900, I, p.258.

19 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.99.

20 See Hume's discussions of comedy in The Development of English Drama and in 'Marital Discord in English Comedy from Dryden to Fielding', Modern Philology, vol.74, no.3 (February 1977), pp.248-72. In Hume's criticism a new hierarchy of Restoration comedy is built up with plays like Southerne's The Wives Excuse, or, Cuckolds Make Themselves or Vanbrugh's The Provok'd Wife replacing the works of Etherege and Congreve. Such challenges to critical orthodoxy are stimulating but, insofar as the criteria for the new assessments are based on expectations of realism and distress, the judgements appear to me to be insufficiently convincing and too narrowly twentieth century in focus.

21 James Sutherland, English Literature of the Late Seventeenth Century, p.142.

The sense of the actual or treatment of the 'real' is only of relevance in terms of Otway's overall artistic strategies. As Hume and Sutherland both note, the play is also shot through with scenes of farce²² and it is relevant to work out the interaction and function of these elements.

From the realistic basis of his appreciation of poverty and sexual disgust, Otway works out the consequences of these experiences in terms of farce. Courtine, pursuing an attractive heiress, finds himself hanging in 'limbo', tangled in ropes outside her window (IV.536-40) and the actual cuckolding of Sir Davy is carried out with surrealistic farcical scenes in which the husband has bizarre visions and the lover pops up through trap doors. The farcical scenes have various functions in the play. On one level, they provide the mechanics of the complex plotting: the improbable letter/jewel trick used to communicate with Beaugard and the murder trick to get him into Lady Dunces's house and bed. On another level, the scenes have a psychological reality and reveal the characters' disordered psyches or their deep-rooted illusions about themselves.

22 James Sutherland, as cited above, describes the play as successfully combining a 'sense of the actual with the cathartic gaiety of comedy', p.142. Cathartic does not seem to be a very appropriate word to describe the frequently disturbing farcical scenes - especially their culmination in Sir Davy's near insanity. R.D. Hume in 'Otway and the Comic Muse' recognises the need to relate the realism to the farcical materials, see p.99, but does not really proceed to do so. He seems to suggest that the farcical elements in the play are conventional (which is true) but, more dubiously, that their function is to allow the audience to escape from the play's 'disturbing realism', p.102. In line with this is Hume's description of Sir Davy's speech 'I'll run mad, / I'll climb Bow Steeple presently, bestride the Dragon, and / preach Cuckoldom to the whole City', (III.121-24), as an example of Otway's 'high spirits', p.99. I cannot see any simple gaiety in this speech which is one of the many examples of Sir Davy's association of sex with religion (see, II.146-50, III.178-79, 473-75).

The major pattern of the play is a contrast between illusion - which is frequently given a farcical dimension - and reality. The play's title The Souldiers Fortune is obviously ironic since the soldiers are highly unfortunate. The title can also be seen as referring to 'fortune' in terms of the possession of luck and the pursuit of money. The word is used in both senses in the play²³ and in either sense the soldiers lack fortune. Indeed, the meanings come together since it is good luck to obtain money. However, the contrast between fortune as happy destiny and fortune as a material asset is basic to the play's patterning. The play opens with Beaugard cursing fortune, in the non-materialistic sense, and Courtine echoes him when he more elaborately curses the Strumpet Fortune (I.186) who has brought him nothing but bad luck. The alternative is the pursuit of more materialistic ends: 'Fortune be damn'd, since the worlds so wide' (I.5). Courtine's function in the opening scene is to show what that actually means as he consistently debunks and deflates Beaugard's optimistic speeches. As Courtine points out, cutting across Beaugard's airy assurances that he has 'vices/enough for any Industrious young fellow to live com-/fortably upon' (I.32-34), what that means is living as a confidence trickster or a gigolo:

23 For fortune as money see IV.579 and Sylvia's description to Courtine of what she has to offer '... a Fortune of 5000 pounds, pleasant nights and quiet days' (V.71). The phrase soldier of fortune meaning mercenary seems not to have been general at this time. The Oxford English Dictionary cites Boyle in Style of Scripts, 1675, 'Like war which is wont as well to raise soldiers of fortune as ruin men of fortune'. The title probably carries 'mercenary' as a secondary meaning since this fits in very well with the play's thematic concerns but one is faced here with the problem of registering tenor in the use of idioms and, indeed, establishing idiomatic usage.

What wouldst thou have me turn a Rascal, and run cheating up and down the Town for a livelihood? I would no more keep a Blockhead company, and endure his Nauseous non-sense in hopes to get him, then I would be a drudge to an old Woman, with Rheumatick Eyes, hollow Teeth, and stinking breath, for a pension.

(I.35-40)

The ugly reality of this is something Beaugard would evade, despite the cynicism with which he tells Courtine that 'an Old Ladies pension need not be so despicable in/the eyes of a disbanded Officer, as times go Friend' (I.45-46). Beaugard listens with tolerant amusement to Fourbin's description of his encounters with Sir Jolly while Courtine keeps interrupting the account of the absurd ceremonies and courteous exchanges with which the pimp opened the negotiations with impatient cries of 'but the Money, Fourbin, the Money ... But to the money, the money man' (I.155,164).²⁴ Beaugard's desire to gloss over the real nature of the situation is illustrated as he describes the gold he has been given as having 'dropt/out of the Clouds' (I.67-68). Only it has not dropped out of the clouds pure and undefiled, as the curious business of Fourbin smelling and tasting the gold indicates (I.70-74). Beaugard himself recognises that the gold is more likely to be associated with hell than heaven (I.80-84)²⁵ and a link between the gold and excrement is furthered when Beaugard, believing that Lady Dunce is playing with him, offers to return her 'dirt' to her (II.552).

The choice of Sir Jolly as the intermediary through whom the money has been given indicates clearly enough the degradation

24 Beaugard's servant Fourbin conforms to the general tendency to falsify and glamourise reality when he calls himself the 'Chevalier Fourbin' (I.147-48).

25 The scene recalls Jaffeir's midnight meeting with Pierre on the Rialto in Venice Preserv'd when Pierre gives him a bag of gold. Jaffeir, like Beaugard, sees the money as a gift from hell (II.99-100).

involved in accepting the gift. Sir Jolly, a 'disabled debauchee' who now gets his sexual satisfaction from watching others make love, is described as being so dedicated to his vocation as a pimp that when business is slack he will

...go from one end of the Town to
t'other to procure my Lords little Dog to be civil to my
Ladies little languishing Bitch. (I.93-95)

The joke is horribly appropriate as Sir Jolly's attitude towards his protégés is that of a connoisseur of animal flesh (I.235-39, III.145-49): his terms of greeting and endearment are a stream of animal epithets.²⁶

Beaugard and Courtine join Sir Jolly's stable and the link between their own amorous activities and the simple prostitution they are actually involved in is stressed in the second scene in the play in which Sir Jolly rounds up a group of whores who work for him (I.325-79). The whores themselves offer briefly an example of the desire to gloss over the actual nature of their existence as they exchange laboured courtesies with each other in the face of obscene insults (I.325-332). After they have obliged Sir Jolly by tickling him they hurry off to service 'Lord Beaugard, and his Couzin the Baron, the Count, the Marquis' (I.356-57). The 'devillish deal of/Monie' (I.365-66) they will be paid is the money Beaugard has just received via Sir Jolly from Lady Dunce. The money runs under the surface of all these existences linking up the separate lives - a corrupting stream of dirt which degrades them all.

The following scene introduces the female leads, Lady Dunce and Sylvia. Lady Dunce is linked into the theme of prostitution both in terms of her purchase of a lover and her own situation, which she

²⁶ See, for instance, I.243, 279, 377-79, II.446, 450, 513, 280, IV.127, 185, etc.

curses (I.534-51), sold in marriage to a disgusting old man. There is little to choose between this legal prostitution, the details of which are revoltingly sketched in by both Lady Duncce and Sylvia (I.385-90,418-20,422-25), and the life of the 'Bulkers' (I.329) fumbling and being fumbled by Sir Jolly. Sir Jolly and Sir Davy are similar characters: in Venice Preserv'd their various perversities, as McBurney has noted,²⁷ are amalgamated in the character of Antonio. R.D. Hume distinguishes Sir Jolly from the other characters in the play stating that he 'turns out to be one of the most decent and humane characters in the play - which is surely a very blunt authorial comment'.²⁸ However, there is nothing particularly decent or humane about Sir Jolly; it is simply that his values are the reverse of normal values: he persecutes husbands and protects whores. Essentially, Sir Jolly belongs to the London underworld. He is the honorary father of the whores (I.341-45), patron of thugs like Bloody-Bones and supporter of all plots to cuckold the married men. He will, in fact, have nothing to do with the legal world of marriage, washing his hands of Courtine when he hears he intends to marry Sylvia

- 27 W. McBurney, 'Otway's Tragic Muse Debauched: Sensuality in Venice Preserv'd', p.384 and footnote 9. Sir Davy and Sir Jolly are also similar to each other and to Antonio in their speech habits: the use of the term 'toad' as an endearment and the easy descent into animal noises, gasps and baby-talk. In Venice Preserv'd there is a similar counter-pointing of sexually and morally degraded characters in the parallels between the Senator Antonio and the rebel Renault.
- 28 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.98. He makes the same point in The Development of English Drama, p.354. A.H. Scouten suggests that Sir Jolly's characterisation changes in the course of the play, 'At first Sir Jolly is a voyeur, a pimp with homosexual tendencies, and is held up to ridicule. Later he is presented as a pleasant good-humoured old fellow who protects whores', The Revels History of in English, V, pp.204-05. This is a very humane and decent twentieth century attitude. I am not sure that the protection of a troop of whores is meant to elicit admiration rather than ridicule.

rather than seduce her (IV.177-89). Sir Davy, on the other hand, is very much a member of the 'official' world, being a married man and proud of his civic responsibilities when 'the business of the Nation calls upon [him]' (III.465). Ironic parallels are drawn between their activities when Sir Jolly is described by Beaugard as an 'as good a natur'd publick spirited Person as/the Nation holds' (I.89-90), or by Courtine as 'A very worthy Member of the Common-Wealth!' (I.96). Sir Jolly is, of course, none of these things but then neither is Sir Davy, who is depicted as morally and politically debased. The point Otway is surely making is not that Sir Jolly's anarchic underworld is better and has more decent values than the official world but that there is, at root, little to choose between the worlds. The underworld mirrors the 'polite' world or even merges in with it as Sir Davy enters the same tavern in which Beaugard, Courtine and Sir Jolly are drinking (to plot Beaugard's murder (IV.204-461)). As in most of Otway's plays the options are closed. We are not called upon to take sides although our sympathies lie with the two soldiers, who at first are outside society, belonging neither to Sir Jolly's world nor Sir Davy's.

The society we are introduced to in the first Act is one in which everything is for sale. This theme of commercialism and prostitution (prostitution standing as a basic analogy for the human relationships charted in this play) is continued throughout the work. In a series of satirical speeches Beaugard and Courtine reveal that in the law courts oaths are for sale (I.25-29), in the army rank is for sale (II.357-62) and, from the King, pardons are for sale (II.395-98). Sex is for sale and so is human life: a point which is comically exploited by Beaugard's friends when they arrange for Sir Davy to buy his murder. However, what the play shows is not simply that the world is corrupt, bribable and nasty but, more

interestingly, what happens to people as they live in this world. It is the process of corruption and not the fact of corruption which is examined. It is against this process which is marking the characters' lives that their illusions about themselves and about life are set - and shattered.

On a (fairly) comic level the two most degraded characters in the play, Sir Jolly and Sir Davy, are both discredited by the end of the play. In both cases it is their sense of their own identity which is attacked. Sir Jolly's reputation as a pimp is seriously undermined by Beaugard's refusal to meet Lady Dunce (II.473-74) and lost when Beaugard and Lady Dunce are discovered in his house (V.640-41). A final blow to him is the news that Courtine and Sylvia intend to get married - another slur on his house (V.716-18). Sir Jolly is not victim of a corrupt world but one of its casualties. His 'jolly' attempts to control vice result in 'jumble', disorder and his own discomforture.

The destruction of Sir Davy is more detailed and more complete. The plots against him attack his two strongest delusions; his belief in his own importance in the world of politics (I.464-65, III.458-87) which is used to send him off on a false errand to the Lord Mayor, and his belief in his wife's fidelity. This latter belief is turned to the lovers' advantage as he confidently meets his rival and passes letters and gifts to him. It also leads him into the murder plot in response to his 'virtuous' wife's demands for revenge against her intended ravisher. His confidence in his wife does not spring from the fact that he is a 'doting Doodle' (I.408) but from his own 'vanity' (I.410). At the same time this confidence is crossed by gnawing anxiety lest he should be made a cuckold. We hear that he keeps his wife a prisoner in their house (I.467) and he reacts neurotically to Sir Jolly's news that his wife has been talking to a

'Young Fellow' (III.117-18). His mad picture of himself climbing Bow steeple and preaching 'Cuckoldom to the whole City' (III.123) reveals his fear of ridicule and also prepares the ground for his later insane visions when he believes he has effected Beaugard's murder. There is a strong streak of insanity in Sir Davy, which emerges in his conversation with Fourbin and Bloody-Bones and his cruel desire to have Beaugard's head 'flay'd' and displayed with his hunting trophies (IV.229-32). Sir Davy's personality is always under pressure from his perversities, which link him into the seamy underworld reigned over by Sir Jolly.

Otway makes considerable play with the way in which Sir Davy's official status in the world carries with it no sense of order or moral integrity. This is comically apparent as he makes homosexual passes at Courtine asserting that 'I'll/Ravish you, you Buttock, I am a Justice of the Peace' (IV.452-53). His disordered and debased values can also produce the sublime deadpan of

'Tis true, here I have been bargaining with
you about a Murder, but never consider that Idolatry is
comming in full speed upon the Nation. (IV.421-23)

Fittingly, the revelation of his degraded status as a cuckold is brought about by his use of his official status so that his public and private follies and vices collaborate in his destruction.

It is his assertion of his authority as a Justice of the Peace that leads the Watch to enter Sir Jolly's house (V.555) and results

in his recognition of his new persona, 'I am/a Cuckold
... any body may make bold with what/belongs to me' (V.689-91).

Sir Davy is no cardboard character or simple comic dupe. Otway goes to great pains to sketch in his perversities, which range from homosexuality to sexual flagellation, and to demonstrate a link between Sir Davy's perversity, credulity and political activism

(II.146-50). Sexual perversity becomes (as in contemporary satires) a sign of political subversion and the degradation and incoherence of Sir Davy's morals and politics is further indicated by his verbal incoherence, his repeated 'da da' and neurotic laughter. At the end he responds with wild masochistic laughter to the news of his humiliation and embraces with self-destructive glee his new identity, which negates his former sense of self,

... I am thy Lady-ships most
humble Servant and Cuckold, Sir Davy Dunce Kt., Living
in Covent-Garden, ha,ha,ha, well this is mighty pretty,²⁹
ha,ha,ha, (V.702-05)

Sir Davy's ideals are clearly debased: from his adulation of the Lord Mayor (III.426-28 ff.), to his naively wholehearted response to his wife's theatrically insincere heroics following on the attempted 'rape' by Beaugard (III.545-49). His pursuit of revenge is mingled with sexual jealousy (III.572-78) and leads him to the shady company of Bloody-Bones and Fourbin. The folly, unreality and more importantly degradation of Sir Davy's revenge for his honour as a husband is demonstrated as he listens aghast to Bloody-Bones's crazed mixture of heroic rant and sordid personal history (IV.266-70,337-40,350-53). The debasement of ideals and uncomfortable transformations in personality is not, however, limited to Sir Jolly and Sir Davy. Attention, in fact, is focused not on these characters who merely play out in a minor key the major themes of illusion and identity which are articulated through the activities of Beaugard and Courtine.

29 Sir Davy's reference to his cuckoldom in Covent Garden picks up Sir Jolly's earlier assurance that cuckoldom and Covent Garden are an unlikely combination (III.155).

Beaugard and Courtine begin the play as outsiders; observers of the comedy of iniquity around them. They become participators as well as commentators. Their pursuit of fortune, in the material sense, involves the exploitation of that which they fortunately possess - attractive bodies. The play is remarkably full of physical descriptions of the two men. Sir Jolly speaks gloatingly of both men's attractions (I.241-43,376) but concentrates on Beaugard's virility and sensuality (I.157-63,III.137-40,144-49). Sir Davy, more glumly, notes Beaugard's sexual attractiveness - and wishes he could chain him up or castrate him (II.68-70). Courtine's appearance is bitterly described by himself in terms of the poverty of his clothes (I.18-22) and the same subject is treated mockingly by Sylvia (I.480-87). In effect, both men are treated by themselves³⁰ and others as objects: Beaugard primarily as a sexual animal, Courtine, appropriately, in terms of his all consuming sense of shame and poverty. It is their combination of poverty and sex-appeal which makes both men marketable objects but as their sexuality becomes a commodity they lose control over their lives and ironically their virility.

Beaugard is remarkably passive in the conduct of his affair with Lady Dunce. All the arrangements for their meetings are made by Sir Jolly and Lady Dunce with the help of the servants, Fourbin

³⁰ See Beaugard's wry comments on his surprise at the effect his portrait has had on the mysterious lady, 'Now, whereabouts this taking quality lies in me, the/Devil take me Ned if I know: But the Fates Ned, the Fates!' (I.184-85). Beaugard resigns understanding of the events to the 'Fates' and accepts the fact of his attraction. This sense of people being sexual objects with limited control over themselves or their attributes is extended to the women: to Lady Dunce through her sale in marriage, and to Sylvia through the entry on her-in Sir Jolly's 'Table-Book' (IV.144,166-74).

and Bloody-Bones. Incompletely informed about the mechanics of the plot, touchy and distrustful, Beaugard on his own nearly jeopardizes the whole affair (II.444-587). He emerges from the scenes in which he is being manipulated by the cuckolding plot looking rather stupid. Sir Jolly impatiently calls him a 'Fool' (II.505) and even Sir Davy remarks on 'how like a Fool he looks already' (II.600). Beaugard, with his incomprehension and angry shame, appears almost as much a dupe of the plot as Sir Davy. Later, when Sir Jolly explains to Beaugard the murder plot which will get him inside the Dunce house as a corpse, his slowness in understanding leads Sir Jolly to call him a 'Jack Straw' (IV.478). His servant remarks sarcastically when he finally gets the point, 'Your Honour has a piercing Judgement' (IV.484). Beaugard is almost literally unmanned by Lady Dunce during their first angry encounter: she pours scorn on his sexual confidence (II.541-42) and refuses contemptuously to accept the return of her money (II.554-56). During their first attempt to make love they are interrupted by Sir Davy's appearance and Beaugard flees cravenly leaving his sword behind (III.544-45). Beaugard finally enters Lady Dunce's house and bed in a state of total passivity feigning a corpse. The heroic terms with which he courts his love, 'Sweet Creature, who can counterfeit Death when/you are near him?' (IV.565-66) are cut short by Sir Jolly's flat statement 'You shall Sirrah, if a body desires you a little' (IV.567).³¹ Even Beaugard's joke of

31 Peter Holland suggests that part of the humour of this scene lies in the use of the middle/scenic stage in a parody of heroic tragedy - the scenic stage being particularly associated, according to Holland, with the staging of heroic tragedies, The Ornament of Action, Text and Performance in Restoration Comedy (Cambridge 1979), pp. 36-37, 41-42. I find this unconvincing particularly with reference to farcical comedies which require discoveries and the use of the middle-stage. Further practical stage sense suggests

appearing as a ghost before Sir Davy is carried out on Lady Dunce's instructions (V.417-18). Beaugard's first two encounters with Lady Dunce are followed by scenes in which he bitterly rails at the corruption of the world (II.345-458) or regrets with Courtine the kind of life they are now forced to lead (IV.8-15,31-42). The sexual encounters are thus 'placed' in terms of disgust at the nature of the world and the desire for honourable forms of employment.

Courtine pursues Sylvia without any help from Sir Jolly but his sexual activities are also characterised by an almost total passivity. He anticipates humiliation at Sylvia's hand (III.64-73) and is, indeed, exposed to scorn by her. He is first left hanging on a rope outside her window and is then discovered at the beginning of Act V tied up helplessly on a couch in Sylvia's chamber. He can only receive his freedom from Sylvia's hands and as he realistically remarks, 'Well now name the price; what must I pay for't?' (V.49). The price is his body as Sylvia sets about acquiring a handsome young husband for herself. By the end of the scene Sylvia and Courtine have successfully negotiated for his purchase. As Porcia will point out in the sequel play, The Atheist, Courtine sells himself 'to a Plantation ... for Five thousand pounds' (II.113). There is nothing

31(continued) that the spectacle of Beaugard's inert body would be of limited interest on the front stage which should be left clear for the ensuing comic dialogue between Sir Davy, Sir Jolly and Lady Dunce. There is no indication of where Sir Davy enters from but Lady Dunce's warning to him to keep away from the body (IV.603-05) suggests that most of the dialogue is taking place front stage. The heroic mode is being parodied in Beaugard's diction (IV.565-66) and deflated in Sir Jolly's words (IV.567-71) - and in the whole mock situation of the dying lover and his mistress. Both Beaugard and Sir Jolly's words can carry a sexual significance with death meaning orgasm. The joke then lies in Beaugard denying the possibility of counterfeiting orgasm and his pimp assuring him that this is possible if that is what the customer wants. The actual staging, however, seems to be more of a practical necessity than an extra layer of significance.

coy about the sale; Sylvia having announced her worth, 'a Fortune of 5000 pounds, pleasant nights, and/quiet days' (V.71-72), Courtine checks up on the sum of money involved (V.76) and then cautiously declares his interest (V.78-80). A brief spurt of angry virility on Courtine's part as Sylvia once again humiliates him by pretending that she finds Beaugard attractive (V.81-101) is firmly quashed by Sylvia as she embarks on the details of the deal she will conclude with him.

From their earlier encounters (II.258-334, III.1-64) and Sylvia's conversation with Lady Dunce (I.471-90) we have reason to believe they are attracted to each other, although distrustful of their own and each others' reactions. However, the scene in which they decide to marry is not very encouraging. They are not, like Millamant and Mirabell, discussing the refinements of married life: freedom of social intercourse, continued good manners but Sylvia's more basic requirements; frequent sex and faithfulness (V.130-34, 37-39).

The language they use is legal and is concerned with the buying and leasing of land (V.130-55). Courtine's status in the arrangement is low and strictly functional - sexually functional. Sylvia refers to herself as an estate (V.142) and a house (V.139) and to Courtine as an animal (V.119-20) and a tenant (V.137). Courtine accepts this frame of reference. At the very beginning of the exchanges with Sylvia he describes himself as an 'humble Animal' (V.20) and a 'poor dog' (V.22-23) and he goes on to refer to himself as a 'poor Jade' (V.117) and an 'Ox' (V.121) and to Sylvia as his 'Landlady' (V.152). By the end of the scene Courtine and Sylvia both refer to him as a sheep (V.180-82), the animal traditionally known for its gentle timidity and passive obedience. In the course of this scene Courtine's identity has been gradually whittled away, from his identification as an 'enchanted/Knight' (V.13-14) to his new identity

as a sheep meekly following his pastorally named Sylvia for a taste of pre-marital sex: 'come follow your Shepherdess. B a a a' (V.182).³² John Harrington Smith finds the scene a poor and 'feeble' example of the gay couple proviso scene. This charge is challenged by R.D. Hume who praises the scene for being more 'real' than those between more sprightly gay couples like Celadon and Florimell.³³ The scene is obviously a version of the popular proviso scene and Courtine and Sylvia 'the fair, the witty, the ill-natured' (IV.164) types of the gay couple. However, the scene and the characters are variants on the more usual model and to judge them by the standards of Celadon and Florimell is to fail to note the twist Otway is giving to such scenes.

In the sequel play we will see the ugly results of this proviso scene in the wretched marriage of Courtine and Sylvia. It is unlikely that Otway had already planned a sequel but in portraying their marriage as a failure in The Atheist he is only following the ground he has prepared here. Although the scene is realistic in its appreciation of the highly commercial nature of marriage at that period,³⁴ it goes well beyond realism in its exaggerated depiction of

32 W. McBurney points to the similarity between 'Aquilina's whip as a cure for Antonio's canine misbehaviour' and the threat by Sylvia's maid to whip the 'ungovernable curr' (V.22) Courtine, 'Otway's Tragic Muse Debauched: Sensuality in Venice Preserv'd', p.384, footnote 11. However, McBurney does not go on to note the connection between Courtine and Sylvia's erotic sheep and shepherdess games and Jaffeir's submission to Belvidera when he tells her to 'Come, lead me forward now like a tame Lamb' (IV.87). As a gloss on this scene Sylvia and Courtine's behaviour draws attention of the sensuality and perversity of the image.

33 John Harrington Smith, The Gay Couple in Restoration Comedy (1948 reprinted New York 1971), pp.106-07, and R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.101.

34 For a discussion of the increasingly commercial nature of marriage contracts see H.J. Habakkuk's article, 'Marriage Settlements in the Eighteenth Century', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 4th series, 32, (1950), pp.15-30.

Courtine's submission to Sylvia. Here the traditional courtship triumph of the woman over the man is carried to an absurd limit as the man is bound, threatened with whipping (V.28-29) and led off like a tame animal. Courtine and Sylvia's sexuality is clearly tinged with perversion with its overtones of sadism (the last person to offer to whip Courtine was Sir Davy (IV.446-47)) and bestiality. The 'realistic' financial considerations do not entirely explain these aspects of the relationship. In The Souldiers Fortune, as in Venice Preserv'd, Otway runs prostitution and animalism/sexual perversion as two parallel themes which illustrate the processes and results of man's fall from grace - a fall which Otway always most emphatically portrays with regard to man's sexual behaviour.

The destruction of romance and debasement of the pastoral effected in this scene continues in the scenes between Beaugard and his equally pastorally named Clarinda. Both Harrington Smith and Kenneth Muir have seen the fact that Beaugard and Lady Duncie were in love before his departure for France and her subsequent marriage as an attempt to excuse and glamorize adultery.³⁵ However, the reverse is the case: there is no glamorization but rather the destruction of these two characters' romantic illusions about each other. Clarinda's

35 Harrington Smith, The Gay Couple, p.107, Kenneth Muir, The Comedy of Manners, p.64. R.D. Hume points out that the prior love of a wife for her gallant occurs in a number of Restoration comedies, while the foolish behaviour of husbands is also a standard recipe for adultery. He cites Aphra Behn's The Roundheads, The False Count, The Lucky Chance and Mrs. Pix's The Spanish Wife; 'Otway and the Comic Muse' p.100. He could also have pointed to the Loveday/Eugenia plot in Ravenscroft's The London Cuckolds and Wittmore and Lady Fancy in Behn's Sir Patient Fancy. The strong tendency of Restoration comedy to satirise marriages of convenience through depictions of adultery, rather than to satirise marriage itself and condone adultery, is discussed by P.F. Vernon in 'Marriage of Convenience and The Moral Code of Restoration Comedy', pp.370-87.

may have been the image which kept Beaugard going in his years abroad (V.337-41) but Clarinda, as he says, is now 'lost' (V.342); there is Lady Duncce instead. The change indicated by the different names is deeper than Lady Duncce recognises when she reminds Beaugard that 'Clarinda I was call'd till my ill Fortune/Wedded me' (II.522-23). The sexual disgust associated with her marriage to Sir Davy spills over into her affair with Beaugard. In a post-coital conversation with her Beaugard expresses intense horror at her marriage:

... I came home, and found Clarinda
lost! - how could you think of wasting but a night in
the rank surfeiting arms of this foul feeding Monster? this
rotten trunck of a Man, that lays claim to you?

... you might have found out some
cleanlier shift to have thrown away yourself upon, than
nauseous old age and unwholesome deformity.

(V.341-44,351-53)

There is a strong sense here that Lady Duncce is herself soiled by her marriage. This is reinforced by the fact that Beaugard's words merely echo Lady Duncce's own descriptions of the horrors of living and sleeping with the filthy - physically as well as morally - Sir Davy (I.418-20,422-25,526-32). Lady Duncce's reply to Beaugard's strictures is revealing. She rejects Beaugard's suggestion that she might have married a young man:

Is youth then so gentle if age be stubborn?
Young-men like Springs wrought by a subtile work-man,
easily ply to what their wishes press 'em, but the desire
once gone that keep 'em down, they soon start streight
again, and no signs left which way they bent before.

(V.363-67)

She is providing here an epitaph on the dream of marriage with Beaugard (I.445-49): on the duration of the affair they are now having and, indeed, on the marriage of Courtine and Sylvia. Throughout the play the characters have been compared to animals but in many ways the most diminishing view of man is that which sees him merely as a mechanism. Lady Duncce's characterisation of sexual desire as a short-lived

mechanical reaction is both sad and crude. There can be no recapturing of their original romantic state for Beaugard and Lady Duncce. Their own cynicism and the constant presence of Sir Jolly 'peeping' and orchestrating their embraces with orgasmic gasps (III.332) indicates the unromantic and degraded nature of their present relationship. During their love-feast Beaugard compares himself and Lady Duncce to Antony and Cleopatra (V.574-75). The comparison, on the surface, has a certain probability; like the affair of Antony and Cleopatra theirs is an adulterous affair and Beaugard, like Antony, is a soldier. Sir Jolly, however, puts an end to such reveries, 'Pish! A Pox of Anthony and Cleopatra, they/are dead and rotten long ago' (V.576-77). The heroic note which is struck from time to time in their relationship is constantly deflated. Beaugard's high-flown rhetoric serves to mark the great distance between their own sordid affair and great love and to debase the ideal of love in terms of the reality of hurried sexual encounters.

Throughout the play references to the heroic manner function ironically. The central image of the play is that of the two soldiers, sometime heroes of the nation (I.199-202), but now reviled and penniless objects of scorn. Without troops to command, Beaugard and Courtine now employ military language in praise of Sir Jolly's 'Regiment of Rampant, Roar-^{Roysterous}ing Whores' (I.308-09, 300-02, II.12-14). The idea is extended in The Atheist when Beaugard storms his mysterious lady's castle with the aid of soldiers once in his command, Rapine and Plunder. In both plays the military language, inappropriately applied, highlights the unmilitary and unheroic nature of the heroes' mode of life. Bloody-Bones psychotic ravings and the fact that Sir Davy is convinced by displays like his and like his wife's (III.546-47) are also telling comments on the fatuity of the heroic manner.

Otway is doing more here than using heroic phrases, actions

or gestures to contrast with degraded reality. He is treating the heroic mode as a species of self-delusion. When Lady Duncce turns Beaugard's sword to her breast and offers to kill herself she sounds like Belvidera toying with Jaffeir's dagger (Venice Preserv'd, III.ii 68-71). In both cases the effect is similar, as is the meaning. What we see is a woman sexually drawn to her lover/husband's sword and longing, unambiguously, for penetration. Once again, The Souldiers Fortune, where the scene takes place against a background of sexual frustration (IV.83-84), can act as a gloss to Venice Preserv'd and indicates the sensuality of its images.³⁶ Otway's satiric methods and thematic concerns do not vary from comedy to tragedy. What changes is the degree of intensity with which the issues are pursued and the rig^{or} with which actions are pushed to their conclusions. The Souldiers Fortune skates close to the edges of tragedy with its depictions of ugly violence (IV.258-59) in the whole sub-plot of the murder. In avoiding tragedy, it produces an effect of anti-climax; there are no rapes, no murders and no ghost - just common or garden adultery.

Most tellingly this deflation into anti-climax is applied to Beaugard and Courtine's whole image of themselves as soldiers; soldiers who have enjoyed good fortune. In Act IV (the Act in which Otway had introduced anti-pastoral elements in Friendship in Fashion and Caius Marius), Beaugard and Courtine discuss the differences between the life they are obliged to lead now and the 'glorious days' (IV.9) they have enjoyed in the past. The scene involves a reverie over the pleasures and fulfillment of military life and a strong sense of the frustration and humiliation of their present life:

³⁶ See footnote 32.

Ah, Courtine, must we be always idle? must we never see our glorious days again? when shall we be rowling in the Lands of Milk and Honey; incampt in large luxuriant Vineyards, where the loaded Vines Cluster about our Tents, drink the rich Juice, just prest from the plump Grape, feeding on all the fragrant golden Fruit that grow in fertile Climes, and ripen'd by the earliest vigor of the Sun?

(IV.8-15)

Courtine adds his memories of champagne and good friends to the picture (IV.16-27). The friends add a note of honour to the scene, 'Fellows that would speak truth boldly, and/were proud on't, that scorn'd flattery, loved honesty, for/'twas their portion' (IV.24-26). Against this the soldiers set their life back in England. Here the term 'friend' can only be applied wryly to men such as their pimp Sir Jolly, their 'dear Friend and intimate' (IV.78). They live in enforced idleness, sleeping like 'Drones' (IV.29) and great men ignore their claims for reward for duty and cynically urge 'patience' on them (IV.38-42). In their daily lives they are forced to fawn over and flatter their creditors (IV.57-71) - since here honesty cannot be their 'portion'.

There are various points which seriously qualify Beaugard and Courtine's images of felicity. An obvious irony which is worked into Beaugard's speech (IV.8-15) is that what Beaugard is describing as the life of employment is a life of total idleness and sensual abandon. In fact, his 'Lands of Milk and Honey' sound less like the biblical promised land and more like Spenser's Bower of Bliss (Faerie Queene, Bk. II, Canto 12, 54-56) or the legendary land of Cockaigne. The sensual basis of Beaugard's images of paradisaical lands is confirmed when he greets Sir Jolly by enquiring after his chances of sleeping with Lady Dunce, 'what news from Paradise Sir Jolly?/Is

there any hopes I shall come there to Night?' (IV.128-29).³⁷ Later, Sir Jolly, Beaugard and Courtine withdraw into an inner room to drink, Sir Jolly instructing the drawer that they are only to be interrupted by 'Whores and Bottles' (IV.198). Beaugard, seeing the room with bottles laid out in it, describes it as 'the land of Canaan now in/ little' (IV.200-201). As Beaugard's earlier language indicates - 'large luxuriant Vineyards ... loaded Vines ... drink the rich Juice' - his promised land has a not inconsiderable basis in drink.

