

Turncoat Poets of the English Revolution

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English

Michaelmas Term, 2015

Abstract

Edmund Waller, William Davenant, Andrew Marvell, and Abraham Cowley were royalist poets who changed sides following the English Revolution, attracted to Cromwellian military power, and the reforming aims of the Independents. This thesis contributes to existing scholarship by showing that the poets engaged strongly with theories of allegiance, self-consciously returning to first principles—the natures of sovereignty and obligation—to develop a concept of allegiance that was contingent and transferrable.

Their crucial influence was Hobbes. Hobbes collapsed partisan perspectives into a general theory of sovereignty constituted by a *de facto* protective and coercive power; this was grounded on a psychological analysis of humans' restless appetite for power. The poets' approach to Hobbes was crucially mediated by Machiavelli, who provided a less abstract account of the relationship between individual agency and collective institutions, and whose concept of *virtù* offered a model for how restless ambition could be harnessed to political order.

An introductory chapter sketches out the intellectual background to this body of theory and reflects on the methods used to show how the poets dramatized it in their works. Chapter two considers the disintegration of Waller's courtly poetry under the pressure of civil war, and his resulting turn to rationalist theory. Chapters three and four focus on the immediate aftermath of the revolution, considering the synthesis of Hobbes' and Machiavelli's theories of military power ventured by Davenant, and the influence of Davenant's ideas on Marvell's Machiavellianism. Chapter five focuses on Cowley and his more religiously-inflected account of Hobbesian psychology and political obligations. Chapter six asks how the poets responded to the Restoration of Charles II, and in particular charts their influence on the younger poet John Dryden.

With their emphasis on materialist psychology, the turncoat poets abandoned allegory in favour of a mode of dramatization which observed the contingent circumstances in which allegiances could be generated, dissolved, and transferred. They possessed a political conservatism, but a conceptual radicalism which presented a serious challenge to Anglican and constitutionalist discourses of Stuart monarchy.

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Pierre Lombart, equestrian portrait of Oliver Cromwell (after Anthony Van Dyck) in 'headless' state, ca. 1655. © Trustees of the British Museum.

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Note on References

In-line parenthetical references are given for the main text under discussion. Passing references to other primary sources are given as footnotes. References to poetry give line-numbers except David Gladish's edition of *Gondibert* (stanza numbers) and A. R. Waller's editions of Cowley (page numbers). References to prose give page numbers.

All references to Hobbes and Machiavelli give book, chapter, and page numbers. I deem this the clearest system even for Noel Malcolm's three-volume edition of *Leviathan*, in which the text is paginated consecutively across volumes two and three. References to Machiavelli cite the English translations by Edward Dacres of 1636 and 1640; in the absence of a modern edition, these are cross-referenced in parentheses with modern scholarly translations.

References to the *Oxford English Dictionary* were checked at www.oed.com; these and other electronic resources were last checked on 20th October 2015.

All dates follow the Old Style (i.e. eleven days behind the modern calendar), but the year is taken to start on 1st January.

Abbreviations

BL	British Library
Bod.	Bodleian Library
EEBO	<i>Early English Books Online</i>
ELR	<i>English Literary Renaissance</i>
HJ	<i>Historical Journal</i>
HLQ	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly</i>
NQ	<i>Notes and Queries</i>
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
PMLA	<i>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</i>
RES	<i>Review of English Studies</i>
SEL	<i>Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900</i>
YES	<i>Yearbook in English Studies</i>

Acknowledgements

I am greatly indebted to the patience, generosity, and meticulousness of my supervisors, David Norbrook and Tom MacFaul. I have also benefited from the advice of Tim Raylor, Will Poole, Katie Murphy, Richard McCabe, Rhodri Lewis, and Sharon Achinstein; and from discussion with my friends in the Oxford Early Modern Literature Graduate Forum, especially Joe Hone. The thesis has been supported by grants from the AHRC and Merton College, and a teaching post at Oriel College. I am extremely grateful to my parents for their emotional, logistical, and academic support. But this thesis is dedicated to my best friend Rosie Birchall, with all my sovereign and unswerving love.

Chapter One

Introduction: Changing Sides in Revolutionary England

When Pierre Lombart engraved an equestrian portrait of Oliver Cromwell in the mid-1650s, he pulled a proof copy before completing the Lord Protector's head. Some scholars have assumed Lombart was hedging his bets about the uncertain political future. In fact, it seems he had merely burnished out his first attempt at the head and wanted to check the condition of the plate.¹ Yet the prior assumption reveals how the print unintentionally symbolizes the disorientating contingency of political allegiances in mid-seventeenth-century England. This beheading was fraught with irony, as the design was lifted from a 1633 Van Dyck portrait of Charles I: Lombart had appropriated a symbol of imperial Stuart majesty to the Cromwellian Protectorate, but brought with it an awkward reminder of regicide and revolution.² The image of the mounted ruler condenses important Renaissance beliefs about princes, a symbol for martial prowess—as Sir Philip Sidney had put it, ‘no earthly thing bred such wonder to a prince as to be a good horseman’.³ But it was also a metaphor, deriving from Plato, for masculine Reason exerting his control over the wayward passions.⁴ These intertwining metaphors of horsemanship were foundations for the political thought of an earlier generation of Renaissance poets like Sidney or Edmund Spenser. The earlier poets were well-read in discourses of Calvinism and classical republicanism which could sometimes permit resistance to tyrants.⁵ But it was not until the image had been reappropriated in the aftermath of a revolution that the *transferability* of the horseman's qualities became quite so bluntly clear. Lombart's engraving went through several

¹ See title page; Anthony Griffiths, *The Print in Stuart Britain, 1603-1689* (London, 1998), p. 181; G. S. Layard, *The Headless Horseman: Pierre Lombart's Engraving: Charles or Cromwell?* (London, 1922).

² Kevin Sharpe, *Image Wars: Promoting Kings and Commonwealths in England, 1603-1660* (New Haven, 2010), pp. 502-3.

³ Sir Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy*, in Katherine Duncan-Jones, ed., *The Major Works* (Oxford, 1989), p. 212.

⁴ Christopher Tilmouth, *Passion's Triumph Over Reason: A History of the Moral Imagination from Spenser to Rochester* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 42-3.

⁵ See discussion in David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (2nd ed.; Oxford, 2002), pp. 87-91, 109-16.

states, depicting Cromwell, Charles I, Gustav Adolphus, and, in a later addition scrawled onto the headless state, Louis XIV. The body on the horse is defined by his military and psychological powers—but the actual person occupying the saddle had become interchangeable.

This thesis is about the man (or men) on the horse, and the ways in which the revolutions of the mid seventeenth century forced people in England to think more abstractly about sovereign power. But it is also—to stretch a conceit—about the man on foot, alongside the horse. The original Van Dyck had shown Charles' riding master, Monsieur St. Antoine, ushering Charles forward. Had Sidney and Spenser been alive to see it, they would have had no trouble in applying that role metaphorically to themselves, in their conception of poets as instructors and advisors to princes. But this figure had changed in Lombart's version: no longer a riding master, but a lowly page; no longer leading the horse, but falling into step just behind it. Was this development paralleled in its metaphorical application to poets? Were poets still welcome to offer advice to princes, or were they to occupy a more servile role as followers and propagandists? Lombart's page still carries the horseman's helmet: what role might the poet have in assisting or defending their sovereign? And how could a poet choose which rider to back?

The case of Lombart's headless horseman is analogous to an entertaining but ultimately blind alley in scholarship on Thomas Hobbes: the debate over whether the sovereign figure in the famous *Leviathan* frontispiece (1651) was drawn to look more like Charles or Cromwell.⁶ The simple answer is neither; the more interesting answer is to contemplate sovereign power as distinct from the person who wields it, defined by certain abstract and impersonal qualities and generating particular types of allegiance. Likewise, I will not hunt for cryptic evidence of whether writers were secretly royalists, parliamentarians, or cynical trimmers, but seek rather to understand their developing beliefs about sovereignty and obligations. I will focus on five poets, Edmund Waller, William Davenant, Andrew Marvell, Abraham Cowley, and John Dryden, who all changed their allegiance during the revolutionary period. This introductory chapter begins by

⁶ See Keith Brown, 'The Artist of the *Leviathan* Title-Page', *British Library Journal*, 4 (1978) 24-36; the question is answered with a decisive silence by Noel Malcolm, 'Introduction', in (ed.) *Leviathan* (3 vols.; Oxford, 2012), vol. 1, pp. 133-4.

mapping out the existing debate on allegiance in the English Civil Wars; it considers the intellectual materials the poets had to work with, and traces a rough chronology of events. It concludes by briefly discussing the methods I will employ in the following chapters.



Abraham Bosse, *Leviathan* frontispiece, 1651. © Trustees of the British Museum.

1. Allegiance: Some Historical Perspectives

If asked what they were fighting for, most people on both sides of the English Civil War would have given a similar answer: the preservation of England's ancient liberties; of the Protestant Church of England; and of government by kings in parliaments. This shows the comparatively limited resources early moderns had for thinking about the English state, although they still provided grounds enough to start a war.⁷ As events developed, it became increasingly apparent that the consensus had only ever existed in rhetoric, a shared vocabulary that could be used to articulate widely divergent beliefs about sovereignty. Contemporaries made fundamentally different assumptions about the source of sovereign power: was it inherent in an ancient constitution; in the people, or the particular classes of the people represented in parliament; or somehow in the divinely anointed body of the king? They did not necessarily approach this question in the abstract: obligations were understood as personal connections—to a feudal lord, to a family, to a patron—with certain forms of decorum and gratitude expected on both sides.⁸ Allegiance could also be fashioned through the stylized discourse of friendship.⁹ Conversely, writings about fractured allegiances or tergiversation could be characterized by 'the theme of broken friendship'.¹⁰ These senses of sovereignty and obligation were understood instinctively and often irrationally.¹¹ The belief that abuses of prerogative by the king and his bishops were mortally dangerous to the commonwealth eventually led parliament to abandon much of the old rhetoric and resort to what Hugh Trevor-Roper called a 'surgical discontinuity'.¹² Thousands of people faced exile, ostracism, and death because they knew which side of this divide legitimate power rested—fates which the writers in this study contrived to avoid.

⁷ See Michael Braddick, *God's Fury, England's Fire: A New History of the English Civil Wars* (paperback ed.; Harmondsworth, 2009), pp. 212-13, 225.