Otway had a reputation for his love of drinking³⁸ but in both Friendship in Fashion and The Poets Complaint of His Muse he displays disgust over drunken debauchery.³⁹ In his poem 'Epistle to R.D. from T.O.',⁴⁰ the poet dreams of an Eden which bears some resemblance to Beaugard's idyll. The poet moves through a fertile summery landscape and has for his content good friends, 'A generous Bottle, and a Lovesome She' (63). Here, (or rather in bed with the lovesome she)

37 Although this joke may be interpreted as an ironic adjustment of language to Sir Jolly's level, it only echoes Beaugard's earlier description to Courtine of his frustrated sexual encounter with Lady Dunce, the 'Woman [his] Soul is most fond of' (IV.82): 'I was this Evening just entering upon the Pallace of all/Joy, when I met with so damnable a disappointment' (IV.83-84).

38 See Gildon's description of Otway: 'He was a Jovial Companion, and a great Lover of the Bottle, and particularly of Punch; the last thing he made before his death, being an excellent Song on that Liquor', The Lives and Characters of the English Dramatic Poets (1699), p.107.

39 See Goodvile on his drunkenness (III.1-4) and Sir Noble's drunken buffonery (II.543-66, V.224-36) and The Poets Complaint of His Muse, 4, 85-95.

40 R.D. was Richard Duke, who wrote an Epilogue to The Atheist as well as two verse epistles to Otway, one in Latin and one in English. Both were published in Poems by the Earl of Roscomon ... Together with Poems by Mr. Richard Duke (London 1717). Otway's verse epistle to Richard Duke was published in Tonson's Miscellany Poems of 1684. R.G. Ham dates all three poems to early 1682 from Duke's references to the visit of the court to Cambridge, a visit by the Queen having occurred at that time, Otway and Lee, p.176.

'no vexatious cares come near his head' (92), words which recall Beaugard's injunction to the drawer to shut the door 'that neither cares, nor/necessity may peep in upon us' (IV.202-03). In the poem the dream is^{an} insubstantial escape from the harsh reality which comes with the dawn as the poet awakes to his actual situation: 'No grove, no freedom, and what's worse to me,/No friend' (119-120). The dream, however, is not just dispelled by the dawn, but by 'Reason, the honest Counsellor' (iii) who with 'res'lute vertue' (112) dissolves the court of Fancy which the poet had entered. The dream of bliss, in fact, is the product of 'fickle' Fancy (103), helped by 'Will, that Bully of the mind' (106) and the 'Follies' which 'wait on him in a troop behind' (107). This pattern of deluding dream and harsh awakening also occurs in The Poets Complaint of His Muse, where the poet, having succumbed to the enticements of his 'deceitful Muse' (4,99), finds that 'too long [he'd] slept, and was too late awake' (6,168). Again he awakes to solitude and poverty (6,170-73).

Variants on this pattern are used in The Souldiers Fortune and illustrate both the harsh nature of reality and the quality of the idyll. For Courtine after he has, very drunkenly, left the 'land of Canaan ... in little' there is the high-spirited assault on Sylvia's chamber, followed by his humiliating dawn awakening. Courtine has already shown a streak of cowardice as he hastily climbs up the wall to safety in response to cries of murder and for help (IV.544-46). The ignominy of his situation, tied up in Sylvia's room, and the gap between this and his image as a soldier, is stressed by Sylvia's mocking words as she calls him an 'enchanted Knight' and a 'valiant Captain' (V.13-14,16).

At first when Courtine awakes he imagines he must be in a brothel (V.3) but when Sylvia enters he recognises that he is in her 'limbo' (V.18). The phrase reminds one that when he hung on the

rope outside her window he described himself as being in 'Erasmus Paradise between/Heav'n and Hell' (IV.536-37). Whether it is Sylvia's chamber which represents heaven is questionable since a few lines earlier Courtine had described her window as 'Hell-door,/ and my damnation's in the inside' (IV.513-14). Either way reality is less dramatic than Courtine's drunken illusion. Reality is money and marriage with sex on Sylvia's terms. Exit the 'valiant Captain' and enter the obedient lamb. What we are watching here is a transformation process and the end to illusion. Courtine's fortune is equivocal and limbo is an appropriate term to describe the place he has found for himself.

For Beaugard there is the dawn conversation with Lady Dunce which acknowledges the loss of Clarinda. Further, from their conversation a very different image of the idyll of military life emerges as Lady Dunce paints a much more realistic picture of the soldier's fortune:

What think you now of a cold wet March over
the Mountains, Your men tir'd, your Baggage not come up,
but at night a dirty watry Plain to Encamp upon, and
nothing to shelter you, but an old Leager Cloak as tatter'd
as your Colours? is ~~not this much~~ better now than lying
wet and getting the Sciatica?
(V.331-36)

Beaugard does not deny the veracity of this account. He now describes his life in the army as one of 'Fatigue' and 'solitude' (V.337,339) which was only alleviated by thoughts of his Clarinda (V.337-41). Even granted the flattery necessary to a lover, his words have a sombre ring of truth. What this suggests is a life which is constantly sustained by delusions. In the army Beaugard dreams of his Clarinda, in reality the despoiled wife of a filthy old man; in civilian life he dreams of his 'glorious days' in the army which was in reality a cold, exhausting and lonely existence. Not only are his dreams false in the sense of not being true but, at a deeper level,

they are shown to be false in the sense that they are inadequate. Beaugard's visions of felicity, 'rowing in the lands of Milk and Honey' or, more obviously, making love to Lady Duncce, are base and sensual. The application of religious language to these idylls underlines their lack of any type of spirituality. Beaugard's sensuality and materialism make his transformation into a stud, a male prostitute, inevitable. The interaction of his brand of idealism and the ugly reality of a base and commercial world results in the process of human degradation we witness in the play.

The whole structure of the last Act is a series of anti-climaxes. Apart from the disenchantment associated with the two soldiers' affairs as the element of romance is exorcised, there is Otway's customary refusal to provide a satisfactory 'happy' ending. Instead there is a series of actions which peter away. Beaugard and Lady Duncce's triumphant love-feast is interrupted and turned into a sordid confrontation with the husband. Sir Davy's devil-ridden visions turn into a laughable misreading of reality; his attempt to transfer his guilt onto his neighbour is thwarted and, in many ways, Beaugard's triumph over him is thwarted by Sir Davy's eager acceptance of his humiliation. The news that Courtine and Sylvia are to be married is treated with general uninterest. Sir Jolly evinces disgust and refuses to have anything to do with it (V.716-18); Sir Davy merely accepts it as one more blow to his status (V.719-23) only interrupting his sick hilarity to put a rhyming curse on them (V.725-26). Beaugard briefly congratulates Courtine but his main concern is his relationship with Sir Davy and Lady Duncce (V.728-33). Beaugard is left in possession of the lady having threatened her husband with the exposure of his murder plot against him (V.693-98). This in itself is odd and disquieting but any sense that this arrangement represents anything lasting is weakened

by Lady Duncce's anxious words to her husband, 'Can you, my Dear, forgive me one misfortune?' (V.701). This is Lady Duncce's last speech and the question which is responded to by Sir Davy with more mad hilarity is not really answered (V.702-05). The play concludes with a speech by Sir Davy in which, like Goodvile at the end of Friendship in Fashion, he turns outwards from the stage to the audience. Only Sir Davy does not warn his audience about trusting their wives; more disturbingly, he claims kinship with the audience (V.740-41).

The play has worked to unpeel and reveal the nature of both reality and illusion. Friendship in Fashion was an angry and bitter play but anger is an inadequate word to describe the mood of The Souldiers Fortune. There is no longer a sense of surprise and outrage at hypocrisy and corruption, rather there is a more mature concern with the nature and quality of life under such conditions. The Souldiers Fortune is a play about disillusionment and is itself an exercise in disillusionment.

III

LATER COMEDY

ii

THE ATHEIST: OR, THE SECOND PART OF THE SOLDIER'S FORTUNE

Otway's next comedy and last surviving play is The Atheist. This is an intricate and complex play and Otway's most ambitious comedy. His other comedies are clearly related to his tragedies in terms of character types, language, situations and themes, but they emerge as works of lesser density. In The Atheist, on the contrary, there is no lack of density. The problem is to sort out the patterns contained in the labyrinthine plots and assign appropriate significance to the complex symbolism of names and actions. The play's complexity has usually been condemned as mere confusion. Ham sums the play up as a 'cynical loose-jointed thing',¹ Kenneth Muir has described the second half of the play as 'absurdly confused'² and even Hume, who admires the work, describes the last two acts as 'difficult to follow'.³ Critical analysis can,

1 R.G. Ham, Otway and Lee, p.205.

2 K. Muir, The Comedy of Manners, p.65.

3 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.110. Further adverse comments on the play may be found in Nicoll, A History of English Drama, I, where he briefly notes that 'The Souldiers Fortune was continued in The Atheist but in a not very satisfactory way'; p.258 and Harrington Smith in The Gay Couple, where the play is described as 'an aggregate of cheap romance and cheap farce', pp.106-07.

I believe, show that the play, although complex, is coherent; it is worth noting that in performance the disguises and fights of the final acts present no difficulties in comprehension to the audience.⁴

Hume's discussion of the play in 'Otway and the Comic Muse' is the most sustained and penetrating study of the play. However, it does little more than label some of Otway's techniques, most notably his use of inversion. T.B. Stroup has already described the world the play shows as 'a world turned upside down'.⁵ Hume goes further in identifying some (but not all) of the inverted areas: the role reversal of Beaugard and his father, Daredevil's fake atheism, Courtine and Sylvia's wretched marriage. To these can be added Lucrece's role and sex reversal when she dresses up as a man; the mocking and inversion of ceremonies, such as Courtine's speech on duelling (II.265-71), or the father's act in begging Porcia's blessing (V.1020-21). There are also comic inversions of language, as in Beaugard's description of marriage as a 'Blot ... in an honest Fellows/Scutcheon' (I.408-09). Hume relates the use of inversion to the play's 'broader themes' of 'loyalty, authority and rebellion',⁶ although the relationship is not clarified. For Hume and Stroup the inversions have a largely atmospheric, evocative effect, presenting in Stroup's words a picture of 'a world turned upside down' or in Hume's a 'despairing depiction of a meaningless world gone mad'.⁷ The pattern

4 The play was performed at the Vandyck Theatre, Bristol in March 1977 by The Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. I attended a performance with a group of students who had not read the play but found no trouble in understanding the action. The problems and confusions critics note in the last two acts are those inherent in reading any farce or play with farcical scenes. It looks confused on the page but is alright on the night.

5 T.B. Stroup, 'Otway's Bitter Pessimism', p.65.

6 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.109.

7 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.110.

of inversion is important and undoubtedly does create powerful images of disorder. However, it is also important to note Otway's other thematic patterns and to study their development and resolution. For in this play Otway does, for the first time, provide some sort of a resolution and conclude with some sense of an ending.

The Atheist was performed in the spring or early summer of 1683.⁸ That is, it was performed a little over a year after Venice Preserv'd and three years after The Souldiers Fortune. However, since it is a sequel play following the later fortunes of Beaugard, Courtine and Sylvia, it will be treated here rather than placed chronologically after Venice Preserv'd. The extent to which the play is a sequel has earned it some opprobrium with critics dismissing it as a weak attempt to cash in on the popularity of The Souldiers Fortune. Hume defends it from these charges by arguing that it hardly qualifies as a sequel with Courtine and Sylvia as the 'only significant carryover'⁹ and a wealthy Beaugard presenting us with an entirely new character from the down at heel soldier of the previous

8 The London Stage, I, gives a tentative date of July 1683 on the basis of an advertisement for the printed edition in The Observer, 8 August 1683 and working on the assumption that plays were performed about a month before they were published. In their article, 'Dating Play Premières from Publication Data', Judith Milhous and R.D. Hume suggest that if a play was published in August the two to four month lapse between performance and publication at this time indicates a performance in April or May, p.392. J.C. Ghosh in Works, I, p.60 suggests a performance date between June and November since he takes Beaugard's reference to 'the Plot' (I.290) to mean the Rye House Plot which was revealed in June 1683. However, it is just as possible that Beaugard was referring to the Popish Plot or in a general way to the plethora of plots engaging public interest at this time. A performance date in late May rather than April seems probable if one identifies the 'Perjur'd Wretch' of Richard Duke's Epilogue to the play with Sir Patience Ward who was convicted of perjury on 19 May 1683. Had the play been performed much later, in July as The London Stage suggests, Richard Duke's highly political Epilogue would surely have referred to the Rye House Plot rather than harking back to a trial in May.

9 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.104.

play. There seems to be no reason to defend the play from being a sequel - merely from being a weak sequel. The Atheist is a far better play than The Souldiers Fortune and in many ways a very different play. However, it is concerned with issues raised in the first play and continues and develops that play's use of the language of Romance literature to indicate man's capacity to falsify himself and his surroundings.

Just as The Souldiers Fortune in many ways prefigures Venice Preserv'd, introducing characters and situations which are reworked in the tragedy, The Atheist can also be related back to Venice Preserv'd as well as the earlier comedy. Like Venice Preserv'd, The Atheist opens dramatically onto a dispute between a father and son which challenges the father's authority over his children's marriage plans. There are obvious differences; Jaffeir is Priuli's son-in-law and Priuli is objecting to a marriage, while old Beaugard is trying to force his son into marriage. Nevertheless, the essential combat between age and youth over authority and submission is there as is the sense of the unnaturalness of the father's proceedings. The unnaturalness of Beaugard's father, however, stems not from his cruel assertion of paternal authority but from the picture which emerges of his delinquent exercise of his fatherly role (I.7-18,24-28,170-81). If Priuli is unnaturally stern and unfatherly, old Beaugard is unnaturally weak and willing to abandon his fatherhood to enter into a childlike relationship to his own son.

The inversion of their roles of father and son introduced in the first scene of the play is continued throughout the play. Old Beaugard treats his subsequent attempts to assert himself over his son as a rebellion (V.330-35,345-52). This 'rebellion' is in itself a burlesque and extreme version of paternal authority (IV.52-56) which extends to the father's willingness to conïve at his son's

murder (IV.78-87). Old Beaugard, in his refusal to assume the dignity of age and his plots against his son, follows the pattern of raging old age established in the character of Tissaphernes in Otway's first play, Alcibiades, and continued throughout most of his works. Friendship in Fashion, which does not feature fathers or old men, and The Orphan, in which Acasto is misguided but usually benevolent towards his sons, are the exceptions.¹⁰ In Don Carlos sexual jealousy leads Philip to plot against his son and in Caius Marius Caius Marius refuses to accept the limitations of age and unnaturally dominates his son. He even controls his son's sexual activity when he is married and he brings about his destruction as a consequence of his own destructive personal and political ambitions. In The Souldiers Fortune, both Sir Jolly and Sir Davy present versions of irresponsible and ungraceful old age and Sir Davy plays out the blood-lust of Otway's old men as he tries to have his youthful rival murdered. In Venice Preserv'd there are three unsatisfactory 'father'

10 The characteristic attempt of Otway's aged men to deny the temporal flow is however indicated in Paulino's descriptions of Acasto's challenge to mutability (The Orphan, I.30-34, 77-80). Acasto's rural retreat is in many ways an attempt to deny the forces of Nature and time. Significantly, as the 'childrens'' sexual maturity destroys the idyll Acasto's health wavers; by the end, as his world disintegrates, he collapses completely. In Titus and Berenice we are not told much about Titus's father, Vespasian, but it is interesting to note that it is Titus's assumption of the role of his dead father which necessitates the cruel act of emotional severance from Berenice which destroys him as a human being. In this case even a just (and dead) father can destroy his son. Otway's reactions to fathers and his sense of an almost vampiric relationship as the fathers drain their sons' youth has perhaps ultimately to be attributed to his own psychology - which is outside the scope of this study. The Cheats of Scapin does not greatly develop Molière's material but it is worth noting that both fathers in the play are unpleasantly tight-fisted and determined to marry their sons off against their wishes. In a fundamentally paternalistic society satirical portraits of fathers are commonplace but Otway's treatment of father figures goes beyond the norm.

figures: Priuli, Renault and Antonio, all of them elder statesmen who are emblematic, in their different ways, of failures of order and authority in the state, the family and personal relationships. Cruelty, lust and perversion disfigure their characters and render each unnatural. Old Beaugard, 'old Anti-Abraham, the Father of Unbelievers' (V.1002-03), as his titles here indicate, has an emblematic function in the play. An unfestive Falstaff figure,¹¹ old Beaugard is the last and, with respect to his total role reversal, the most extreme of Otway's depictions of sickness and disorder in authority.

Beaugard and Courtine are less recognisable versions of Pierre and Jaffeir in The Atheist than in The Souldiers Fortune. Daredevil, however, exhibits some of Pierre's characteristics in his espousal of libertine philosophy and contempt for orthodoxy. His dying 'confessions' can thus be contrasted with Pierre's fortitude in the face of an ugly death and his refusal to let a priest come near him. Daredevil is a degraded version of Pierre; a version which points out more blatantly the follies of libertinism, taking the comic path of ridicule rather than the tragic path of negation. Ghostly outlines of Pierre and Jaffeir can be discerned in Theodoret and Gratian with their cult of friendship and the muddle-headed heroics which constantly lead them into actions which are both violent

11 The father's whole anarchic manner associates him with Falstaff but more specifically his reference to 'Sack' (V.1014) and his jokes about his 'Malmsey Nose' (V.1013) recalls Falstaff's favourite drink and his jokes about Bardolph's nose. The scene in which Daredevil claims to have known the father all along, even when disguised as the Chaplain (V.1000-13), is similar to Falstaff's claims to have recognised the Prince when he and Poins set upon him in disguise, Henry IV, I (II.iv.258-59). Daredevil is not a Falstaffian figure; the scene rather indicates Otway's mental connection between the father and Falstaff.

and unsuccessful. Theodoret, in particular, has a language of sexual disgust associated with the 'rank Scent' (V.239) of sex which links his horror at Porcia's love for Beaugard with Pierre's disgust at Aquilina's affair with Antonio (V.P. I.193,II.3-10) and Jaffeir's revulsion at the thought of Renault's attempted rape of Belvidera (V.P. III.ii.245). In both plays the heroic imperative towards violent action can be seen as a recoil from sexuality. In this context, the recoil is not associated with temperance and restraint but self-disgust. Otway has subtly shifted the grounds for heroic action, treating heroic gestures as confused reactions to sexual emotions. As Porcia notes, Theodoret's raging speeches on her unchastity are the product of an obscene imagination; 'What a Load of Dirt is the Thick-Skull cram'd/withall, if the Tongue were able to throw it out!' (V.249-50). Theodoret's invective replaces rational speech but no speech of any sort is able to express the 'Load of Dirt' stored up in the darker areas of the mind. Noise and action replace words as Theodoret cries out and physically threatens Porcia (V.301). As always in Otway's plays, a failure in language indicates mental and physical disorder.

A further link between The Atheist and Venice Preserv'd is supplied by Porcia's name, which recalls Belvidera's claim to emulate the Roman Porcia's fortitude, loyalty and discretion (V.P. III.ii.62-71), a claim which she later recognises she cannot sustain (V.P. IV.391). The witty, indiscreet and unchaste Porcia of The Atheist is a telling comment on the fate of Roman virtues in the 'modern' world. Similarly, Lucrece, who vigorously pursues Beaugard and immodestly dresses herself up as a man, is another character whose name recalls a Roman matron legendary for her virtue, who was also one of Belvidera's ideal but unattainable models (V.P. III.ii.5-9). The Lucrece of The Atheist actually tries to arrange a rape when she arranges for Beaugard and

Sylvia to retire into a private room together. The Roman names, of course, have resonance without reference to Venice Preserv'd to underline the absence of Roman virtue in the 'modern' world. Their use here is an indication of Otway's preoccupation with the failure of human progress. These links and parallels do not make The Atheist a light-hearted version of Venice Preserv'd; it is rather that they demonstrate the seriousness underlying the farcical action. The Atheist is not anti-heroic where Venice Preserv'd was heroic; the critique of heroics has a similar basis in both plays.

As in Otway's previous three plays, The Atheist reviews various ways of viewing the world. The power of mental illusions of romance, heroics or libertinism, to blind and confuse is a major organising principle in the play of masks and disguises, inversion and phoney attitudes. Taking the main outlines of his love plot from the tale of the Invisible Mistress in Scarron's Comical Romance,¹² Otway follows the novella in both mocking and manipulating the standard patterns of Romance literature. The love plot revolves around Beaugard's attempts, which are eventually successful, to free his lady, Porcia, from a 'certain Enchanted Castle' (II.485). The 'Enchanted Castle' is her town house where she is guarded by her

¹² There were two English translations of Scarron's Le Roman Comique available to Otway. One by John Davies of Kidwelly, printed in 1665 and again in 1667, and an anonymous translation, Scarron's Comical Romance, Or: A Facetious History of a Company of Strowling Stage Players (1676). The Invisible Mistress love-trick was also used as part of a comic plot by Francis Fane in Love in the Dark: or, The Man of Business (1675) and by Edward Ravenscroft in The Wrangling Lovers (1677). Similarities in language indicate that Otway went to the 1676 translation of Le Roman Comique; see Lucrece's description of herself as 'not beneath (Porcia) in Beauty, Birth, or/Fortune' (II.351-52) and the Invisible Mistress description of herself (when pretending to be a rival) as 'not inferior to her, either in Beauty, Birth or Fortune', p.24.

brother-in-law, Theodoret, and his friend and her suitor, Gratian. Porcia, however, is not merely content to be rescued but submits Beaugard to a love-test. She has him captured and taken to her house, where he is kept prisoner in exotic and erotic surroundings complete with dancing blackamoor women and the traditional dwarf of legend. In these surroundings she meets him in disguise and unsuccessfully tempts him to break his word to Porcia. Like a true hero Beaugard passes the test, demonstrating that although he is not impervious to the promptings of the flesh he has his sensual impulses under control (IV.321-31,364-65). The test and the extent to which Beaugard passes it with flying colours is important in terms of the play's resolution. Significantly, Porcia's love-test is 'successful' as Sylvia's test of Courtine in The Souldiers Fortune was not. Sylvia's test aimed at humiliating Courtine (in this it was successful) and Courtine's unruly desires were only restrained by the fact that he was drunk and incapable and could be tied up by the girls. Beaugard's demonstration of self-restraint and fidelity to Porcia provides a more solid basis for their subsequent marriage.

The 'real' world crashes into the fictive world Porcia has created in Acts III and IV as, at the very height of the test, as Porcia having threatened Beaugard with death is now preparing to release him, Courtine bursts unceremoniously into the 'Enchanted' room. The language Porcia has been employing has been elevated, frequently moving into blank verse (IV.396-99,403-10,417-23). Illusion is shattered as Porcia's speech 'Be gone, for ever fly this' (IV.460) degenerates into 'squeaks' as Courtine enters swearing unromantically (IV.461). Courtine's own fictive world of 'the rarest Adventure' (IV.269) with an amorous stranger has just dissolved as the lady turned out to be a highly pregnant whore in the last stages of labour.

Porcia's house, in which Courtine and Sylvia also lodge, is a house of fact and fantasy. The scene-shifts and sudden entrances are in themselves a stage metaphor for the shifting perspectives of life which are charted. Thus Courtine and Sylvia enact in one room the bickering inanities and degrading deceptions of unhappy married life (IV.155-236) while Beaugard and Porcia play out in another room the romance of courtship. This double perspective on life and love is basic to the play's ironic techniques. The world of poetic fictions is constantly juxtaposed with the 'real' world; however, there are also moments when the two worlds are harmonised.

Courtine's entrance, soon to be followed by the maids bearing 'The finest chop-/ping Boy' (IV.505-06) and then by the entrance of the distraught and jealous Sylvia, signals an end to enchantment. The chaos of reality as Courtine sings and dances and Sylvia has hysterics (IV.546-50) is contrasted with the ordered, carefully planned confusions of Porcia's make-believe world. However, this intrusion of chaotic and sordid reality into the fictive world does not dismay Beaugard, who has maintained a double-vision on romance and reality throughout the 'enchanted' room scenes. His saving reality principle never deserts him, as it does the gullible and cowardly Daredevil, who is convinced by the artificial world he finds himself in and responds readily to both its terrors and promises of sensuality.¹³ Beaugard is mistaken as to the identity of the masked lady but, unlike Daredevil, he is never

13 Daredevil's grasp on reality is so tenuous that he is prepared to reinterpret his sense-data (III.625-28), while his sense of illusion is so strong that even after Courtine's intrusion into the scene he is able to hope that 'for ought I know, we may be still/enchanted' (IV.490-91). At this point scepticism becomes pure folly as in Lucian's depiction of Pyrrho in The Sale of Lives.

confused into accepting the distortions of time and place presented to him (III.611-14,620-24). Although Beaugard describes the rich surroundings in which he finds himself as 'a Paradise' (III.575), he employs poetic language ironically to distance himself from the carefully wrought effects. The very use of the indefinite article - 'a Paradise' - places the scene before him as distinct from Paradise itself.

Beaugard recognises that he is the victim of 'some Romantick design' (IV.283) and correctly identifies his surroundings and the servants as the trappings of a fictive world (III.592-94,599-600). It is his recognition that the scene before him is part of a plot which enables him to resolve to thwart the seductress and remain true to his lady (IV.283-87). He therefore passes the test by relying on his sense of reality, represented for him here by the character of his lively widow 'that loves Liberty as I do' (IV.330). Significantly, Beaugard loves Porcia before he has actually seen her face since she is masked when she accosts him in Act II, as she was when she approached him, antecedent to the play, in the Churchyard. Masks in Restoration comedy can always have (at least) two functions: to conceal personality or reveal it. As Mrs. Dainty points out to Horner in The Country Wife, 'women are least masked when they have the velvet/vizard on' (V.iv.97-98). In the first Act Beaugard describes to Courtine the beauty of the woman he is pursuing. When he has worked Courtine up into a state of sexual excitement with his description he admits it is entirely fictional; he has never seen her face (I.435-70). On one level this means that Beaugard is in love with a figment of his imagination. He tells Courtine that 'I love my own Pleasure so well, that I'll/Imagine all this, and ten times more, if it be possible' (I.469-70). But Béaugard's attraction to a lady whose face he has not seen can also suggest that he is drawn

to her by the gaiety and spirit of her personality rather than her physical attributes.¹⁴ His subsequent comments on Porcia do not concern her appearance or offer further speculations as to her appearance, they concern her ideas which coincide with his own (IV.328-31).¹⁵ Beaugard's affection for Porcia goes beyond those surface appearances which the play repeatedly demonstrates are deceptive and penetrates to the deeper reality of the heart's truths. That is why Beaugard is able to survive the love-test and resist the obviously sensual world created for him by Porcia. Otway, therefore, does not consistently debunk his romance materials. The love-test is a fictional device but it works and is valid. The contrivances of art are here tempered and harmonised with a firm and

- 14 Peter Holland has suggested that there was an extra joke, in the concealment of Porcia's appearance, for a Restoration audience who knew that Mrs. Barry was playing Porcia; since Beaugard's description of his ideal woman does not fit Mrs. Barry, The Ornament of Action, p.64. Although such a joke would fit in with the action -Beaugard imagines one type of beauty but gets another and is equally happy -it is an unnecessary elaboration and unconvincing. Antony Aston, it is true, describes Mrs. Barry as having 'darkish hair, light eyes', A Brief Supplement to Colley Cibber, Esq., His Lives of the Late Famous Actors and Actresses, (undated, c.1747), p.7. Beaugard's imaginary lady, on the other hand, has dark eyes and 'light Amber-brown' hair (I.442,446). However, despite Mrs. Barry's popularity, I am not convinced that the average Restoration theatre-goer would be sufficiently well acquainted with her to be sure of the precise shades of her eyes and hair or that the lighting in the theatres facilitated such discriminations. The point is simply that Beaugard gives a description of a conventional type of beauty. The lady he actually gets will be sufficiently attractive, from the stage at least, to prevent any sense of anti-climax. Whether the actress fitted the description or differed from it in some details is irrelevant; either way the point is that without knowing what she looks like Beaugard loves her. The joke, if it exists, is a private one of extra-dramatic significance.
- 15 Although Beaugard does not speculate to his friends any further on Porcia's appearance he does ask her what she looks like (II.68-74). He is, however, contented with her assurance that she is 'not very ugly' (II.81); delighted by her following descriptions of her tastes and attitudes (II.83-89,130-32).

profound sense of reality. With pleasing irony Beaugard's affection for Porcia, which was stimulated at first by the discovery that she shared his dislike of matrimony, is transformed into a desire to marry her. Marriage is both a social and a literary convention so that the marriage of Beaugard and Porcia satisfies our sense of their reality as lovers and the literary convention of the hero who survives an ordeal and wins the battle for his lady. Beaugard represents a norm for behaviour in the play and for the right relationship between fact and fantasy. Reality dominates fantasy - although fantasy may have a significant educative role.

Elsewhere in the play the world of romance, adventure and enchantment is evoked parodically and to demonstrate the characters' limitations and illusions. Courtine, conventionally enough, unites the illusory world of the Romances with the freedom of libertinism,¹⁶ pursuing his affairs under the guise of a 'wandering Knight' (III.458). Underlying Courtine's jesting pursuit of romance there lies a very serious attempt to recapture his image of himself as 'Courtine the/Gay, the Witty, and Unbounded' (I.262-63). His attempts light-heartedly^{to} manipulate the language of romance are a failure and constantly rebound on him, revealing the extent to which his personal ideal is false. When he tries to persuade Lucrece to unmask, telling her 'that Black Armour/upon your Face, . . . makes you look as dreadfully as the/Black Knight in a Romance' (II.316-18), she ripostes by swiftly unmasking him. He is not the suave lover he imagines himself to be but Courtine 'the Man that's married!' (II.324-25).

16 See Dale Underwood's discussions of the libertine manipulation of courtly conventions in Etherege and the Seventeenth Century Comedy of Manners (New Haven, Conn., 1957) and also John G. Hayman 'Dorimant and the Comedy of The Man of Mode', Modern Language Quarterly, vol. XXX (June 1969), pp.183-97.

The extent to which the ladies all know him is his undoing. Porcia 'knows' him (II.96) and responds tartly to his gallantry by insisting that he is certainly not the man she loves but is 'a Married-man, sweet Monsieur/Courtine' (II.94-95). Courtine tries to establish that the next masked lady he meets does not 'know' him (III.463-64) but it is in fact his wife Sylvia, whom he greets in the guise of a 'wandering knight'.

Courtine's sexual adventures are ludicrous and humiliating. The 'rarest Adventure' (IV.269) he sets out on with another mysterious lady turns into a nightmare when the lady falls into labour and then palms the child off on him as his own. His most ludicrously unromantic 'Romantic Adventure' (V.717) nearly leads him into climbing into bed with Daredevil; whose self-pitying moans he interprets as female cries of sexual frustration. In a beautiful piece of slap-stick based on mistaken identity we see how wilfully Courtine interprets his sensory experience in terms of his misguided imagination. The largeness of Daredevil's hand when he grasps it does not deter him or suggest to him that he is with a man; instead he lustfully cries that 'by the Rule/of proportion I'll warrant her a Swinger' (V.710-11). Courtine's final and most humiliating sexual adventure again depends on mistaken identity. He confuses Sylvia for Porcia and 'like a true Friend to/Love' (V.898-99) guards, with a drawn sword, the door of the room in which his wife is being debauched by his best friend. With beautiful but savage irony the end result of Courtine's attempts to involve himself in romantic ~~amours~~ is to ~~come~~ at his own cuckoldom.

Courtine's lack of self-knowledge lies at the root of his continual discomfort and his failure to interpret the world correctly. A striking example of his lack of personal insight and the shallowness of his libertine assurance is given in his attitude

towards duelling and cuckoldom. As Stroup notes, Courtine produces an excellent satire on the rules and conventions of duelling.¹⁷ He expounds to Beaugard the folly of a man, already injured by his wife's infidelity, exposing himself to the danger of death by fighting with his wife's seducer (II.261-71). However, by the end of the play Courtine very probably has been made a cuckold. Beaugard and Sylvia, each under the impression they are with someone else, (the Goodvile/Lady Squeamish situation repeated) have been closeted together quite long enough by the standards of Restoration comedy to have made love. Courtine's attitude to this is not one of urbane indifference, as Stroup implies, when he talks of Beaugard and Courtine's 'resignation to the way of the world, ... they accept the absurdities which enslave men'.¹⁸ Courtine is sarcastic and angry (V.931-32) and when Beaugard refuses to respond, simply and unconvincingly assuring him he has not been wronged, he turns to deliver an ugly diatribe to his wife (V.942-49). There is no easy acceptance of absurdity here. It is rather that the possibility of the kind of world weary libertine tolerance Stroup has described is revealed to be a shallow pose based on a failure to comprehend the emotional facts of the situation.¹⁹

The reiterations of the phrase, Courtine 'the Man that's married' (II.324-27), establish Courtine's real identity, which is

17 T.B. Stroup, 'Otway's Bitter Pessimism', p.64.

18 T.B. Stroup, as cited above, p.64.

19 Otway does not attack or debunk the institution of duelling in this play. When he pours scorn on Theodoret and Gratian's duelling propensities through Beaugard's scornful comments on them (II.255, III.315-19), it is not the fact that they wish to fight which makes them ridiculous but the fact that their cause is without honour. They are fighting in order to scare off admirers of Porcia and force her and her wealth into a marriage she does not care for. Courtine's inability to provoke Beaugard into a duel sets the seal on his humiliation as a man.

opposed to his fictional Don Juan image of himself. The reality of the marriage is extremely ugly. Courtine, as Porcia cruelly points out, sold himself to a 'Plantation, the Country, for Five thousand Pound' to his 'Cream-pot in the Country' (II.113,149). Such an arrangement is itself a distortion and falsification of marriage and can only breed evils.²⁰ Compensation for the lack of romance and love in the marriage is sought in two ways: in the use of false endearments 'Courtee' and 'Sylvee' (IV.217-18) which attempt to gloss over the reality of the breach between them and in both partners' search for sexual fulfilment outside marriage. However, their attempts to find romance elsewhere lead them both into false relationships. They are both paired off with members of their own sex in the last Act as Courtine makes advances to Daredevil and Sylvia makes assignations with Lucrece. There are no grounds here for any harmony between the contrivance of art and the flux of reality. Art becomes artifice, misleading and deluding, as the use

20 Contemporaries could, it seems, interpret the play as a satire on marriage. The poem 'The Cornuted Beaux: or A Satyr Upon Marriage' (in The Remains of Thomas Brown (London,1718)) is a conversation between Beaugard and Courtine in which Courtine describes the misery of his marriage with Sylvia in terms taken from the play. The poem ends with Beaugard's praise for a promiscuous libertine State of Nature. However, as in The Souldiers Fortune, it is materialistic attitudes toward marriage which are satirised and deplored (II.111-14, 135-42) and not the institution of marriage itself. Both R.D. Hume and A.H. Scouten see the marriage of Courtine and Sylvia in The Atheist as a disappointing view of reality after the hopes for the couple in The Souldiers Fortune; see Hume's 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.104, Scouten in The Revels History of Drama in English, V, p.205. However, the marriage we see in The Atheist is the one we might expect from their courtship. The flirtatious but essentially perverse scene in which Sylvia led Courtine off as her sheep (The Souldiers Fortune, V.181-82) is repeated in bitter and ugly terms as Sylvia drags Courtine off to make love to her and he describes himself as a trapped animal (III.555-57). The Atheist merely points out the obvious consequences of Courtine's degrading sale of himself in the previous play.

of inversion and mistaken identity indicates. Sylvia and Courtine are locked into a series of false positions, in their marriage and their attempts to escape from marriage, and there can be no 'solution' to their troubles.