⁸ Victoria Kahn, *Wayward Contracts: The Crisis of Political Obligation in England, 1640-74* (Princeton, 2004), pp. 11-12; Barbara Donagan, 'Varieties of Royalism', in Jason McElligott and David L. Smith, eds., *Royalists and Royalism During the English Civil Wars* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 81-2.

⁹ Penelope Anderson, *Friendship's Shadows: Women's Friendships and the Politics of Betrayal in England, 1640-1705* (Edinburgh, 2012), pp. 1-2 and passim.

¹⁰ Nicholas McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance in the English Civil Wars: Marvell and the Cause of Wit* (Oxford, 2008), p. 266.

¹¹ Jason McElligott, *Royalism, Print and Censorship in Revolutionary England* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 95, 122-23.

¹² Hugh Trevor-Roper, *From Counter-Reformation to Glorious Revolution* (London, 1992), p. 184.

Allegiance is structured through and by language, so this thesis focuses on poets, who operate at the creative limits of language, in order to help us understand the shortcomings of older discourses, and the ways in which new concepts could be fashioned. These poets had a palpable interest in political theory, and marshalled a distinctive set of intellectual resources to resolve the conceptual and linguistic problems thrown up by the serial discrediting and overthrowing of regimes. They unpicked the knot of personal friendship, religious devotion, and loyalty by recasting allegiance in response to deeper questions about sovereignty itself, turning to more consciously abstract, rationalistic language. Hence it is necessary to shift the centre of gravity away from the Civil War to its aftermath, when the old regime and its traditional consensus seemed finally broken, and a new articulation of allegiance seemed most necessary.

Historiography on the English Civil War has struggled to establish a consistent account of how exactly allegiances were chosen and formed.¹³ Side-changers were of interest to revisionist historians, because if people could move back and forth between sides, then that might suggest the sides were not so far apart to begin with. And yet, post-revisionists have pointed out, for the charge of turncoaterly to have been levelled at all—which it most certainly was—requires a prior perception that real commitments have been made, and broken.¹⁴ Recent historiography has offered the model of a plurality of ideologies, which mapped only contingently and unstably onto the polarity of king and parliament. In a period accustomed to thinking about politics in terms of personal affiliation, allegiance could be ‘unstable, shifting, fluctuating’, formed on irrational grounds of affection or antagonism. Either party was a ‘rainbow coalition’ or ‘fissiparous coalition’—depending on your point of view—engaged in a continuous, dynamic campaign of ‘mobilization’, or ‘coalition-building’.¹⁵ Changing sides was a matter of tactical adaptation, and both sides were capable of policy reversals more momentous than simple acts of

¹³ See summary in Braddick, *God's Fury, England's Fire*, p. 229, although see also Rachel Foxley, ‘Varieties of Parliamentaryism’, in Michael Braddick, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the English Revolution* (Oxford, 2015), p. 417.

¹⁴ Andrew Hopper, *Turncoats and Renegadoes: Changing Sides in the English Civil Wars* (Oxford, 2012), p. 14.

¹⁵ Braddick, *God's Fury, England's Fire*, pp. 226-37; Hopper, *Turncoats and Renegadoes*, pp. 4-6; Donagan, ‘Varieties of Royalism’, pp. 66, 81-2; Foxley, ‘Varieties of Parliamentaryism’, p. 420; McElligott, *Royalism, Print, and Censorship*, pp. 94-8.

side-switching. In this thesis, I will continue to use the terms ‘royalist’ and ‘parliamentarian’ for convenience’s sake, but this flexible picture of allegiance is always intended. Accordingly, where necessary I will substitute ‘cavalier’ for particularly uncompromising forms of royalism—often associated with certain genres of amatory, satirical, and romance poetry. ‘Puritan’, on the other hand, refers to a desire for further Protestant reformation, which normally entailed opposition to the king.¹⁶ Likewise, I will transition to the adjectives ‘Republican’, ‘Cromwellian’, and ‘Protectoral’, as the later regimes of the 1650s dictate.

Andrew Hopper demonstrated the very wide extent of side-changing in the Civil War itself in his 2012 book *Turncoats and Renegades*, building on a shorter exploratory paper from 1989 by Gerald Aylmer, on ‘Neutrals, Trimmers, and Others’.¹⁷ Aylmer and Hopper both emphasized the importance of definitive political realignments which prompted the reshuffling of allegiances. The radicalization of parliament’s position in 1642 ‘sifted’ out moderates who gravitated to the king.¹⁸ The major series of parliamentary victories in 1644-46 reversed that trend, whilst the diplomatic deadlock and Second Civil War in 1647-48 brought a new false dawn for royalist optimism. The regicide in 1649 and decisive Cromwellian victory of 1651 convinced most royalists the game was up. Finally, and definitively, the constitutional impasse of 1659 led to the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, when, as we will see, residual political ambivalence was almost drowned out by a wave of royalist euphoria.¹⁹ At any of these moments of realignment, moderate adherents of either side could suddenly find themselves outside the fold. Edward Hyde, one of the leading architects of the parliamentary reforms of 1640-41, defected unhesitatingly to the king rather than fight against him in 1642. Even William Prynne, who had savaged defectors in pamphlets like *The Doome of Cowardize and Treachery* (London, 1643), became something of an unlikely hero for royalists after the Presbyterians were purged from Westminster in 1648. Allegiance could often be governed by generational antagonism; by local shifts of power as the

¹⁶ See Foxley, ‘Varieties of Parliamentarianism’, pp. 416-17.

¹⁷ Gerald Aylmer, ‘Collective Mentalities in Mid-Seventeenth-Century England: IV Cross Currents: Neutrals, Trimmers, and Others’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Series, 39 (1989) 1-22.

¹⁸ Foxley, ‘Varieties of Parliamentarianism’, p. 415.

¹⁹ Aylmer, ‘Neutrals, Trimmers, and Others’, pp. 6-7; Hopper, *Turncoats and Renegades*, pp. 40-4, 53-9.

different armies moved through the country, and sought to sustain themselves through legal and extra-legal means; and by the rhetoric through which both sides castigated traitors whilst trying to woo new converts.²⁰

Hopper and to a lesser extent Aylmer focused narrowly on the spheres of high politics and the military, on micro-political tactics, and on the main years of conflict, 1642-48. My contention is that the poets studied here addressed deeper linguistic and conceptual problems about the nature of sovereignty and obligation which became more strongly focussed after the regicide, in the crucial 1650s. Hopper points out that the terminology of ‘turncoat’ and ‘renegado’ emerged from the discourse of religious controversy—the major recent context early-moderns had for thinking about the problem of apostasy. Yet his analysis remains doggedly within secular politics. Victoria Kahn, writing about a ‘crisis of political obligation in England’ in the mid-seventeenth century, argues that the concept of allegiance broke free of its religious moorings and became secularized through the rise of the metaphor of the social contract.²¹ Hopper espouses the secularization line without really enquiring how it came about; because his analysis is secular in method, the argument risks becoming self-determining.²² Early moderns would have been astonished and troubled to hear that their conception of allegiance had become less religious. The writers in this study did not often resort to metaphors of contract, but the more abstract ways in which they began to think about allegiance certainly appear more secular to our eyes; I will try to keep in view the question of why this was so. Secularization in the seventeenth century meant a different set of theological assumptions and priorities, not the evacuation of theology itself. Some religious questions, like that of church government, directly affected the central issue of legitimacy and authority. Others, like the role of Providence in human affairs, determined the ways in which writers were able to interpret events. Although I will use the term ‘secularizing’ where an argument genuinely seems to be so, I will also rely on the less prescriptive term ‘rationalist’—which I interpret reductively to mean politics governed by human

²⁰ Hopper, *Turncoats and Renegadoes*, pp. 20-22, 30-4, 44, 83-6, 100-4, 126-30, 151, 209-10; Braddick, *God’s Fury, England’s Fire*, pp. 233-7.

²¹ Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, pp. 1-12 and *passim*.

²² Hopper, *Turncoats and Renegadoes*, pp. 208-21.

reason, as opposed to personal affections or mythical formulations like the ancient constitution or divine right of kings. It was those ideological models which were the problem, not their religious content *per se*. Just because one highly religiously-inflected way of imagining the English polity—the special divine status enjoyed by the Stuart family—had been found wanting, does not mean the writers had dispensed with God altogether.

Allegiance has proved such a perennially interesting topic to students of the seventeenth century and its literature because it marks an intersection between the history of political theory, of socio-economic relations, and, more elusively, of emotional, psychological, and cultural attachments. And this is particularly relevant to a group of writers who all had the pretensions and educations of gentlemen, but who were (with the exception of Waller) sufficiently lowborn to have to rely on patrons, and work as secretaries, agents, and tutors, throughout their lives. Aylmer observed that allegiance itself was a concept structured by distinctions of class:

the higher men were in the social scale or the more eminent their profession, the more likely their views are to be documented, yet at the same time the greater were the pressures on them to take sides, the more difficult it was for them to opt out.²³

Although punitive efforts were made to discourage the common soldiery from switching sides, their propensity to do so was shrugged away as evidence of the inherently base, pliable instincts of the herd.²⁴ More respectable men, teachers like Richard Busby or physicians like Charles Scarborough, were tolerated by regimes they were known to oppose, their residual allegiances waived as subordinate to their specialist, functionary roles.²⁵ But poets belonged to the cultural if not necessarily social or economic elite. They were capable of addressing their superiors in sophisticated and sometimes familiar terms—financial necessity meant they made a habit of it. The system of patronage and the genres associated with it, most obviously panegyric, created

²³ Aylmer, 'Neutrals, Trimmers, and Others', p. 3.

²⁴ Hopper, *Turncoats and Renegadoes*, pp. 78-81.

²⁵ On Busby, see James Anderson Winn, *John Dryden and his World* (New Haven, 1987), pp. 36-47; on Scarborough, Jeffrey Collins, *The Allegiance of Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford, 2005), p. 163, and Arthur Nethercot, *Abraham Cowley: The Muse's Hannibal* (London, 1931), pp. 156-7.

ambiguities as to the precise obligations between patron and poet.²⁶ This was the riding master's (and the engraver's) dilemma in Lombart's print: was the relationship one of feudal hierarchy, or was it something more transactional, involving the exchange of cultural and financial capital?

So allegiance is an economic, class-bound category; yet, like all components of ideology, it has to be negotiated and fashioned in rhetoric. Richard Cust has drawn revealing conclusions about the rhetorical nature of allegiance in his study of Thomas Wentworth, one of the first seventeenth-century politicians to be perceived as a turncoat:

If one accepts the seventeenth-century vision of England's political order as an organically united commonwealth, in which crown and people had to coexist in harmony, then no change of sides was involved. If, on the other hand, one applies the theme of 'court' and 'country', in which a corrupt and tyrannical 'court' confronted a virtuous 'country', then Wentworth's accommodation with Buckingham so soon after leading the Commons' campaign for the Petition of Right was a monumental sell-out. Either interpretation would have made sense to contemporaries.²⁷

Wentworth's career bears instructive comparisons with Waller's, torn between roles as a country MP and a courtier. The dominance of a rhetoric of harmony in Caroline England may have emboldened political actors in adopting complex, flexible positions which became unsustainable only as the regime fell apart. But Cust's point also reminds us that allegiance is relational, something constructed towards one's audience, in contradistinction to one's opponents. Accusations of turncoaterly often owe much to the accusers' desire to reinforce their own constancy.²⁸ After the Restoration, an anonymous anti-court satirist attacked George Villiers, the second Duke of Buckingham, raking up memories of his past as a serial defector to smear the authoritarian ministry in which he eventually rose to power:

Did we forget thy former treachery,
When, false, our King thou left'st in misery,
Turn'd kneeling renegade to what was trump,
And pay'd allegiance to the rotten Rump?²⁹

²⁶ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, p. 127; Winn, *Dryden and his World*, p. 386.

²⁷ Richard Cust, 'Wentworth's "Change of Sides" in the 1620s', in J. F. Meritt, ed., *The Political World of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, 1621-1641* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 63.

²⁸ Hopper, *Turncoats and Renegadoes*, pp. 9, 140, 207.

²⁹ Anon., 'On the Prorogation' (1671), in George de Forest Lord, ed., *Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714* (7 vols.; New Haven, 1963), vol. 1, p. 181.

Buckingham is a key figure in the history of side-changing; as we will see in chapter six, the theme became a concern for writers under his ministry. The satirist redescribes the reasoning of the turncoat using a hostile gambling metaphor—‘kneeling renegade to what was trump’—an activity unconcerned with morality, in which the *de facto* power, the ‘trump’, was purely arbitrary, and interchangeable. Yet this rationale in its positive, or at least neutral, form is the central theme of this thesis—and the satirist seems to have been familiar with it. Denouncing Buckingham as a fickle opportunist enabled him to shield himself and his parliamentary colleagues from the suspicions of amoral disloyalty which might otherwise have stuck to them.

Side-changing was a charged insult in a period which saw constancy as an essential ethical value. Unwavering fealty to one’s sovereign, patron, and family was not seen as time-serving, but rather a basic requirement of civilization. But constancy also meant continence, fortitude, self-sufficiency, and self-governance, the values fashioned through the metaphor of the horseman. Royalists who abandoned the king after his defeat had been inconstant in both senses. This double transgression lies behind Hyde’s seemingly extreme condemnation of his former friend Waller’s ‘abjectness and want of courage’ when Waller had been arrested by parliament under suspicion of treasonable conspiracy, but saved himself with a crawling recantation before the House of Commons (and a hefty bribe). He preserved his life, Hyde believed, ‘in an occasion in which he ought to have been ambitious to have lost it’.³⁰ But Waller didn’t just face an unjust death, but the terrifying fate of being hanged, drawn, and quartered.³¹ A similar death threatened the journalist Marchamont Nedham when the Republican regime finally busted his underground royalist news operation at the beginning of 1650. Blair Worden quotes the letter he wrote to his friend and patron Henry Oxinden at this moment:

Nay, did you but see my clothes you would suppose them plundered from half a dozen factions, or begged for God’s sake in as many several nations; and this habit I rant in, partly out of necessity, partly on purpose to obscure myself... The truth in good earnest is, I am much distressed every way.

³⁰ Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, *The Life of Edward, Earl of Clarendon* (Oxford, 1759), p. 25.

³¹ John Safford, *The Life of Edmund Waller* (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), chapter XI, pp. 14, 20-2. I am grateful to Professor Mike Parker for sharing the late Dr. Safford’s manuscript with me.

For Worden, this is evidence of Nedham's 'indomitably sprightly prose'.³² But it must have been a struggle for him to keep his voice level whilst begging for Oxinden's help. When the authorities caught up with him, Nedham had little choice but to offer his services in return for life and livelihood. He has been sniped at ever since: for instance by Anthony Wood, from the safety and comfort of Merton College, Oxford, as a 'Jack of all sides'; and by Samuel Butler, as a 'Shittlecock'.³³

The charge of turncoaterly could be used to entrench one's own values and exert pressure on waverers. In February 1643, at a time when the royalists were gaining ground and the temptation to defect was at its greatest, the Presbyterian polemicist John Vicars published *A Looking-Glasse for Malignants: Or Gods hand against God-Haters*. Vicars provides a standard-issue invective against the royalist 'Malignants', but, more interestingly, adds a second section entitled *A Caveat for Cowards and unworthy (either timorous or treacherous) Newters*. Here, he promises:

I shall herein exhibite... also of all *cold* and *cowardly Neutrals*, and of either *false* or *faint-hearted deserters* of the *Parliament cause*, and also of all unsettled and unresolved weake Christians in foure or five most *memorable*, and (as I may say) *Tragecomicall examples* of Gods *justice* mixt with *mercy*...³⁴

Vicars' different types of 'Newter'—neutrals, defectors, and the unresolved—do not serve as distinctions, but rather ensure his category of 'Cowards' is as capacious as possible. He then forces this category into a generic narrative of divine punishment: royalists and neutrals who defect to parliament die calmly in their beds, assured of salvation; parliamentarians who try to abandon the cause meet nasty and usually violent ends.³⁵ The thought that turncoats might fall outside of the Calvinist binary of Saints and Malignants is too terrifying to contemplate:

³² Blair Worden, *Literature and Politics in Cromwellian England: John Milton, Andrew Marvell, and Marchamont Nedham* (Oxford, 2007), p. 19.

³³ Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses... The Second Volume* (London, 1692), p. 468; [Samuel Butler], *The Character of the Rump* (London, 1660), p. 3; quoted in Joad Raymond, "'A Mercury with a Winged Conscience": Marchamont Nedham, Monopoly, and Censorship', *Media History*, 4 (1998) 7-18, p. 8, and McElligott, *Royalism, Print, and Censorship*, p. 118.

³⁴ John Vicars, *A Looking-Glasse for Malignants: Or Gods hand against God-haters* (London, 1643), p. 3.

³⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 25-8.

a *Newter*, or Key-cold fellow in *Gods cause*, is a most despicable creature, despised both of *God* and the *Deville*, being apt to be false and faithlesse to them both, and so good for the use of neither of them, as not caring whether *Gods* or the *Devils cause* faile or prevaile, sinke or swim.³⁶

The most challenging aspect of Vicar's argument is his rather inhumane description of his examples as 'Tragecomicall'. This seems to concede the artificiality of his rhetoric—God's hand mysteriously conforming to the structure of an earthly genre. Perhaps the intention was to subvert the stereotypically cavalier drama with a Calvinist context. But the effect is to highlight the role of rhetorical artistry in fashioning a partisan view of political allegiances.

Vicars was pushing back against the tendency in the early years of the Civil War for constitutional moderates to defect to the king, or avoid choosing sides altogether. Shortly after Vicars published his pamphlet, the royalist Mildmay Fane, second Earl of Westmorland, was captured and imprisoned in the Tower. The experience of being visited by some socially inferior tourists prompted Fane to write a disenchanted manuscript satire on the nation's political breakdown:

Can we be sure that any thinges our own
 When stranger to himself each one is grown
 Nor dares think, much less speak, or write, or doe
 What Nature, and his duty Prompts him to
 Though't be to serve his Prince or else the state
 It must be as opignion sets the rate
 And soe esteemd, if you but Cross the one
 Malignancies the Beasts Mark and you'r gon
 When to oppose the Other in's demands
 (Though ne're soe just) will multeply Commands[.]³⁷

On the face of it, this might look like a straightforward lament on the tragedy of civil war. A few months later, Ralph Hopton and William Waller expressed such conventionalized regrets (quoting Lucan) in a famous exchange of letters before launching regardless into the Battle of Lansdowne.³⁸ But Fane pinpoints how the crisis was specifically one of obligations—in which 'duty' is no longer aligned with 'Nature'. 'Opignion' was a familiar bogeyman of Renaissance

³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 33.

³⁷ Mildmay Fane, second Earl of Westmorland, 'By-Ward to some Cittisens entring the Tower the 1t of March-1642[/43]', ll. 123-32, in Tom Cain, ed., *The Poetry of Mildmay Fane, Second Earl of Westmorland* (Manchester, 2000), p. 124.

³⁸ David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric, and Politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 24.

thought, commonly invoked to describe the political chaos of the 1640s.³⁹ ‘Opinion’ has no inherent value, fluctuating relative to others. Fane uses a monetary metaphor (‘sets the rate’) to convert obligation from a personal connection into a financial transaction. In this more contingent world, received ethical values seem relative, and slippery. ‘Malignancie’ is a mutable, artificial concept, and there is no conversely immutable standard of justice—‘the Other’ might make ‘demands’ which seem ‘ne’re soe just’. Fane justifies his slippage into a monetary metaphor by identifying private property itself—‘our own’—as contingent not on the old, stable structure of common law and protocol, but on this destabilized marketplace of obligations. We know from a later exchange of verses with John Cleveland that Fane was a reader of Thomas Hobbes.⁴⁰ Hobbes’ political theory was at the time circulating in English in manuscript, and in Latin in print, and in it Fane could have found a more systematic account of the relationship between property and sovereignty, and the *de facto* obligations this entailed. He soon compounded for his estates, and remained neutral thereafter; he was, in this sense, the first turncoat poet—but not the last.

Impressive recent work in literary studies has filled in a dense, messy picture of the flexible allegiances and unlikely alignments which emerged in revolutionary England. But we still lack a systematic, comparative account of the different poets who changed sides at different times, and the conceptual and linguistic solutions they developed. Critics and historians have preferred to tidy away the question in three ways. The first has been to read tergiversations as evidence of natural cynicism and self-interest. Thus, Edmund Waller’s entry in *The History of*

³⁹ See the contemporary engraving by Wenceslaus Hollar, *The World is Ruled and Governed by Opinion* (London, 1642), discussed in Dagmar Freist, *Governed by Opinion: Politics, Religion, and the Dynamics of Communication in Stuart London 1637-1645* (New York, 1997), pp. 2-3, and Sharon Achinstein, ‘The Politics of Babel in the English Revolution’ in James Holstun, ed., *Pamphlet Wars: Prose in the English Revolution* (London, 1992), pp. 20-2.