The absurdity and unreality of Courtine and Sylvia's amorous activities are emphasised by the identification of their quests for romance and the illusory world of Don Quixote (II.100-03, 106-18, V.51-53). These identifications are made by Porcia and Lucrece the main manipulators of reality and appearance in the play. Reactions to their manipulations provide a kind of touchstone for judging the characters' moral strength. Daredevil literally collapses as he is caught up in Porcia's plots and takes to his bed imagining he is dying. Sylvia and Courtine run wildly through the mazes created by Porcia and Lucrece, and Theodoret and Gratian respond with inflated heroics to the situation created by Porcia's love for Beaugard and her plots to meet him. Like Don Quixote, these characters have lost touch with reality. But there is no ambiguity here over whether or not the dream world has more beauty and validity than the real world. The ugliness of the real world has been created by their own actions and their pursuit of illusions only intensifies that ugliness. Illusion becomes destructive and there is a strong streak of violence in their activities. Fights are generated, two characters wounded and Theodoret's linguistic violence toward Porcia threatens to transform itself into physical violence. Beaugard is an exception here: in Otway's main source, The Comical Romance, Scarron wrote that his hero is not of 'Don Quixote's humour' and does not indulge in 'Extravagance'.²¹ The same could be said of

21 The Comical Romance (1676), p.25.

Beaugard whose control over his imagination distinguishes him from the other characters.

Theodoret and Gratian are deeply enslaved by their fictional world although they too can mock the vocabulary of Romance literature (III.564-65, V.335). Their conversation with each other in Act III (345-404) is mostly in blank verse and they adhere to the conventions of heroic friendship as they praise each others virtues (III.345-47, 368). The self-centred and self-refering world of the heroic is exposed as the narrowness and meanness of Theodoret and Gratian's vision is revealed. Theodoret's description of his brother's dying desire that his widow should marry his best friend and noble rival Gratian (III.353-60) contains an inner core of ugliness. The heroic debt to friendship and the dying man's magnanimity is challenged by the fact that the generous act depends upon treating the woman as an object, a 'Legacy' (III.358), which can be bequeathed to another (III.359). Porcia's wit and vigorous individuality amply points out the absurdity and cruelty of such an arbitrary disposition of human life.

As in The Orphan, the heroic inclination towards idealisation is twinned with a savage satirical ability to see the world in terms of sexual depravity and corruption.²² Porcia's refusal to accommodate herself to Theodoret's heroic patterns elicits a series of virulent anti-feminine diatribes (III.370-76, IV.675-79, V.236-41, 246-47). Her refractory behaviour is characterised in terms of her wanton sexuality

22 Unlike the satirical outbursts in The Orphan Theodoret's satires are not self-refering. Otway's tragic characters are endowed with that germ of self-awareness which can render the world tragic. The comic characters, however, are limited in their self-perception so that satire remains external and in a sense manageable.

and the vicious lust of all women - 'Their Sex is one gross Cheat' (III.370). In such speeches Theodoret sounds like Polydore attacking Monimia (The Orphan, I.340-51) and Castalio brooding on woman's sinful nature (The Orphan, III.579-94). We are not shown Theodoret lusting after Porcia but Gratian, who mourns that 'Woman is but a weak/Vessel' (IV.13-14), wishes nevertheless to wed Porcia. The sense that Theodoret is, in fact, reacting to his own sexual feelings is indicated by Porcia's criticisms of him. He is worse than a 'Beast' (V.242), foul minded and foul mouthed (V.249-50). Theodoret's rages and bursts of heroism are signs of his extreme emotional instability; in the extremes of his temperament there is no middle ground.

The improbability of Theodoret and Gratian's brand of heroism is further demonstrated by their uneasy alliance with the father. Actions which involve such allies cannot claim elevated intentions. Ironically, it is the father, who whatever his sins does not lack realism, who most effectively calls their bluff. As Theodoret insults and manhandles Porcia the father protests 'Is this the Issue of your Honourable/Pretensions?' (V.312-13). Theodoret responds to this with a dramatic cry of 'Et tu Brute!' (V.314), which reminds one once again of the classical exemplars which provide a kind of moral framework for the play. The father's reaction to this of 'Brute me no Brutes;^{Friend} Oonds/I am a Man' (V.315-16) comically deflates Theodoret's stance and by interpreting 'Brute' as animal makes a telling comment on the degradation of classical virtue.

R.D. Hume has seen Theodoret and Gratian as representing an 'important but incongruous contrast' to the world of 'deceit, intrigue and appetite'.²³ Their ineffectuality then becomes a comment on the

23 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.110.

triumph of deceit, intrigue, appetite. Theodoret and Gratian are, however, bound into and part of that debased world and their ineffectualness is not a despairing gesture towards the failure of idealism in an ugly world but a harder depiction of the ways in which ideals have become corrupted. Their names are significant since both Theodoret and Gratian were church fathers. Gratian was a twelfth century cleric whose Decretium Gratiani laid the foundations of canon law. Theodoret was a fourth century Bishop of Cyrrhus whose most famous work Graecarum Affectionum Caratio²⁴ was a survey and defence of Christian ideas of the nature of God compared to pagan views. Theodoret and Gratian's names are therefore suggestive of the triumph of Christian philosophy and Christian law over pagan secular law and civic morality. The triumphs of the pagan world are recalled by Porcia and Lucrece's names, Porcia, Cato's daughter, perhaps suggesting law, Lucrece, stern civic morality. The two sets of names thus represent high points in human civilization and the idea of human progress as Christianity triumphs over paganism. The Theodoret and Gratian of the play, however, are more foolish and more dangerous than Porcia and Lucrece. The implications of this are not simply of an inversion of values but an actual regression as in the 'modern' world even pagan values appear incongruous and debased. The father as 'old Anti-Abraham, the Father of Unbelievers' fits into this pattern, which suggests a reversal of human progress.

Daredevil, the cowardly and insincere atheist, whose creed provides the play's title, links up the themes of the illusory nature of romance, the limitations of libertinism and the decline of faith and moral values. Critics have been at rather a loss to explain

24 Theodoret's collected works had been published in Paris in 1642.

Daredevil's prominence in the play and the title. Hume explains him accurately but inadequately in terms of the play's pattern of inversion; he is an atheist who turns out to be a believer.²⁵ Apart from that Hume refers to J.C. Ross's explanation that Daredevil is in part, at least, a satirical attack on Thomas Shadwell.²⁶ Ross's accumulation of evidence for a quarrel between the two dramatists which may be traced back to Friendship in Fashion is convincing, as is his explanation, in terms of rumours circulating about Shadwell, for Daredevil's dramatically irrelevant complaints at being indicted as a Catholic (II.399-404). However, this identification alone does not explain Daredevil's prominence. In Venice Preserv'd Otway included a personal satire on the Earl of Shaftesbury in the character of Antonio. However, Antonio's perverse characteristics can also be traced to earlier characters in Otway's dramas. Antonio is not simply a portrait of the Earl of Shaftesbury, he is also a regular 'type' character and apart from his specific political purposes fulfils an important function in the structure of the play. It seems reasonable to suppose that if Daredevil is important it is not simply because he resembles Shadwell in some points and Otway disliked Shadwell.

It is relevant to note that Daredevil's rational atheism, death-bed 'conversion', cowardice and love of 'Ballum rancum' - naked dancing - (I.360-65, III.578-79), suggests that the Earl of Rochester

25 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.108.

26 J.C. Ross, 'An Attack on Thomas Shadwell in Otway's The Atheist', Philological Quarterly, LII (1973), pp.753-60.

is also referred to in this portrait.²⁷ Rochester was repeatedly portrayed in Restoration drama²⁸ as the very type of the libertine. If Daredevil is also Rochester there is more point in Otway's cruel and intense exposure of the follies and weakness of a seemingly bold free-thinker. He is not simply attacking a fellow poet in one of the period's endless poetomachias; he is dismembering a legend. Daredevil as a sexual libertine and free-thinker typifies the degradation of morals and beliefs indicated by the other characters. Otway's achievements in the creation of Daredevil are comparable to his demythologising of the rake in the character of Goodvile. In Goodvile he succeeded in creating a character who was virile, intelligent and apparently attractive to women but also thoroughly

- 27 Rochester's Deism (in seventeenth century views, atheism) and death-bed conversion were widely known through Gilbert Burnet's popular publication Some Passages of the Life and Death of the Right Honourable John, Earl of Rochester (1680). Rochester's exploit of frisking naked in Woodstock Park was also widely known. His friend, Henry Savile wrote to him about the rumours of the event which had reached London, see The Rochester-Savile Letters, edited by J.H.Wilson (Columbus 1941), letter XIII, p.45. The event was also referred to, in shocked terms, by Robert Harley in a letter to his father, see The Collected Works of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, edited by John Hayward (London 1926), p.XLI. Rochester's cowardice is referred to in the Earl of Mulgrave's Essay upon Satire (1679), lines 244-49, Carr Scrope's In Defence of Satyr (1677), lines 50-57, in Anthology of Poems on Affairs of State, edited by G. de F. Lord, Vol.I and perhaps in Rochester's own self-castigating poem, To the Postboy - 'Son of a whore, God damn you!'. Rochester's family and friends were active in suppressing satirical references to him. They had Crowne cudgelled for his portrait of Rochester in City Politiques (written 1682, performed 1683) and Hume speculates that they may have delayed publication of Lee's The Princess of Cleve (1680, published 1689): see 'The Satiric Design of Nathaniel Lee's The Princess of Cleve', Journal of English and Germanic Philology, LXXV (Jan, April 1976), pp.117-38. If Daredevil is in part a portrait of Rochester the activities of Rochester's defenders might be being referred to in the letter of Dedication where Otway mentions the 'very industrious' enemies who have attacked the play, Works, II, 293, lines 19-23.
- 28 Rochester is portrayed sympathetically as Dorimant in The Man of Mode, ambiguously as 'Rosidore' and Nemours in The Princess of Cleve and critically as Artail and Florio in City Politiques. Otway makes a new and damning contribution to this gallery by portraying him as a fool.

and convincingly unpleasant. In Daredevil Otway successfully convinces us of the folly of an intelligent man and the poverty of feeling and substance in someone who is also colourful and amusing.

Daredevil's character is very fully outlined by Beaugard at the beginning of the play and before we have seen him. Beaugard describes his spiritual hypocrisy; he has 'Doubts enow to turn to all Religions, and yet would/fain pretend to be of none' (I.338-39), and his spiritual fears, 'he never feels as much as an Ague-fit, but he's/afraid of being damn'd' (I.341-42). We are also given a taste of Daredevil's modish rationalism (I.349-52) and told of his love of debauchery (I.360-65). However, Beaugard also pays condescending tribute to his more attractive qualities; 'barring his Darling-Topick, Blasphemy' he is 'a Companion pleasant enough' (I.368-69). Beaugard's description is accurate. Daredevil exhibits all the qualities Beaugard has outlined. When he appears on stage he does not present any surprises. This replication of words and action could be regarded as wasteful but it serves two important functions. Beaugard's words firmly 'place' Daredevil and Daredevil's actions illustrate Beaugard's discernment. Beaugard is a far more reliable judge of character than most of Otway's heroes - this in itself is a very significant development. Daredevil provides a foil to Beaugard; Beaugard knows him but Daredevil, who admits that he feels happiest about his ideas when he has numbed his mind with drink (II.460-64), does not know himself, his surroundings or anyone else. His imperception makes him the perfect comic butt. Daredevil's fundamental naivety is wittily demonstrated as the father plays dice with him, loses and outrageously refuses to hand over the winnings to Daredevil (III.195-223). As in Jonson's comedy, the devil is an ass.

Daredevil's naivety and lack of self-knowledge form the

basis of Otway's critique of libertinism. As R.D. Hume notes, 'most of Daredevil's conversation turns on denials of conventional authority and restrictions'.²⁹ His solution to the human and social problems the play presents is wonderfully simple. When Beaugard hands over to him the problem of Courtine's unhappy marriage he calmly suggests murdering Sylvia, 'Poison her! Ay, what would you do with her else, /if you are weary of her?' (II.443-44). The solution is, of course, no solution and Courtine and Sylvia are left to work out their own complex patterns of misery. Daredevil's most breath-taking denials of conventional authority are contained in his attitude towards religion.

The problem of belief runs throughout the play and is introduced in the first Act as the father, in response to Beaugard's denial of his authority to marry him off, asks 'What Religion are you of?' (I.75-76). After some evasion Beaugard commits himself to a guarded expression of his beliefs,

... I am of
The Religion of my Country, hate Persecution and Penance,
love Conformity, which is going to Church once a Month,
well enough; resolve to make this transitory Life as
pleasant and delightful as I can; and for some sober
Reasons best known to my self, resolve never to marry.
(I.94-99)

This is not elevated doctrine and the last sentence dismisses one of the sacraments of the Church but it is tolerant, humane and orderly. It is a livable doctrine and provides a low-level but acceptable norm. Beaugard's emphasis on conformity is significant since Daredevil's main argument against religion is based on the weakness of religious injunctions compared with the strength of secular law (II.392-99).

29 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.110.

The father's question to Beaugard is echoed in the second Act as Courtine asks Daredevil 'But what Religion are you of?' (II.380). The question is again repeated, this time by Daredevil to the Dwarf in the third Act, 'what Religion is the Lady of?' (III.644). These repetitions help to build up the conviction that this is an important question - and one which is never satisfactorily answered. Beaugard's reply is highly limited, the Dwarf's is evasive - 'That's a secret' (III.645) - and Daredevil's is inadequate: the 'Religion of the Inner-Temple' (II.381). Courtine presses him to expand on this by putting forward what is in many ways a libertine argument that religion is a form of social control,

'Tis certainly the fear of Hell, and hopes of Happiness, that makes People live in Honesty, Peace, and Union one towards another. (II.387-89)

Courtine's fear/rewards view of religion is far cruder than Beaugard's attitude towards religion with its recognition of the 'transitory' and imperfect nature of earthly life. Courtine's position, by treating religion simply as a means of social control, lays itself open to Daredevil's objection that religious injunctions are insufficient,

Fear of Hell! No, Sir, 'tis fear of Hanging. Who would not steal, or do murder, every time his Fingers itch't at it, were it not for fear of the Gallows? Do not you, with all your Religion, swear almost as often as you speak? break and profane the Sabbath? lie with your Neighbours Wives? and covert their Estates, if they be better than your own? Yet those things are forbidden by Religion, as well as Stealing and Cutting of Throats are. (II.392-99)

The obvious answer to that is that even with the law stealing and murder take place. Otway effectively demonstrates this and refutes Daredevil's logic by revealing the inadequacy of the law through the activities of Theodoret and Gratian.

Theodoret as Porcia's legal guardian does represent the world of legal authority which Daredevil has argued enforces obedience. As

a representative of law Theodoret can only demonstrate the way in which any purely human institution is subject to the passions and weaknesses of man. Further, a purely human concept of law and obedience is refutable in terms of redefinitions of human rights. Porcia illustrates this as she revolts against Theodoret's treatment of her. As she tells Sylvia, she is 'transported ... With hopes of Liberty ... an/Englishwoman's natural Right' (V.430-31). Appeals to Nature and liberty are always suspect in Otway's works: Pierre's 'great Call of Nature' (Venice Preserv'd, I.162) is a call to murder and rebellion while in Caius Marius the frequent cries of liberty were incitements to anarchy and disorder. Porcia gives her claim topical political significance by citing the example of the current political crisis. Natural right, she points out, has been their masculine relations' justification for rebellion:

Do not our Fathers,
Brothers and Kinsmen often, upon pretence of it, bid fair
for Rebellion against their Sovereign; And why ought not
we, by their Example, to rebel as plausibly against them?
(V.431-34)

Porcia's scepticism over the claim she is enunciating here is indicated by her ironic qualification 'upon pretence of it'; Porcia is all the heroine we are going to get and she is not a political subversive although her remarks do indicate the basic flaw in Daredevil's position. Reliance on secular authority alone does not ensure social cohesion. On the contrary, it opens up the way to disorder since without a higher authority men are free to dispute their natural rights; their rights as men rather than as Christians.

Otway does more than demonstrate that secular law is by itself inadequate. He also further reveals the weak and illusory nature of Daredevil's sceptical rationalism. For Daredevil does, in fact, fear Hell. His first reaction when he and Beaugard are

set upon is to interpret the occurrence as a divine judgement on him and to beg for mercy for his soul (III.338-40). Later, when he imagines he is dying, he is obsessively concerned with his salvation (V.661-62,666-70) and repents of his sins (V.787-846). Fearing imminent death, Daredevil at no stage calls for justice against his 'murderer'. Human justice pales into insignificance in the face of death and the divine world. The sense of sin and fear of damnation are presented as an inescapable fact of the human condition. To attempt to deny man's fallen nature, as Daredevil does in his fundamentally optimistic belief in legality, is portrayed as an act of intellectual and emotional simplicity. Related to the sense of sin is a capacity for belief, and Daredevil, who tries not to believe in God, is shown to have a well-developed capacity for belief. Having denied the 'true' faith, belief degenerates into credulity, and Daredevil is effortlessly able to believe in castles in the air (III.640-43) and magic. The denial of faith leaves the way open for man's regression to a primitive state in which his superstitious nature reasserts itself.

Act III shows Daredevil at first at his most triumphant as he presides over a drinking bout in which Beaugard and Courtine praise the joys of libertinism. The scene recalls the similar scene at the beginning of Act IV of The Souldiers Fortune, in which Beaugard and Courtine lament the present and idealise their past. Both scenes in their evocations of sensual delights in arcadian surroundings recall the poet's dream of a fake Eden in 'The Epistle to R.D. from T.O.' Beaugard's opening speech also recalls Don John's at the beginning of Act II of Don Carlos in its associations of primal nature, liberty and man's mastery over himself, 'Lord of his own Hours, King of his/own Pleasures' (III.3-4). Against this picture of the happiness of unfallen man 'as Nature meant him first' (III.4)

Beaugard sketches in a picture of man as a 'Slave' to 'the vile Customs that the World's debauched in' (III.17-18):

Who'd interrupt his needful Hours of Rest, to rise and yawn in a shop upon Cornhill? Or, what's as bad, make a sneaking Figure in a Great Man's Chamber, at his Rising in a Morning? Who would play the Rogue, Cheat, Lie, Flatter, Bribe, or Pimp, to raise an Estate for a Blockhead of his own begetting, as he thinks, that shall waste it as scandalously as his ~~f~~ather got it? Or who, Courtine, would marry, to beget such a Blockhead?
(III.19-26)

The mercenary nature of Courtine's match with Sylvia certainly relates his marriage to the base endeavours outlined in this speech. However, there is nothing joyous or free about his earlier and subsequent attempts to enjoy the 'uncontroll'd delights the/Free-man tastes of' (III.2-3). His pursuit of sexual liberty only involves him in degradation and humiliation. The entry of the father fifty-six lines into the scene presents a startling and effective picture of the actual life of the man of pleasure. Drunk and disorderly, he shamelessly begs for money from his son and cheats his friend at dice. Daredevil will also later in the Act display dishonour as he refuses to fight and begs for mercy as the 'Ruffians' attack him and Beaugard (III.336-40). Daredevil is, of course, not 'Lord' of himself but pathetically at the mercy of his imagination.

Honour is an integral part of Beaugard's depiction of the happy carefree life as he prays that he be granted,

... while I live the easie Being I am
at present possess of; a kind, fair Shee, to cool my Blood,
and pamper my Imagination withal; an honest Friend or
two, like thee, Courtine, that I dare trust my Thoughts
to; generous Wine, Health, Liberty, and no Dishonour.
(III.34-38)

Beaugard's plea here strongly echoes the concluding lines of 'The Epistle to R.D. from T.O.':

But grant me quiet, liberty and peace,
By day what's needful, and at night soft ease;
The Friend I trust in, and the She I love.
(127-29)

The poem, however, concludes more despairingly with the cry 'But make Life what I ask, or tak't away'.³⁰ In the poem this prayer follows on the poet's realisation that his sensual dream was a deluding trick of the fancy and his awakening to the ugliness of his sordid life. Beaugard's plea occupies a similar position between his and Courtine's images of prelapsarian bliss (III.1-8,10-16) and his evocation of sordid reality (III.17-26). Beaugard's images of felicity are still, however, more sensual and less realistically limited than the poets. For Beaugard, Courtine (and the poet) the ideal world is a strongly retreatist one. Courtine's images of happiness in fact are closer to an undertaker's Vale of Rest than the Happy Valley (III.10-16) and for Beaugard life must be without 'intruding Cares [to] make one Thought bitter' (III.8). What we are shown in the play is that cares will and do constantly intrude, whether in the form of a jealous wife or a dissolute father. Further, Beaugard discovers that the easy gratification of the appetites can present cares as he finds himself resisting the sensual pleasures offered to him in the simulacrum of the blissful retreat which Porcia creates for him.

In this situation, Daredevil, consistent with his belief that oaths are 'meer Words of course' (II.494), urges Beaugard to at least swear to the Lady that he loves her (IV.401-02,424-25).³¹ Beaugard responds to these urgings with a stern 'Fool, stand off' (IV.426). He is putting the Devil behind him and standing out for honour in a

30 Beaugard's version of this is a more jovial denial of any wish for greater fortune in the statement 'when I ask more of Fortune, let her e'en make a Beg-/gar of me' (III.39-40).

31 Daredevil is later shown facing the folly of his position on language when he refuses to reveal to his 'confessor' the name of the young wife he debauched (V.834-35,839-40). Daredevil, however, does not learn from his experiences and later denies his 'conversion' (V.1000).

situation where honour proves not to be compatible with sensual gratification. The busy world may be corrupt and without honour but honour is not to be found in any sensual retreat from the world. The essential flaw in Beaugard's earlier position is that the war between appetite and reason/honour cannot be resolved through gratification to 'cool (the) Blood'.³² Theodoret and Gratian transform sensual appetite into honour, Beaugard tries to equate honour and sensual appetite but the prompting of the blood and of the mind cannot be cashed in for one another. In the love-test Beaugard shows a capacity to learn and grow. Theodoret and Gratian, however, must remain deluded.

The failure of most of the other characters to appreciate the duality of man's nature leaves them locked inside the false positions presented to them by their uncontrolled imaginations. And the world of the imagination is a primitive regressive world. The single most powerful depiction of this is the behaviour of the father who has regressed to become a child to his son.³³ The projection of the uncontrolled imagination onto the 'real' world produces those distortions of order and authority which the play depicts. Daredevil's voice is not very grand but within the confines of the comedy it represents the voice of 'that Infernal Serpent, who would have debauched us from our Obedience, and turned our Eden into a Wilderness' referred to in the letter of Dedication.

32 This point is made in much more detail in The Orphan where Polydore hopes to escape from the tyranny of sense through gratifying his appetite (The Orphan, I.362-77).

33 Theodoret and Gratian's contribution to the idea of regression has already been noted. To these regressions one can also add Courtine and Sylvia's baby-talk (IV.217-18).

We are not shown any English Eden, but we are shown vistas of the wilderness in the depictions of social chaos.

It is significant that the play begins and ends with Beaugard's conversations with his father. The pact made with the father at the end ensures his permanent control - if not 'righting' - and this area of control guarantees the establishment of at least a kind of order. Otway is content to leave many of his plot ends unresolved. Courtine and Sylvia cannot be reconciled, Lucrece must go back to petticoats or stay in breeches, either way the poet is not concerned, and Daredevil remains a fool. However, Beaugard does impose solutions on Porcia^{and} on his father and he at least offers a solution to Theodoret. The play does not simply and anarchically present a 'despairing depiction of a meaningless world gone mad'.³⁴ The play amply depicts disorder and then it does show a partial, incomplete and fragile restoration of a workable everyday order. Beaugard is undoubtedly the play's agent of order. The fact that his dead uncle skipped the normal processes of inheritance to leave his money to Beaugard and not to his brother is significant. Beaugard is the inheritor of not only money but the values of the past. He stands for continuity and conformity. Throughout the play Beaugard (apart from the brief lapse in Act III) is a voice of restraint and reason. His calm and sane views on religion have already been quoted. They do not make him into a man of spiritual depth but they are at least reliable. Beaugard's underlying piety and reverence is illustrated when he cuts short Courtine's witty remarks on his father,

34 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.110.

Prithee no more on't, tis an irreverent Theme;
and next to Atheism, I hate making merry with the
Frailties of my Father.

(II.11-13)

In the first Act Beaugard puts forward a tolerant if not ardent view of matrimony to Courtine (I.214-221). Courtine's refutation of his argument point by point does not invalidate Beaugard's position. Courtine, after all, has made a wretched mess of his life. Later Courtine's complaints at their having parted 'with the Women so soon' (III.45) are brushed aside with only half-joking reminders of the value of 'reputation' (III.46). Courtine's indignation at the way he has been fooled by the whore is mocked by Beaugard,

This comes of your Whoring, Courtine; if you
had kept me company, and liv'd virtuously, none of this
had happened to you now. But you must be wandering:
No reasonable iniquity will serve your turn.

(IV.500-03)

The speech is humorous since when they parted from each other Beaugard was himself hurrying to an assignation. However, there is also an element of truth in the speech and in the condemnation of Courtine's unreasonable iniquity.

In the final Act Beaugard organises Porcia's rescue with an act of well-controlled violence. He restrains his man, Plunder, telling him 'This is a Bus'ness must be done with Decency' (V.460). In the event the taking of the 'castle' is carried out remarkably peacefully, most of the hustle being provided by the defenders. Wit rather than violence is used as Beaugard in disguise exploits Theodoret's over-expansive heroic generosity (V.579-97). Once in total control Beaugard proceeds to impose order. His first task is to dissuade Theodoret from suicide (V.954-55); 'Nay, hold, Sir, none of that neither: This Design/was not laid for a Tragedy' (V.956-57). The comment on the 'Design' reflects on both Beaugard's plot to enter the house and the design of the whole play. Once again Beaugard's

voice is one of restraint and order and the comment also indicates that the design of the play is ordered to conform to the artistic and formal demands of comedy. Here is no disordered display of anarchy but a carefully plotted artifact which will move towards the ends appropriate to the design. The serious theme raised by Theodoret's presence in the play is indicated by Beaugard's following reference to his 'merciless Tyranny' (V.964) but Theodoret cannot 'qualify' for suicide, not because he has not really hurt anybody, but because his heroism is so debased. Beaugard in effect reminds him, and us, of the shallowness of his heroic attitudinising: Theodoret has no place in the world of tragedy; he is a comic creation.

Attention now swings to Daredevil and the father. Daredevil is raised from the dead; dying in a comedy can only be a mock-dying but so, ironically, is repentance only a mock-repentance. Daredevil's comic revival also ensures his not so comic damnation. Otway turns the form on itself as for Daredevil, at least, the continuity of the comic form ensures the continuity of his folly. Daredevil cannot be converted and neither can the father be restored to a position of paternal authority. Beaugard and he now enact parodic versions of both the return of the Prodigal Son and the proviso scenes of Restoration comedy. Beaugard agrees to maintain his father on a 'reasonable' (V.1033) allowance and the father in return agrees to be 'very obedient' (V.1027). The father accepts his dependant position and goes through a ceremony to 'invert the Order of Duty' and ask his future daughter-in-law for her 'Blessing' (V.1021). Otway presents us with a twist of the traditional endings of comedy: father and rebellious son reconciled, the marriage blessed. The effect of inversion here, however, is not totally negative; Otway effects a compromise (and comedy deals with compromise) between the demands of form and his sense of reality. Given the characters of

the father and the son dominance cannot pass from the son back to the father. But the father's position can be contained, formalised and controlled.

As Beaugard says, 'I am begining^g/to settle my Family' (V.1038-39). He is finding an appropriate place for the characters. Beaugard then explains his ability to impose order in terms of chance:

... all this comes by the Dominion
Chance has over us. By chance you took^{the} Charge of
an old Father off from my Hands, and made a Chaplain of
him. By the same sort of Chance I have taken this Lady
off from your Hands, and intend to make her another sort
of Domestick.

(V.1039-44)

Hume has interpreted this speech as a very bleak and despairing form of explanation, 'to think that the forces which kick (man) about are accidental and aimless is frightening and demoralizing'.³⁴ But Beaugard's speech does not simply provide an explanation: it raises questions: have we really seen in the play an example of the 'Dominion of Chance' over men? Have all the actions and plots unrolled haphazardly and accidentally? The myriad plots and fast farcical action can give an impression of chance but, in fact, plots and actions are attributable to human agencies. Beaugard's explanation in terms of 'Chance' is no more valid than Chamont's explanation of the events in The Orphan in terms of the 'Fates' (V.528).

In Otway's dramatic world men make and break their own lives through their own actions which are explicable in terms of their characters and their confrontations with their own minds. Perhaps the only moment in the play where chance operates is when Courtine's whore turns out to be pregnant. But even here it is not luck or chance which has organised events; Courtine's indiscriminating lechery makes

34 R.D. Hume, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.112.

him an obvious choice for such a 'trick'; as Beaugard says, 'This comes of your Whoring, Courtine'. Beaugard's father joined the enemy faction not by chance but because he was angry with his son and for the hope of 'two/thousand Pounds a year' (IV.80-81).

Daredevil has been wounded because he is a coward, Sylvia is in town because she has jealously followed her unfaithful husband and finally Beaugard has won Porcia not by chance but because he has passed her test and organised her rescue. The blindness and folly we have seen are attributable to human nature and not to external agencies; the organisation we see at the end is also due to human nature.

Looked at more carefully, Beaugard's speech can be seen as ironic rather than 'flat' and 'bleak'.³⁵ In the face of his overwhelming control of the situation his phrase 'By the same sort of Chance I have taken this Lady/off from your Hands' suggests that human action and not chance is involved. The speech ends with Beaugard asking Theodoret if he is 'contented' (V.1044). When Theodoret replies 'I cannot tell whether I am or no' (V.1045), Beaugard replies contemptuously 'Then you are not so wise a Man as I took you/for' (V.1046-47). In the light of this dialogue the speech can be interpreted as a compromise explanation of the events for Theodoret's sake. The speech is part of the process of settling the family. Earlier Beaugard described his action in invading the house as a necessary response to Theodoret's 'merciless Tyranny'. But now he smoothly explains his 'Dominion' as the 'Dominion' of 'Chance'. Theodoret is being offered a face-saving solution; a

35 These are the terms Hume uses to describe Beaugard's tone when uttering this speech, 'Otway and the Comic Muse', p.110.

convenient fiction which will help to place him back in the on-going world of comedy. Not to accept this necessary fiction, given his powerlessness to challenge Beaugard's authority, is, as Beaugard says, an act of folly.

Beaugard's last lines are addressed to the audience and make it clear that the order we have seen being imposed is not an act of chance;

Thus still, with Power in hand, we treat of Peace;

But when 'tis ratify'd, Suspicious cease:

The Conquer'd to recruiting Labours move.

Like me, the Victor, Crowns his Ease with Love.

(V.1053-56)

Order has been achieved through the exercise of power, combined with diplomacy and tempered with mercy. The political implications of the speech are obvious. Otway was writing during the period of relative calm following on the King's victory over the whig faction. From the tory point of view the King had at last asserted himself and brought order through shows of power. 'Suspicious' had not ceased but they were lulled. Beaugard's early speech about 'the Plot' and the 'danger of the Times' (I.290-91) is indicative of the continuing tensions but his final speech holds out the hope of peace. In taking to arms, capturing and subduing the house and imposing peace on his terms, Beaugard, like Dryden's David, has raised himself at last; and, like David's, his methods may not be very savory but they are necessary.

Otway's plays have been about failures of power; failures of power over the self and springing from that and feeding into that, failures of power in society and the state. Caius Marius, Titus and Philip become tyrants misusing power as they lose control over themselves. Otway's most consistent images are of terrible physical and mental failures in authority from Caius Marius raving on the ground to Antonio barking like a dog. Beaugard's ability to control himself

gives him the ability and right to control others. Beaugard's assertion of naked power ends the play on a note of triumph and it is in that spirit that Richard Duke's Epilogue follows to celebrate that the 'Whig-Tyde runs out, the Loyal flows' (15).

Nevertheless there is a temporizing quality about the end. Otway has depicted a world in which false ideas and illusions feeding on the disordered psyches of his characters have rendered the world chaotic. That world cannot be remade whole; it can only be made tolerable. The rhetoric of his Dedication asserts that Halifax's oratory has saved the English Eden. In the more realistic world of his comedy, he does not present the redemption of mankind. Beaugard is not Halifax^{and} London will not become the garden of Paradise. But he does show the triumph of a humanly possible way of life in which certain basic values, orthodox Anglicanism, loyalty, authority and obedience, are reasserted. Disorder of course does remain; but with the father pensioned off, Daredevil publicly unmasked and Theodoret and Gratian restrained physically, the areas of disorder are for the moment held in check. The destruction of Courtine and Sylvia's marriage must represent a question mark hanging over the match between Beaugard and Porcia, even though we have been given stronger proofs of their attachment than we were given for Courtine and Sylvia's. Otway's sense of the dynamism and fluidity and inherent divisions of the human mind was too strong for him to offer more than a fragile and perhaps temporary sense of order. The sense of an ending given to The Atheist is nevertheless the strongest to be found in all of Otway's dramatic works. This play, like others of Otway's, has partly been about the danger of mental fictions which form distorted visions of the world. But he has also shown areas in which poetic fictions revealed the truth and expressed reality. The conclusion is a poetic fiction

harmonising life and art into a parable of power. The power of the mind, of art and of politics is the power to create order out of chaos and Otway's last play shows with guarded optimism that such order is humanly possible.