⁴⁰ Fane, ‘To Him again in return for a letter he wrot upon the former’ in Cain, ed., *Poems*, pp. 256-7; Jon Parkin, *Taming the Leviathan: the Reception of the Political and Religious Ideas of Thomas Hobbes in England 1640-1700* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 132.

Parliament credits him with ‘a degree of flexibility unusual even for a poet’.⁴¹ Waller himself was not above exploiting his facile reputation when it suited him: the story goes, when Charles II demanded to know why his panegyric on the Restoration was inferior to his one on Cromwell, Waller replied: ‘we poets never succeeded so well in writing truth as in fiction’.⁴² But we will try to look beyond these humiliating assumptions, and the ulterior political motives that have often given them currency. The second scholarly response has been the direct opposite: to insulate poets against the taint of turncoaterly. Abraham Cowley’s unequivocal renunciation of royalism in 1656 has not prevented otherwise impressive critics from thinking they have spotted him ‘rehearsing the values and aspirations of the royalist underground’, whatever the lacunae and contradictions that inevitably follow (‘a little camouflage is understandable’).⁴³ I will try to resist making this spurious distinction between ‘real’ beliefs and rhetorical camouflage. I regard pregnant ambiguities as significant for the way they complicate and defer commitment—rather than encoding cryptic messages, they may in fact perform a principle of political flexibility. Exculpatory readings have often been motivated by a well-intentioned desire to protect good writers like Cowley from the charge of disloyalty. But it seems inconsistent to make poets conform to our moral standards by insisting on their unflinching fidelity to political causes which today we would find fantastical, even bigoted. Almost the only people in the Civil War whose political beliefs seem anywhere near acceptable to our own are the Levellers—and it may be significant that, by the 1650s, the Levellers had become in a sense turncoats, finding common cause with the royalists against what they saw as Cromwellian tyranny.

The third and most successful critical approach to side-changing has been to diffuse the question by discovering some higher principle which could transcend party. This has helped Blair Worden and Joad Raymond make sense of Nedham’s intricate tergiversations, by identifying his

⁴¹ Basil Duke Henning, ‘Edmund Waller’, in (ed.) *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1660-1690* (3 vols.; London, 1983), vol. 3, p. 657.

⁴² The anecdote first appeared in English in Elijah Fenton’s edition of *The Works of Edmund Waller, Esq.* (London, 1729), p. lxxvii; cited in Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter XV, pp. 5, 27 n4.

⁴³ Thomas Corns, *Uncloistered Virtue: English Political Literature, 1640-1660* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 256-59, 267.

consistent hostility to the Presbyterians (although this has by no means resolved all the tangles).⁴⁴ McDowell has described a related ‘cause of wit’ which could unite culturally elite republicans and cavaliers in 1640s London.⁴⁵ Penelope Anderson has highlighted Waller’s consistent celebration of English imperialism and a mode of cultivated friendship, which elevated the civility of the ‘affable time-server’ above partisan rancour.⁴⁶ Most famously, John Wallace’s influential study of Marvell proposed a concept of ‘loyalism’ to describe Marvell’s willingness to serve the English state, whoever happened to be in charge at the time.⁴⁷ This was anachronistic: ‘loyalism’ meant fealty to the king, synonymous with but more idiomatic than the Frenchifying term ‘royalism’.⁴⁸ It was also too capacious, failing to distinguish between Marvell and quietist compounders like Fane, or religious casuists like the puritan pamphleteer John Dury. I will use an anachronistic term of my own, ‘defactoist’, which some scholars have adopted to describe the theory that sovereign power inhered in *de facto* military supremacy.⁴⁹ This was not an exclusively secular argument—as we will see, it could lend itself to Providentialist interpretations of recent events—yet it could be used to shut down religious controversy by undermining clerical casuistry. ‘Defactoism’ usefully isolates one key respect in which we can discuss the turncoat poets as a group, and it does not diminish their status as turncoats. The transferability of allegiance was the cornerstone of the *de facto* argument, and accepting one’s own changeability as a fact of a restlessly changing world was one of the poets’ enduring themes.

Waller, Davenant, Marvell, Cowley, and Dryden were a group only in the loosest sense, that among many other connections they all either knew one another, or read each other carefully. Although less isolated than was once thought, Marvell is a more complicated case: except for Cowley (who he was at university with), he probably did not meet the other poets in person until the later 1650s, yet was fascinated by the dilemmas faced in their poetry. The turncoat poets were

⁴⁴ Worden, *Literature and Politics*; Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641-1649* (Oxford, 1996); discussed by McElligott, *Royalism, Print, and Censorship*, p. 120.

⁴⁵ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 5-10 and *passim*.

⁴⁶ Anderson, *Friendship’s Shadows* pp. 45-52.

⁴⁷ John M. Wallace, *Destiny His Choice: The Loyalism of Andrew Marvell* (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 38-50 and *passim*.

⁴⁸ McElligott, *Royalism, Print, and Censorship*, p. 5.

⁴⁹ See Malcolm, ‘Introduction’, pp. 69-72.

all familiar with Hobbes: Davenant, Waller, and Cowley were friends with him, and Marvell and Dryden read his works closely. Their politics were radical in respect of their incendiary scepticism and relativism, but not of any social progressivism. Even at their closest approach to the Republic, they remained elitist, authoritarian, and, except with regard to religion, socially conservative.

I will pay considerably less attention to some writers in order to more fully trace the connections and developments of this group. I exclude Fane because he never renounced his emotional attachment to royalism, whilst mostly trying to avoid the question altogether. Besides, his manuscript poetry did not command much attention with our poets (except possibly Marvell). Two quintessential literary turncoats, Thomas May and Marchamont Nedham, will figure as important touchstones (for Marvell in particular), but they are not intimately connected with our group, and have been very well served elsewhere.⁵⁰ With Nedham's journalism and cheap-print pamphleteering there is too wide a generic and sociological gap to allow efficient comparison with our poets.⁵¹ The republicans May and Nedham were also more politically radical than our turncoats, as was another poet of flexible allegiance, George Wither. Unlike Nedham, Wither is in need of scholarly attention, but his demotic radicalism and circulation in cheap print make it impossible to do him justice here. At the other end of the social scale, Buckingham will enter the story occasionally as a friend and patron. But as he did not produce a significant work of literature during the Revolutionary period itself, I will devote no space to his writings. Modern historians stress the multi-national dimensions of the Civil Wars, but the intricacies of the different conflicts in Scotland and Ireland frustrate exposition in the limited space here: like our poets, I will confine myself to English matters. Finally, this thesis regrettably pays no attention to the writing of women. Penelope Anderson's excellent study has shown the distinct discourses through which Katherine Phillips, Lucy Hutchinson, and Margaret Cavendish fashioned their

⁵⁰ In Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic*, Worden, *Literature and Politics*, Raymond, *The Invention of the English Newspaper*, and McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*.

⁵¹ On this distinction, see McElligott, *Royalism, Print, and Censorship*, p. 8.

allegiance—most prominently that of friendship.⁵² The poets studied here took a different path, in social positions proscribed to women (as tutors, secretaries, agents, and MPs). Their view of political action governed by changeability and appetite could leave them open to misogynistic satirical representations as effeminized or sexually compromised—as we will see in chapter three, transfiguring Davenant into the Ovidian nymph Daphne. Yet women poets were capable of piling into these attacks—as evidenced by Hutchinson’s satire against Waller, and Hester Pulter’s against Davenant.⁵³ These risks may have reinforced the poets’ tendency to represent politically significant women—as when Waller encounters the Countess of Carlisle in chapter two, and Marvell, Mary Fairfax in chapter four—in terms which limit female agency through more traditional discourses of beauty, obedience, and constancy.

2. The Intellectual Background

What, then, were the intellectual resources which distinguished the turncoat poets from their contemporaries? It is immediately clear that they would not have been attracted to the two central themes of parliamentary rhetoric—the common law and Protestant reformation—at least not at first.⁵⁴ Davenant had studied at the Inns of Court, but none of them were lawyers, and their few mentions of the common law are laced with hostility. Similarly, although they were all (more or less) Protestant, with the exception of Marvell they show little interest in puritan militancy. But they also display, at best, a conflicted relationship with the familiar ideological resources of royalism. Their writings of the 1640s and 1650s pay little attention to patriarchy, to the divine right of kings, or the ancient constitution—and we will see how these themes reappeared at the

⁵² Anderson, *Friendship’s Shadows*.

⁵³ See David Norbrook, ‘Lucy Hutchinson versus Edmund Waller: An Unpublished Reply to Waller’s *A Panegyrick to my Lord Protector*’, *Seventeenth Century*, 11 (1996) 61-86; Marcus Nevitt, ‘The Insults of Defeat: Royalist Responses to Sir William Davenant’s *Gondibert* (1651)’, *Seventeenth Century*, 24 (2009) 287-304.

⁵⁴ Foxley, ‘Varieties of Parliamentarianism’, pp. 416-20.

Restoration only with a destabilizing irony.⁵⁵ Davenant and Marvell dabble with chivalric, cavaliering imagery, but chapter four will suggest how politically flexible the genre of romance had become by the end of the 1640s.⁵⁶ It was only after parliamentarians had been forced into more innovative arguments that their intellectual position may have begun to seem more attractive.⁵⁷ In 1642 Henry Parker abandoned constitutionalism to argue for the absolute supremacy of parliaments and to ‘confront and dismiss the theology of kingship’.⁵⁸ Chapter two will consider the convergence between his arguments and Waller’s—although his defence of popular sovereignty remained unacceptable. Arguments that elevated reason above the ancient constitution gained more traction after parliament had won the war, when republicans like John Hall of Durham (a friend of Nedham’s) began to call on royalists to accept the *de facto* outcome. Hall’s aspiration ‘to extinguish the names of parties’ would echo through the writings of the turncoat poets.⁵⁹

The turncoat poets’ thinking was most obviously shaped by the intellectual traditions of continental humanism. They shared this learned inheritance with all university-educated men of the period, but they came particularly close to the somewhat unorthodox positions held by their erstwhile friends Hyde and the Great Tew Circle.⁶⁰ Hyde was at the centre of the intellectual gatherings hosted by Lucius Cary, second Viscount Falkland; Waller and Hobbes were more peripheral members, and Cowley’s admiration for Falkland suggests he also had some links with the group.⁶¹ Waller worked closely with Hyde and Falkland in parliament in the early 1640s, and Davenant had been Hyde’s roommate at the Inns of Court.⁶² The turncoat poets shared the Great

⁵⁵ On these themes, see Alan Cromartie, ‘The Persistence of Royalism’, in Braddick, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the English Revolution*, pp. 400-3.

⁵⁶ Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, pp. 139-42.

⁵⁷ Foxley, ‘Varieties of Parliamentarianism’, p. 423; Cromartie, ‘The Persistence of Royalism’, p. 408.

⁵⁸ Michael Mendle, *Henry Parker and the English Civil War: The Political Thought of the Public’s Privado* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 43-5, 145.

⁵⁹ John Hall of Durham, *A True Account and Character of the Times* (London, 1647), p. 8; McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 90-1; Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 169-70.

⁶⁰ On Tevian unorthodoxy see Hugh Trevor-Roper, ‘The Great Tew Circle’, in *Catholics, Anglicans, and Puritans: Seventeenth-Century Essays* (London, 1987), pp. 170, 193.

⁶¹ *ibid.*, p. 175.

⁶² Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter X, pp. 3-7; Mary Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant* (Manchester, 1987), p. 36.

Tew Circle's espousal of reason in religious matters: scepticism towards things indifferent, outside of a limited set of fundamental doctrines; hostility to clerical assertiveness; and a belief in Erastian control (i.e. by the temporal power) over an ecumenical church.⁶³ But this irenic tendency failed to provide a foundation for neutralism in the Civil War. Hyde struggled to keep Charles and his son on a moderate course, and after the revolution the tolerationist cause was captured by the Independents, whom Hyde preferred to the Presbyterians, but who remained unacceptable to the punitive Anglicanism of the early Restoration.⁶⁴ This is the first key difference between Hyde and the turncoats, who moved enthusiastically away from the Church of England in the 1650s. Hobbes was irreconcilable to Anglican clericalism, and we must place some weight on Davenant's cryptic remark to John Aubrey:

His private opinion was that Religion at last, —e.g. a hundred years hence,—
w^d come to a settlement, & that in a kind of ingeniose Quakerisme.⁶⁵

Davenant was presumably punning on 'ingenuous', distancing himself from a sense of plain Quakerish honesty, but we will consider further in chapter three what his baroque, 'ingeniose' Quakerism might have looked like—and it was not much like the Church of England venerated by Hyde.

The turncoat poets and the Great Tew Circle shared an interest in the so-called 'new humanism', dominated by the study of Tacitus. In particular, they studied Tacitean 'politic' or 'civil' history, the use of historical examples to draw aphoristic generalizations about political conduct and prudence.⁶⁶ Tacitist historians like Francesco Guicciardini had adopted, in Richard Tuck's view, 'a melancholy and sceptical attitude to politics', accepting the role of cruelty and violence in a 'reason of state' which appealed outside of conventional ethics and constitutional proprieties to the objective forces of interest and necessity.⁶⁷ Reason of state was severely problematic to constitutionalist thinkers, alarmed by the growing rhetoric of necessity in Charles

⁶³ Trevor-Roper, 'Great Tew Circle', pp. 188-99, 208.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 172-77; Trevor-Roper, *From Counter-Reformation to Glorious Revolution*, pp. 185-86; Aylmer, 'Neutrals, Trimmers, and Others', pp. 8-11.

⁶⁵ John Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, ed. by Kate Bennett (2 vols.; Oxford, 2015), vol. 1, p. 145.

⁶⁶ Trevor-Roper, 'Great Tew Circle', p. 210.

⁶⁷ See Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government, 1572-1651* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 38-40.

I's public language and, later, that of parliamentarians like Parker.⁶⁸ But we will see Waller and Dryden flirting more dangerously with reason-of-state concepts and allusions to Guicciardini. An alternative but similar tradition could be found in the writings of Machiavelli, and, in England, the synthesis of Tacitism and Machiavellianism practised by Francis Bacon. Great Tew had a direct link with Bacon through Hobbes, who had worked as Bacon's secretary in his youth.⁶⁹ Machiavelli was widely read amongst English elites: the turncoat poets could have accessed him in one of the many Italian, French, or Latin editions which passed through Protestant centres like London (we know Waller read him in Latin) or in one of the manuscripts circulated privately at the universities, at least some of which were in English.⁷⁰ Machiavelli's reach expanded further in the years before the Civil War, when the English translations by Edward Dacres appeared in print, *The Discourses* in 1636 and *The Prince* in 1640.⁷¹ Almost nothing is known about Dacres, but, as the nearest contemporary English text, I will mostly cite his translation in this thesis.

As this wide readership suggests, Machiavelli was recognized not to be the malevolent 'Muster maister of Hell' of Elizabethan nightmares.⁷² It has been argued that Hyde read him as a conventional Ciceronian theorist of civic virtue, and that Falkland synthesized his account of the ancient Roman class system with the traditional English theory of the mixed constitution.⁷³ But such readings had to ignore many more incendiary implications. Great Tew could not tolerate the

⁶⁸ Alessandro Arienzo, 'From Machiavellian Policy to Parliamentary Reason of State: Sketches in Early Stuart Political Culture', in Alessandro Arienzo and Alessandra Petina, eds., *Machiavellian Encounters in Tudor and Stuart England* (Farnham, 2013), pp. 150-55; G. Baldwin, 'Reason of State and English Parliaments, 1610-42', *History of Political Thought*, 25 (2004) 620-41, pp. 621-5, 635-40.

⁶⁹ On Bacon see Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, pp. 52-3.

⁷⁰ Alessandra Petrina, *Machiavelli in the British Isles: Two Early Modern Translations of The Prince* (Farnham, 2009), pp. 8-14, 22-7, 30, 47; Timothy Raylor, 'Reading Machiavelli; Writing Cromwell: Edmund Waller's copy of *The Prince* and its draft verses towards *A Panegyrick to my Lord Protector*', *Turnbull Library Record*, 35 (2002) 9-32, pp. 9-10; Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven, 2000), pp. 330-3; Michael Mendle, 'A Machiavellian in the Long Parliament Before the Civil War', in *Parliamentary History*, 8 (1989) 116-24.

⁷¹ Edward Dacres, trans., *Machiavels Discourses upon the first Decade of T. Livius, translated out of the Italian* (London, 1636; henceforth '*Discourses*'), and *Nicholas Machiavel's Prince* (London, 1640; henceforth '*The Prince*').

⁷² Thomas Nashe, *Pierce Penilless his Supplication to the Divell* (London, 1592), sig. C3^v; see Victoria Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric: from the Counter-Reformation to Milton* (Princeton, 1994), pp. 89-93.

⁷³ Irene Coltman, *Private Men and Public Causes* (London, 1962), pp. 31-3; J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, 1975), pp. 361-66.

application of Italian republicanism to England, with her sacred monarchical constitution, and yet David Norbrook has demonstrated how ready many other writers were to do just that.⁷⁴ The turncoat poets were particularly fascinated by the Machiavelli who could turn his method to support both principalities and republics. It seems early moderns were less concerned with the modern academic problem of how to reconcile Machiavelli's two faces than they were with what Victoria Kahn calls his 'moral neutrality', what I will term his political relativism.⁷⁵ Machiavelli did not enshrine normative authority in any particular political form, instead analysing people and institutions instrumentally, in terms of their ability to contain discord and maintain order. He valued organized religion not for its inherent sanctity, but rather as an artificial, human institution, 'a thing wholly necessary to preserve stability'.⁷⁶ The institutions of state were plastic and mutable, and it was necessary for them to be renovated through the dictatorial power of a man of violence—an argument the turncoat poets found useful when they came to Cromwell. Such violent actions could not be judged according to the fixed standards of Christian ethics, but according to their consequences, so 'though the act accuse him, the effect will excuse him'.⁷⁷ Machiavelli referred catachrestically to 'virtù', returned to its etymological Latin sense of manly vigour, to describe the capacity of violent force to seize and conquer Fortune—whom *The Prince* famously imagined as a capricious, sexualized 'mistress'.⁷⁸ Political obligations are inherently unsettled and contingent in a world where 'all humane things are in continuall motion, and nothing stands firme'.⁷⁹ Kahn has argued that this instability is essential to Machiavellian rhetoric, which adapts the humanist tradition of arguing *in utramque partem*, on both sides of the question, to reveal the artificiality and mutability, the double-sided nature, of seemingly innocuous terminology like 'virtù'.⁸⁰ The contingency, artificiality, and violence of Machiavelli's

⁷⁴ Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 197, including Marvell, p. 257, and Waller, p. 304.

⁷⁵ Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric*, pp. 18-20, 91-2; Petrina, *Machiavelli in the British Isles*, p. 4.

⁷⁶ *Discourses*, Book I, chapter XI, p. 60 (trans. by Leslie Walker, with revisions by Brian Richardson, ed. by Bernard Crick, *The Discourses* (Harmondsworth, 1970), p. 139); see Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, pp. 37-40.

⁷⁷ *Discourses*, book I, chapter IX, p. 50 (trans. Walker, p. 132).

⁷⁸ *The Prince*, chapter XXV, p. 209 (trans. by Peter Bondanella (Oxford, 2005), pp. 86-7).

⁷⁹ *Discourses*, book I, chapter VI, p. 35 (trans. Walker, p. 123).

⁸⁰ Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric*, pp. 19-26.

politics, which had rendered him so obnoxious to conventional opinion, and which the Great Tew thinkers endeavoured to suppress, is what proved most useful to the turncoat poets.

Machiavelli did not provide the only response to universal restlessness. The Great Tew Circle and turncoat poets also inherited a discourse of constancy from neo-stoicism.⁸¹ Both Hyde and Cowley responded to the experience of marginalization and exile by identifying with the ideal expressed by Justus Lipsius, that ‘adversitie doth confirme and strengthen us’, ‘as trees that are much beaten with the winde, take deeper roote’.⁸² Lipsian political theory emphasized the paternalistic love between king and subject as a corrective to tempestuous instability—Davenant exploited this sort of amatory rhetoric in his Caroline masques of the 1630s.⁸³ Yet the austere, invulnerable Stoic hero could prove fatally irreconcilable to these affective relationships—as we will find in chapter five with Cowley’s controversial admiration for the regicide Brutus.⁸⁴ Hyde was unable to accept a pure reading of Stoicism which might fracture the conventional civic humanist obligation to engage publicly in the commonwealth.⁸⁵ The risk, as Montaigne pointed out, was that a world subject to wayward human affections might not be governable at all:

Our ordinary manner is to follow the inclination of our appetite this way and that way, in the left and on the right hand; upward and downward, according as the winde of occasions doth transport us: we never thinke on what we would have, but at the instant we would have it: and change as that beast that takes the colour of the place wherein it is laid. What we even now purposed we alter by and by, and presently returne to our former biase; all is but changing, motion and inconstancy.⁸⁶

⁸¹ Tilmouth, *Passion’s Triumph Over Reason*, pp. 136-7; Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 49-52; Raymond Anselment, *Loyalist Resolve: Patient Fortitude in the English Civil War* (Newark, 1988), pp. 13-15; Reid Barbour, *English Epicures and Stoics: Ancient Legacies in Early Stuart Culture* (Amherst, 1998), pp. 15-17.