IV

LATER TRAGEDY

i

THE ORPHAN: OR, THE UNHAPPY MARRIAGE

The Orphan: or, The Unhappy Marriage is one of Otway's finest tragedies and a work which represents his triumphant maturity as a dramatist. It combines strong acting parts and intense dramatic excitement with a subtle and complex view of life. The Orphan was first produced at the Duke's Theatre in February or March 1680.¹ It was a considerable success for Otway,² and a triumph for Mrs. Barry, the first of a long line of Monimias, whose performance helped to establish her reputation as the 'famous Mrs. Barry'.³

1. The London Stage, Part 1, p. 285, states that the precise date of the premiere is not known, The Prologue alludes to the Duke of York's triumphant return from Scotland (lines 24-36) which took place on 24th February, 1680. Pepys, however, saw the play on 6th March, 1680 and called it a 'New Play', which may indicate that this was its first performance.
2. See for instance Matthew Prior's "Satyr on the Poets", where he recalls that '.... the full Pitt with pleas'd attention hung, / Wrap'd with each Accent from Castalio's Tongue'.
3. Downes, Roscius Anglicanus, p. 37.

The play's subsequent stage history has been well traced by A.M. Taylor.⁴ It was admired and imitated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,⁵ and in suitably cut forms it held the London stage until the nineteenth century.⁶ Then reviewers and critics assailed the play, largely on the grounds of its indecency⁷ although Hazlitt also objected to the play's

voluptuous effeminacy of sentiment and mawkish distress, which strikes directly at the root of that mental fortitude and heroic cast of thought which alone makes tragedy endurable.

8

The Orphan had suffered a strange fate. It survived 'through all the vicissitudes of dramatic fashion'⁹ because it was

4. A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare: Otway's Venice Preserv'd and The Orphan and Their History on the London Stage, pp. 73-140
5. See for example Catherine Trotter's Fatal Friendship. A Tragedy (1698) which 'borrows' the idea of a secret marriage, the name Castalio and various lines. Nicholas Rowe's The Ambitious Step-Mother (1701) is cited by A.M. Taylor, as above, p. 74, as owing a debt to The Orphan and J. Douglas Canfield in Nicholas Rowe and Christian Tragedy (Gainesville, Florida 1977), suggests that there are thematic similarities in the themes of flawed Edens in The Orphan and The Fair Penitent, p. 113. The anonymous The Rival Brothers (1707) displays a clear debt.
6. See A.M. Taylor, as cited above, pp. 74,75,92,109,111n,112,130n and 139 for references to modifications (for the sake of decency) to the text. An early critic of the play's indecency was Jeremy Collier who objected in his A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage (1698), to Monimia's 'smutty' speeches and 'improper Description' and the Chamont's treatment of the family Chaplain, pp.9, 146,100, 101. Excised of these and other 'indecencies', the play lasted into the nineteenth century. A.M. Taylor lists the last performance by the Drury Lane Company as 1803, by the Covent Garden Company 1815. However, the play was no longer in regular repertory at Drury Lane after 1776 or at Covent Garden after 1799. The last performance recorded at Lincoln's Inn Fields is 1750, Next to Shakespeare, Appendix B, pp.286-93.
7. See the reviews quoted by Mrs. Taylor, as cited above, from the Theatrical Inquisitor (Dec.1815), and the European Magazine (Dec.1815), p.139.
8. William Hazlitt, Lectures on the Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth; Delivered at the Surrey Institute, Lecture VIII (London, second edition 1821), pp.336-37.
9. Dr. Johnson in his 'Life of Thomas Otway' in Lives of the English Poets, Everyman's Library, 2 vols (London 1958), Vol.I. p.143.

submitted to careful and prudish editing. Then a new and more fastidious generation arose to object both to its ineradicable sensuality and to its sentimental ethos; an ethos largely the result of the editing and the product of an acting tradition based on the principles of affective drama.¹⁰ After Kemble's revival of the play at Covent Garden in 1815 (notwithstanding the efforts of Miss O'Neil), the play was dropped from the London stage until another revival failed in 1925.¹¹

The main source for The Orphan was the novelette 'The History of Brandon' from The English Adventures, published in 1675 by a 'Person of Honour', probably Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery.¹² Otway's use of his source has been adequately discussed by R.G. Ham, A.M. Taylor and J.C. Ghosh.¹³ The important thing to note about Otway's transformation of the story into a drama is that, while he kept closely to the source for the setting and general situation and even incorporated some phrases directly from the source, he also deviated

10. Here, as elsewhere, I rely on Mrs. Taylor's invaluable study, cited above, pp.73-142. Eric Rothstein usefully discusses affective theories of drama in Restoration Tragedy: Form and the Process of Change (Madison, 1967), Chapter I, pp.3-23, although I feel he exaggerates the extent to which affective theories were put into practice during the 1670's and 80's. Banks was an exception rather than the rule.
11. A.M. Taylor describes the Phoenix Society production of 1925 in Next to Shakespeare, pp.140-42. Sir John Gielgud briefly describes the production, in which he played Castalio, in Early Stages (New York, 1939), p.93. Montague Summers liberally pours scorn on both the actors and the critics in his Introduction to The Complete Works, I, p. LXXX.
12. Langbaine, who accurately described the play as a 'very moving Tragedy' was the first to identify the source, see An Account of The English Dramatic Poets, pp.393-99.
13. R.G. Ham, Otway and Lee, pp.144-45, A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, pp.14-16, J.C. Ghosh, Introduction to Works, I. p.50. Apart from this main source, The Orphan is a good example of the way Otway drew ideas and themes from a wide variety of sources, from Shakespeare to Milton, including Fletcher, Dryden and Lee.

from it significantly. He added the characters of Chamont and Serina and expanded the role of the Chaplain. More significantly he turned tragicomic materials into tragedy by driving his three main characters into violently taking their lives. Otway changes the whole motivation of the story by his omission of the father's well known and clear cut financial reasons for objecting to a match between his ward and either of his sons. Acasto displays no such miserly tendencies for he advises his sons to 'Learn how to value Merits though in Rags' (II.72) and is delighted when a penniless soldier of fortune, Chamont, asks for his daughter's hand. On the spot he makes over to him a 'third of all my Fortune' (III.126) and his objection to the marriage of Castalio and Monimia seems (like that of many critics) to be to its secrecy (IV.334-36, V.41-42) rather than its ineligibility. The total effect of these changes is to transform the materials from a tale of unfortunate circumstances - a stern father's disapproval of a bad marriage - into a tragedy which arises from a profoundly disturbing view of human nature.

Although Otway took away the obvious motive for Castalio's concealment of his marriage he supplied, as I hope to show, convincing and dramatically coherent explanations for his characters' actions.¹⁴ Criticism, however, has tended to concentrate on the apparent motivelessness and arbitrariness of the action,¹⁵ and to echo Dr. Johnson's judgement that the play is domestic, moving and muddled,

14. The analysis of The Orphan which follows owes much to my conversations and correspondence with Dr. D.W. Hughes and to the opportunity I had to read his article 'Otway's The Orphan: An Interpretation' (shortly to be published in Durham University Journal) while revising my own chapter. I should like particularly to acknowledge the direction given to my thinking by our discussions on the nature of Polydore's libertinism.

15. See Edmund Gosse, Seventeenth-Century Studies: A Contribution to the History of English Poetry (London 1885), pp290-91, Clifford Leech, 'Restoration Tragedy: A Reconsideration', Durham University Journal, II (1950), p.112, H.M. Batzer Pollard, From Heroics to Sentimentalism, etc., pp.205-06, A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, p.24 and J.H. Wilson, A Preface to Restoration Drama (Boston, 1965), p.111, for complaints

Of this play nothing new can be easily said. It is a domestic tragedy drawn from middle life. Its whole power is upon the affections; for it is not written with much comprehension of thought or elegance of expression. But, if, the heart is interested, many other beauties may be wanting, yet not be missed.¹⁶

As tastes have changed modern critics' views that the play's strengths lie in its tenderness and pathos is to damn with very faint praise. Allardyce Nicoll, for instance, has described the play as yielding a mild sort of pathetic appeal'.¹⁷ James Sutherland is more damning and concludes a brief description of the play with 'its significance is little more than "Alas, how easily things go wrong"'.¹⁸ R.D. Hume has described The Orphan as 'an exciting play, and even a moving one', but he also sees it as a play in which, in the absence of a villain, 'accident breeds catastrophe'.¹⁹ This latter comment is especially damaging in its neglect of the thematic and symbolic patterning²⁰ which prevents the substitution trick from being a mere accident.

16. Johnson, Lives of the English Poets, I. p.143.

17. Allardyce Nicoll, English Drama: A Modern Viewpoint (London, 1968), p.90. A more striking tribute is paid to the play's pathos by Bonamy Dobrée, who stated that 'Tender Otway' is the epithet which 'rises almost inevitably to the lips upon reading The Orphan', in Restoration Tragedy 1660-1720, p.142. See also Eugene M. Waith's article 'Tears of Magnanimity in Otway and Racine' in French and English Drama of the Seventeenth Century. Papers Read at a Clark Library Seminar, which argues that in The Orphan Otway moves away from heroism towards a drama based on pity for the characters, pp.17-18.

18. James Sutherland, English Literature of the Late Seventeenth Century, p. 80.

19. R.D. Hume, The Development of English Drama, p.218, Dr. Hume's point of view can also be found in A.H. Scouten's brief discussion of the play in The Revels History of Drama in English, Vol. V.p.273.

20. See also Leech, who sees The Orphan as constructed solely to achieve emotional effects in 'a succession of scenes hardly linked by probability or necessity', and can see no reason for Acasto's sickness, 'Restoration Tragedy: A Reconsideration', p.112. Critics who note the play's emotional impact seem inclined to view that as a dramatic trick which substitutes feeling for thought and planning.

Few critics have challenged Dr. Johnson's definition of the play as a 'domestic tragedy', which is the term used to define the play by Ham, Ghosh, Batzer Pollard and Hume.²¹ However, the play makes little sense when viewed from this perspective. The symbolism seems intrusive while the motivation, which is drawn from generalized considerations of the human condition, can seem inadequate.

A.M. Taylor is one of the few critics who does not describe the play as domestic. However, her analysis, which seeks to explain the problems of motivation in terms of Restoration codes of morals and manners, leads her to neglect or undervalue the rural and family setting which, if not 'domestic', is nevertheless important. Basically Mrs. Taylor concludes that the characters are inconsistent and the plot does not really make sense but then contemporary ideas were often very confused too - as were contemporary audiences:

Ideas which are irreconcilable in logic may still be fused in the head of an esprit fort, and though a modern reader may be completely baffled at the obvious inconsistency, it does not follow that Otway's contemporaries liked The Orphan the less for a medley of ideas with which they were vaguely familiar. 22

In effect Mrs. Taylor's critique makes the play inaccessible to the modern mind, since only a well-stocked but illogical Restoration mind could really enjoy its confusions and make up its deficiencies. In appealing to contemporary ideas and codes of conduct Mrs. Taylor surveys the play through the wrong end of the telescope. She reads

21. Ham, Otway and Lee, p. 140, J.C. Ghosh, Works, I, p.53, Summers, The Complete Works, I, p. 1xxvi, H.M. Batzer Pollard, From Heroics to Sentimentalism, etc., p.192. Hume, as cited above, sees the play as offering examples of 'domestic-scale rant', p.219, although there seem to be no grounds for so classifying Monimia and Castalio's cosmic-scale curses.
22. A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, pp.23-24

into the work stereo-types and codes of manners which, although common to the period, are not therefore necessarily to be found in all works. The codes of conduct she draws on are largely fashionable and urban and not very surprisingly she has no explanation for the rural setting which she finds inappropriate. ²³

The rural setting, however, can neither be ignored nor relegated to the status of a decorative backdrop. ²⁴ Otway made an unusual and even audacious move in setting his play in the countryside and away from the courts of Kings and this demands serious consideration. Recent critical studies have recognised that Acasto's retreat can be seen as an illusory Eden which is violated and destroyed in the course of the play through the activities of fallen man. ²⁵ John M. Wallace usefully shifts discussion of the play from either the emotional or domestic sphere as he describes the play as a 'powerful fable' showing the 'destruction of an English Eden through original sin'. ²⁶ Only, he argues, the sin has changed and is now the

23. A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, p. 37. Mrs. Taylor's interpretation of the play is repeated in a more condensed but essentially unchanged form in her edition of The Orphan, Regents Restoration Drama Series (Lincoln, Nebraska 1976; London 1977), pp xviii-xxx.

24. This I take to be the role assigned to the natural setting by Ghosh and Summers, neither of whom note any ambiguities in the treatment of Nature. Summers calls The Orphan an 'emphatically... quiet play' and writes that 'tranquillity lies softly over old Acasto's retreat', The Complete Works, I, p. 1xxvi. Ghosh similarly feels that a 'fresh breeze blows through many a passage' and commends the play for its naturalness and simplicity, Works, I, p.53

25. See John M. Wallace, 'Dryden and History: A Problem in Allegorical Reading', English Literary History, Vol.36 (1969), pp.284-85; J. Douglas Canfield, Nicholas Rowe and Christian Tragedy, p.113, citing John David Walker, 'Moral Vision in the Drama of Thomas Otway' (Diss. University of Florida 1967), chapter 4: Eric Rothstein, Restoration Tragedy: Form and the Process of Change, pp.100-103.

26. John M. Wallace, as cited above, p.284

vice of secrecy; a vice which contemporaries would have recognised as lying behind the troubled relations of King and Parliament.²⁷ Wallace's brief comments are interesting but unfortunately he gives no explanation, beyond that of political relevance, for the characters' fatal tendency to secrecy. The secrecy apparent in the play may well be, on one level, a comment on the distrust operating in the political realm. However, both secrecy and corrupt politics are in themselves effects of a deeper malaise which Otway is concerned to investigate. Otway's analysis goes beyond party politics - not in Wallace's sense that Otway maintains an 'Olympian detachment' from specific party issues,²⁸ but because Otway uses the rural setting and fabulist mood and structure to try to understand the forces in human nature which shape the grim patterns of history. In that sense The Orphan, as much as Caius Marius or Venice Preserv'd, can be seen as a political play in which man is seen as a political animal, bound to function in complex rule-bound societies - no matter how small they are or how far from the apparent centres of power.

Wallace does not explain the characters' motives. He only posits the *donnée* of secretiveness. A similar criticism may be raised in relation to Geoffrey Marshall's discussion of the play, in which he explains Castalio's secretiveness in terms of a general failure to live up to Acasto's ideal of plain-speaking.²⁹ Plain-speaking is certainly tragically absent in the play but Marshall does not explain

27. Wallace, as cited above, pp.284-85.

28. Wallace, as cited above, p.284. The position from which Otway undertakes his analysis here, and in all his works, is not detached but that of a pessimistic conservatism. He has no sympathy for the states of chaos he unrolls before us but a passionate need to understand their genesis.

29. Geoffrey Marshall, 'The Coherence of The Orphan', Texas Studies in Literature and Language, 11 (1969-70) pp.931-43.

why this is the case. More fruitfully, Eric Rothstein relates the characters' moral malaise to their attitudes towards Nature. He argues that the play 'turns on the idea of Nature, largely in the terms in which Restoration comedy had explored the idea'.³⁰

Rothstein describes the characters as displaying a sexual cynicism familiar from the comedies of Etherege and Wycherley. They display a 'lace-cuffed Hobbesianism about matters of love'³¹ which springs from their doctrine of 'corrupt nature' and breeds an atmosphere of mutual distrust; 'each of the protagonists comes to disaster because he fails to trust the others'.³² But here too the critic is both relying over-heavily on external materials and placing too much emphasis on one aspect of the play, in this case a negative view of Nature, which itself demands explanation. Rothstein relates these views to the characters' imagination, describing the play as

a tragedy of the imagination, in which nature becomes vicious because the characters, like those in Restoration comedy, assume it is vicious to begin with.

33

However, although Rothstein correctly draws attention here to the role of the imagination, he over-simplifies the play's moral structure by solely relating the characters' imaginative vision to a view of 'corrupt nature'. Just because this is a tragedy of the imagination, attitudes towards Nature are not static but reflect changing and conflicting mental states. The play does not so much turn on the 'idea of Nature' but on ideas about human nature which generate various responses to the physical world. An intricate

30. Eric Rothstein, Restoration Tragedy, p.100.

31 Rothstein, as cited above, p. 101.

32 Rothstein, as cited above, p. 101.

33 Rothstein, as cited above, p. 101.

patterning is set up between these attitudes and expressions so that there is a constant ironic, but eventually tragic, interplay between contrasting and irreconcilable interpretations of experience. The aspects of the play singled out for special emphasis by these critics, Wallace, Marshall and Rothstein, are relevant but do not, in themselves, sufficiently explain the motivation. However, I think it is possible to see, strictly within the terms of the play itself, that Otway does organise his materials and perceptions to offer up coherent explanations for the characters' secrecy, evasions, cynicism and distrust.

As it has been noted, the play is organised around a re-working of the theme of the fall of man from the Paradise of Eden. Rothstein has described the exposition by Ernesto and Paulino as 'stunningly inept',³⁴ but the scene is of considerable importance to the overall structure of the play. Indeed, the creaking 'once upon a time' air of the retainers' description of life in Acasto's household helps to establish the mood and tone of a fable.³⁵ The world which Ernesto and Paulino describe is Edenic in its perfection. The head of the household, Acasto, is so good that he deserves exemption from the human laws of mutability (I.30-31). At the same time his life is associated with the very continuation of the human arts and ideals of

34. Rothstein, as cited above, p. 100

35 The polarities the play sets up in the first Act must have been seriously truncated when the exposition scene was dropped shortly after the première. See A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, p.271, citing Charles Gildon, Laws of Poetry (1721), p.205, on the cutting of the scene. Perhaps the scene is too long and would drag on the stage, but in reading the effect seems to me to be similar to that achieved by Shakespeare in The Winter's Tale. There the play opens with an exposition scene in which two courtiers discuss the strength of the friendship between Leontes and Polixenes, a friendship which is seen to be destroyed through the sudden eruption of Leontes's sexual jealousy.

civilization (I.32-34).³⁶ His sons, 'of Nature mild and full of sweetness' (I.37), enjoy an unflawed fraternal love which is characterised by its selflessness;

Neither has anything he calls his own,
But of each others joys as griefs partaking,
So very honestly, so well they love,
As they were only for each other born.
(I.40-43)

Monimia and Serina are beautiful and good and like the brothers are united in a friendship of both soul and thought (I.47-50). They share in each others 'harmless pleasures' (I.50) and the setting for these innocent joys is a world in which Nature is seen as a fruitful Mother blessing the earth (I.30-31). This Paradise is implicitly compared to the unruly outside world in which Acasto was once involved in crushing rebellions (I.9-12) and which has subsequently treated him unjustly (I.20-24). The scene then appears to be set for a comparison between the hectic outside world and the calm pleasures of a philosophical retreat.

However, the harmonious society which has just been described speedily disintegrates before our eyes.³⁷ During the first Act the

36. See also I.77-80 and III.57-60 for further celebrations of and prayers for Acasto's continued exemption from mortality.

37. As Rothstein points out, Restoration evocations of pastoral retreats tend to differ from Renaissance pastoral in offering not so much a microcosm of the great world as a retreat from it, Restoration Tragedy, p.114 n.1. It is the social and psychological basis of this ideal which Otway questions here and elsewhere. The illusory nature of humanly contrived Paradises is a fairly constant theme in Otway's work. In Caius Marius, during the scenes set in the countryside, a brief moment of harmony as Lavinia shares the bounty of Nature with Caius Marius, who acknowledges her as his daughter (IV.348), is rudely shattered. Violence (the attempt to assassinate Caius Marius, Lavinia's abduction) and politics (Caius Marius's visions of glory, Cinna's arrival from Rome) erupt into the countryside and break up the idyll. The sense of Eden as a tantalizing illusion is conveyed in the 'Epistle to R.D. from T.O.', where the poet awakes from a dream of an 'Eden' of perfect freedom and untroubled sexuality to his sordid reality and 'No grove, no freedom, and what's worse to me, No friend' (118-20). In 'The Poet's Complaint of his Muse' Otway creates a strangely desolate Eden 'E're God had said, / Let Grass and Herbs and every green thing grow' (13-14) and makes this

friendship of Castalio and Polydore, a pastoral as well as an heroic ideal,³⁸ is under pressure as the brothers circle warily around the issue of who will call Monimia his own. Their first conversations betray an unsettled thirst for danger (I.82) and warfare (I.96-99) and a longing, which with tragic irony comes about, to escape from their retreat. From the first, descriptions of Nature and natural imagery can serve as an index to the characters' minds as well as a symbolic representation of their situation. Castalio and Polydore's profound unrest and discontent are expressed in the derogatory terms with which they describe their rural Paradise (I.101,105,106). The ideal world of ventry and male companionship is briefly glimpsed in their descriptions of the boar hunt, an activity which Paulino has described as a 'Royal sport' (I.76). The slaying of the boar is a traditional symbol of man's control over his unruly passions and, as Rothstein points out, the brothers' joint enterprise in their pursuit of the boar establishes the reality of their friendship both effectively and economically.³⁹ There is, however, a strong suggestion that their

37 (continued) infertile setting the retreat chosen by the 'Bard' for the contemplation of the ruin of his life and the corruption of art and politics. There is a sense here perhaps that anything growing is capable of corruption.

38 For a discussion of the links between theories of friendship and the pastoral ideal see Renato Poggioli's article 'The Oaten Flute', Harvard Library Bulletin, XI. (1957), pp.147-85. Restoration ideals of rural retreat and the association of retreat and perfect friendship are surveyed by Maren-Sofie Røstvig in The Happy Man, Studies in the Metamorphoses of a Classic Ideal, Vol.I, 1600-1700, Oslo Studies in English 2 (Oslo 1962). Perfect friendships in unflawed rural retreats are repeatedly celebrated by Katherine Philips in poems such as 'Content, To my dearest Lucasia', 'To Retir'd Friendship. To Ardelia', 'A Reverie' and 'A Country Life' in Minor Poets of the Caroline Period, ed., George Saintsbury, 3 vols. (Oxford 1905-21), Vol.I, pp.520-21, 524,556-58.

39 Rothstein, Restoration Tragedy, p.103. As Rothstein notes here, the language of the hunt is soon to be transferred to sexual hunting - a hunt in which two men after the same quarry become rivals not friends, see I.360-61,II.360-72,III.23-26, 125,336-37, V.16 for the transference of hunting language to the pursuit of love.

control over the 'desperate' and 'savage' (I.85) forces of Nature may weaken in future. Although Castalio kills the boar, he nearly loses his life in the process and is borne over a 'Rock', a 'dang'rous precipice' (I.86,90) which here, and later, serves as a symbol of the dangers lying to 'wreck' and 'wreck' happiness (I.274,IV.384).⁴⁰ There is a marked difference between the dangers the brothers experience during the hunt and Acasto's description of the single blow with which he dispatched an equally ferocious boar (II.3-13). Significantly, Acasto uses a similar form of words to describe slaying the boar and later on to describe killing a rebel who insulted his King (II.145-46). Acasto is not, in fact, exempt from the processes of mutability, as his illness later indicates - 'a slip decaying Nature made' (III.44). However, his actions here contrast with those of his sons and suggest that he represents a standard of order and control which his sons cannot match.⁴¹ For Castalio and Polydore the encounter with the boar is not a completed action in itself but, in their own minds, and in the structure of the play, it is a foretaste of the state of war they long for (I.96-106). The language of the hunt is transferred to the pursuit of love,⁴² while Polydore can characterise his projected rape of Monimia as the action of his 'Ambitious Soul, that Languishes to glory' (III,16). The

40. Dr. D.W. Hughes's article, as cited above, also draws attention to the symbolic significance of the natural imagery and to the way the characters' inner turmoil is projected onto imaginary landscapes. Specifically, his article drew my attention to the repeated use of the rock as a symbol of 'the harsh, perilous aspects of the natural world'.

41. In Restoration Tragedy Rothstein sees Acasto's illness as symbolic of the fact that his sons are slipping from his standards, p.102. Marshall also sees Acasto as representing an ideal, that of plain-speaking, from which his sons lapse, 'The Coherence of The Orphan' pp.931-43. While it does seem clear that Acasto stands for an order, found in the initial descriptions of his retreat and some of his actions, from which his sons deviate, he is not presented as unflawed. His actual mortality, contradictory moods and 'Dark-dreams' (IV.5) are also indications of the human and irrational forces which affect him and which must flaw any post-Lapsarian attempts to create an Eden.

42 See footnote 39 for the use of hunting language in this context.

characters' aggressive instincts have their part to play in the development of the tragedy. However, the frustrated craving for action revealed here is crossed by equally strong longings for peace and rest ⁴³ and these conflicting desires have their roots in a deeper paradox of human nature.

The destruction of Acasto's 'fair Garden' (IV.297), which culminates in violence, is primarily brought about by the characters' confused and troubled responses to the sexual passion which grips them. Polydore's question to Castalio, 'is your heart at peace?', (I.128) focuses attention on sexuality as an agent of destruction. Although love can be seen in terms of rest and harmony (II.329-30, 399-400) such characterisations are not sustained. The first and most consistent depictions of love are in terms of the loss of peace of mind in the face of an alien force. ⁴⁴ Castalio describing his love for Monimia uses the language of invasion and occupation:

Love reigns a very Tyrant in my heart,
Attended on his Throne by all his Guards
Of furious wishes, fears, and nice suspicions.
(I.142-44)

Later Monimia will describe Castalio's love for her in terms of a military campaign which has left her heart 'a ravag'd Province ruinate and waste' (II.382). None of the characters treats falling in love as part of the normal process of growing up. Castalio vigorously rejects Polydore's suggestion that it is quite proper for him as the elder brother to contemplate marriage and the begetting of heirs.

43. See I.128,177,194,376-77, III.316,494-503, IV.81-96, V.17-23 for images of peace or the desire to regain peace.

44. For further characterisation of love in terms of conquest see I.280, II,379,III,125,131, IV.239 and in relation to tyranny, II.379, IV.130,226, V.221

(I.166-67) and asserts that no woman shall 'cheat [him] of [his] Freedom' (I.162,169-70). Polydore pours scorn on the idea that 'a Womans Toy' (I.148) could be of sufficient consequence to 'break this Friendship' (I.147.) The idea of love as a form of debauched play is developed throughout with references to sexual encounters as 'false Play' (I.187), 'foul play' (III.20) or a 'sordid Game' (II.269).⁴⁵ Monimia in her opening speeches treats love as a game which has suddenly become frightening and dangerous. Castalio has 'caught' her heart,

... and like a tender Child,
That trusts his play-thing to another hand,
I fear its harm, and fain would have it back.
(I.212-214)

Monimia's picture of herself as a tender trusting child whose plaything has been snatched away suggests her longing to return to the child's world of innocence. Her nature has been divided by the intrusion of love, which means that her heart is no longer under her control. She sees love in terms of loss and exile. Instead of being 'at Rest' (I.209), she is now 'wand'ring into cares' (I.210). If childhood cannot be regained, and with it rest and peace, then death seems an attractive alternative to the dangers of sexually aware adult life. The dead enjoy the peace she has lost and she wishes she had died in childhood rather than grown up to experience

45. See Dr. D.W. Hughes's forthcoming article for his discussion of the play imagery and the way in which 'the idea of play is itself often tainted with the fallen, predatory passions of the adult world'. As he notes, the final association of play with sexuality occurs in Acasto's description of the 'Dark-dreams', 'Sick Fancies Children' which 'play'd Farces' in his mind (IV.5-7) during the night of Monimia's violation. I found Dr. Hughes's identification of this pattern of imagery and its transformations highly significant in terms of The Orphan's overall depiction of the loss of innocence. I differ slightly from Dr. Hughes in assigning more negative associations to love as a game from the very first. The use of play images to characterize love is, I feel, not so much an attempt to locate sexual passion in the untroubled world of childhood as an attempt to minimize and ignore the operation of passion (I.147-48

her loss:

Why was I not lain in my peaceful Grave
With my poor Parents? and at Rest as they are?
Instead of that I am wand'ring into cares.
(I.208-10)

The 'harmless pleasures' which Paulino described Monimia as sharing with Serina are a world away from the reality of her lonely journey into the realms of passion. The loss of innocence and the growth of fear and shame as sexual feelings are aroused are underlined in Monimia's following conversation with the page. Although the page will prove to be a remarkably corrupt and wordly child,⁴⁶ he shrinks away from his first sexual stirrings, admitting to Monimia that he has avoided visiting her because her ripe sexuality disturbs him;

I am asham'd to see your swelling Breasts,
It makes me blush, they are so very white.
(I.224-25) 47

Monimia echoes Paulino's words (I.50) when she refers to the page's 'harmless sports' (I.239) but in the face of his emerging troubled sexuality the words are as inappropriate with reference to him as to her. Sexuality invades the world of innocent play and Monimia's offer of 'pretty Toys' (I.240) for his 'harmless sports' is itself a bribe to elicit from him the 'secrets' (I.235) Castalio and Polydore

46. As the play develops the page serves as an emblem of man's innate corruptibility. He spies and pimps for Polydore (II.320-24, III.1-10, 380-84) and is a general purveyor of dirty stories and erotic tit-bits to the two brothers (III.405-06, 454-55, 464-68). The page's age is nowhere stated. In his History of the English Stage (1741), Edmund Curll states that Anne Bracegirdle created the role before she was six, p.26. Lucyle Hook in 'Anne Bracegirdle's First Appearance' Theatre Notebook, Vol.13 (1956), pp.133-36 argues that Curll's dating and identification are trustworthy. Though other theatre historians (see A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers and Other Stage Personnel in London 1660-1800 by P.A. Highfill, K.A. Burnim and E.A. Langhans (Carbondale, III.1973) and John Fyvie's Tragedy Queens of the Georgian Era (London, 1909)) have argued that Mrs. Bracegirdle was sixteen in 1680. Were the page played by a five year old his corruption and his fear of his own aroused sexual feelings would certainly indicate the short duration of the idyll of innocence in childhood.
47. See also III.488-89.

'wickedly ... talkt' (I.233) about her.⁴⁸ With the exception of Serina, soon to belie her name and fall in love with the passionately violent Chamont (II.106-07),⁴⁹ there are no innocent children in Acasto's humanly contrived Eden, only the tantalizing memory of lost periods of contentment.⁵⁰ By the first 230 lines of the play sexual passion has been associated with tyranny (I.142), servitude (I.162), shame (I.224-25) and fear (I.205-07). These associations are developed with increasing intensity as the play progresses. The page's simple solution of avoiding the object of his shameful passion is denied to the adult characters who are compelled by the passions they fear and regret. Nevertheless, the desire to escape from the onslaught of sexuality with its implied loss of freedom, peace of mind and self-respect, is one of the general movements of the play.

It is in terms of this movement that Castalio's motives for deceiving his brother can be understood. In the first Act Castalio's intentions towards Monimia are unclear, as are his motives for offering to lead Polydore to the 'Scene of Love' (I.185) he has

48. That this is a normal way of proceeding with the page is indicated by his speech in Act III (464-69). Thus his 'sports' and 'Toys' depend upon the betrayal of sexual secrets.
49. Serina's 'fall' is confirmed in the Epilogue, where in the joint role of the character and the actress (Mrs. Boteler) she wonders whether in future prostitution or trickery will best serve her ends (8-19).
50. This point will be returned to later. The lost harmonies of life are frequently located in the past, among the dead or in death. Castalio reminds Polydore at the end, of their friendship in childhood (V.361-58), while the unflawed friendship of Acasto and Chamont (I.54-55) has ended in death. Acasto praises the memory of his dead wife (II.134-35, V.116-18) though he warns his sons of marriage as a source of corruption (III.88). The dead parents of Chamont and Monimia are depicted by both of them as a source of honour and virtue (I.339, II.169, 207) and by Monimia as enjoying in death peace and rest (I.208-10). This peace and the cessation of care is sought for in death by both Castalio and Monimia (V.426-28, 517).

appointed with Monimia. On the one hand such magnanimity recalls the behaviour of Orreryan heroic friends like Mustapha and Zanger⁵¹ and is in accordance with the cult of friendship expressed by the brothers. However, the chivalry of the gesture and its self-denying principles are undermined by Castalio's cynical attitude towards the love he offers his brother and the fact that seduction, not honourable marriage, appears to be the brothers' object. Castalio's idealism and cynicism sit uneasily together and the heroic gesture (like the heroic action of the hunt) is flawed from the onset. By Act II we learn that Castalio has deceived his brother and that he has, in fact, arranged to marry Monimia that day (II.277-80). By his own admission Castalio has no very good reasons for concealing his marriage from Polydore (II.310-11). The motives for his deception can be sought in that uneasy mixture of idealism and cynicism which is not only Castalio's means of concealing the truth but his reason for concealing it. A.M. Taylor has suggested that Castalio is a romantic lover with idealistic views about matrimony which he seeks to hide from the ridicule and disapproval of his libertine brother and conventional father.⁵² But such a reading is not born out by the text. Although Castalio can be transported to Platonic regions

51. See The Tragedy of Mustapha (1668), Act III (in Five Heroic Plays, ed. Bonamy Dobrée, London (1960), pp45-46, where both Mustapha and Zanger recommend each other to the Queen of Hungary. Orrery did not introduce this feature into his novella, where the brothers' feelings for Victoria are entirely concealed from each other.
52. A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, p.36. Polydore's libertinism is never particularly evident in regard to marriage about which from the first he displays quite conventional views (I.166-68). Acasto, on the other hand, shows no inclination to treat marriage as a mercenary arrangement in his generous doweries to Serina and Monimia (III.74-75, 126-27), but does show a sense of marriage as a possible snare for 'man of frailty' (III.128) and as a folly (III.88-89).

with thoughts of the 'Extatick bliss' of sexual fulfilment (III.306-10), he is unable to sustain the Platonic ideal and immediately relapses to simple sensuality: while the thought of marriage does not evoke comparable ecstasies. Indeed, his sexual ecstasies, if thwarted, turn quickly into angry passion. Monimia can be seen by him as 'Natures whole perfection in one piece!' (II.409), 'Dove-like, soft and kind' (II.368) and 'Gentle and kind, as sympathizing Nature' (III.274). However, the slightest impediment of his desires changes his perceptions of Monimia and her relation to the world around them. Then she becomes the embodiment of 'artful Woman' (II.390), poisoned 'Bait' laid to entrap man (II.369-72) or the type of 'Destructive, damnable, deceitful Woman' (III.586) from whom all the evils of the world spring (III.580-94). Castalio's enslavement to his passion is demonstrated by the instability and confusion of his reactions towards Monimia as he projects onto her image his own inner turmoil. But whether ^{Castalio is} pleased or frustrated by his relationship with Monimia, marriage is seen as symbolic of his bondage to passion. Throughout the play Castalio and Monimia describe their love in terms of slavery and tyranny, each casting themselves in the role of a slave and seeing the other as a tyrant. 53 The idea of tyranny is clearly self-reflective and refers to their inability to subdue their passions and, from this point of view, marriage becomes a sign of capitulation. Even before his failed wedding night, which he attributes to Monimia's desire to tyrannize over him (III.545-50), Castalio views his impending marriage as a sign of his 'Weakness' (II.307). He believes that Monimia treats him 'already like a Slave' (II.308) and gloomily describes himself as a 'doating honest Slave, design'd/For Bondage, Marriage bonds' (II.314-15).

53. See II.379,389, III.547-50, IV.97-99, 111-14,120-23,225-26,245, V.26-28,218-21,275. This use of bondage imagery to characterize the tyranny of sexual passion can be seen throughout Otway's later dramas. See especially my chapter on Caius Marius. Dr. D.W. Hughes's article draws attention to the characters' resentment of sexual bondage and fear of passion. On this issue my debt to Dr. Hughes is not specifically to his article but to our many discussions on Otway's treatment of passion.

Even when Castalio is planning with Monimia the longed for consummation of their marriage, the language he uses displays resentment at the extreme to which he has been pushed: 'to my Joyes I'll steal/As if I ne're had paid my Freedom of them' (III.300-01). At the same time the lines are suggestive of the fact that by concealing his marriage and stealing to his 'Joyes', Castalio is able to act as if he had not been obliged to pay his 'Freedom' for them. Secrecy is, in part, a means of minimizing the extent of the changes wrought by passion.

In concealing the truth from Polydore, Castalio is not only protecting himself and Monimia from Polydore's jealous rage (II.358-63); he is also protecting and maintaining his friendship with Polydore. Their friendship belongs to the ordered and asexual world described by Ernesto and Paulino, which was briefly seen in the boar-hunt scene in which manly co-operation united to defeat the savage forces of nature. Sexual passion isolates Castalio as it threatens his relationship with his brother, destroys his ability to control his emotions and increasingly separates him from the more organised world around him (III.494-509, IV.81-98, V17-28). Castalio's capacity for idealization is not especially illustrated by his contradictory reactions to love but his appreciation of worlds untroubled by sexual passion. His 'ruse' enables him for a moment to maintain and hold separate the golden world of his 'pre-sexual' friendship with Polydore (which he tries to recapture at the end as he reminds Polydore of their boyhood friendship (V.361-68)), and the tormented world of his sexual passion. To Polydore, Castalio first admits the emotional tyranny of love (I.142-44) and then, through his cynicism and offer to let Polydore replace him, demonstrates an ability to control his passion, which he desires but cannot in fact achieve. Castalio's lies are foolish and, in the event, ineffectual. They are not necessitated by any strong

external pressures. The need to lie comes from within himself. Deceit and secrecy are degraded and imperfect methods of controlling the disruptions of passion. In effect, in concealing his marriage, Castalio seeks to delay his own and the public recognition of his 'fall'. In a destructive paradox, the very means he uses are themselves tokens of his debasement as the desire for secrecy demonstrates his need to capitulate to a passion he deems shameful. Castalio cannot integrate his conflicting impulses and by lying he effectively splits his personality, for the final alienation experienced by the characters is the alienation of the self.

Monimia is even more depressed and alarmed than Castalio by the passions aroused in her. Her love rarely brings her moments of unalloyed happiness and, even when she has no overt reasons to be fearful, she recoils before the impact of her passion. Before the page reveals that Castalio has arranged to let Polydore replace him at their assignation, Monimia is filled with feelings of unease which culminate in her longing for the resolution of death. 'Distrust and heaviness' fill her heart (I.206) and 'Apprehension shocks' her 'timorous Soul' (I.207). There are no reasons for these fears at this stage unless her distrust is centered on her own reactions to falling in love and her capacity to control her emotions. The marriage ceremony does nothing to allay her fears and she describes afterwards how even as the Priest pronounced the 'Sacred Words' (III.270), 'Passion grew bigg' (III.271) and 'trembling seiz'd [her] Soul' (III.272). During the actual consummation of the marriage she displays her irrational fears when, in the arms of the man she presumes to be her husband, she believes that the intruder who knocks at her door is Polydore sent by her husband 'T' affront and do her violence again' (III.540). After the love-making, which was apparently highly satisfactory (IV.104,236-39), and before she knows about the

substitution trick, Monimia is unhappy and regretful. She wishes she had 'never marry'd' (IV.68) and finds that she is now weighed down by the 'Cares' (IV.70) she had earlier dreaded. Like Castalio, Monimia is capable of violent and angry language when she feels she has been slighted. Just as Castalio can describe her as a gentle 'Dove' or poisoned 'Bait', Monimia depicts her lover as a gentle shepherd (V.415-17) but also as a 'false Hyæna' (II.333) and 'cruel as Tygers' (IV.158). The terms are indicative of the identification of passion with the instinctive and cruel forces of Nature. However, the language, like Castalio's, is disproportionate to the event unless it is seen as a projection of an internal anguish at the dominance of savage passion.⁵⁴ Even when complaining that Castalio is 'cruel as Tygers' Monimia adds in an extraordinarily sensual and passionate image

I feel him in my breast, he tears my heart,
And at each sigh he drinks the gushing blood.
(IV.159-60)

Her passion is internal and destructive but always inescapable and the exclamations and execrations are expressions of frustration at the extent to which reason is subdued by ugly passions.

Monimia's reasons for fearing her passions are made explicit during the interview in which she defends herself from Polydore's 'brutal Passion' (II.351). Monimia begs Polydore not to talk to her of love because 'I must not hear it' (I.304). The use of the verb 'must' instead of 'will' or 'shall' is significant and suggests her

54 Clifford Leech, for instance, complains that it is difficult to understand why Castalio's 'lamentations' when locked out of Monimia's bedroom are 'quite so crazed', 'Restoration Tragedy: A Reconsideration', p.112. But in relation to Castalio's struggle against the rule of passion Monimia's apparent cruelty is more than a feminine whim but rather a confirmation of the degradations he had already anticipated.

fear that his language might be persuasive. When Polydore defends his language on the grounds that it was love which taught Adam to speak, Monimia does not deny this premise but argues that the love of Adam and Eve was blessed by their circumstances.

They were the only Objects of each other;
Therefore he Courted her, and her alone.
(I.313-14)

Adam and Eve had no choice but to be faithful but in the fallen 'peopled World' (I.315) there is no such security. Monimia's reply indicates her fear of the temptations offered to her own fallen nature and this fear is made more explicit later on. Angry at his repulse Polydore, rather illogically on the face of it, accuses Monimia, along with all womankind, of possessing gross sexual appetites, 'Inconstancy' and 'loose desires', which easily dominate them (I.348-49). However, Monimia does not deny the slur but eagerly agrees with him:

I own my Sexes follies, I have 'em all,
And to avoid it's faults must fly from you.
(I.352-53)

The hints about the unrestrained nature of passion which are being built up here give the catastrophic night of secret and anonymous sensuality a significance well beyond the accidental. Polydore's hope that 'I may fit her Arms, as well as he' (III.414) is justified. Chamont's prophetic dream of Monimia, Castalio and Polydore enjoying a sexual orgy with 'all the freedom of unbounded pleasure' (II.231) gives expression to the indiscriminating physicality of their desires. Monimia's fear of her rebellious sexuality is such that the total loss of humanity seems preferable to her vexed human life combatting the 'destroying wiles of faithless man' (I.357-60,361). Ribald jokes lurk at the back of the substitution trick and in Polydore's angry or amorous speeches (I.340-51, III.420-26, IV.380-82), as Otway harnesses comedy's frank acceptance of sexual urges to the tragic theme

of man's struggles with the limitations of the human condition. ⁵⁵

Polydore, who will perpetrate the tragic outrage, also demonstrates his unease with the appetites which threaten to overwhelm him. The satiric note introduced in his anti-feminine gibes (I.340-51) is indicative of his disgust with sexual urges, which is as strong as his impatience with the 'peevish Vertue' (I.331) which inhibits them (hypocritically, he asserts (I.332)). This follows on his brief attempt to justify his appetites through a libertine version of Adam's gift of speech which seeks to unify man's nature and by-pass the conflict between sense and reason by deriving the traditionally rational faculty of speech from man's sexual impulses:

Desire first taught us words: Man, when created
At first alone, long wander'd up and down,
Forlorn, and silent as his Vassal Beasts;
But when a heav'n-born Maid, like you, appear'd,
Strange pleasures fill'd his eyes, and fir'd his heart,
Unloos'd his Tongue, and his first talk was Love.
(I.306-11)

The biblical Adam was given the gift of speech by God long before the creation of Eve and exercised his faculty, demonstrating his superiority over the mute 'Vassal Beasts' as he named them. ⁵⁶

Polydore's unification involves a drastic reduction and simplification of man's nature as sexual desire becomes the source of speech. Man's

- 55 A far more complete substitution trick, playing round the idea that it makes no difference in the dark, occurs in Friendship in Fashion, where Goodvile and Lady Squeamish make love to each other each under the impression they are embracing a different partner (IV.113-21). The effect is not particularly funny there although, since none of the characters attempt to strive beyond their severe limitations, the effect is necessarily bitter rather than tragic.
56. See Genesis 2.20-23. Polydore's account of the gift of speech does not accord with Milton's Paradise Lost, where Adam speaks the moment he is created and goes on to have a long conversation with God (Bk.VIII.271-451). However, Adam's description of the 'amorous delight' he felt when he first saw Eve is perhaps echoed in Polydore's assertion that the first man felt 'Strange pleasures' at the sight of Eve. All references from Paradise Lost are taken from Milton: The Poetical Works, edited by Douglas Bush (London 1966)

separation from the animal kingdom thus lies solely in his ability to express his lust in words and not in any essential differences in modes of experience. Although Polydore has unified man's nature and abolished the need to combat and subdue passion with reason, he does so only through a degradation of man to a new animal level.

Polydore's argument founders partly on Monimia's fear of the sexual anarchy implied by this fable but more fundamentally on her insistence on her uniquely human inheritance of 'My Mothers Vertues and my Fathers Honour' (I.339). These are the moral and rational articulations of a human world in which instinct must war with reason and Polydore's fable can neither explain their existence nor minimize their power over the mind. After his rebuff Polydore abandons his attempt to reconcile speech and desire. Moving to an opposite extreme, he now treats man's need to woo in words, 'To cringe thus, fawn, and flatter' (I.363), as a sign of man's inferiority to the animals. While the animals simply and silently satisfy their sexual needs man humiliates himself by begging for his pleasures and thus demonstrates a subservience to his passions which puts him below the level of the animals. Polydore admires the arbitrary behaviour of the Bull who

... ranges through all the Field,
And from the Herd singling his Female out,
Enjoies her, and abandons her at Will
(I.365-67)

The emphasis in Polydore's speech is not on the Bull's ability to copulate with any number of the herd (though that, perhaps, is implied in line 366), but on the speed and ease with which the Bull can slake his appetites. Polydore does not, like Don John (in Don Carlos), put forward a relatively simple libertine doctrine of inconstant roving

pleasure with one delight following another (Don Carlos, III.1-5).⁵⁷ Rather, Polydore looks forward to sexual gratification as a means of liberating himself from his sensual nature. As Polydore decides to emulate the Bull and 'rush' on Monimia in a 'storm of Love' (I.373), (when she is sexually aroused and cannot marshal her arguments on 'Vertue' (I.369-72)), he looks forward to his subsequent release from the conflicts and torments of passion and he will

Surfeit on Joys till even desire grows sick:
Then by long Absence liberty regain
And quite forget the pleasure and the pain.
(I.375-78)

By imitating the Bull, Polydore hopes to achieve the animal's freedom from sexual subservience. The inarticulate Bull who knows no bars to his instinctual drives is in control of his passion and can enjoy and abandon his mate 'at Will' (I.367) while man's desires are painfully prolonged as he pursues his lust through the conventions designed to inhibit it. Man's divided nature is such that his reason cannot subdue his passion. It can only intensify it through frustrating it while passion degrades the attributes of reason, making

57. Polydore's position on the gratification of the appetites is quite different from that of the 'typical' libertine of verse and stage. See for instance, John Ward's The Libertine's Choice: or, The Mistaken Happiness of the Fool of Fashion, (1704) where the libertine persona of the poem decides to 'Measure my Pleasures by my Appetites, / And unconfin'd persue the World's Delights', p.12, or John Oldham's 'A Satyr against Vertue', which points out that the 'happy Brutes... the great Rule of Sense observe.' Polydore does not want endless gratification but release from lust and the animals are happy following their instincts because in so doing they are paradoxically free from sensual domination. Shadwell's The Libertine (1675), offers an example of envy of animal promiscuity, in The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell, ed. Montague Summers, 5 vols (London 1927), III.ii.43-44, as does Lee's Mithridates (1678). Polydore's speech clearly echoes Pharnaces's admiration of the 'generous Horse' among his mares (II.i.44-49) and Pharnaces also rejects 'Honour, Courtship, all/But gaudy nonsense' and 'baseness' (II.i.41-43). However, the emphasis in Pharnaces's speech is simply on the stallion's endless ability to chose new mates from the herd and gratify his promiscuous lust without inhibition.

language subservient to lust (I.362-64). *Language is not made subservient in the sense of Polydore's Edenic fable which postulated the generation of speech from lust but is degraded as passion, if not exorcised by gratification, invades and perverts the rational mind. Caught in this vicious circle, Polydore envies the animals not for their lawless promiscuity but for their freedom from the humiliations of unsatisfied lust which makes man, supposedly a rational creature, a slave to his passions.* 58

Polydore's view that the natural world enjoys a greater degree of calm and freedom from passion than that allotted to human nature is echoed by Castalio. In three speeches in Acts III, IV and V, the first before his disillusionment with Monimia and the others after, Castalio demonstrates his unease at the domination of passion as he contrasts the harmony of the natural world with his own tormented condition. Whether expecting gratification or suffering from frustration, Castalio is aware of his alienation from forces of order and content. In the first speech he evokes the calm enjoyed by sleeping Nature where even 'The feeling Ayr's at rest and feels no noise' (III.501). Surrounded by images of peace, the sleeping 'Herds', 'Fishes' and 'harmless birds' (III.498,499,503) each dwelling in their natural element, Castalio moves furtively to satisfy his wakeful passion. His sexual appetite is not seen here as something he shares with the animal kingdom but is compared with the unnatural and

58. Dr. Hughes drew my attention to the way in which Polydore's speech and its conclusions contrast very markedly with the sentiments expressed by Horace in the Third Satire of the First Book, in which he describes man's discovery of speech as laying the foundations for a peaceful and civilised society. He explicitly compares primitive man's hurried and promiscuous love-making with the violent and frequently lethal copulations of bulls, The Satires of Horace and Persius, trans. Niall Rudd, Penguin Classics (1973), I.3.99-110

obsessional gold-lust of a miser,

At Midnight thus the Us'rer steals untract,
To make a Visit to his hoarded Gold,
and Feast his Eyes upon the shining Mammon.
(III.507-09)

59

In this context sexual appetite becomes a form of greed, not simply a matter of gratification, and Castalio's need for secrecy is further explained as his passion is revealed as ugly. In Act IV Castalio greets the dawn and creates a pastoral mood as he imagines the 'Swain' who satisfies his simple natural appetites 'when hunger calls' (IV.85-87) and listens to the dawn chorus of the 'Cheerful Birds' (IV.94). Compared with this scene of stirring activity after the refreshment of sleep, Castalio sees his own 'Condition' as 'curst' (IV.97). Man's passions may be a sign of his kinship with the animal world but they are also a source of isolation. The reasons for man's miserable uniqueness are made clearer in his speech in Act V where his thinking, if not his conclusions, comes closest to Polydore's. Here he compares the brief seasons of animal sexuality with man's perpetual enslavement to his lusts. Watching a herd of grazing deer he reflects that

Once in a Season too they taste of Love:
Only the Beast of Reason is its Slave,
And in that Folly drudges all the year.
(V.26-28)

Castalio's thinking goes beyond Polydore's as he recognises that man can neither enjoy the ease of the animals nor the calm of reason.

These lines express the central issue the play examines. The phrase

59. Polydore also uses the miser image, comparing his feelings for Monimia with those of a miser for his gold (I.195,299). Such similarities suggest that the brothers' attitudes to their passion (and their solutions) are to be compared not contrasted. There is no simple contrast between 'libertine' Polydore and 'romantic' Castalio.

the 'Beast of Reason' defines man in terms of the warring elements of his nature which the play shows to be tragically irreconcilable. As Polydore recognised, man's gift of reason both thwarts and intensifies his passions. In fact, the two elements of human nature, reason and passion, combine to make man a 'Monster' (V.25), the 'Beast of Reason' who can neither satisfy nor control his sensual nature. The opposition of the two elements is destructive. Passion is prolonged and darkened by reason, which has induced feelings of shame and regret as its sovereignty is challenged. Equally, man's imperfect powers of reason are further corroded by passion and the very processes of inhibition, secrecy and deceit lead the characters further into the labyrinth of passion. Perverted reasoning leads to Castalio's muddled concealment of his marriage while Polydore disastrously reasons his way to an anti-rationalist position. Castalio's appearance of control in the first Act is an illusion and his later attempts to deny the rule of passion are a failure. Equally, Polydore will prove incapable of sustaining his role of inarticulate brutality. There is no escape from the tragic paradox of the human condition, although the characters will anxiously pursue the various possibilities presented to them by their divided minds.

Polydore is not alone in seeking the evasion of silence. For Castalio, as much as for Polydore, silence is a condition of love-making. 'Our Joyes', he tells Monimia,

Shall be as silent as the Extatick bliss
Of Souls, that by Intelligence converse.
(III.306,307-08)

The idea of any kind of converse is negated in the next lines, which celebrate sensuality as an escape into mindlessness;

Immortal pleasures shall our senses drown;
Thought shall be lost, and every Pow'r dissolv'd.
(III.309-10)

This rhapsody to silence is itself a response to Monimia's injunction that during his visit to her chamber he 'speak not the least word' (III.304). Although circumstances dictate this silence for Acasto's bed-chamber is next to Monimia's (III.286-88), since there are no very convincing external grounds for the initial deception of Acasto, it becomes evident that silence, like secrecy, responds to a fundamental division in the characters' minds. The silent brute physicality of Polydore's night with Monimia is the actual enactment of all their fears and desires. Although Monimia can praise Castalio's language, begging him to

...charm me with the Musick of thy Tongue,
I'm ne're so blest, as when I hear thy Vows,
And listen to the Language of thy Heart,
(II.398-400)

her words cannot really represent an integration of passion and discourse, sense and reason.⁶⁰ As the page says, when retelling the scene on which he has spied to Polydore, 'of a sudden all the Storm was past,/A gentle calm of Love succeeded in' (III.9-10). Monimia is not rationally persuaded by Castalio's arguments - he has no arguments - but one strong emotion is followed by another: 'My Rage ebbs out, and Love flows in apace' (II.395). The process has not depended on reason, but on some uncontrollable force akin to the movements of the tides or the weather.

60. In 'The Coherence of The Orphan', Geoffrey Marshall describes this speech as an example of the way language in the play can be a 'magnificent and beautiful means of communication', p.95. But the means by which Monimia has moved from her earlier denunciation of Castalio's language as typical of the 'bewitching Tongues of faithless men!' (II.332) to her subsequent admiration of his speech has nothing to do with language working at a rational level of communication. Reconciliation takes place suddenly and unexpectedly and at the level of the passions. Further, there is an ambiguity in Monimia's use of the word 'charm', which, although it can mean simply 'delight', could also refer back to the idea of bewitchment, in which case submitting to Castalio's amorous utterances becomes a willing abdication of reason to the magic of passion.

The inability to reconcile reason and passion leads to the almost schizophrenic attempt on the characters' part to hold these aspects of their life separate. All the secrets in the play are sexual secrets as the characters try to relegate their sensual feelings and curiosity to obscurity.

As Dr. Hughes has noted there is an 'intense and general wish to exorcise sensuality from the confines of speech; for the secrets are always those of the characters' sensual natures, whether they concern a triviality such as Monimia's garters (III.464-66) or the momentous fact of the lovers' marriage'.⁶¹

The divisions of the characters' minds affect their perceptions and the whole way in which they articulate their world. The harmony of landscape around them, with its 'Chearful birds' and herds of peaceful deer, is constantly challenged and eventually overcome by their mental projections of disturbed inner landscapes of the mind, where hyaenas and tigers prowl through a 'Province ruinate and waste'. The divisions of their minds also produce the characteristic alternations in the play between praise and disparagement, panegyric and satire.⁶² The sense of dissatisfaction with the unruly present is demonstrated by the outbursts of satire, which occur with increasing frequency throughout the play. The panegyrics in the play usually refer to the dead: Monimia and Chamont's parents (I.54-55, II.151-52, 206-212), Acasto's wife (II.134-35, V.117-18); events in the past, like the happy childhood of Castalio and Polydore (V.361-68) or Monimia's pre-sexual innocence (IV.294-99); or people who are far from the scene, so that Acasto praises his 'Royal Master' even as he celebrates his distance from the Court (II.108-09). The praise of the present cannot be sustained. Ernesto and Paulino's vision of felicity disintegrates and Acasto is deluded when, recovering from his illness, he sees his position, supported on his sons' arms, as an emblem of strength (III.62-64). The panegyric mood expresses the characters' longing for a golden world half remembered.

61. See Dr. D.W. Hughes's forthcoming article 'Otway's The Orphan: An Interpretation'.

62. Dr. D.W. Hughes's article, as cited above, drew my attention to the significance of the alternation between panegyric and satire.

and admired, as it were the pre-Lapsarian world, while the satiric mood expresses their recognition of their fallen state. Frequently satiric outbursts occur in scenes in which the gratification of the senses has been denied and involves a recognition of the characters' frustrated servitude to their senses. Polydore delivers his anti-feminine diatribe (I.340-51) after he has failed to seduce Monimia and he goes on to satirise his own language as an example of the humiliations imposed on reason by passion (I.362-63). When Monimia treats him coldly Castalio satirises women as baits set to entrap men (II.367-72) or satirises himself for his servitude to passion (II.307-15).

Monimia recognises that she cannot liberate herself from her passion for Castalio and satirises her sex, her language and herself: she will 'Be a true Woman, rail, protest [her] wrongs,/Resolve to hate him, and yet love him still' (I.278-79). Shut out from Monimia's bedroom Castalio decides to 'ruminate on Womans Ills,/Laugh at my self and curse th'inconstant Sex' (III.557-58).⁶³ Bitter, self-directed laughter is the form many of the satires take, ^{and} even Chamont includes himself in his warning to Monimia against trusting masculine amorous language; 'Trust not a man; we are by Nature false,/Dissembling, subtle, cruel, and unconstant' (II.288-89). Rothstein noted the mood of distrust which permeates the play and attributed that to the fact that each of the characters 'fails to trust the others'.⁶⁴

63. In 'A Discourse Concerning The Original and Progress of Satire' (1693), Dryden describes satire as developing from Adam and Eve's post-Lapsarian recriminations, in 'Of Dramatic Poesy' and Other Critical Essays, ed. George Watson, Everyman's Library (1962), p.97. Castalio's impulse to satire here springs from his impatience with his sexual servitude which leads to his humiliating frustration (III.545-50). The scene becomes a re-enactment of the Fall as inside the chamber Polydore achieves his false and transitory sexual Paradise (IV.380-82) while Castalio outside imitates Milton's fallen Adam, flinging himself to the ground and tracing the many falls of man back to Eve's transgression (in Paradise Lost, Bk.X. 850-52, Adam lies on the ground, in Bk.X.867-908 he foretells the ills which will spring from the fall, The Orphan, III.556-59, 580-94). Castalio's satiric lamentations therefore both derive from his recognition of his fallen state and confirm that state.

64. Rothstein, Restoration Tragedy, p.101

But Otway's analysis goes deeper than that suggests. The basis for the distrust of language is a distrust of the self which is provoked by the war of sense and reason and springs from the recognition of the extent to which the rebellion of the senses has warped rational communications. Inevitably the satires on language concentrate on amorous language,⁶⁵ where the subversive effects of sexual passion are most obviously seen. But Acasto's satires extend the failures of language to the Court and the political realm, where the passions of greed and ambition pervert language (II.20-30,37-45, III.76-96). In relation to that whole outside world, the activities in the play constitute a microcosm of the macrocosm as, through their distrust, shame and fear, the characters recreate in Acasto's retreat the discords and subterfuges of the outside world.

Marriage, traditionally a symbol of the unification of man and society, harmonising asocial sexual impulses with the need for public order, can do nothing to integrate the divided natures of Monimia and Castalio. The manner and circumstances in which the rites of marriage are celebrated in this play constitute a denial of the significance of the ritual. The Book of Common Prayer admonished that marriage is not to be

taken in hande unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly, to satisfie mennes carnall lustes and appetites, lyke brute beasts that have no understanding; but reverently, discretely, advisedly, soberly, and in feare of God.

66

65. See also I.226-29, II.104-05, 332-37, III.133.

66. Cited by Edward Le Comte in Milton and Sex (London 1978), p.30.

Significantly, the marriage ceremony does not take place in the family chapel but outside amongst the woods associated with the tyranny of the wild boar (II.3-4) and the groves dedicated to Polydore's erotic adventures (III.13).⁶⁷ Its secrecy denies the principle of inclusion, while the fit of passion which overcomes Monimia as the Priest pronounces the 'Sacred Words' (III.270) illustrates the disjunction between the ritual and the circumstances, each belonging to the opposed worlds, of divine speech and reason, or fallen animal appetite. Monimia's fit of passion corresponds to Acasto's sudden illness and temporary loss of speech (III.39-41) - an illness which he recognises as a sign of his decaying vitality (III.44-45). Similarly Acasto's 'Dark-dreams' (IV.5), in which he is bereft of speech to dispel the nightmare world (IV.11-12), take place during the night of Monimia's violation, as each stage of the decline into the irrational world of appetite is marked symbolically by these failures of speech on the part of Acasto, who has been associated with the triumphs of art and civilization (I.30-34). Symbolically these parallels sharply illustrate the conflict between the fallen world of animal passion and the realms of reason and they also show the power of passion to invade the mind and paralyse the faculties opposed to it. However, speech and all the operations of the rational mind, although

67. The relationship of the 'Grove' to the passionate forces of Nature was brought to my attention by Dr. D.W. Hughes's article 'Otway's The Orphan. An Interpretation'. The erotic associations of the grove in which the marriage ceremony takes place are brought out further by Chamont's angry and suspicious questioning of the Chaplain about Monimia and Castalio's activities in the grove (III.244-45). A.M. Taylor has stressed the importance of the sacramental view of life to an understanding of The Orphan, see Next to Shakespeare, p.21-24, 'A Note on the Date of The Orphan', English Literary History, Vol.12-13, and the Introduction to her edition of The Orphan, pp.xxiii-xxiv. However, the important point about the treatment of the sacrament of marriage here is that in all but the words, which are drowned by passion, the rite is a travesty of the holy sacrament. Even the Chaplain conforms to the rule of passion and violence and would have rather been a soldier (III.160-62).

challenged, denied, avoided and increasingly feared, can never be totally evaded. The crux of the tragedy lies in the duality of man; his inability to free himself from the legacy of the fall and his equal inability to actually achieve the oblivion of the animals.

The impossibility of escaping from speech (and with it the operations of the rational mind) is illustrated on many levels and, at times, with touches of bitter irony. As Dr. D.W. Hughes points out 'Castalio is diverted from his silent ecstasies by the Page's relentless talking' (Hughes's italics).⁶⁸ Silence itself for reasoning beings is not actually a total blank. Monimia's disquiet after her wedding-night (before she knows about the substitution trick) springs, at least in part, from that very silence she had enjoined on her partner and which now seems 'cold' (IV.66) and she interprets this silence in terms of sexual satiety and boredom (IV.66-67).

Although Polydore admires the brief and inarticulate couplings of the Bull he cannot in fact enjoy and abandon his mate 'at Will'. His very sexual pride forces him to talk as his 'Vanity that could not keep/ The secret of [his] happiness' (IV.397-98) leads him to blurt out the truth to Monimia. As he talks Polydore sets in motion the tragic machinery of the conflicts which beset the 'Beast of Reason', for the revealed truth cuts across the facile libertine psychology of his attempt to isolate his sexual impulses from the human world in which he must play a part. His violation of Monimia reveals that, bestial though man may be, it is no solution to imitate animals. The patterns and conventions of human existence cannot be evaded and in reverting to a state of animal primitivism Polydore violates the uniquely human

68. D.W. Hughes, 'Otway's The Orphan: An Interpretation'.

tabu against incest.⁶⁹ Human relationships, the ability to promulgate ideals such as virtue and honour and social customs such as marriage are as much the realities of the human condition as the primitive urges which rebel against these confines. The absence of any of the human forms of organisation in the animal world is noted by Castalio as he watches the grazing deer where 'Male, Female, Daughter, Mother, Son/Brother and Sister [are] mingled all together' (V.18-19). But, as Castalio recognises here, such harmony depends on that absence of thought-reason which distinguishes man from animal. Polydore hoped to exorcise his passion by satisfying it and so 'liberty regain/ And quite forget the pleasure and the pain' (I.376-77). With tragic irony his resurgent rational forces, which include memory, will not let him forget the consequences of his act aimed at effacing the memory of passion. From the first his libertinism was unconventional and based on the idea of escaping from sexual servitude and now he displays no libertine insouciance over the fact of incest but dwells on the human significance of his act and its violation of human relationships; 'And then have I enjoy'd/My Brothers Wife' (IV.419-20) - 'thy spotless Marriage Joys/Have been polluted by thy Brothers Lust' (V.410-11).

69. A.M. Taylor has suggested that Polydore's remorse and eventual suicide can only be explained by a complex of irreconcilable ideas ranging from sacramental piety to libertinism, Next to Shakespeare, p.23. But Polydore's character is not so contradictory and elusive as this implies, nor so dependant on external sources of knowledge like 'the sacramental view of life', as cited above, footnote 26, p.23. Both his brand of 'libertinism' and his remorse spring from the same sources and his actions are consistent within the terms of the play. Geoffrey Marshall is surely correct in seeing that it is his incest which horrifies Polydore, 'The Coherence of The Orphan', p.942

As Polydore talks to her the inescapable operations of the mind affect Monimia as she finds that 'A thousand horrid thoughts crowd on my memory' (IV.386). The working of memory is typical of the mental conflicts the play presents. For while memory offers up images of the innocent and untroubled past, it also reaffirms the painful reality of the present. At times throughout the play attempts are made to salvage the present. Acasto tries to dismiss his illness, promising that the next day they will 'Find out new pleasures, and redeem lost time' (III.154). Polydore offers to keep his and Monimia's incest secret and leave the household after reconciling Castalio to Monimia (IV.425-28) and in the last Act Castalio tries to re-establish his relationships with Monimia and Polydore. Each attempt fails and time cannot be redeemed from memory. Monimia cannot forget the fact of her 'pollution' (IV.432) and Castalio in reviving the memory of the past (V.274-75,361-68) can only remind his listeners of the actions which separate them from that past. The desire to forget the pain of the past becomes paramount in the last two Acts as the characters writhe in turmoil and long to escape from the contradictions of their natures. For Castalio 'Woman is the thing I would forget, and blot from my Remembrance' (V.38-39), but he can neither control his passion nor his mind and 146 lines later he declares that his 'heart will not forget' Monimia (V.185). Monimia longs to 'drown/In dark Oblivion but a few past hours' (V.212-13) or to escape from her situation by forgetting her 'Humanity' (IV.408) or losing her reason (IV.432-33). The longing to escape from humanity is given startling form as Polydore compares their situation with that of 'the first Wretched Pair expell'd their Paradise' (IV.449) and imagines for them an anti-Eden which elaborately negates the physical reality and significance of Acasto's retreat;

... some place where Adders nest in Winter,
Loathsome and Venemous; Where poisons hang
Like Gums against the Walls.

(IV.450-52)

The exile he imagines for them is far more severe than the biblical one. It is not the harsh world of human striving but an inhuman and sterile world. Here at last sexuality will be forgotten as 'Desire shall languish like a withering Flower ,/And no distinction of the Sex be thought of' (IV.456-57). Normal parental feelings are also abandoned as Polydore and Monimia debate over whether any child engendered by their night of lust should be murdered or brought up in misery to 'Curse its Birth' (IV.442-46).

The parallel Polydore draws between himself and Monimia and Adam and Eve is qualified by his depiction of the world into which they will flee. The bleakness of his images suggests a recognition that the world they have fallen from is itself the fallen world; hence their exile is to an inhuman or subhuman world.