⁸² Justus Lipsius, *Two Bookes of Constancie*, trans. by John Stradling (London, 1594), book II, chapter VIII, pp. 78-9.

⁸³ Malcolm Smuts, ‘Force, Love, and Authority in Caroline Political Culture’ in Ian Atherton and Julie Sanders, eds., *The 1630s: Interdisciplinary Essays on Culture and Politics in the Caroline Era* (Manchester, 2006), pp. 29-45.

⁸⁴ Barbour, *English Epicures and Stoics*, pp. 186-88.

⁸⁵ Trevor-Roper, ‘Great Tew Circle’, pp. 213-16, *From Counter-Reformation to Glorious Revolution*, pp. 185-6.

⁸⁶ Michel de Montaigne, ‘On the Inconstancy of our Actions’, in *Essays Written in French by Michael Lord of Montaigne*, trans. by John Florio (London, 1613), book II, chapter I, p. 184.

Dryden tended to cite this passage in extenuation of his own inconsistencies. The metaphors of changing winds and of chameleons were repeatedly invoked throughout the period to structure the concept of political changeability.⁸⁷

A growing body of Renaissance thought responded to this apparently universal mutability by throwing out the concepts of an ancient constitution or a divine right, and resorting instead to the principle of self-preservation as the foundation of political sovereignty. Lipsius held that justice and constitutional propriety were not absolute but relative goods, and that obligations and laws were dispensable if necessary.⁸⁸ In the seventeenth century, Grotius interpreted self-preservation to be a natural law, on which he founded his theory of social contract; and similar arguments were taken up by John Selden in England.⁸⁹ All of this was awkward for defenders of an Anglican monarchy founded on an ancient constitution: Great Tew needed the Stuart system to carry theological as well as political authority. Where Trevor-Roper cited Grotius' religious ecumenism as 'the greatest of all influences' on Great Tew, Tuck has countered that they could only accept his 'utterly alien' contract theory with major caveats.⁹⁰ Selden, meanwhile, although maintaining the importance of rule of law, repudiated the notion of an ancient constitution and embraced Independency. In fact, he had much in common with Hobbes: the two had moved in similar circles in the antebellum intellectual world, and Aubrey records how they rekindled their friendship in Selden's last years, after Hobbes had settled in Cromwellian England.⁹¹ Henry Parker had also adopted a language of necessity, founded on a principle of self-preservation, in the 1640s—albeit in defence of a popular absolutism unacceptable to Selden or Hobbes.⁹² The turncoat poets did not generally employ the metaphor of social contract, perhaps because it did not satisfy their preoccupations with violence and

⁸⁷ Winn, *Dryden and his World*, pp. 12-13; and Nigel Smith, *Andrew Marvell: The Chameleon* (New Haven, 2010).

⁸⁸ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 52-9.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 170-3.

⁹⁰ Trevor-Roper, 'Great Tew Circle', p. 192; Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 272-76.

⁹¹ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 220; Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, pp. 164-5; Bod. MS Aubrey 9, ff. 52-3.

⁹² Mendle, *Henry Parker*, pp. 70-88.

mutability. But they participated in this broader turn away from constitutionalism towards a more abstract theory of obligation derived from self-preservation.

The decisive break was made by Hobbes. Hobbes' distinctive contribution was his embrace of physical determinism. His kinetic psychology founded on atomic materialism seemed to provide a philosophical explanation for the unstable and appetitive behaviour described by Montaigne and pre-eminently by Machiavelli. Hobbes also went much further than the stoics in totally upending the conventional view of passions as morally degenerative forces which reason had to struggle to bridle. He now maintained that all thought and action originated in corporeal appetites and resulting passions; reason's job was merely to deliberate on how best to satisfy them.⁹³ This opened the way to a thoroughgoing moral relativism: if the passions were normative rather than essentially corrupt, then action had to be evaluated according to contingent political circumstances; there could be no fixed, normative, let alone teleological standard of justice, beyond that laid down by a sovereign power.⁹⁴ What really put Hobbes beyond the pale was his insistence that sovereignty was an artificial construct, erected by humans to escape the brutal civil war that resulted from their restless seeking after power.⁹⁵ He reduced the concept of sovereignty to a *de facto* power to defend subjects from attack, and coerce them into obeying the law.⁹⁶ Obligations were now contingent only on the sovereign's continued ability to wield this power. Nor was it necessary that this sovereign must be a monarch: Hobbes preferred monarchy, but his relativism permitted that aristocracies or republics could be perfectly sufficient.⁹⁷ This became especially controversial in 1649, when the monarchy finally fell and a republic was established in its place—but critics like Hyde had spotted the problem from the beginning.⁹⁸ According to Kahn:

⁹³ *Leviathan*, chapter VI, pp. 90-2; Tilmouth, *Passion's Triumph Over Reason*, pp. 222-47.

⁹⁴ *Leviathan*, chapter XIII, pp. 192-6; Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 304-5.

⁹⁵ *Leviathan*, chapter XVII, pp. 254-8; Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, pp. 136-9.

⁹⁶ *Leviathan*, chapter XVII, p. 260; Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, pp. 154-60.

⁹⁷ *Leviathan*, chapter XIX, pp. 288-98; See Malcolm, 'Introduction', p. 81.

⁹⁸ Parkin, *Taming the Leviathan*, pp. 32, 89.

Hobbes not only opened up the possibility of producing new accounts of political obligation; he also captured for his contemporaries the frightening contingency of human relationships in the brave new world of passion and interest.⁹⁹

Although his absolutism was designed to shut down instability, to many contemporaries Hobbes in fact described a frighteningly contingent world.¹⁰⁰

I am interested, then, in the intellectual resources which enabled the turncoat poets to fashion sovereign power as artificial and mutable, obligations as contingent and transferable. This might appear as evidence of political relativism, allowing that legitimate power could arise in different contexts, perhaps expressed through a Machiavellian deliberation *in utramque partem*. Alternatively, it might emerge from a Hobbesian psychological interpretation of politics as driven by the passions, understood to be normative rather than degenerative forces. We might also expect to find the poets emphasizing the martial qualities of power. We will also ask whether they were able to synthesize Machiavelli's violent concept of *virtù* with Hobbes' psychology. Machiavelli held that 'men arise by degrees from one ambition to another', whilst Hobbes reasoned that a 'restlesse desire for Power after power' formed the 'generall inclination of all mankind'.¹⁰¹ We will observe the poets trying to harness ambition to generate political order—and, as its Latin etymology suggests, ambition could involve moving on both sides, sharing a root with the early-modern insult 'ambidexter'.¹⁰² This view of political relationships was not inherently irreligious: we will see the poets questioning how natural law interacted with the will and workings of Providence. Yet we will consider how the turncoat poets' way of thinking about politics was inherently and deliberately corrosive to traditional beliefs about the ancient constitution, the church, and sacred monarchy.

⁹⁹ Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, p. 138.

¹⁰⁰ Trevor-Roper, *From Counter-Reformation to Glorious Revolution*, p. 192.

¹⁰¹ *Discourses*, Book I, chapter XLVI, p. 184 (trans. Walker, p. 223); *Leviathan*, chapter XI, p. 150.

¹⁰² *OED*, 'ambition', n.; etymologically, the prefix 'ambi-' could mean 'around' or 'on both sides'.

3. Chronology of Events

To accommodate in-depth readings of their poems and intellectual development, I will devote a separate chapter to each poet. Chapter two will focus on Waller's attempts to finesse the polarization of the 1640s, before tracing his later move to Cromwellianism. Chapters three and four will cover the climactic revolution of 1649-51, and Davenant and Marvell's places in it respectively; we will take Marvell second because he read and responded to Davenant (rather than *vice versa*). Chapter five will consider Cowley's slightly delayed defection in 1654-6. Chapter six will trace how all of the turncoats adjusted to the Restoration of 1660, and how the young Dryden responded to their influence; it will conclude by asking what became of their ideas under the Restored Stuart monarchy. To preserve a sense of consistency it will be helpful to give a narrative overview here.

Waller and Davenant had established themselves as court poets in the 1630s, gravitating to the more religiously diverse court of Queen Henrietta-Maria.¹⁰³ Both circulated poetry in manuscript, and Davenant published a collection of poems, *Madagascar*, in 1638, the year he inherited Jonson's unofficial post of poet laureate. Hobbes was serving the Cavendish family as a tutor and secretary, engaged in humanist translation, geometry, and Baconian experimental philosophy.¹⁰⁴ Cowley was pursuing his undergraduate studies alongside Marvell at Trinity College, Cambridge; he had also already published a volume of poetry, *Poetical Blossoms*, in 1633.¹⁰⁵ Both Cowley and Marvell made an important connection towards the end of their time at Cambridge, when Buckingham briefly attended Trinity in 1641.

The national crisis broke out with the so-called Bishops' Wars in 1639. Waller and Cowley celebrated Falkland's leadership of the king's army in manuscript verse, and Davenant was active in that army as an administrator and messenger. The financial strain of an inconclusive

¹⁰³ Timothy Raylor, 'The Early Poetic Career of Edmund Waller', *HLQ*, 69 (2006), 239-66; Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapters V-VII; Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, pp. 43-86.

¹⁰⁴ Noel Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 6-11.