Although this formally marks the end of Acasto's demi-Paradise it is the culmination of a movement begun in the first Act. The characters' spiritual restlessness, induced by their conflicting reactions to the onslaught of passion, is throughout illustrated by images of wandering and the desire to escape, while the triumph of passion over their rational minds is expressed by the disordered and desolate landscapes which fill their imaginations. Polydore and Castalio at the beginning of the play long to escape from their retreat, where their inclinations towards violence are inhibited (I.96-106), and their natural imagery of 'dunghill' weeds and 'rot' (I.105) already shows their ability to dwell in the alternative reality of the imagination. Monimia begins finding herself 'wand'ring into cares' (I.210) amidst a landscape of perilous rocks (I.274) and tells Polydore that she would 'rather wander through the world a beggar' (I.336) or exile herself to a sub-human life in the wilderness (I.357-60)

than submit to the promptings of passion. As their passions attack and impair their powers of reason, the characters' depictions of savage landscapes increasingly over-rule the external world or rural beauty, which here represents the kind of order Acasto has established, and which is inimical to the play of passion. The world is transformed as the characters undergo changes; as Monimia says after her wedding night, 'The Scene's quite alter'd; I am not the same;' (IV.69, my italics). The pastoral animals of herd and covert, the 'Swains' and 'happy Shepherds' (IV.83,84), have less reality than the savage principles symbolised by the tigers and hyaenas of the disordered mind. When rural beauty is observed, as in Castalio's three speeches on the surroundings (III.494-503, IV.81-96, V.17-23), the emphasis in each speech is on the distance between these scenes of calm and order and his own disquiet. But even the calm he observes may be part of his disorder; an exaggerated inversion of the pathetic fallacy. For when he recounts his experiences to Monimia in the last Act the scene has become cold, dark, stormy and sinister; 'The dropping dews **fell cold** upon my head, / Darkness enclos'd, and the Winds whistl'd round me' (V.252-33). The scenes he describes here correspond not to perceived reality but to his own 'fierce and violent desires' (V.251); to his state either of guilty anticipation or angry humiliation. The barren and lonely states Monimia imagines for herself similarly keep pace with her increasing misery. Ill-treated by Castalio, who has left her a prey to Polydore's seductions, she describes her heart as a war ravaged 'Province' where 'Desolation's settled' (II.379-84). Later, when rejected by Castalio, she finds morbid relief in imagining herself bereft of reason, a madwoman 'Chain'd to the Ground' (IV.212), whipped and starved (IV.213-14) or a social outcast 'Thrust out a

naked Wanderer to the World' (IV.343),⁷⁰ Castalio and Monimia's passions are isolating, cutting them off from the world around them so that when the desired object is removed nothing is left. Castalio imagines himself without Monimia as in a 'desart, ... /Salvage and forlorn' (II.328-29) or 'alone' on a 'naked beach' (V.287,288), his sighs mingling with the harsh elements (V.289) as they did on the night of his vigil outside Monimia's chamber (V.253-54), as the extremes of passion reduce the characters to inarticulacy. Both Monimia and Castalio turn against Nature in the extremity of their misery, cursing the world back to its first confusion (IV.154-55,V.507-09).

Castalio's curse, which is the more extensive, longs for the dissolution of the whole political and social world (V.503-06). *It is as though only by the ending of all forms of existence can the discords that tear his mind apart be stilled.*

As the dark world of the irrational mind overtakes the characters the nightmare world materialises; more particularly, the horrors which are enacted, of incestuous passion and fratricide, are actualisations of the dreams of Chamont and Acasto (II.222-37, IV.5-11). Although the dreams do not further the action they colour it and act, in part, as intimations of the gradual surfacing of the dark and hidden corners of the psyche when reason is in retreat.

Dr. Hughes has drawn attention to the 'unreasoning imagination's capacity to create terrible alternatives to the reality of the outward, substantial world.'⁷¹ He points out that the significance of the 'two grimly prophetic dreams' is demonstrated by Chamont's account of his encounter with the hag (II.240-69):

70. Monimia's self-images of beggary, starvation and isolation recall Lavinia's more elaborate projections of misery in Caius Marius, II.142-58, IV.72-78.

71. D.W. Hughes, 'Otway's The Orphan: An Interpretation', as cited above.

As a destitute, 'wrinkled' (II.246) wanderer (his italics) through a hostile world, the hag corresponds closely to Monimia's numerous self-projections in a similar role, so that here the sinister, inward images of the mind suddenly acquire substantial, external form. 72.

Alienated from the world of rural beauty around them the characters find it increasingly insubstantial. When Castalio attempts to resurrect that world, comparing his and Monimia's condition to that of birds united after a hunt (V.237-43), Monimia warns him to 'be not too fond of peace' (V.244) and rejects the parallel. But as the nightmare world replaces the 'real' world the characters' powers of reason put up a rearguard defence as they recognise that they have strayed into an unfamiliar and insubstantial world. As Monimia is rejected by Castalio she wonders if her sense of identity is an illusion; 'Am I not then your Wife, your Lov'd Monimia?/I once was so, or I've most strangely dreamt' (IV.115-16). Later, when she has learnt about her defilement, she does treat herself as a dream figure, warning Castalio to come 'No nearer, lest I vanish !' (V.207). In response the still ignorant Castalio wonders if he now has wandered into a dream world (V.208-10), while later his spiritual desolation, loss of 'rest' and bewilderment in a world which no longer corresponds to any known reality leads to his cry of 'Where am I? sure I wander midst Inchantment,/ And never more shall find the way to rest' (V.283-84). The border-lines between dream and reality become blurred as Ernesto, hearing Castalio mourning outside Monimia's chamber, wonders if his 'sense has been deluded' (III.560) and later Acasto, who has heard the same voice, is not sure **if it** was substantial or a part of his 'Dark-dreams' (IV.5,23-25). But the world of 'Dark-dreams' is, after the violation, thick and substantial. Chamont, who introduces

72. D.W. Hughes, 'Otway's The Orphan. An Interpretation'. Dr. Hughes goes on to demonstrate the way in which the characters come to define themselves and their experiences in terms of dreams and visions.

into the play the world of dreams, riddles and apocalyptic warnings (II.243-59), whose meanings can only be clarified as the irrational gains control, is also a representative of that outside world of Court and Camp Acasto has distanced from his household. Chamont not only represents the point at which dream and reality start to change places but, touchy, suspicious and bellicose, he also represents the intrusion of the outside world into a society organised around its exclusion. Chamont does not ferment the discords, which exist quite independently of his presence. But his presence, and the disturbing quality of his dream, help to make the point that there is no escape from the unruly human condition. At one point towards the end of the play Castalio treats Chamont like a creature from a dream, ordering him to 'Vanish, I charge you' (V.486) or, if he will not disappear, threatening to stab him. But the world Chamont represents can neither be dissolved at will nor eradicated with violence. As the nightmare world surfaces it betrays most of the characteristics of the great world shunned and satirised by Acasto. Lying, spying, infidelity (albeit unconscious) and, in a sense, civil war, are all enacted as the large social and political world is recreated inside Acasto's garden world. A final confrontation between Acasto's ideal world of rural beauty and the nightmare world of passion takes place as Monimia hurrying towards Castalio compares his voice with that of 'the Shepherd's Pipe upon the Mountains, /When all his little Flock's at feed before him' (V.416-17). But her pastoral images fade on the air and are replaced by bewilderment and horror, 'But what means this? here's Blood' (V.418). For now the dark world has gained control and Castalio has, in effect, killed his brother. It is now the rural world of beauty which seems insubstantial and dreamlike, and blood and passion are the reality. Monimia finally acknowledges the reality of the violent and disordered world around her when, as she is dying, she bids the world 'Good night' (V.470).

Polydore makes his last entrance with a speech which demonstrates the negative enlightenment which leads to his suicide;

To live, and live a Torment to my self,
What Dog would bear't that knew but his Condition?
We have little knowledge, and that makes us Cowards:
Because it cannot tell us what's to come.

(V.304-07)

He recognises now the paradox of the human condition, which can neither enjoy brutish ignorance nor achieve the knowledge which would enable rational control. The torment of knowing their imperfect condition quite properly reaches its climax in the last Act as the characters try to exclude from speech and memory the situation created by their passions. Castalio begs his father to avoid recalling the object of his desires to him; 'Name not a woman to me; but to think/Of woman were enough to taint my Brains' (V.35-36). Later he stumbles in his attempt to explain his earlier lies to Polydore;

...I know not how to tell thee;
Shame rises in my Face, and interrupts
The Story of my Tongue.

(V.331-33)

Both Monimia and Castalio long to be able to 'blot' out the past (IV.38-39, 211-13) and Monimia repeatedly begs and commands Castalio to 'forbear inquiry' (V.257) as, faced with the knowledge of the past, words fail her (V.224,268). Lacking words, she cannot believe that her inner misery and physical violation are not in fact physically apparent - 'Read'st thou not something in my face that speaks/Wonderful change and horror from within me?' (V.258-59) - or more desperately she hopes that 'Time will clear all' (V.277). Acasto's dream of his sons' deaths was also prophetic in his inability to find words to communicate with, or dispel the images of violence and passion (IV.11-12).

Nevertheless, the human compulsion to speak cannot be avoided and is

illustrated by the insistent questioning which punctuates the last Act. Indeed, throughout the play information has in fact been elicited through the process of question and answer, no matter how reluctantly the answers have been given. The pattern is established in the first Act with Polydore's questioning of Castalio (I.118-71), though here the truth is withheld. Speech relentlessly probes the secret areas of the mind and Chamont wrings out answers about the marriage from both the Chaplain and Monimia (II.205-83, III.155-248, IV.162-262), while Monimia's solemn question to Polydore obliges him to cease his sensual hints and speak plainly (IV.391-95). But although speech in the end cannot be denied, Polydore can only bring himself to reveal the truth to Castalio when he has been fatally wounded and no longer has to live with the consequences of speech. Similarly, Monimia, who has not been able to face Castalio's questions, at her final entrance, has abandoned her intention of hiding in exile (V.280-82) and has taken poison (V.426-28). The manner in which enlightenment is finally given to Castalio combines man's passionate and rational qualities as Polydore knowingly taunts Castalio into an instinctive act of violence and then runs on his drawn sword (V.398-99). Like a man waking from a dream, Castalio cries 'What have I done! My Sword is in the Breast' (V.401) but his action is part of the waking world.

No more than Monimia and Polydore can Castalio live with the burden of self-knowledge (V.441-43). Before he kills himself he curses his own birth and then goes on to curse the whole world as if for him to die is not enough but his confusions and ultimate dissolution must be replicated and amplified. T.B. Stroup commenting

on the bitterness of The Orphan notes that

Both victims have cursed the world to its first confusion, and the play leaves the world with that curse on it. 73

But Monimia and Castalio are not 'victims' of the world but of themselves and their curses are a final instance of the characters habit of projecting their inner disorders on the world around them. The stars do not lose their light and the 'Chain of Causes' is not broken. Life will go on as the union of Serina and Chamont indicates. This is itself a union of opposed principles, serenity and violence, but not one that particularly suggests a harmonisation of these principles. Death itself only brings a partial release to the characters. Dying, Castalio states 'I now am — — — nothing' (V.526), words which recall Jaffeir's last words on the scaffold, 'I am sick — — — I'm quiet' (V.478) as both welcome death as an end to conflict. But just as Venice in all its corruption will endure, the conflicts revealed in this play are not resolved. Monimia as she dies hopes she will be 'forgotten' (V.462) but also displays the contradictions of her nature, asking Castalio to 'Speak well' of her and guard her 'memory' from 'ill tongues' (V.469,466). Castalio himself betrays a contradictory desire for post mortem justification, asking Chamont to be kind to Serina for 'Monimia's sake, whom thou wilt find/I never wrong'd' (V.523-24). Polydore, whose despair with linguistic processes has been indicated by his inability to speak until he has received his death-blow, nevertheless leaves behind him a written account of their tragedy (V.491-95). At the same time he indicates the pointlessness of this with his injunction to 'Inquire no further' (V.496). The paradox of human nature is thus maintained to the last; the violent unreasoning suicides which register despair and the written words which symbolise the human compulsion to think, reason and seek explanations.

The last lines of the play are Chamont's as he seeks a conventional explanation to the events in the incalculable and hostile operations of fate. But everything in the play works against this too facile conclusion. The tragedy has not been caused by external forces and is not incomprehensible. The tragedy has been a human tragedy brought about by the conflicting forces which characterise man as the 'Beast of Reason'. While the whole play is itself a denial of Chamont's belief that 'man must not Complain' (V.530). Heaven may maintain its Empire (tyranny?) through its creation of fallen humanity, but suffering man's only relief is through his impassioned complaints in which he harnesses his reason to the analysis of passion.

The Orphan is in many ways Otway's most satisfactory work up to this point in his dramatic career. In his previous play, Caius Marius, Otway examined the workings of passion in the political realm, revealing the egotism underlying expressions of altruism. There are many similarities between the two plays; a secret marriage, restless cravings for action crossed with longings for rest and peace, an escape into the country which proves to be no escape from human nature, and conclusions which offer no hope that a solution has been found to the discords of life. But The Orphan is a far better organised play than Caius Marius, where attention is harmfully split between the dominating personality of Caius Marius and the complications of the Lavinia/Caius Marius jr. love plot. In The Orphan Otway narrows down his canvas and unifies his plot materials. In no way does this make the play a domestic tragedy; the motivation is not drawn from particular family circumstances but rather a particular family are made to represent and exemplify the conflicts of man and society and man in society. Political conflict is too facilely explained in terms of personal ambition in Caius Marius. In The Orphan, by removing the characters from the hub of politics and then showing them recreate states of war in apparently paradisaal surroundings, Otway provides far more satisfactory explanations for chaos in man's linked

his play on tragi-comic materials, Otway uses relentless logic to turn jokes, a bed-trick, a cuckolding, into tragedy. More fully here than in his earlier plays he exposes the weak psychology of libertine 'pranks', forcing on his characters not merely recognition of what their actions have done to others but recognition of what they indicate about their own natures. In The Orphan Otway exploits the skills he had acquired in comedy as well as tragedy. Satire and the audiences' knowledge of what will be the result of Polydore's 'comic' trick involve that constant doubleness of vision which is the essence of irony.

The tragic irony of Otway's dramatic vision is quite opposed to the mood of pathos which critics have found in the play. Eugene M. Waith, trying to analyse the quality of the tears shed by an audience of The Orphan, says that 'such tears as we shed for these three characters of Otway's will be largely due to our feeling sorry for them.'¹⁴ Waith is here comparing tears of pity with tears of magnanimity shed in heroic dramas in response to scenes of grandeur. But the shift which has taken place in the play is not from the heroic to the pity based pathetic but rather a transference of heroic striving from the external to the internal world. The characters present in their battles with themselves conflicts between greatness of soul and baseness. Both Waith and Hume point to the absence of any villains as a factor in the creation of a pathetic mood and style.¹⁵ However, villains become increasingly

¹⁴ Waith, 'Tears of Magnanimity', as cited above, p.18

¹⁵ Waith, 'Tears of Magnanimity', p.17, Hume, The Development of English Drama, p.218

unimportant to Otway, not because of any belief in fundamental human goodness,⁷⁶ but because his pessimistic view of human nature is such that it does not require figures dedicated to evil to produce chaos.

The view that Otway's tragic conflicts are increasingly internal conflicts does not mean that he was not interested in man in relation to the larger world. For out of his analysis of the qualities which constitute the tragic flaws in man Otway tried to develop an understanding of the forces in society as a whole which tend towards the discords, treachery and violence which characterised the political realm of his own day.⁷⁷

In his next play, The Souldiers Fortune, Otway produced a distinctly uncomfortable, brilliant but sour comedy of unhappy marriage and hasty copulations over-shadowed by that lurking violence which can easily turn comedy into tragedy. In this comedy he again illustrates, though in a light vein, the humiliations of sexual subservience and the power of the imagination to distort reality or to produce competing realities. However, effective and intelligent though the comedies are, they never explore or express Otway's sense of the painful inadequacy of human nature as thoroughly as do the tragedies. It is in Venice Preserv'd that the debt to The Orphan is most clearly shown. In The Orphan Otway has exploded the myth of the pastoral or the country retreat by showing that in 'exile' from the world the characters recreate the characteristic flaws of the great world. There can be no escape from discord since the causes of discord are inherent. The world of chaos is the world the 'Beast of Reason' creates out of the divisions of his own nature. Otway fully realised his tragic vision of man in The Orphan and in Venice Preserv'd he applied his sense of the human predicament to a more complex situation in which he unfolds the destructive impact of his flawed characters upon the whole body politic.

76. Waith quotes Bernbaum's definition of sentimentalism, 'confidence in the goodness of average human nature is the mainspring of sentimentalism', and applies this to The Orphan as a 'major forerunner' of the mode, as cited above, p. 19.

77. Otway's connection between personal anarchy and political anarchy is not original. Much of the satire of the period connects sexual deviance and political misrule. However, there is considerable originality in the depth he gives to the connection as he probes beyond obvious deviance and, indeed, shows how conventional relations, filial; fraternal and marital, can be rendered deviant by the 'Beast of Reason'.

IV

LATER TRAGEDY

ii

VENICE PRESERV'D, OR A PLOT DISCOVER'D: THE TRAGEDY OF POLITICS

Thomas Otway's last tragedy, Venice Preserv'd, or A Plot Discover'd, was first performed at the Duke's Theatre in February 1682.¹ It was a great success in its own day and has remained Otway's best known and admired play. The period of the play's initial productions coincided with the triumph of the Court over the whig opposition led by the Earl of Shaftesbury. Otway's inclusion of topical satirical materials, in particular the 'Nicky Nacky' scenes, helped to establish the play's popularity in tory circles.² Charles II

- 1 The Prologue and Epilogue for the first performances were printed separately from the play and the Prologue is headed 'Acted at His Royal Highness the Duke of York's Theatre, the 9th of February 1681'. This was most probably the first night, in which case, the performance on 11th February which is on the L.C. list 5/145, p.120 was a third night performance attended by the King. See The London Stage, I, p.306 and Audrey Nell Wiley, Rare Prologues and Epilogues, 1642-1700 (London 1940), pp.61-66.
- 2 A hostile whig satire describes the popularity of the play and complains that the 'Nicky Nacky' scenes are rated higher in tory circles than Shadwell's comedies, B.M. Harl. 7319.f.225. Aphra Behn's poem 'The Cabal at Nickey Nackeys', Poems Upon Several Occasions (1684) also attests to the popularity of these scenes in tory circles. Otway's

attended a performance and productions were mounted in April and May of that year to celebrate the return of the Duke and Duchess of York from their diplomatic exile in Scotland.³

Early on in its theatrical career the 'Nicky Nacky' scenes were excised from the text,⁴ whether on moral or political grounds is not clear. In its bowdlerized form the play held the London stage until the mid-nineteenth century with the key roles of Jaffeir, Belvidera and Pierre providing generations of actors and actresses with star vehicles. However, as in the case of The Orphan, despite numerous and increasing cuts in the text, the play's sensuality

2 (continued) Prologue suggests that both Renault and Antonio are satirical portraits of Shaftesbury, l.23-37. Both Davies, in Dramatic Miscellanies (London 1785), III, pp.228-29, and Genest, in Some Account of The English Stage, etc. (Bath 1832), I,p.294, identified Renault and Antonio with Shaftesbury. In 'Contemporary Satire in Otway's Venice Preserv'd', Modern Language Association Publications, Vol.43 (1928), John Robert Moore argues that this joint identification is valid, pp.166-181. This has been generally accepted although it is also relevant to note, as does William H. McBurney, that Antonio is also clearly an amalgam of Sir Davy Duncie and Sir Jolly Jumble, 'Otway's Tragic Muse Debauched: Sensuality in Venice Preserv'd', Journal of English and Germanic Philology, LVIII (1959), p.384. J.H. Wilson has argued that Renault and Antonio are not necessarily portraits of Shaftesbury. He argues that identification rests on the Prologue, which could have been written shortly before the performance and need not necessarily be closely related to the play itself. He also points out that Anthony Leigh, who played Antonio, was nothing like Shaftesbury in appearance, and that the name Antonio may refer to the actor as much as the politician, A Preface to Restoration Drama (Harvard 1968), p.105. Nevertheless, given that play's popularity with tories and the hostility shown to the 'Nicky Nacky' scenes by a whig, it seems reasonable to suppose that contemporaries saw these scenes, at least as, politically loaded.

3 The play was performed before the Duke of York on 21 April 1682 with a new Prologue by Dryden and a new Epilogue by Otway. On 31 May 1682 the play was again furnished with a new Prologue and Epilogue by Dryden and Otway and performed before the Duchess of York. See The London Stage, I, pp.308-09.

4 In 1718 Gildon stated that the 'miserable Farce under Plot' had been 'left out for many years', The Art of Poetry, I, p.237.

eventually made it unacceptable. Dr. Johnson paid tribute to Otway's originality and naturalness but described the play as 'the work of a man not attentive to decency, nor zealous for virtue'.⁵ Nineteenth century critics were even more pained by the play and Leigh Hunt's denunciation of the sensuality of the play, when reviewing the Fanny Kemble 1830 production at Covent Garden in The Tatler, is only one of a growing number of reviews objecting to the play's aura of immorality.⁶ In the twentieth century the play has been revived more frequently than any other of Otway's plays and has met with varied success.⁷

- 5 Dr. Johnson, Lives of The English Poets, I (London 1925 and 1958), p.143. Dr. Johnson also pays tribute to the great popularity of the play, remarking that 'The striking passages are in every mouth', p.143. The popularity of rather anodyne versions of Venice Preserv'd is attested to in poems like Lord Lyttelton's 'To a Young Lady. With the Tragedy of Venice Preserv'd', The Works of the English Poets, ed. Alexander Chalmers (London 1810), Vol.XIV, p.186.
- 6 See McBurney's discussion of Hunt's review in 'Otway's Tragic Muse Debauched: Sensuality in Venice Preserv'd', pp.380-81, and A.M. Taylor's description of the stage history of the play in Next to Shakespeare. A.M. Taylor lists London performances in Next to Shakespeare, Appendix B. The play appears regularly in repertory during the eighteenth century and until the middle years of the nineteenth century. The last repertory performances that Mrs. Taylor traces on the London stage are at Covent Garden, 7th December 1838, Drury Lane, 28th April 1842 and Sadlers Wells, 26th December 1856.
- 7 In 1904 the Otway Society revived Venice Preserv'd and included the hitherto expunged 'Nicky Nacky' scenes. Mrs. Taylor records that the revival was not a success, Next to Shakespeare, pp.240-42. The Phoenix Society staged the next revival in 1920 with Edith Evans reaping the laurels as Aquilina. This production is described by Montague Summers, who was responsible for it, in his introduction to the Works, I, p.XC and by Mrs. Taylor, as cited above, pp.242-43. In 1953 Peter Brook directed a much acclaimed production with Sir John Gielgud as Jaffeir and Paul Scofield as Pierre. This production is briefly described and lavishly illustrated in 'World Theatre Annual', no.4 (1 June 1952 - 31 May 1953) pp.140-44. Kenneth Tynan wrote about Gielgud's performance in Curtains (London 1961) and criticises the actor for an exaggeratedly sensitive performance, p.51. James Hogg describes the production and critical responses to it in 'The 1953 production of Venice Preserv'd', Salzburg Studies in English Literature, no.26 (1975) pp.2-11. In 1970 the Prospect Theatre Company toured with a production of Venice Preserv'd, directed by Toby Robertson. The cast included Julian Glover, Barbara Leigh-Hunt, Barbara Ewing and Bryan Pringle. I saw this production when it was staged at the Cambridge Arts Theatre. The Nicky Nacky scenes were extremely funny and dominated the stage. Pierre was played as a student revolutionary and Jaffeir and Belvidera seemed rather in the way.

A.M. Taylor has shown that throughout its theatrical history the play has been variously interpreted. For the Restoration, Jaffeir, who was played by Betterton, was undoubtedly the hero,⁸ but in the eighteenth century Pierre was the more favoured role.⁹ These differences in staging and interpretation are perhaps partly due to the few scruples Theatre managers showed in changing the text. But it is also true as Malcolm Kelsall remarks that 'it is perhaps this very openness of interpretation ... which places Otway in the ambience of Shakespeare'.¹⁰ The play is highly dramatic and, as Kelsall says, '"theatrical" - in the praiseworthy sense of the word'.¹¹ Much of the play's impact on stage depends on non-verbal acting, such as Jaffeir's manner as he hands over the list with the conspirators' names, the emphasis given to stage properties like Jaffeir's dagger,¹² and the way the production is dressed. Differences in dress can lead to Jaffeir appearing as forlorn and dejected or richly laced and haughty, as in Garrick's famous interpretation of the role.¹³ This is why Venice Preserv'd has always been a showpiece for great actors

- 8 Describing the audiences' reactions to the play in his 'Satyr on the Poets', Matthew Prior wrote 'How mourn'd they, when his Jaffeir struck and bled'. Smith, who played Pierre, took the roles of Courtine in The Souldiers Fortune and The Atheist and Chamont in The Orphan, which leaves his interpretation of the role in the contemporary theatre open to speculation. Mrs. Barry played Belvidera and was famous in this role; 'she forc'd Tears from the Eyes of her Auditory, especially those who have any Sense of Pity for the Distress't', Downes, Roscius Anglicanus, p.37, which indicates that the part was played sympathetically.
- 9 See A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, pp.151-196.
- 10 Introduction to Venice Preserved, ed. Malcolm Kelsall, Regents Restoration Drama Series (Nebraska and London 1969), p.XIX.
- 11 Malcolm Kelsall, as cited above, p.XVII.
- 12 See Kelsall, as cited above, p.XVIII on the various uses of the dagger.
- 13 Garrick broke with the tradition of playing Jaffeir in a shabby costume and appeared in a 'pompous suit of cloaths', The Dramatic Censor, 1752, cited by Mrs. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, p.168.

and actresses and on a deeper level it is a part of the openness with which Otway deals with his subject of corruption, rebellion and betrayal.

Since critical interest in the play revived in the twentieth century it has become apparent that, even when read in the study, the play is open to numerous and opposing interpretations. Modern critics disagree not only about interpretations of the play but about which are the main issues to be interpreted.¹⁴ However, the issue which has chiefly exercised critics can be seen to be that of determining the play's point of view. Should Jaffeir and Belvidera be seen as the innocent victims of a depraved world as R.E. Hughes, Dr. Batzer Pollard, R.G. Ham, David Hauser and others have argued,¹⁵ or are they contaminated, to a certain extent at least, by the sensuality and corruption of their world, as Gordon Williams, W.H. McBurney and D.W. Hughes have suggested?¹⁶ Is Pierre a right minded political idealist or a satanic tempter, or is he as A.M. Taylor argues a cavalier

14 David Hauser, for instance, isolates the main objections to the play as the repetition of the artificial formula of heroic tragedy and the presentation of emotion for its own sake, 'Otway Preserved: Theme and Form in Venice Preserv'd', Studies in Philology, IV (1958), p.481. Other critics like R.E. Hughes in 'Comic Relief in Otway's Venice Preserv'd' Notes and Queries (February 1958), pp.65-66, treat the relationship of the sub-plot to the main-plot as the main issue to be resolved.

15 See R.E. Hughes, as cited above, Dr. Batzer Pollard, From Heroics to Sentimentalism, etc., pp.228-267, stresses throughout Jaffeir and Belvidera's goodness and appeal to pity. R.G. Ham, Otway and Lee, pp.185-200, particularly emphasises Belvidera's nobility, and David Hauser, as cited above, draws attention to Belvidera's angelic associations and sees Jaffeir's death as a successful redemptive act.

16 Gordon Williams in 'The Sex-death motive in Otway's Venice Preserv'd Trivium, Vol.2 (1967), pp.59-70, notes the ubiquity of sex as a motive and draws attention to the masochistic elements in Jaffeir and Belvidera's relationship. McBurney, as cited above, notes the physicality of their relationship, but argues that they are not intended to be seen as perverse psychologically. D.W. Hughes in 'A New Look at Venice Preserv'd', Studies in English Literature, Vol.XI, no.3 (1971) pp.437-57, argues that Jaffeir and Belvidera differ in degree not kind from their world which is limited by a misleading 'vision of themselves and of others ... determined by body and instinct', p.456.

gentleman with a grudge?¹⁷ What is one to make of the fact that whilst the comic sub-plot reveals, as Goethe pointed out to Crabb Robinson, that the Senate is unfit to govern,¹⁸ the behaviour of Renault and his fellow conspirators does not suggest a viable alternative? The topical satirical materials raise the question of whether the play's point of view is intimately tied up with the politics of Popish-plot England, whilst the success the play enjoyed without these scenes raises the question of their relevance to the main plot. The joint identification of Renault and Antonio with the Earl of Shaftesbury further confuses the issue of where to place sympathies and antipathies and reinforces the parity between the conspiracy and the Senate.

Reference to Otway's main source for the play does not greatly clarify the issues. Venice Preserv'd is based on César Vischard, l'abbé de Saint-Réal's semi-fictional account of a Spanish plot to overthrow the government of Venice in 1618: La Conjuración des Espagnols contre La République de Venise (1674). The account was translated into English in 1675 as A Conspiracy of the Spaniards Against the State of Venice. A further edition was brought out in 1679, probably because of the interest in plots and the especial relevance of an account of a foreign inspired and financed insurrection. Otway's use of this translation has been proved by Alfred Johnson.¹⁹

17 See A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, 'When Venice Preserv'd is taken in its entirety, Pierre can be regarded only as the cavalier, the gentleman-soldier motivated by the code of honour', p.50.

18 H. Crabb Robinson, Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence, edited by Thomas Sadler (London 1869), Vol.I, p.187.

19 Lafosse, Otway, Saint-Réal. Étude sur la Littérature comparée de la France et de l'Angleterre à la fin du XVIIe siècle (Paris 1901), pp.96-100.

At times, as in Renault's speech to the conspirators in Act III (373-88), Otway transfers whole sentences verbatim. More fundamentally he follows Saint-Réal in his analysis of the revolutionary temperament and his dispassionate view of both Senate and conspiracy. Of the conspiracy Saint-Réal wrote:

I know of none that afford greater instance of the effects of Prudence in the Transactions of the World, or of Chance; of the vast extent of Humane Wit, and its various confines, of its Elevations, the most aspiring, and its most secret Failings.²⁰

Many of Saint-Réal's conspirators are recognisably Otway's. Renault is described as a man who

preferred Vertue to Riches; howbeit could sacrifice his Vertue to his Ambition, and whensoever innocent methods should fail him in the persuit of Glory, there were none too ill for his purpose.²¹

Jacques Pierre, a piratical Norman, is 'a person of more Youth and Vigor' who 'studied especially to appear a Man of great Execution'.²²

Saint-Réal's Jaffeir is a man with a divided conscience; he betrays the conspiracy because he is appalled by the bloodthirsty programme outlined by Renault but is tormented by the thought of betraying

... all his friends, and such friends! so brave!
so prudent! so singular in the respective Talents
wherein they excell'd.²²

On the other hand, Saint-Réal describes the defeated Jaffeir dispassionately as an 'unfortunate Wretch' and the conspirators as 'Male-contents'. He notes that the Senate over-taxed the people for their own profit, but emphasis is laid on the perfidy of the foreign powers who seek to

20 Saint-Réal, A Conspiracy of the Spaniards Against the State of Venice (1679), p.6.

21 Saint-Réal, as cited above, p.24.

22 Saint-Réal, as cited above, p.97.

undermine Venice. At the end, after describing the heroism with which Renault and the other conspirators endure their tortures and death, Saint-Réal describes the defeat of the conspiracy as leading to the restoration of tranquility in the city. As Kelsall says, 'just as in Otway, so in Saint-Réal, therefore, the reader is confused where to place his sympathies'.²³ Nevertheless, Saint-Réal's account is in many ways highly conventional. His plotter's motives are fairly simple; either they are loyal subjects of foreign and hostile powers, or they act out of revenge or ambition. Saint-Réal shows man as a creature of great potential and nobility whose virtues, if wrongly exercised, can be destructive.²⁴

Otway's deviations from his source intensify the drama as he condenses the action and develops the characters, but they do not simplify the issues. His greatest departures from the source are the creation of Belvidera and Antonio. He expands the role of Priuli and transforms Saint-Réal's Greek courtesan, who is described as 'a woman of extraordinary merit', into Aquilina, a London Restoration lady of pleasure. These additions do not clarify the materials: they merely add lust, love and perversion to ambition, idealism and revenge as motives and failings. Belvidera gives Jaffeir a new motive for betraying the conspiracy, but this new motive involves a complex mixture of love, sexual disgust, duty and self-abnegation. The flaws in Renault's character are expanded and given a sexual basis. His ambition and lust impart a blacker note to the conspiracy, whilst Antonio's perverse maunderings and Priuli's unnaturally vengeful

23 Malcolm Kelsall, as cited above, p.XVI.

24 Saint-Réal's view is aristocratic and of the Greek courtesan he states 'People of Noble extraction still form their resentments proportioned to their Quality when reduced to Professions unworthy their birth', as cited above, p.63.

behaviour more fully degrade the Senate. Otway's additions and deviations greatly intensify the ambiguities inherent in the source material. What Otway's choice of source does indicate is that he was not looking for a clear-cut fable of political rights and wrongs, with the opposing parties neatly lined up on each side.

The question of the play's topicality is something of a red-herring. Clearly contemporaries appreciated the satires on Shaftesbury but as ambitious villain and comic old lecher, Renault and Antonio are standard dramatic types and function perfectly well in the play as such. In setting the play in a republic - and in particular in the Republic of Venice - and then showing that republic to be corrupt, Otway would have won the approval of all loyal Tories. As Professor Fink has shown, the Republic of Venice had ideological significance for England in the seventeenth century.²⁵ It represented the ideal mixed way of government to the Whigs and was anathema to Tories. Otway's hostility to the mixed way of government is obvious, not only here but in The Poet's Complaint of His Muse, where the Monster plans to introduce 'a Commonwealth,/And Democracy, by stealth', by crying 'Twas but a Well-mixt Monarchy' (15:482-485).²⁶ However, this undoubted political bias does not allow the play to be interpreted, as Zera S. Fink suggests, as a

25 See Zera S. Fink, The Classical Republicans. An Essay in the Recovery of a Pattern of Thought in Seventeenth Century England (Evanston, Illinois 1945), see also Oliver Logan's Culture and Society in Venice 1470-1790 (London 1972), especially Chapter One, 'The Mythology of Venice'.

26 See also Dryden's rousing denunciation of republics in the Epistle Dedicatory to All for Love (1678) and in The Vindication of The Duke of Guise; 'Both my nature, as I am an Englishman, and my reason, as I am a man, have bred in me a loathing to that specious name a republic'. Politically and philosophically Otway and Dryden's thinking is close, both in their sense of the possibility of a return to anarchy and in an awareness that the problems raised by Restoration politics are not amenable to easy solutions.

straightforward tory political allegory. It is difficult to see how it clarifies the political sense of the play to argue that the same character and the same party are shown in opposition to each other.²⁷ As a means of demonstrating the instability of whig government this is both unwieldy and open to misinterpretation since Venice is, after all, preserved. Nevertheless, the republican Venice which is preserved, after committing breach of faith and with Antonio still adorning the Senate, is hardly a triumph of rational and humane government. As Ronald Berman has pointed out the play offers a critique of whig philosophy and constitutes a 'rejection of the myth of mixed government as unable to withstand the pressures of fallen human desires'.²⁸ The 'idealism' of the conspirators and the corruption of the senators add up to a double pronged attack on whig theory and practice. However, by rooting inadequate political ideas and actions in human nature itself, the play transcends issues of factional politics. As Berman goes on to say, the play can also be seen as a 'rejection of the idea that the enigma of politics in the Restoration can be solved'.²⁹ The republican setting enabled Otway to look at both sides of a political conflict with cynicism and disenchantment. Speeches like Renault's in Act II (265-71) strongly suggest that Otway's Venice is also Charles II's London. Although the play does not work as a political allegory it does reflect on a deeper level the troubled and confused years of 1679-82. Venice Preserv'd is a play that thinks

27 Professor Fink acknowledges that 'it may be objected that this interpretation makes the conspirators in the play stand in allegory for the system they are plotting to overthrow', The Classical Republicans, p.148.