¹⁰⁵ Nethercot, *The Muse's Hannibal* (London, 1931), pp. 42-63; Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 29-35.

campaign forced Charles to call a parliament in April 1640, in which both Waller and Hyde sat as MPs, and for which Hobbes stood but was not elected.¹⁰⁶ The so-called Short Parliament did not even last a month. Following its rancorous dissolution, William Cavendish, the Earl of Newcastle, commissioned Hobbes to write a manuscript treatise on monarchical power, which became *The Elements of Law*. Hobbes' absolutist defence of the royal prerogative brought him to the attention of the puritan nobility and their clients in the Commons. When Charles called what was to become the Long Parliament in November 1640, Hobbes became the first royalist to flee England for France.¹⁰⁷

In May 1641, Davenant was mixed up with Henry Jemryn in the attempted coup known as the Army Plot. Whilst his co-conspirators escaped to France, he was caught and imprisoned in the Tower. Fortunately, he had a friend in the Commons: Waller successfully petitioned for his release in July.¹⁰⁸ Waller was still circulating his manuscript poems, but focusing on his career as a parliamentary orator: his speeches against the bishops and ship money were soon printed. When the king raised his standard in 1642, Davenant entered active service again. Newcastle personally requested his presence as Lieutenant-General of the Ordinance, and he was knighted for his service in 1643.¹⁰⁹ Marvell, who had been ejected from Trinity in September 1641, left the country for a European tour (probably working as a tutor) to escape the mounting conflict.¹¹⁰ Cowley was also ejected from Trinity in the Presbyterian purge of 1643. He retired to Oxford, settling at St John's College, and became secretary to Henry Jermyn, who was in turn secretary and confidante to the queen.¹¹¹ This would have brought him into contact with Davenant, one of whose jobs was carrying correspondence between Newcastle's army and the royal court at

¹⁰⁶ Trevor-Roper, 'Great Tew Circle', p. 176.

¹⁰⁷ Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, p. 15.

¹⁰⁸ Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, pp. 87-90; Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter IX, p. 21.

¹⁰⁹ Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, pp. 90-5.

¹¹⁰ Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 45-63.

¹¹¹ Nethercot, *The Muse's Hannibal*, pp. 70-83.

Oxford. Waller also visited Oxford at this time, in a peace delegation orchestrated by Hyde and the moderates in parliament.¹¹²

As one of the last figureheads actively lobbying for peace, Waller's position in the Commons was increasingly exposed. In May 1643 he was arrested for a loosely related set of suspicious activities and implausible plans for a coup, now known as 'Waller's Plot'. John Pym exploited the concoction to stoke up anti-royalist paranoia and break the peace party in parliament.¹¹³ As we have noted, Waller's alleged co-conspirators were hanged, drawn, and quartered, whilst Waller saved himself with a self-abasing recantation and a massive bribe. He suffered only expulsion from the House and banishment from the kingdom. After a year in prison, he eventually escaped to France in March 1645, by which time Humphrey Moseley and Thomas Walkley had published two rival unauthorized editions of his poems and speeches.¹¹⁴ Henrietta-Maria abandoned Oxford for Paris in April 1644, probably taking Cowley with her. After the collapse of Newcastle's army at Marston Moor in July 1644, Davenant's activities became more akin to piracy, attempting to raise funds and smuggle arms; his centre of operation also shifted to the exiled queen's court at the Louvre.¹¹⁵ Waller had settled in Rouen and arranged for Hobbes to tutor his son and nephew. Hobbes had published a Latin version of his political theory for a continental audience in 1642, *De cive*. Waller began but gave up an attempt to translate it into English. Hobbes suggested in a letter that Waller was preoccupied with thinking 'how you may to your Contentment and without blame pass the seas' (i.e. return to England).¹¹⁶ But, in 1646, Waller travelled to Italy and enrolled at the University of Padua. Marvell was also in Italy at the time, ribbing Richard Flecknoe for the entertainment of the Duke of Buckingham's poetical academy at Rome.¹¹⁷

¹¹² Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, pp. 90-5; Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter X, pp. 25-6.

¹¹³ Braddick, *God's Fury, England's Fire*, pp. 292-3.

¹¹⁴ Safford, *Waller*, chapter XII, pp. 1-9; Timothy Raylor, 'Moseley, Walkley, and the 1645 Editions of Waller', *The Library*, 7th series, 2 (2001) 236-265.

¹¹⁵ Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, pp. 95-6.

¹¹⁶ Hobbes to Waller, 29th July 1645, letter 39 in Noel Malcolm, ed., *The Correspondence of Thomas Hobbes* (2 vols.; Oxford, 1999), vol. 1, p. 124; Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter XII, pp. 11-24.

¹¹⁷ Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 53-62; Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter XII, pp. 12-15.

Davenant's career suffered a setback towards the end of 1645 when he was involved in a delegation to persuade Charles to cement an Anglican-Presbyterian alliance by taking the Solemn League and Covenant. If the plan was an unlikely one, Davenant nevertheless got the blame for its failure: according to Hyde, Charles became enraged when Davenant mentioned the Church 'sightingly'.¹¹⁸ Cowley was still vigorously active as Jermyn's secretary, managing Charles and Henrietta's correspondence. Legend has it that John Denham was arrested in 1647 when a soldier recognized Cowley's handwriting on a letter he was conveying to the king.¹¹⁹ But Cowley had also written a new collection of libertine love poems, steeped in the philosophical discussions of atomism and psychology around the Cavendish household in Paris.¹²⁰ *The Mistress* was published by Moseley in England in 1647—where it was read by Marvell, who had returned to London that year and became involved with the royalist literary scene.¹²¹ Marvell published an elegy for Buckingham's younger brother Francis in July 1648, and contributed poems to two major royalist volumes of 1649, *Lachrymae Musarum* and Richard Lovelace's *Lucasta*.¹²²

By 1648, Waller, Davenant, Cowley, and Hobbes were based in Paris. Their participation in the Cavendishes' intellectual circle seems to have stimulated a wave of new literary endeavour: Hobbes embarked on *Leviathan*, Davenant on *Gondibert*, and Cowley (probably) on the *Davideis*.¹²³ The regicide in January 1649 undoubtedly shook the royalist exiles, but perhaps more for its political consequences in Paris than in London. Unlike his father, Charles II was willing to forge an alliance with the Presbyterian Scots in the hope of overthrowing the Independents and Republicans at Westminster. This meant making major concessions over church government and control of the militia—precisely the opposite of the policies advocated by Hobbes and Davenant, who seemed increasingly close to the Independents, politically and

¹¹⁸ Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, ed. by William Dunn Macray (6 vols.; Oxford, 1888), vol. 4, p. 206 (chapter X, sections 56-7); Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, pp. 99-100.

¹¹⁹ Nethercot, *The Muse's Hannibal*, p. 116.

¹²⁰ Charles Kay Smith, 'French Philosophy and English Politics in Interregnum Poetry', in R. Malcolm Smuts, ed., *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in Politics and Political Culture* (Cambridge, 1996).

¹²¹ Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 65-6; McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 39-40.

¹²² Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 64-79; McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 13-52.

¹²³ Smith, 'French Philosophy... in Interregnum Poetry', pp. 189-90.

theologically.¹²⁴ In September 1649, Charles decided that Davenant was no longer required on the front line, and effectively demoted him to a role in the colonies.¹²⁵ Davenant's last act in Paris was to publish his *Preface to Gondibert*, dedicated to Hobbes and followed by Hobbes' friendly *Answer*, with dedicatory poems by Waller and Cowley. After a brief sojourn with Hyde in Jersey, he left for America in May 1650. He was almost immediately captured by parliamentary privateers and imprisoned, once more, in the Tower.¹²⁶

By this time, the Engagement controversy was in full swing, a major theatre for debating the transferability of allegiances. The controversy took its name from the 'Engagement oath' of loyalty enforced by the Republic from October 1649, which focused and intensified a longer-term debate over the legitimacy of submitting to the new regime.¹²⁷ Hobbes had followed some of the discussion, and remarked in *Leviathan* on the 'divers English books lately printed', probably thinking of the two defactoist Engagers who had started citing him, Anthony Ascham and Marchamont Nedham.¹²⁸ In 1650, Engager printers took the surprising step of pirating Hobbes' *Elements of Law* in two halves, appearing as *Humane Nature* in February and *De Corpore Politico* in May, repurposing Hobbes' argument that obligations were contingent on sovereign power to emphasize their transferability.¹²⁹ Undoubtedly part of the polemical effect was to co-opt a notorious royalist into an Engager argument—a fact Hobbes himself seemed conscious of when he prepared *Leviathan* for the press the following year.¹³⁰ Nedham, too, began his *Case of the Commonwealth of England, Stated* with a frank admission:

¹²⁴ See Malcolm, 'Introduction', pp. 26-9, 61-4; Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, pp. 121-8, 134-45, 149-57.

¹²⁵ Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, pp. 103-4, misses this context; see further in chapter three.

¹²⁶ *ibid.*

¹²⁷ Wallace, 'The Engagement Controversy 1649-1652: An Annotated List of Pamphlets', *Bulletin of the New York Public Library*, 68 (1984) 384-405, pp. 384-6.

¹²⁸ Malcolm, 'Introduction', pp. 69-70.

¹²⁹ Parkin, *Taming the Leviathan*, pp. 77-9.

¹³⁰ Malcolm, 'Introduction', pp. 71-2, 81-2.

Perhaps thou art of an opinion contrary to what is here written. I confess that for a time I myself was so too, till some causes made me reflect with an impartial eye upon the affairs of this new government.¹³¹

Writers' increasing willingness to highlight their own rationalized changes of mind suggests the growing acceptance of political theories which enshrined the transferability of allegiance.¹³²

By June 1650, Cromwell had taken important steps towards cementing the Republic's authority by pacifying Ireland. Marvell seemingly abandoned his royalism to celebrate this event in 'An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland'.¹³³ In July, the Commons voted to try Davenant for treason. Hyde wrote to Cowley that he was 'exceedingly afflicted' at this 'misfortune', but it is hard to imagine him being pleased at what ensued.¹³⁴ Davenant appealed to literary-minded parliamentarians, Henry Marten and Bulstrode Whitelocke, who intervened to defend him.¹³⁵ Nedham also took up his cause in the new state's official newsbook, *Mercurius Politicus*.¹³⁶ In November Davenant turned the unfinished *Gondibert*, with a moralizing 'Postscript' on his impending death, over to the publisher Thomas Newcomb.¹³⁷ He was evidently still alive, as Marvell made a joke about his developing relationship with the republicans in his poem 'Tom May's Death' the same month.¹³⁸ When *Gondibert* went on sale in December, Nedham gave it a marketing push in *Mercurius Politicus* alongside an advertisement for the pirated Hobbes pamphlet, *Humane Nature*.¹³⁹ Davenant survived and was eventually released from the Tower in 1652.

Leviathan appeared in May 1651. Especially in its later sections, with their attacks on the clergy and bald statement of the transferability of allegiance, it revealed the gulf that had opened

¹³¹ Nedham, *The Case of the Commonwealth of England, Stated*, ed. by Philip A. Knachel (Charlottesville, 1969), p. 3.