28 Ronald Berman, 'Nature in Venice Preserv'd', English Literary History, vol.36 (1969), p.535, see also pp.537-539.

29 Berman, 'Nature in Venice Preserv'd', p.535.

about politics, and about whig politics in particular, but it has survived, as so many of the politically inspired plays of the period have not, because its meanings radiate out beyond personal satires and strictly topical issues. The questions raised by the play are, in many senses, the fundamental questions raised by considerations of man as a political animal. They are also questions which Otway had always, though not always so coherently, been concerned with: the character of true authority, the nature of power and status and the obligation of the individual to the state. Finally, the question which all these issues raise is whether human nature is capable of sustaining any of these roles and relationships.

The even balancing of the two sides portrayed in the play is typical of Otway's dramatic style. In Caius Marius, Otway's first dramatic reaction to the political crisis, he portrays two factions who between them reduce Rome to chaos. The two sides are comparable both in their ambition and violence and in the cynicism with which they manipulate the language of peace and liberty. In an earlier work, Friendship in Fashion, none of the characters involved in the various attempts to cuckold each other deserves admiration. And in The Souldiers Fortune the equally depraved Sir Jolly Jumble and Sir Davy Dunce stand on opposite sides of the cuckolding plot in a manner reminiscent of the counterpointing of Renault and Antonio. Otway is always disinclined to offer his characters any avenues of escape, nor does he allow his audiences easy solutions. In Venice Preserv'd the equally grim political realities of conspiracy and Senate effectively shatter all illusions and vitiate all forms of action. In The Hidden God Lucien Goldmann describes Greek tragedy as tragedy 'with peripeteia and recognition, the tragedy of human illusion and the discovery of

truth'.³⁰ In Venice Preserv'd not all the characters discover the 'truth' but their fortunes do change and the dramatic structure itself works as a strategy to shatter illusions and reveal underlying truths to the audience or reader.

One solution to the problem raised by the play's political stalemate and the flow of sympathy for the three main characters is to sever the relationship between these characters and the play's politics. For A.M. Taylor the way in which the political sympathies shift between Senate and the conspiracy, and the identification of Shaftesbury with Renault and Antonio, diminishes the importance of politics in the play. The two sides, she argues, in effect cancel each other out, and we are left with a love and friendship play featuring Jaffeir, Belvidera and Pierre.

All sympathy becomes divorced from the political opponents and rests with the three principals, in their misfortune representative of the respectable, peaceable part of the nation.³¹

Respectable and peaceable do not seem particularly appropriate adjectives to describe a young man who runs away with his patron's daughter and joins a conspiracy to murder that erstwhile patron when he refuses to pay his debts. Nor are they adequate to describe Pierre, a soldier of fortune, who helps lead a revolt when his mistress sells her favours to a Senator. Love and friendship are certainly important themes in the play, but the way in which the characters feel cannot be divorced from the way they act - and they act in the public and political realm. Gordon Williams also argues that the joint identification of Renault

³⁰ The Hidden God. A Study of Tragic Vision in the Pensées of Pascal and the Tragedies of Racine, translated by Philip Thody (London 1964, reprinted 1970), p.376.

³¹ A.M. Taylor, Next to Shakespeare, p.58.

and Antonio with Shaftesbury minimises the importance of politics in the play.

Thus the political conflict becomes, as in Juno and the Paycock, a backdrop against which to explore the passions of individuals. The rebellion disrupts their lives, acts as a catalyst. But beyond this is unimportant: a background of tension reduced to the moral equation of Antonio and Renault.³²

As background materials, however, the conspiracy and Senate are curiously prominent. The meaning, or real issues of the play, cannot be severed from the substance in which the characters are rooted. The rebellion disrupts their lives because they willingly participate in it: they are not the victims of an impersonal disaster but initiators of political action. Hence the importance of revealing the political realm in all its cruelty, corruption and false illusion. Antonio and Renault represent a moral equation which affects our response to the whole world of Venice Preserv'd. The amorous world of Jaffeir and Belvidera is not simply threatened by the outside world but, as I hope to show, it is also defined by the larger world. The parallels between the love and activities of Jaffeir and Belvidera and Antonio and Aquilina have been noted in some detail by D.W. Hughes.³³ These links further demonstrate the

³² Gordon Williams, 'The Sex-death Motive in Otway's Venice Preserv'd', p.63.

³³ Hughes, 'A New Look at Venice Preserv'd', pp.437-57. Hughes draws especial attention to the ways in which the play's themes of prostitution, and of man's regression down the Chain of Being towards animal states of being, are exemplified in the activities of Antonio and Aquilina and echoed in the language and actions of Jaffeir and Belvidera. Antonio's animalism is obvious, it is echoed in Jaffeir's description of himself as a 'Dog' (II.79) and a 'tame Lamb' (IV.87). Echoes of the overt commercialism of Aquilina's relationship with Antonio can be found in Jaffeir's description of Belvidera paying him with herself (I.48) and in the materialistic trappings of their love, which will be discussed later. Further similarities between the two sets of characters can also be found in Antonio and Belvidera's masochistic and orgasmic responses to being threatened with daggers.

impossibility of ignoring the ways in which the main characters are integrated with the total dramatic world.

Whilst I have argued that factional politics are not of especial relevance to our reading of the play today, a sense of politics as a human activity is of importance. It is unnecessary and undesirable to sever the emotional and political materials in the play since Venice Preserv'd is precisely about the complex inter-connections between private and public worlds, emotions and actions, instincts and ideals. It is to take a purely modern view of the separation (and indeed, antagonism) of the state and the individual to treat the shifting political scene merely as background materials included to throw private emotions into relief. The play works on the assumption that the public and private realms are inter-connected. This does not mean that Jaffeir, Belvidera and Pierre or Antonio/ Renault and Aquilina represent the State in allegory; rather that they are the state. Public and private mirror each other because, traditionally, public morality can only be the sum of private virtues. It should be possible to disentangle public and private emotions and actions more clearly than is possible in this play. Here a series of dislocations and confusions ^{has} disrupted the relationship between the public and private realms. The play draws attention to the problem of moral priorities as there are no clear corollaries between the corrupt and debased nature of the conspirators and the heroism with which they face their terrible deaths (V.423-25). On the one hand the play points to a total dislocation in the organisation of human life; on the other it demonstrates ways in which vital distinctions between the domestic and the public have been lost. Generally, instead of mirroring each other, the two realms have collapsed into each other. Here as in Titus and Berenice and Caius Marius actions in the public and private realms are integrative of each other. The dark and

savage promptings of the psyche are externalised while public considerations rule and ruin domestic life. What Otway is depicting here is a world in which the discrete elements which make up the complex entity of social and political life have ceased to cohere harmoniously.

Ronald Berman's article 'Nature in Venice Preserv'd' makes a number of useful points on the relationship between personal desires and political ideologies in the play. Berman points out that throughout the play the characters invoke Nature as a standard of behaviour and have erected around the idea of Nature a false golden age mythology which dangerously obscures their own motives and the consequences of their actions. In Pierre's speeches Nature is characterised as representing an authentic reality which preceded and is opposed to the existing socio-political system. He tells Jaffeir that his revolutionary 'Cause .../is founded on the noblest Basis,/Our Liberties, our natural inheritance' (II.153-55). Against this is set the State of Venice where 'Honesty' is a cheat (I.132), 'Justice is lame as well as blind' (I.212) and 'Brothers, Friends and Fathers, all are false' (I.253). Pierre's most rousing and political speech in the first Act is the one in which he describes himself as a 'Villain' and no man if he is prepared to watch passively the sufferings of his 'fellow Creatures' (I.152):

... To see our Senators
Cheat the deluded people with a shew
Of Liberty, which yet they ne'r must taste of;
They say, by them our hands are free from Fetters,
Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds;
Bring whom they please to Infamy and Sorrow;
Drive us like Wracks down the rough Tide of Power,
Whilst no hold's left to save us from Destruction;
All that bear this are Villains; and I one,
Not to rouse up at the great Call of Nature,
And check the Growth of these Domestick spoilers,
That make us slaves and tell us 'tis our Charter.

(I.153-64)

Here, as in Otway's earlier plays, Alcibiades (II.144-45) and Don Carlos (I.14-16), libertine primitivism is given political dimensions but at the same time the physical and sexual basis of libertinism is also revealed. As Berman says, 'Pierre continually urges Jaffeir to follow Nature, but he himself has confused Nature with his own desires'.³⁴ The problems and confusions involved in Pierre's 'great Call of Nature' are revealed as Jaffeir responds to a speech which has been couched in terms of abstract generalities relating to the State by commiserating with Pierre on the loss of his mistress Aquilina (I.165-67). The 'great Call of Nature' degenerates into Pierre's pathetic cry that 'A Souldier's Mistress Jaffeir's his religion' (I.199). It is the violation of Pierre's sexual 'religion' which has alienated him from society and dissolved 'all former bonds of service' (I.201). As Berman points out, there is no logical connection between 'The great Call of Nature' and a 'Souldier's Mistress'.³⁵ The effect is both of an anti-climax and a revelation: the impulse towards political action is rooted in the characters' physical desires rather than some abstract concept of justice. At the same time these physical desires can only be articulated in terms of the public world. Jaffeir characterises Pierre's relationship with Aquilina as uniting his roles as a lover and a soldier. Aquilina was 'The Dearest Purchase of thy noble Labours;/She was thy Right by Conquest, as by Love' (I.166-67). Pierre's response to his mistress's infidelity was to throw her lover out, but as a consequence of that he was summoned to appear before the Senate where he was 'censur'd basely,/ For violating something they call priviledge' (I.195-96). What

34 R. Berman, 'Nature in Venice Preserv'd', p.534.

35 R. Berman, 'Nature in Venice Preserv'd', p.533.

rankles equally with the violation of his mistress by the physically revolting Antonio is the fact that 'This was the Recompense of my service' (I.197). Berman writes that for Pierre 'politics are simply the vehicle of his passions'.³⁶ Certainly the characters' motivations are passionate, but there is nothing simple about the connection between sex and politics in the play.

The 'great Call of Nature' and a 'Souldier's Mistress' are concepts which are emotionally related in terms of Pierre's reactions to degradation in his private and public life. Antonio's roles as intruding lover and Senator are important and make the link between physical disgust and revolutionary puritanism emotionally coherent. When urging Jaffeir to take revenge, Pierre's rhetoric entwines 'the Cause that calls upon thee' (I.289) with ^{cries} to 'Remember/Thy Belvidera suffers' (I.290-91) and disgusted images of physical corruption and rot (I.294-95), which recall his own feelings of sexual disgust toward Antonio (I.178-79,186-91). The dislocated punctuation and jumps in thought in the latter part of this speech (I.290-92) are indicative of the mingling of ideas and impulses which generate the call to follow Nature. Significantly, although Jaffeir and Pierre can both be seen to move towards revolutionary positions as their sexuality is threatened,³⁷ engagement in activities against the State involves a rejection of sexuality. Pierre rejects Aquilina's advances in Act II (3-10) and Jaffeir's pledge to the conspirators is ratified as he hands over Belvidera to them and abjures her bed (II.367-424). Superficially, at least, the conspiracy aims at a kind of puritan revolution and the language of revolt is frequently the language of

³⁶ R. Berman, 'Nature in Venice Preserv'd', p.534.

³⁷ For the attacks on Jaffeir's sexuality see Priuli's curse on his marriage (I.52-58) and Pierre's description of the 'violation' of his marriage bed (I.245-49).

sexual disgust. When Pierre urges Jaffeir to fight rather than die submissively, he stresses the corruption of those Jaffeir would 'mingle [his] brave dust' (I.293) with, '... stinking Rogues that rot in dirty winding sheets, / Surfeit-slain Fools, the common Dung o'th Soyl!' (I.294-95). Later, in apocalyptic terms, Pierre describes with relish the destruction of Venice, characterising the city as a whore;

How lovely the Adriatique Whore,
Drest in her Flames, will shine! devouring Flames!
Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom
And hiss in her Foundation.
(II.292-95)

Renault's revolutionary speeches also emphasise the purging nature of the revolt which will cleanse the city of impurities;

... Let's consider
That we destroy Oppression, Avarice,
A People nurst up equally with Vices
And loathsome Lusts, which Nature most abhors,
And such as without shame she cannot suffer.
(III.ii.366-70)

It is this speech which precipitates Jaffeir's exit from the conspiracy in search of Belvidera and his lost 'Peace' (III.ii.371-72). Renault's ineligibility to deliver such a speech has already been demonstrated by his attempted rape of Belvidera. Derek Hughes has described Jaffeir's sudden rejection of the conspiracy as irrational;

The nature of the change bears no relation to the nature of the offence, and we are forced to conclude that Jaffeir's moral sensibility is entirely at the mercy of the irrational side of his personality.³⁸

Renault's attempt, as Hughes notes, was not very sustained or horrific,³⁹ but the violence of the attack is not very important; had Jaffeir merely heard Renault meditating on how he would like to make love to

³⁸ D.W. Hughes, 'A New Look at Venice Preserv'd', p.441.

³⁹ D.W. Hughes, 'A New Look at Venice Preserv'd', p.441.

Belvidera the effect would be similar. The gap between Renault's puritanical words and unruly sexual feelings reveals the inadequacy of the conspirators' idealism and suggests a view of human nature which directly contradicts the conspirators' statements about man in the state of Nature - 'honest as the Nature/Of Man first made' (III.ii.169-70). Two concepts of the State of Nature are in conflict here: the conspirators', which may be characterised, rather loosely as Lockian, and the State of Nature in which the characters in the play actually live, which is basically close to Hobbes's formulations of the pre-contract condition of man. For the conspirators, squabbles, violent and bloodthirsty language and selfish lustful desires reveal that they are already in fact living in the condition of Nature, very much as described by Hobbes in chapters XIII and XIV of Leviathan. The conspirators' millenarian belief in the efficacy of a single act of violence which will purge humanity and bring about a golden age of Nature is totally belied and undermined by the limitations of human nature itself. As Jaffeir says, 'What a Devil's man,/When he forgets his nature' (III.ii.303-04). Man's fallen nature prevents him from achieving selflessness and a liberation from the bondage of the flesh. Jaffeir's rejection of the conspiracy can be seen as irrational (a physical impulse) in so far as it is motivated by a sexual horror stronger than the sense of sexual outrage which first drew him in. However, it also represents a profound moral shift as he comes closer now to an understanding of man's flawed nature and the complexity of the social and political situation which precludes simple violent solutions. Jaffeir's subsequent confusion, restlessness and loss of peace are not simply signs of irrationality but of the growth of consciousness as Jaffeir becomes more aware of the contradictions of his world.

Renault is himself aware of the humiliating bondage of the flesh, which contradicts his theoretical position; 'Perverse! and peevish! what a slave is Man! / To let his itching flesh thus get the better of him!' (III.ii.273-74).⁴⁰ His condemnation of 'loathsome Lusts' is not simply hypocrisy (as Jaffeir interprets it) but also a violent reaction against his own 'itching flesh'. The whole conspiracy is, from the start, completely undermined by sexual impulses, and not only in terms of Pierre and Jaffeir's motives and Renault's lusts. One of the conspirators, Elliot, is accused of arriving for a meeting straight from a 'Whore's lap' (II.218) and the meetings themselves take place in Aquilina's house of pleasure. This degrading sensual backdrop heightens the gap between the conspirators self-images and their reality. Allied to the puritanism and golden age mythology of the conspirators' ideology is the assumption that they can be defined as 'men' in contrast to the debased world around them. When Bedamar interrupts a brawl he takes the conspirators to task for forgetting who they are;

... Men of your high calling,
Men separated by the Choice of Providence,
From the gross heap of Mankind.

(II.223-25)

Renault, on the eve of the conspiracy, also congratulates the conspirators on their uniqueness, 'Oh you are Men I find / Fit to behold your Fate' (III.ii.309-10). Earlier Pierre is loaded with mythic and classical associations as Bedamar greets him as Mars (II.245) and Pierre associates himself with the tyrannicide Marcus Brutus (II.248-51). The Brutus cult associates the conspirators with classical republican

40 See also Renault's meditations on the fallibility of human ambition (II.196-202), where the uncertainty of ambition is characterised in terms of natural elements.

revolutionary movements, but the conspirators go on to construct a new and even more dubious pantheon of revolutionary heroes as Cateline (sic), Cethegus and Cassius are resurrected (II.250-55). These references further indicate the fallacious nature of their ideals.

Pierre's arguments to Jaffeir also rest on the double assumption that the State of Nature is an authentic and liberating state and that the conspirators who will bring about this desired state are themselves men apart. His inducements to Jaffeir frequently rest on injunctions to be a man. In Act I Pierre counters Jaffeir's desire to die by arguing that such quiet despair is a denial of human identity:

Rats die in Holes and Corners, Dogs run mad;
Man knows a braver Remedy for sorrow:
Revenge! the Attribute of Gods, they stamp it
With their great Image on our Natures.
(I.285-88)

The argument is pagan and perverse, identifying man in terms of his instinctual nature - anger - rather than his rational capacities. It is the first of a series of unsatisfactory definitions of man which are to be found throughout the play,⁴¹ and one which reveals that Pierre's condition of Nature is a condition of war. Other injunctions to act like a man stress the uniqueness of Jaffeir and the conspirators. Later, Jaffeir's wavering sense of identity, which is revealed when he calls himself a 'Dog' (II.79), is countered by Pierre's insistence on his manhood. Pierre describes their friendship in heroic masculine terms as he points out that they have 'entertain'd each others thoughts like Men,/whose Souls were well acquainted' (II.105-06). He goes on to tell Jaffeir that 'thou art a Man,/whom I have pickt and chosen from the World' (II.135-36). In contrast to this chosen band the people of

41 See I.308-15,335-42, II.206-07, V.10-16.

Venice are described in disgusted animal terms as 'unclean Birds,/... Lazy-Owls' (II.167-68).⁴² Jaffeir is finally worked up to the point of throwing in his lot with the conspiracy as Pierre moves once again from general reformist principles to exhortations of manhood, 'But be a Man, for thou art to mix with Men' (II.185). Jaffeir responds to this with the assertion, 'Yes, I will be a Man' (II.188) and pledges himself (II.189-90). His success in assuming the form of manhood admired by the conspirators is ironically indicated when he enters the meeting with a dagger and before he has said anything Bedamar remarks approvingly that 'His Presence bears the show of Manly Vertue' (II.317).

Between Pierre's heroic but inadequate injunctions to Jaffeir to act like a man and Bedamar's identification of masculinity with the show of violence is Renault's famous definition of man. While Pierre, Jaffeir and Priuli still define man in terms of angels or animals, Renault strikes a new note as he divorces man from these traditional associations to compare man disadvantageously with mechanisms;

Yes, Clocks will go as they are set: But Man,
Irregular Man's ne're constant, never certain.
(II.206-07)

This is the bleakest and most reductive definition of man in the play. It strips away the complex of desires and aspirations which make up human nature to summarise man's essential ambivalence as adding up to an entity less admirable than a machine. What we are looking at here

⁴² Bessie Proffitt has noted that these bird images relate to the apocalyptic vision of the Book of Revelations, so that in this context the conspirators become latter-day Saints bringing about purification through destruction; see 'Religious Symbolism in Otway's Venice Preserv'd,' Papers in Language and Literature, VII (1971), p.29.

is a crisis point in cultural definitions of man. On the one hand stand the traditional forms of definition, heroic, animal or spiritual, on the other a totally mechanistic view of man as a faulty machine. The mechanistic view cannot satisfy, but the other views are equally unsatisfactory or unconvincing. Man as the paragon of animals is shown to be in many ways an animal indeed, while concepts of man as a creature of spiritual potential and noble aspirations are deflated as the basis of his aspirations are rooted back to his animal nature and his ideas of immortality are shown to be materialistic or sensual (I.337-42, IV.518-19, V.10-18).

The failure satisfactorily^{to} define human nature is illustrated throughout by the characters' shifts in identity. On a comic level this is most clearly illustrated by Antonio's antics. He plays obscenely with Aquilina's name turning her from a woman to a noise, a sexual organ and an animal; 'Aquilina, Naquilina, Naquilina, Acky,/Acky, Nacky, Nacky, Queen Nacky ... /You Fubbs, you Pugg you-you little Puss-Purree' (III.i.18-20). In the course of this scene Antonio draws attention to his own divided and debased nature with his assertions that he is a Senator and his enactment of a bull and a dog (III.i.23-24, 82-114). The really nasty point about all this is not simply that it indicates the decay of human rational qualities and marks the extreme point towards which the other characters tend. More than this, the point is that Antonio's perversities are purely human. He does not become an animal, he merely reveals the dominating animal side of human nature and the human potential for degradation.

Most of the characters in the play are singularly rootless. The majority of the conspirators are foreigners, as is Aquilina. Jaffeir has no family background--his only father is Priuli who opens the play disowning him. Belvidera is virtually an orphan; her mother is dead and her father has repudiated her. By the time he acknowledges

her again it is too late and she has slipped over into the total isolation of madness. We see only the disintegration of her marriage as her husband first pledges her to the conspiracy, later attempts to murder her and finally curses the day of their marriage (V.256-61). Pierre in many ways has the strongest identity since he does not seriously question his own nature. However, even here we have his play on words as he calls himself a 'Rogue' and a 'Villain' (I.141,143), Jaffeir's identification of him as the devil (II.99-100) and the uneasy moment at the end of Act II when in Jaffeir's fevered words he becomes his surrogate wife (II.424-34). There is certainly also a strong ambivalence over his role as Aquilina's lover since, despite his protestations to Jaffeir, he is seen treating her coldly in Act II.

It is upon Jaffeir, however, that the problems in identity centre since, as the most self-conscious character in the play, he searches throughout to understand his nature and situation. Central to Otway's analysis of human nature and human society in the play is the idea expressed in The Orphan of man as the 'Beast of Reason', unable either to regress into animal forgetfulness or to harness his spiritual and rational potential to progress to the angels. Early on in the play, in the first Act, Jaffeir expresses a discontent with existence which Castalio only reaches after Act III:

Tell me why, good Heav'n,
Thou mad'st me what I am, with all the Spirit,
Aspiring thoughts and Elegant desires
That fill the happiest Man? Ah! rather why
Did'st thou not form me sordid as my Fate,
Base minded, dull, and fit to carry Burdens?
Why have I sence to know the Curse that's on me?
Is this just dealing, Nature? (I.308-15)⁴³

⁴³ That this speech articulates a central problem for Otway is indicated not only by Castalio's 'Beast of Reason' speech (V.17-28) but by a similar vexed longing for mindlessness expressed by Titus in Titus and Berenice (III.224-36). The last lines of the poem Epistle to R.D. from T.O. also express Otway's sense of frustration with the human condition in terms of the ability to imagine bliss but the inability to attain it.

The capitalised 'Curse' that is on him is, of course, precisely the curse of man's fallen nature bringing with it imperfect knowledge and a flawed nature. His very longings, 'Aspiring thoughts and Elegant desires' are themselves indicative of man's divided nature. The 'sence to know the Curse' and the inability to escape from knowledge into brutality, or to have enough knowledge to control brutality, forms the paradox of human nature. Jaffeir's attempts to escape from the 'Curse' of frustrating imperfection by entering into Pierre's absurd élite world of unfallen humanity⁴⁴ is doomed to failure. Renault's revelation of the base nature of the men described as set apart by Providence is, as I have already noted, central to the processes of Jaffeir's tragic enlightenment and final acceptance of the curse of humanity. The aberration of Jaffeir's brief commitment to the conspiracy is indicated by his extremely blood-thirsty interpretation of his revolutionary identity:

... How rich and beauteous will the face
Of Ruin look, when these wide streets run blood;
I and the glorious Partner's of my Fortune
Shouting, and striding o're the prostrate Dead;
Still to new waste. (III.ii.143-47)

Once the 'idealism' which informs such visions of carnage has been exploded Jaffeir is once again plunged into confusions over his sense of purpose and identity;

44 Pierre's belief that fallen nature can be redeemed by revolutionary activity is stressed by his sardonic reflection of Jaffeir's backsliding in the Rialto scene, 'Is the World/Reform'd since our last meeting?' (II.106-07). His solution lies with his band of 'Men like Gods' (II.139) who will eradicate the unclean birds (II.167-68) and 'make the Grove harmonious' (II.171). Jaffeir accepts this view as he agrees to be a man and later sees the unruly conspirators as 'so many Vertues' (II.321). Jaffeir turns religious language to sardonic ends later when he tells Renault that ''Tis a base World, and must reform' (III.ii.295). The effectiveness of this sally lies in its use of the conspirators own rhetoric to condemn them.

How curst is my Condition, toss'd and justl'd,
From every Corner; Fortune's Common Fool,
The jest of Rogues, an Instrumental Ass
For Villains to lay loads of Shame upon,
And drive about just for their ease and scorn.
(III.ii.213-17)

Jaffeir's disillusionment over Renault's attempted rape thus expands into a crisis of identity as he is forced, when he repudiates the conspiracy, to give up the concept of manliness along with the political ideals associated with the conspiracy. Betraying the conspiracy means betraying himself, and he sees himself as being remembered as one who 'Forgot his Manhood, Vertue, truth and Honour' (IV.17) and betraying 'My truth, my vertue, constancy and friends' (IV.75). Jaffeir's crisis is not only due to the fact that his choices are invidious, but springs from the fact that either way his choices cannot present him satisfactory self-definitions. The collapse of revolutionary idealism involves a collapse of the self. The inadequacy of ideology, the wayward nature of sexual impulse and impossibility of forging internal coherence out of man's divided nature are combined in Otway's analysis of a human dilemma.

Jaffeir's crisis is characterised by his sense of restlessness and longings for peace in Belvidera's arms (III.ii.371-72, IV.403-09). Spiritual confusion is made literal, as in The Orphan, by his sense of geographic confusion as the fourth Act opens with his cries for direction 'Where dost thou led me?' ... 'where are we wandering?' (IV.I, 4). Jaffeir cannot accept any of Belvidera's counter statements of heroic identity (IV.5-13) since the heroic terms offered by either side now cancel each other out (IV.14-19). Having seen through the superficially ascetic idealism of the conspiracy, which seemed to offer an escape from the 'Curse' of imperfection, Jaffeir now moves to the opposite extreme outlined in that first speech on the human condition (I.308-15) as he seeks escape and oblivion in sensual animal mindlessness. Temporarily,

at least, he makes over his identity and destiny to Belvidera, telling her 'Just what th'hast made me, take me, Belvidera' (IV.72). This speech is followed by the abject speech in which he compares himself to a 'tame Lamb' (IV.87) and takes a perverse pleasure in his humiliation and destruction (IV.80-94). However, the speech itself carries an implicit recognition that a retreat into sexuality and animal primitivism does not constitute an adequate solution. In the course of the speech Jaffeir's relationship to Belvidera undergoes a change. At the beginning she is his 'Soul it self' (IV.80) and 'All present joys, and earnest of all future' (IV.81); by the end she is an 'enticing flattering Priestess' leading him to death (IV.90). In the centre of the speech, dividing the two trains of thought, there is Jaffeir's recognition that lying in Belvidera's arms cannot blot out the problems of the relationship of the self and the world - 'Why was such happiness not given me pure?/Why dash'd with cruel wrongs, and bitter wantings?' (IV.85-86). The questions echo his earlier insistent questions about the human condition.

The impossibility of actually escaping from humanity and from the vexed question of identity is immediately demonstrated as the speech is followed by the entry of an officer who demands that the wanderers identify themselves (IV.95). Responses to the challenge are left to Belvidera since Jaffeir is incapable of assuming his new identity of a 'Friend' to 'the Senate and the State of Venice' (IV.100). The demand for identification is repeated as on Jaffeir's entry to the Senate they all chorus, 'Well, who are you?'. Significantly the replies given to both challenges are abstract and contradictory. Belvidera identifies them as 'Friends' (IV.96), Jaffeir identifies himself as 'A Villain' (IV.134).

The instability of Jaffeir's identity in an unstable world of contrary values is starkly illustrated in Pierre's contrary evaluations

of him. Before Jaffeir is brought in to confirm his denunciation the captured Pierre describes to the Senate his 'knowledge' of Jaffeir asserting that he knows 'his Vertue./His Justice, Truth, his general Worth' (IV.246-47). After realising that it is Jaffeir who has betrayed him he denies his knowledge - 'I know thee not' (IV.289) - and then goes on almost ritually^{to} make and unmake his image of Jaffeir;

Thou Jaffeir! Thou my once lov'd,valu'd friend!
By Heavens thou ly'st; the man so call'd, my friend,
Was generous, honest, faithfull, just and valiant,
Noble in mind, and in his person lovely,
Dear to my eyes and tender to my heart:
But thou a wretched, base, false, worthless Coward,
Poor even in Soul, and loathsome in thy aspect.
(IV.294-300)

Jaffeir's inability to sustain any self-image of himself in the face of these onslaughts is demonstrated in the staccato dialogue in which he abjectly agrees with Pierre that he is 'A Traitor ... A Villain ... A Coward' (IV.345-46). Jaffeir's reactions to his crisis are first to seek that longed-for mindless oblivion which would release him from the human torments of a conscious mind, as he twice calls for sleep and forgetfulness (IV.213-15,388). Jaffeir seeks, in the sensuality which Belvidera promises, peace and the unification of his 'divided Soul' (IV.406). But he cannot escape from the processes of his mind: 'resentment, indignation,/Love, pity, fear, and mem'ry how I've wrong'd him,/Distract my quiet' (IV.418-20). Belvidera, whom he gave in pledge with his dagger, inevitably calls to mind his betrayal and the dagger, which by changing hands has become a sort of surrogate personality; the symbol of Jaffeir's fluid allegiances, as well as of the violence and sexuality of his allegiances. She cannot represent a retreat but rather the particular impetus which propelled him forward; 'Call to mind/what thou hast done, and wither thou hast brought me' (IV.486-87). The idea of killing Belvidera with the dagger is not simply melodramatic

but has its own fevered logic as it unites the two symbols of betrayal in an act of renunciation. The physical impulse which Belvidera represents with her blatant sensuality is now associated by Jaffeir with the fall of man as he reminds her as she sinks into his arms that 'there's a lurking serpent/Ready to leap and sting thee to thy heart' (IV.484-85). However, Jaffeir can no more deny her physical appeal and kill her than he can still the workings of his mind. The sensuality which informs Jaffeir's threats and Belvidera's ecstatic responses is emphasised by the parodic scene in which Aquilina delights and titillates Antonio as she threatens him with a dagger (V.175-218). The scene also plays out Jaffeir's abject humbling of himself at Pierre's feet as Antonio grotesquely drools over Aquilina's 'dear fragrant foots and little toes' (V.207). The comic scene serves to illustrate man's inability to escape from the sensuality in his nature as gestures of renunciation and self-denial are seen springing from and expressing physical and sensual impulse. Jaffeir and Belvidera's dagger scenes thus very dramatically play out the antinomies of Jaffeir's world, and demonstrate the impossibility of a triumph of either reason or passion.

The confusions of self which the characters face spring, however, not only from their divided nature but from the relationship of their natures to the world. In The Orphan Otway, to a large extent at least, worked at the mind-body problem in relative isolation from the large social world, centering his analysis on a single family unit. In Venice Preserv'd, however, the intimations evident in The Orphan of the complexity of the interactions between the individual and the State are expanded. The play is entitled Venice Preserv'd, not Jaffeir and Belvidera or Love and Honour; it is about a city made up of people and not just particular people in a city. Venice, the 'Adriatique Whore', is a potent presence in the play. Her corrupt legislature and the

'Plot Discover'd' in her entrails command attention as part of an investigation into how men articulate their lives as part of a community. The public world of Venice dictates the nature of the characters' emotional world.

Significantly, the three most climactic scenes in the play take place in public spaces and concern public events. These are Jaffeir's midnight meeting with Pierre on the Rialto in which he pledges himself to the conspiracy (II.66-196), his midnight journey to betray the conspiracy (IV.1-94) and the public deaths of Pierre and Jaffeir. McBurney notes that Jaffeir and Belvidera 'meet in unspecified surroundings' usually a street, which he suggests leads to an 'atmospheric isolation of the action'.⁴⁵ From another point of view the public (if vague) locations suggests their failure to establish a private realm, as the most intimate details of married life are discussed in a street. The setting underlines the larger sense of their dispossession, which goes beyond the actual loss of their home. Even the interior scenes take place in settings which are stark and impersonal: the Senate House where Jaffeir delivers the list of the conspirators and Aquilina's house where the conspirators meet. On one level Aquilina exemplifies private vices with her whip conveniently kept in her apartments, on another she is a highly public figure - a woman who sells her body (and dexterity with a whip) on the open market. As the mistress of a Senator and a conspirator and purveyor of illicit sex, Aquilina exemplifies the connections between the public world and dark desires which the play

45 McBurney, 'Otway's Tragic Muse Debauched: Sensuality in Venice Preserv'd', p.390.

investigates.⁴⁶ Her sexuality is not divorced from the public world but rather her way into that world. Sex, as she tells Pierre when she explains why she submits to Antonio's attentions, is power;

... the Beast has Gold
That makes him necessary: Power too,
To qualifie my Character, and poise me
Equal with peevish Virtue.

(II.12-15)

The speech is typical for in their 'private' lives the characters think in public terms of reputation, fame and display. Personal emotions both spring from and find their expression in public status and public actions. Jaffeir throughout the play is characterised by himself and others with groups of abstract nouns praising or insulting him and this is indicative of the extent to which character is seen to be defined in external terms.⁴⁷ The quarrel with which the play opens illustrates the way in which the public life of the characters moulds their emotional life. As Priuli argues with Jaffeir over his run-away marriage with Belvidera his anger is directed at the public shame incurred by the marriage. Jaffeir, he complains, has 'wrong'd me in the nicest point:/The Honour of my House' (I.11-12). Part of Jaffeir's defence is to argue that had he not saved Belvidera's life: 'Childless you had been else, and in the Grave,/Your name Extinct, nor no more Priuli heard of' (I.28-29). As in the pagan world, temporal fame is the only form of immortality envisaged, and children are of value

46 Belvidera, who is frequently paralleled with Aquilina in the course of the play (see for instance Act III where both women have 'unnatural' encounters with Antonio and Renault), has a similar set of 'legalised' relationships. She is the daughter of a Senator and the wife of a conspirator. The inter-relationships of the characters bind together the different plot worlds and underline the links between the public and private realms.

47 This is especially true of the scenes already cited in Act IV where Jaffeir's desired self-images and those of the world are in acute conflict and crisis, see IV.17,75,246-47,296,299.

insofar as they contribute to this fame.⁴⁸ Priuli is grotesquely unconcerned about whether or not Belvidera is happy in her marriage. Indeed, Jaffeir's assurances that this is the case infuriate him. Priuli actively wishes them ill and curses them (I.52-58). The curse rebounds on him as the 'Curse of Disobedience', translated into the public realm, becomes rebellion. Faced with his daughter's involvement with the conspiracy, Priuli produces one of the play's many inadequate definitions of man, as man is differentiated from the beasts, not in terms of soul or mind, but in terms of public esteem:⁴⁹

... wou'd that I'd been any thing but man,
And rais'd an issue which wou'd ne'r have wrong'd me.
The miserablest Creatures (man excepted)
Are not the less esteem'd, though their posterity
Degenerate from the vertues of their fathers.
(V.10-14)

The purely temporal image and public gesture usurp all other forms of reality in the world of Venice Preserv'd.

The love of Jaffeir and Belvidera is strongly tied into the public world of the play. It had its inception when Jaffeir saved Belvidera when she was swept overboard whilst watching the Doge's

48 In a discussion of the significance of the public and private realms Hannah Arendt points out that in the pagan world '... the curse of slavery consisted not only in being deprived of freedom and visibility, but also in the fear of these obscure people themselves "that from being obscure they should pass away leaving no trace that they have existed"', The Human Condition, p.55. Arendt's whole chapter, which stresses that the public realm is non-familial and strongly verbal, helps to clarify some of the areas in which the world of the play has gone wrong, where family considerations are paramount and public speech is under stress. This is particularly the case with regard to Antonio's inanities in the Senate (IV.134-35,159-60,187-96) and his mock senatorial speech in which 'cowcubers' and 'gease' riot with the plot (V.122-49).

49 For a fuller discussion of this speech in terms of the preoccupations with man's physical rather than spiritual nature see Derek Hughes's article 'A New Look at Venice Preserv'd', p.445. My aim is to stress that the physical and temporal world the characters live in, which binds them to their senses, is also the public world towards which they aspire.

ritual marriage with the sea (I.31-48). The connections which are drawn here between the marriage of Jaffeir and Belvidera and the well-being and organisation of the state are sustained throughout the play. The bankruptcy of Venice (II.265-71) and the Doge's cuckoldom when his 'Wife, th'Adriatick' was 'plough'd like a lewd Whore by bolder Prows ...' (IV.237-38) are analagous to Jaffeir and Belvidera's poverty and Jaffeir's increasing inability to defend his wife from sexual assaults (III.ii.179-86, IV.64-68). Pierre and Aquilina also fit into this cuckolding pattern since Pierre is powerless to prevent a Senator debauching his mistress. The extent to which this affects his public image of himself as the nation's soldier has already been pointed out. It is, however, true to say that these parallels between the State and personal sexuality exist because the characters themselves see their own lives and the life of the State in sexual terms.⁵⁰ The distinctions between public and private are blurred by the characters, whose malaise lies in this tendency.

The whole conduct of Jaffeir's marriage further exemplifies the extent to which an over-riding concern with public images dominates the characters' thinking and actions. Jaffeir explains to Priuli that his bankruptcy is the result of his lavish spending on Belvidera. He has chosen to treat her not as the wife of a private citizen but with regard to the status she derives from her father:

I have treated Belvidera like your Daughter,
The Daughter of a Senator of Venice;
Distinction, Place, Attendance and Observance,
Due to her Birth, she always has commanded.
(I.88-91)

⁵⁰ Derek Hughes points to the use of the imagery of eroticism and child-birth used by the conspirators, II.243-45, III.ii.143-44, II.292, II.257, 'A New Look at Venice Preserv'd', pp.448-49. Other examples can be found in Belvidera's speech, see III.ii.62-64.

The aim of this ostentation has, paradoxically, been to make public what should be the purely private and unworldly nature of Jaffeir's love for Belvidera;

Out of my little Fortune I have done this;
Because (though hopeless e're to win your Nature)
The World might see, I lov'd her for her self,
Not as the Heiress of the great Priuli ---
(I.92-95)

It is a natural, though ironic, corollary of Jaffeir's desire to parade in public his love for Belvidera that the next scene offers a graphic description of the unwanted publicity given to his marriage bed. When Priuli leaves, Pierre enters to tell Jaffeir that the 'sons of Public Rapine' have taken over his house and possessions, and even

The very bed, which on thy wedding night
Receiv'd thee to the Arms of Belvidera,
The scene of all thy Joys, was violated
By the course hands of filthy Dungeon Villains,
And thrown amongst the common Lumber.
(I.245-49)

The objects of Jaffeir's ostentatious display, his 'pile of massy Plate', have been 'Tumbled into a heap for publick sale' (I.239-40). Belvidera in her reduced and sorrowful state has herself been made into a public spectacle as, like an icon of grief, she has been led weeping from her house (I.257-66).⁵¹ Moreover, this violation of Jaffeir and Belvidera's intimacy has been carried out openly and legally with a

⁵¹ David Hauser sees Belvidera's pose led from her house between two virgins (I.261) as 'reminiscent of innumerable Renaissance paintings of the wounded Christ supported by women or angels', 'Otway Preserv'd: Theme and Form in Venice Preserv'd', pp.491-92. Bessie Proffitt has also interpreted this portrayal of Belvidera in positive religious terms, see 'Religious Symbolism in Otway's Venice Preserv'd', p.34. However, as Derek Hughes has pointed out to me, the depiction of a woman led sorrowfully between two virgins has dramatic precedent in Lee's Nero (May? 1674) where Agrippina, Nero's mother with whom he has had incestuous intercourse, appears on stage supported by two virgins (stage directions I.i.53). The Works of Nathaniel Lee, edited by Thomas B. Stroup and Arthur L. Cooke, 2 vols (New Brunswick, New Jersey 1954-55), Vol.I. In this context Belvidera's appearance becomes more ambiguous, more shameful, and an image of passion and lust made public rather than simply an image of grief.

commission signed by Priuli. Priuli's roles as vengeful father and City Father/Magistrate have coalesced and impinge upon Jaffeir's conflicting desires for domesticity and ostentation. By dwelling on the marriage bed as a symbol of Jaffeir and Belvidera's most private pleasures, Pierre presents a strong image of the state's intrusion into and violation of personal liberty. This blurs over both the highly public nature of the life Jaffeir and Belvidera led and the question of the individual's accountability for debt. By the end of his conversation with Pierre, Jaffeir is moving towards the idea of revenge and violent action. However, it is important to note that Jaffeir does not move towards the conspiracy simply because the quiet tenor of his private life has suddenly been disrupted. His private and public worlds have never been clearly distinguished and he moves in the direction of revolutionary activity as the public world which gave expression to his emotions tumbles about his ears.

When Jaffeir meets Belvidera in the first Act he briefly shares with her a vision of a retired life of poverty and love. He compares himself advantageously with Monarchs who never know 'Tranquility and Happiness' (I.385) and describes himself as a 'private bark'; wrecked, but still possessed of a great treasure (I.389-95). However, Jaffeir's romantic self-description, although accurate in the sense that as he is bankrupt privacy and poverty are distinct possibilities, is misleading. Until wrecked on financial seas his happiness with Belvidera was monarchical, depending on his ability to provide her with 'Distinction, Place, Attendance and Observance'. Now that he can no longer maintain such state he has already, in his conversation with Pierre, taken the first steps towards violently changing his situation. Belvidera's descriptions of the stony pleasures of love on the bare earth and feasts of roots (I.375-81) is a completely conventional and unrealistic flight into hard primitivism. The hardness of nature and poverty are evoked

merely to be off-set by the softness of Belvidera's bosom (I.352,379) and the 'boundless stock' (I.352) of sexual pleasure. Sexual pleasure is a reality but the simple retired life is not.

The extent to which Jaffeir and Belvidera's relationship is conceived of and conducted in financial materialistic terms as well as sexual is stressed throughout. Even Jaffeir's description of Belvidera's loving gratitude for his heroic act in saving her is couched financially: 'she paid me with her self' (I.48). The material aspect is also present when Jaffeir offers her to the conspirators as a 'Pledge, worth more than all the World can pay for' (II.346). Pierre draws attention to the financial side of marriage when he gives Jaffeir money, telling him 'Marriage is Chargeable' (II.100). The material, public and sensual nature of Jaffeir's concept of his own soul, and the nature of his love for Belvidera, is strikingly illustrated in his speech to Belvidera in Act IV;

... th'art my Soul it self; wealth, friendship,
honour,
All present joys, and earnest of all future,
Are summ'd in thee: methinks when in thy armes
Thus leaning on thy breast, one minute's more
Than a long thousand years of vulgar hours.
(IV.80-84)

The preference for present sexual joys to future spiritual pleasure, or rather the substitution of sexual joy for any other sort of joy, is also illustrated in Belvidera's speeches. When Jaffeir threatens to kill her she tells him that to die by his hand would be a joy 'Greater than any I can guess hereafter' (IV.519) and later she asserts that to lie with Jaffeir in their 'Grave, as our last bed' (V.277) would be better than the resurrection (V.278-79). The limitations built into Jaffeir and Belvidera's concepts of themselves and their relationship precludes the possibility of their marriage representing an alternative to the

world around them.⁵²

Jack D. Durant has argued that the first Act shows the triumph of Jaffeir and Belvidera's marriage. He sees Jaffeir as moving away from the rash activist position he had reached in conversation with Pierre as Belvidera helps him to overcome his despair.⁵³ Durant describes his subsequent actions as a wrong-headed betrayal of the domestic realities which Belvidera and the family unit represent. He argues that the play works as a contrast between 'familial integrity' and the 'facile conventions of an ill-conceived heroicism',⁵⁴

placing the demands of rash heroic action at odds with the profounder, if less flamboyant, demands of marital and familial integrity.⁵⁵

However, Durant is ignoring here the public nature of Jaffeir's domesticity and the unreality of Belvidera's consolations. 'Heroicism' lies at the root of the marriage since it bloomed after Jaffeir's conventionally heroic (and romantic) action of saving Belvidera's life. Integrity is absent from the family unit as much as the state or the conspiracy. Both Jaffeir and Priuli have deviated from the norms of

52 David Hauser, like Bessie Proffitt, has drawn attention to the celestial imagery which surrounds Belvidera and sees Belvidera as supporting a sin and redemption motif and as redeeming Jaffeir each time she sees him with appeals to his 'piety', see 'Otway Preserved: Theme and Form in Venice Preserv'd', pp.491-92. However, the religious imagery associated with Belvidera frequently draws attention to the distance between Belvidera and spirituality or shows the ways in which religious terms have been demoted to carry sensual messages. Given the play's emphasis on man's fallen nature Jaffeir's denial of the fall when faced with Belvidera's beauty (I.335-42) is highly suspect, while his comparison of Belvidera with the Angels is a conceit making the angels look like Belvidera rather than Belvidera like an angel. A later comparison of Belvidera with an angel is even more explicitly sexual and makes use of birth imagery as well as celestial (III.ii.48-50).

53 Jack D. Durant, '"Honour's Toughest Task": Family and State in Venice Preserv'd', Studies in Philology, vol.lxxi, no.4 (1974), pp.489-90.

54 Durant, as cited above, p.449.

55 Durant, as cited above, p.501.

family behaviour: Jaffeir in running away with his patron's daughter, Priuli in disowning and cursing his only child. There are no sources of domesticity and private tranquillity to fall back upon. What Belvidera represents is carnal pleasure and status, neither of which, as Otway demonstrates, constitute a cosy alternative to the public world of passion and action. Although Jaffeir responds in Act I by hugging his 'little, but ... precious store' (I.394) to his heart, this merely represents an emotional response to an immediate appeal. It demonstrates the way in which Jaffeir's emotions are in thrall to his appetites. The next act, however, sees Jaffeir arrive at the appointed hour and place to meet Pierre and discuss revenge.

Despite Belvidera's enthusiasm, in theory, for a life of exile with Jaffeir, she exerts considerable influence in the public realm and makes significant claims for herself as a public figure. In Act III she first compares herself to Lucrece (III.ii.5-9), whose rape and suicide led to the expulsion of the Tarquins (a subject just dealt with by Lee in his political play Lucius Junius Brutus, December 1680). She then compares herself with Porcia [sic]:

That Porcia was a Woman, and when Brutus,
Big with the fate of Rome, (Heav'n guard thy safety!)
Conceal'd from her the Labours of his Mind,
She let him see, her Blood was great as his.
(III.ii.62-65)

These comparisons serve to chart the great distance between Belvidera and these staunch Roman matrons. Typically her language cannot escape sexual metaphor and the 'fate of Rome' becomes a monstrous and unnatural birth. Later Jaffeir points out that she falls from the standards she has named (III.ii.113-15) and Belvidera also later acknowledges her failure to maintain the 'Roman constancy I boasted' (IV.391). Nevertheless, the vigour with which Belvidera pursues her arguments which entwine sexual threats with promises of fame, indicates her grasp of the elements which make up her world and her readiness to enter that world on its own terms.

It is, after all, Belvidera who leads Jaffeir to the Senate, and who brings him word of the perfidy of the Senate (IV.452-68).

Apart from the thought that Renault might easily rape her during the confusion of the fighting (IV.64-66), Belvidera urges Jaffeir along with promises of fame, 'Renown' and glory;

... Every Street
Shall be adorn'd with Statues to thy honour,
And at thy feet this great Inscription written,
Remember him that prop'd the fall of Venice.
(IV.10-13)

As we have already seen, this inducement cannot work, not because Jaffeir is indifferent to his fame, but because his preoccupation with his name and fame has already suggested to him alternative historical memorials (IV.14-18). The public arena as a showplace for individual ambition is as vexed and confused as human nature itself. It is only when Jaffeir briefly abdicates from his human condition and imagining himself as an animal makes his will over to Belvidera that he can carry out the act of betrayal. The betrayal represents a moment of crisis in which Jaffeir tries to forget his name and all the public consequences for that name that his action will involve. Such forgetfulness, I have argued, is shown immediately to be impossible, and when Jaffeir has delivered over the fatal list to the Senate he at once sees his action in terms of his temporal fame;

I've done a deed will make my Story hereafter
Quoted in competition with all ill ones:
The History of my wickedness shall run
Down through the low traditions of the vulgar,
And Boys be taught to tell the tale of Jaffeir.
(IV.207-11)

Jaffeir at this stage lacks internal coherence. His inner self is dominated by his agonised sense of his public image and external evaluations. After Pierre has repudiated him he feels his insults as the 'vilest blots and stains' (IV.426) and obsessively repeats the terms which Pierre flung at him and which he acquiesced in (IV.447-50).

Belvidera's news of the Senate's perfidy brings about a counter-movement as Jaffeir ceases to resent Pierre's words and now feels the need to assert himself in terms of his old allegiances. Jaffeir has constructed himself out of the public world, and the taints of that world - the moral equation of Antonio and Renault - colour his actions.

The mixture of sexual enticement, emotion and politics which Belvidera uses to urge Jaffeir to betray the conspiracy is largely repeated when she sues to her father to intercede with the Senate to save the conspirators. Here she appeals to his emotions as both a lover and a father by urging him to

Look kindly on me; in my face behold
The lineaments of hers y'have kiss'd so often,
Pleading the cause of your poor cast-off Child.

(V.44-46)⁵⁶

Belvidera displays herself extremely unattractively in this scene, exaggerating her physical dangers from Jaffeir (V.64-66,102-03) and boasting of the way she used her sex-appeal to persuade Jaffeir: 'I learnt-the danger, chose the hour of love/T'attempt his heart' (V.85-86). This sensual ambush having been successful, she explains that she has now become the objectified symbol of Jaffeir's personal and political failure, and she convinces her father that as such her life is in danger. Responding to the sensual memories of the past and Belvidera's present sado-masochistic images, Priuli agrees to intercede for the conspirators. They will not merely be saved but 'Not one of 'em but

56 McBurney (in 'Otway's Tragic Muse Debauched: Sensuality in Venice Preserv'd', p.398) and Derek Hughes both point out that Belvidera's appearance in a veil before her father recalls Almahide's use of a veil before Almanzor in The Conquest of Granada. However, as Hughes points out, Belvidera's use of the veil is a prelude to a sexual assault on her father's feelings, whilst Almahide's unveiling draws attention to her eyes, 'A New Look at Venice Preserv'd', p.447.

what shall be immortal' (V.114). Priuli's decision to save the conspirators, indeed, turn them into heroes, is a reversal as complete and as weak as Jaffeir's earlier decision to betray them. Priuli's weakness in the face of Belvidera's charms is anticipated by Jaffeir in a speech which links his own submission with Priuli's, 'Nor, till thy Prayers are granted, set him free, / But conquer him, as thou hast vanquish'd me' (IV.536-37). Betraying or saving the conspirators loses all moral coherence as politics becomes a game played with sexual counters. Again, the parallel scene in which Aquilina sues Antonio for Pierre's release underlines this interpretation of public events. Sensuality and politics are inextricably interwoven and partake of the same taints denying the possibility of purity of action or thought. Man as a political animal is also a human animal of desires, wayward memories, instincts and ambitions.

The play concludes in a baleful glow of publicity as the

Scene opening discovers a Scaffold and a Wheel prepar'd for the executing of Peirre [sic], then enter Officers, Peirre and Guards, a Friar, executioner and a great Rabble (V.stage directions after line 369)

Just as Jaffeir and Pierre's lives have been public, so are their deaths. On the scaffold it is his public reputation which most concerns Pierre. Pierre weeps at the sight of the wheel, not because pain or death terrify him but because of the thought of the ignominy of his prospective death;

Is't fit a Souldier, who has liv'd with Honour,
Fought Nations Quarrels, and bin Crown'd with Conquest,
Be expos'd a common Carcass on a Wheel?
(V.445-47)

Neither is Pierre concerned here (or elsewhere) with any after life. He brushes aside the Friar who offers him spiritual consolations (V.375-83) and to the last expresses his contempt of religion (V.384-89). Indeed, his main anxiety with regard to religion is that (like the late Earl of

Rochester) he might be accredited with a last moment conversion (V.390-92). Pierre's only concern on the scaffold is to make a good end, to 'dye with Decency' (V.461) and preserve his 'Memory/From the disgrace that's ready to attaint it' (V.450-51). Therefore he asks Jaffeir to stab him and save him from shame (just as Titus asks Valerius to in Lucius Junius Brutus). Jaffeir, interestingly enough, at first interprets Pierre's request in terms of his own honour, and responds by offering to murder not only Belvidera, the pledge he gave the conspirators, but his son as well (V.454-57). Pierre, however, is not concerned with this sort of personal vindication. To the end it is the public gesture which is desired. Pierre is triumphant in death because he dies without shame. The manner of his death, from the hand of a comrade, enables him to convert his death into a political gesture and his last words are, 'This was done Nobly --- We have deceiv'd the Senate!' (V.468).

In 'Nature in Venice Preserv'd' Ronald Berman states that Pierre is 'shocked out of his ideological complacency when Jaffeir's treachery is revealed', and discovers that 'his theory of Nature is totally inadequate to explain human ambivalence'.⁵⁷ However, I can see no signs of Pierre's awakening to the harsh realities of human existence and human fallibility. His reactions to Jaffeir's betrayal were unhesitatingly^{to} condemn his actions and character. He does not question his own judgement or ideas but simply rejects Jaffeir. At the end he talks of his fellow conspirators as 'noble friends' (IV.359) and 'Worthy' men' (V.423-24). Pierre dies in triumph, his limited aim fulfilled; Jaffeir dies in despair. The difference marks the fact that Jaffeir has developed in a way that Pierre cannot. Jaffeir, unlike Pierre, is capable of tragic enlightenment.

57 Berman, 'Nature in Venice Preserv'd', p.542.

Jaffeir's development is shown in the last two Acts, in part in his new relationship towards his wife and his marriage. After the betrayal he rejects Belvidera and perceives the serpent's sting (IV.484-85) lying at the heart of their embraces. Jaffeir begins to forge a coherent inner self as he recognises the ways in which his relationship with Belvidera does not constitute an alternative to the world, or an escape, but is part of his vexed world. As Berman says,

One of the saddest moments in the play comes with his realisation that the marriage is, in effect, part of the State; it cannot subsist by itself.⁵⁸

The passing-bell which tolls for Pierre's execution during Jaffeir and Belvidera's last meeting dramatically presents the way in which their relationship forms a bloody link with the outside world. Despite Jaffeir's last moment half-hearted fumbings with his dagger (V.323-26) his words during his final meeting with Belvidera strike a new and sombre note. His attempt to bestow on her a parting blessing (V.291-301) indicates a new maturity as he tries to sever their relationship with dignity and compassion.

By the end Jaffeir no longer confuses ideology and the public image with desire and instinct but strips away social accretions to enter the tragic universe in isolation bleakly asserting man's flawed basic nature. As Berman and Hughes have noted,⁵⁹ Jaffeir turns his death into a blood sacrifice in a reversion to an older, and in a sense more authentic, State of Nature than that envisaged in Pierre's ideological myth. Pierre turns the act of justice into mockery as he escapes his judicial murder, but Jaffeir turns the idea of human justice into parody as he turns his death into a 'Libation' and a curse (V.470-74). His curse, enforced by sprinkling the ground with his own and Pierre's

⁵⁸ Berman, 'Nature in Venice Preserv'd', p.542.

⁵⁹ See Berman, as cited above, pp.542-43, Hughes, 'A New Look at Venice Preserv'd', p.453.

blood, is the curse of human discord and anarchy, the curse of man's own divided and tormented nature. The ritual with which Jaffeir concludes his life constitutes an act of recognition as the primitive aspects of human nature, which have been indicated throughout,⁶⁰ are allowed to break through the cultural superstructure.

Pierre's death is a hollow tribute to the played out notions of the heroic but Jaffeir's last moments move far beyond the heroic. His desires are no longer couched in public terms beyond his longing for the public world to devour itself. His last words are personal and for his wife and son (V.474-77), the bloody dagger he bequeaths to them cancels out his previous desire for his son to be reared in ignorance of his fate to preserve his name (V.335-40). The dagger thus takes on its final full significance as a symbol and memorial to man's capacity for violence. Jaffeir greets death at the end as the only solution to the conflicts of his nature bringing with it at last the peace he has longed for throughout - 'I' m quiet'. His inner sickness (V.478), the sickness Otway diagnosed in man's cursed and fallen nature, cannot in the end be articulated: it is revealed in action and only escaped in the silence of death.

As in Wuthering Heights the quietness of death is questioned by the appearance of ghosts as Jaffeir and Pierre's shades rise up before Belvidera (V. stage directions after lines 487,500). Her state however, suggests that the ghosts could be interpreted as figments of her maddened imagination. Belvidera's limitations are indicated by the manner of her death as she struggles for a last suffocating embrace

60 See, for instance, the frequent references to sacrifice which have run throughout the play, III.i.145, III.ii.1, IV.87-94.

(V.505-09). Priuli closes the play with a speech indicating his retreat from the great world, into a single room and then death (V.511-15). Pierre has gone down into death glorifying the public world and his role in it. Belvidera is broken by the public world which has forged, denied and destroyed her innermost desires. Jaffeir and Priuli alone rise above the public world which has formed them, by in the end denying it. The title of the play, however, leaves us in no doubt that that world continues; Venice is preserved for the Antonios and Aquilinas. I raised the question at the beginning of the chapter of the point of view from which the play should be viewed. The point of view is in a sense that of Venice. The parallels Otway draws between his most elevated and his most debased characters do not preclude sympathy, but do preclude empathy or identification. Otway has constructed a play which demands to be viewed as a totality. The complexity of his vision in his last and greatest tragedy goes beyond the fine delineation of heroes and heroines as he constructs a whole tragic world. Through the alienation tactics of his humour Otway contrives that we respond with intellectual concern as well as emotion to his work. Venice Preserv'd is not only an analysis of the human mind, it is a dramatic and disturbing vision of how and why societies malfunction.

The world Otway has created here is all of a piece. The failure of language he has investigated throughout his plays is taken to an absurd extreme in Antonio's incoherent and repetitious noises and phrases. Elsewhere in the play the failure is indicated in the ease with which the characters break their oaths and the sense in which a word like 'friend' has become meaningless. As Peter Winch has argued, 'our language and our social relations are just two

different sides of the same coin'.⁶¹ Language does not simply describe social relations, it has a more active role as the saying actually forms the doing. From Otway's keen sensitivity to the power of words comes his sense of language as an active force in the organisation of social reality. The failure of language to determine action underlies the total failure of a coherent morality to guide activities in the home or in the State. Since language is tied up with the structure of social relations the debasement of language results in a loss of definition and a blurring of demarcation points which lead to confusions in identity, function and action. While a common morality should inform both the public and private realms, there should be demarcation points between the activities appropriate to each realm. As we have seen, in Venice Preserv'd there are a series of confusions over the nature of love as a private emotion and marriage as a public state, or between personal affronts and political action. Otway never presents us with strong images of the ideal state, although his theological images suggest that the underlying ideal is based on Christian morality. In this play the social conventions which enshrine a Christian and moral view of human beings and human actions have been violated at every level. At the back of Otway's work there is a strong sense of an absolute morality and his depictions of the consistent violations of social conventions produces a drama of moral outrage. This, however, is not simply the outrage of an angry idealist. Despite the sense of an absolute morality, Otway's sceptical evaluation of human nature raises the question of whether human beings are capable of constructing a moral universe. The play's conclusions are profoundly pessimistic: Otway reveals that the politics of the State and the nature of human desires are inexorably and destructively linked.

61 Peter Winch, The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy (London and New York 1958, eighth impression 1973), p.123.

CONCLUSION

In this study I have tried to break away from the literary-historical generalizations which have grown up around Otway's work and have led to his assessment in terms of the transition from the heroic to the pathetic. I have looked at Otway's plays in terms of their own internal coherence and the developments which may be traced from play to play rather than in relation to some larger scheme of the development of English drama. Certainly one may trace his influence, as J. Douglas Canfield does in Nicholas Rowe and Christian Tragedy, when he suggests that the patterning of Paradise and Fall in The Fair Penitent may owe something to The Orphan.¹ The overall mood, dramatic techniques and conclusions of the two plays are, however, very different. The slender basis of comparison only serves to highlight the extent to which Rowe does work within the mode of affective drama and within a moral schema of repentance and regeneration while Otway's work is more fabulistic and essentially pessimistic. Dramatists, like Mrs. Catherine Trotter in The Fatal Friendship (1698) may borrow situations, and even turns of phrase from Otway, but not his dramatic strategies, mood or meanings. That eighteenth century dramatists like Rowe felt

1 J. Douglas Canfield, Nicholas Rowe and Christian Tragedy, pp.113-15.

they owed a debt to Otway² tells us more about their sensibilities than about his. As William McBurney has said, Otway's plays represent 'in many ways, a culmination rather than a beginning'.³ Projections of Otway's literary significance forward into the eighteenth century distort an appreciation of what he was doing with the materials available to him in his own age.

In Dryden's The Secular Masque, written to mark the turn of the century, the following dialogue takes place:

Momus (pointing to Mars): Thy Wars brought nothing about; ...
Janus: 'Tis well an Old Age is out,
Chronos: And time to begin a New.
(lines 87,89-90)⁴

The wars did bring something about: they changed a whole nation's political life and deeply affected the culture of the war and post-war generations. Yet there is a profound truth in Dryden's sense of the passing of an era, and, at that, an uneasy violent and war torn era. Otway is a writer who belongs to that 'Old Age'; his themes of anarchy and order are themes relevant to an age deeply aware of the memory of civil war and the possibility of renewed violence. His sense of mutability and decline relates his works to Elizabethan and Jacobean modes of thought. Otway's universe is not the Newtonian universe of mathematical certainties but a wildly whirling collection of atoms whose final destruction is frequently longed for by his characters. In terms of his vision of man (irrespective of whether he read Hobbes deeply or not) Otway's vision is closer to Hobbes's than to Locke's. He is haunted by a concept

2 See Rowe's Preface to The Ambitious Step-Mother (London 1701).

3 McBurney, 'Otway's Tragic Muse Debauched: Sensuality in Venice Preserv'd', p.399.

4 John Dryden, Dryden's Poems, edited and introduced by Bonamy Dobrée, Everyman's Library (London 1934, reprinted 1966).

of the State of Nature as a fallen state and a state of war, not as a rational work place. The minds of his characters are battle grounds between unruly passion and imperfect knowledge, not blank tablets on which impressions are logically built up. Otway's plays generate a sense of unease and disquiet; they present worlds in which traditional beliefs are exposed as frauds or delusions, while in the gap left behind there is room for nothing but anguish.

Otway still thought in terms of heroes, even as he dismantled the basis for an admiration of the heroic. He thought of felicity in terms of the pastoral, even as he revealed the snake and skull lurking in the undergrowth. Otway does not create new images of man and society; his strength lies in his ability to use the images at his disposal, exploiting their inherent ambiguities to question their significance. Jaffeir and Pierre dying nobly on the scaffold for a worthless cause provide a typical disjunction between image and substance. The heroic gesture has become a icon of futility.

Only in one play, his last the comedy, The Atheist, does Otway allow his play to end with some sense that a resolution has been achieved. However, this resolution is based on an arbitrary act of authority which cannot improve the comic world but can only produce a temporary halt to its downward spiral. The perversities of Beaugard's world are checked rather than redeemed.

Man as Otway sees him is unable to govern himself or to be governed. In two tragedies, Caius Marius and Venice Preserv'd, Otway contexts his study of man's ungovernable nature in republics. This is on the one hand a 'safe' way of talking about unrest in the State and corruption in authority, but it does also constitute a critique of whig political philosophy. Republics as purely man-made creations can only recreate on a larger scale the conflicts experienced

internally by the individual.

Otway's views although highly pessimistic are not entirely negative; his outrage at moral violations is indicative of his adherence to an absolute morality. However, his thinking, which is both sceptical with regard to human potential and conservative with regard to innovation and change, can only hold out very limited hopes for mankind. A desire for progress is balanced by an awareness of the reality of regression. Otway's brand of conservatism is illustrated in his elegy on the death of Charles II, Windsor Castle. In A Monument To Our Late Sovereign K. Charles II (1685). Here Charles is hailed as a 'Godlike King' (37) and an example of the mastery of the passions (89-91). The divinely ordered rule he has imposed is contrasted with the people's unruly inclinations towards anarchy and their capacity to wreck the state (118-36). The accession of James II is hailed in the final section of the poem as an act of Heaven and Providence (575-78) and seen as ushering in a golden age of pastoral content and cultural renaissance (554-66).

Otway is putting forward traditional associations of monarchy and divinity in his picture of stable and just rule. However, even in this poem, which combines panegyric with elegy, the tone is not entirely sure and the poem is not an unambiguous 'Monument' to the power of the monarch. The rather pedestrian verse quickens as Otway describes the forces of anarchy and discontent which have disrupted the paradisaical Isle of England (108-36). Charles's death is attributed to his continual struggles with the 'cruel Cares by faithless Subjects bred' (448) and the poet has to 'strive' (267) to prevent his 'Soul' from 'Repining' over his own cares (270). Monarchical authority, with its streak of divinity, is the only form of government which Otway can conceive of as capable of combating and balancing the human tendency towards disorder.

However, as Otway's depictions of kings in his plays indicates, it is a somewhat frail hope. The spark of divinity in a king can scarcely balance the great curse of fallen humanity.

Otway's longing for order, implicit in his despairing depictions of disorder, springs from his sense of a lack of satisfactory mental or social structures within which to organise and harmonise man's conflicting impulses. The characters in his plays frequently express desires to escape and retreat, as does Otway in his poems, but such desires are countered by a firmly realistic sense of the impossibility of escape since the confusions apparent in the world are also internal. Polydore's images of a poisoned and blighted landscape of retreat are indicative of Otway's sense that man carries his blight within him.

The dominant images in Otway's works after Titus and Berenice are of lost landscapes of peace and tranquillity and of wandering. Tranquillity is always located in the past and attempts to recreate the scene of peace and rest fail. Sensual and violent images intrude to debase the ideals and root them in the imperfect world of ungovernable instinct. The wanderers' landscapes turn into scenes of desolation and the ultimate escapes are into madness or death. Man in Otway's plays is a permanent exile, orphaned and rootless. Children in Otway's plays are without fathers, since their fathers are either dead, have repudiated them, or refuse to act a fatherly role. The characters are deracinated since they have no stable past, no coherent present and no hope for the future. Language, which could articulate the present and forge links between the characters, is undermined by inarticulate passion and the weight of memory, which makes speech painful. Silence is, in many ways, the end of Otway's tragedies. Caius Marius and Priuli, in similar terms, retreat from the busy stage to solitude and death. Acasto is

speechless by the end of The Orphan, Castalio is glad to be 'nothing' and Jaffeir's last words in Venice Preserv'd are 'I' m quiet'.

For all the ambiguity of his play endings, which I have referred to throughout, there is a strong sense of finality in Otway's works. At the end of his plays social worlds, ideals and theories have been thoroughly analysed and revealed as hollow. The world will go on but there is nothing more to say about it. Otway's great achievement was not to create the foundations of a new type of drama but to say fully all that he needed to say within the terms of the existing genres. In doing so he developed the genres he worked in, but also exhausted them. Otway's art is brilliantly destructive; his finest works are plays which challenge literary conventions and express a sense of the end of an era as he demolishes conventions, myths and ideals. In this respect his works are more compatible with the exploded idealism of the twentieth century than are the works of many of his contemporaries. However, Otway was also very much a man of his own age, that 'Old Age' of violence and anxiety Dryden was glad to usher out. Otway's value as a dramatist does not lie only in a fortuitous link with the twentieth century but stems from the depth and honesty of his analysis of the universal problems of the nature of man and the relationship of man to society. In responding with sensitivity to his own troubled age he produced magnificent dramatizations of the human predicament.

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