¹³² On Nedham's attempted syntheses of Machiavelli and Hobbes, see Worden, *Literature and Politics*, pp. 23-5.

¹³³ Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 80-4.

¹³⁴ Hyde to Cowley, 12th July 1650, Bod. MS Clarendon 40, f. 104^v.

¹³⁵ Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, pp. 80-4.

¹³⁶ *Mercurius Politicus*, 5 (4th-11th July 1650), p. 70, and 6 (11th-18th July 1650), p. 85.

¹³⁷ Entered in the Stationers' Register on 7th November (although the rights were transferred to John Holden when it eventually went on sale).

¹³⁸ See further in chapter four.

¹³⁹ *Mercurius Politicus*, no. 29 (19th-26th December 1650), p. 486.

between Hobbes and mainstream royalist opinion.¹⁴⁰ Hyde later claimed to have challenged Hobbes as to ‘why he would publish such doctrine’; Hobbes allegedly replied, ‘the Truth is, I have a mind to go home’.¹⁴¹ But in fact the Republic held out a much better hope of achieving his main policy aims than Charles II.¹⁴² When Cromwell finally destroyed the royalist-Presbyterian alliance at Worcester in September 1651, Sir Edward Nicholas remarked in a letter to Hyde that ‘an abundance of Royalists’ had returned to England, ‘and many more are going’.¹⁴³ When Charles unexpectedly showed up in Paris having survived Worcester, Hobbes tried to repair bridges with a presentation manuscript of *Leviathan* (the more inflammatory lines tactfully removed). This was to no avail: Hyde and the Anglican clerics connived at Hobbes’ banishment, and he was turned away from the court by Hyde’s ally James Butler, the Marquis of Ormonde.¹⁴⁴ Hobbes and Davenant now fulfilled two categories which Hobbes had specified in *Leviathan* as requiring a change of allegiance: Davenant had been taken prisoner of war but spared his life; Hobbes had been banished.¹⁴⁵ Hobbes fled to London in January 1652 and reported straight to the Council of State; the following month, Nicholas bitterly mocked how he was ‘caress’d at London’.¹⁴⁶ Waller, too, was hot on his heels. His sentence of banishment had been lifted the previous November, probably with help from his relatives amongst the regicides: his brother-in-law Adrian Scrope, and his cousin Oliver Cromwell.¹⁴⁷

Marvell had briefly turned away from the regime in 1651 when he joined the household of Sir Thomas Fairfax (who had just resigned his command in the New Model army) as tutor to Fairfax’s daughter Mary.¹⁴⁸ But after leaving Fairfax’s service in 1652, he began to seek

¹⁴⁰ Malcolm, ‘Introduction’, pp. 95-9; Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 325-8.

¹⁴¹ Edward Hyde, *A brief view and survey of the dangerous and pernicious errors to church and state, in Mr. Hobbes's book, entitled Leviathan* (London, 1676), pp. 7-8; Malcolm, ‘Introduction’, pp. 77-8.

¹⁴² Malcolm, ‘Introduction’, pp. 77-82.

¹⁴³ Nicholas to Hyde, 21st October 1651; George Warner, ed., *The Nicholas Papers* (2 vols., London, 1892), vol. 1, p. 278.

¹⁴⁴ Malcolm, ‘Introduction’, pp. 75-7, 98-9; Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 325-6.

¹⁴⁵ *Leviathan*, chapter XXI and ‘Review and Conclusion’, pp. 344-6, 1133-4.

¹⁴⁶ Bod. MS Clarendon 42, f. 385^r; see also *Nicholas Papers*, vol. 1, p. 286.

¹⁴⁷ Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter XII, p. 25.

¹⁴⁸ Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 88-101.

Government employment, armed with a recommendation from John Milton.¹⁴⁹ In 1655, both Marvell and Waller published their panegyrics on the Lord Protector.¹⁵⁰ Waller reaped the most immediate reward, being appointed a Commissioner of Trade.¹⁵¹ Marvell was eventually made a secretary in the Office of Foreign Tongues in September 1657.¹⁵² Davenant had initially struggled to establish himself in Cromwellian England, and had been arrested yet again in 1653, this time for debt.¹⁵³ He too began actively soliciting patronage from the regime, circulating a pamphlet arguing for the economic benefits of re-opening the theatres, and addressing poems to leading republicans like Edward Lawrence.¹⁵⁴ This paid off: he was discharged from the Tower in 1654, and permitted to open a private theatre at Rutland House in May 1656. He developed a series of ‘Morall Representations’ or ‘Operas’ (his euphemisms for plays with songs), under the political protection of Bulstrode Whitelocke, celebrating major Protectorian propaganda themes of Protestant militancy and imperial expansion.¹⁵⁵ Waller, Marvell, and Davenant were now effectively established as court poets of the Protectorate, writing stately occasional poems to commemorate the marriage of Cromwell’s daughters Frances and Mary in November 1657.¹⁵⁶

In Paris, Cowley had persevered as a secretary at the queen’s court, but the surviving correspondence in his hand peters out in August 1654, the month he also seems to have availed himself of a passport to England approved by Cromwell.¹⁵⁷ As chapter five will argue, contrary to the claim put about by Thomas Sprat after the Restoration, there is no evidence Cowley returned to England as a royalist spy. And he was in fact almost certainly involved in facilitating further defections, Lord Jermyn’s ‘Clerke with the redd head’ who was spotted fixing up a meeting

¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 102-28.

¹⁵⁰ See Edward Holberton, *Poetry and the Cromwellian Protectorate: Culture, Politics, and Institutions* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 87-118; Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 340-51.

¹⁵¹ Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, pp. 125, 170.

¹⁵² Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 136-47.

¹⁵³ Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, p. 119.

¹⁵⁴ Davenant, *A Proposition for Advancement of Moralitie* (London, 1653), and ‘To Mr. Edward Laurence’ in *The Shorter Poems and Songs*, ed. by A. M. Gibbs (Oxford, 1972); James Jacob and Timothy Raylor, ‘Opera and Obedience: Thomas Hobbes and *A Proposition for Advancement of Moralitie* by Sir William Davenant’, *The Seventeenth Century*, 6 (1991) 205-50; McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, p. 240.

¹⁵⁵ Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, pp. 122-35; Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, pp. 120, 137-41.

¹⁵⁶ Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 386; Davenant’s is now lost: Gibbs, ed., *Shorter Poems*, p. xxxiii.

¹⁵⁷ Nethercot, *The Muse’s Hannibal*, pp. 139-42; BL Add. MS 78193, f. 86; Bod. MS Rawl. A 328, ff. 35, 122.

between Buckingham and the Cromwellian authorities in March 1655.¹⁵⁸ In April 1656, Cowley published a collection of his *Poems* with his incendiary *Preface*, announcing his abandonment of royalism. He engaged actively in the intellectual life of the Protectorate, studying for a doctorate in Physic at Oxford, helping Davenant with his ‘Entertainments’, and developing several contacts, including Hobbes, the young Sprat, and the physician Dr. Scarborough, in philosophical discussions at London and Wadham College, Oxford.¹⁵⁹ In 1657 he also joined his friends in writing marriage poetry which seemed to vindicate the stability of the regime, with an epithalamium for the wedding of Buckingham and Marvell’s ex-pupil Mary Fairfax.¹⁶⁰

The death of Cromwell on 3rd September 1658 precipitated the last major realignment. Marvell and Milton both walked in Cromwell’s funeral procession the following November, with their new colleague in the Office for Foreign Tongues, Dryden. Waller, Marvell, Dryden, and Sprat all wrote elegies on Cromwell, although Marvell’s proved too politically sensitive to be publishable.¹⁶¹ As the Restoration of Stuart monarchy came to seem more likely, Cowley opened a channel to Hobbes’ old adversary the Marquis of Ormonde, hoping to be welcomed back to royal service as Jermyn’s secretary. Ormonde was distinctly tepid and, when the Restoration was finally accomplished in May 1660, Cowley was angrily rebuffed by Hyde—now Earl of Clarendon and Lord Chancellor.¹⁶² Cowley, Dryden, Waller, and Davenant joined the flood of panegyric which greeted the Restoration, and, unlike Cowley, the other turncoat poets prospered. The Anglican authoritarianism and bellicose foreign policy of the first Restoration settlement, under Clarendon and the so-called ‘Cavalier Parliament’, pulled the turncoat poets in different directions.¹⁶³ Davenant and Dryden enjoyed successful careers in the theatre, their plays frequently offering implicit propagandistic support for the Restored monarchy. Waller also

¹⁵⁸ Nethercot, *The Muse’s Hannibal*, p. 146; *Nicholas Papers*, vol. 2, p. 219.

¹⁵⁹ Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, p. 163.

¹⁶⁰ On this poem, see chapter five and Allan Pritchard, ‘Editing from Manuscript: Cowley and the Cowper Papers’, in A. H. de Quehen, ed., *Editing Poetry from Spenser to Dryden* (New York, 1981), pp. 61-7.

¹⁶¹ Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 148-65.

¹⁶² See chapter five and Nethercot, *The Muse’s Hannibal*, pp. 187-92.

¹⁶³ See Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and his Kingdoms, 1660-1685* (London, 2005), pp. 51-60.

supported the regime in his public poetry, although remained privately critical of the bishops.¹⁶⁴ Cowley remained discontentedly alienated from the court; both he and Marvell moved more closely into the orbit of Buckingham. For Marvell, this meant an increasingly public opposition to the regime, in a series of satires mocking Dryden, Davenant, and Waller's propaganda writing, and arguing for religious toleration.¹⁶⁵

As things turned out, the poets' allegiances hinged on their dissatisfaction with royal policies—the failure of constitutionalism, the overbearing clericalism, and, later, the allegiance with the Presbyterians—and, on the other side, their increasing attraction to Cromwell—his martial *virtù*, his Erastianism, and his curbing of social upstarts and radicals. They defected at different moments, but the side they really embraced was the conservative Cromwellian Protectorate. The successful Restoration might have decisively buried the resources of rationalism and relativism which had supported the poets' Cromwellian stance. But, as chapter six will argue, the military and political disasters which wrecked Clarendon's ministry in the later 1660s revealed how their view of the changeability and contingency of sovereign power remained intensely relevant.

4. Some Notes on Method

This thesis is about the intellectual resources which enabled the turncoat poets to conceive of allegiance as transferrable in a way that others could not. After all, Hyde was just as dismayed by Charles II's concessions to the Presbyterians in 1650 as Hobbes and Davenant, yet he remained steadfastly loyal to the Stuart cause and manoeuvred to purge it of Hobbes'

¹⁶⁴ Aubrey records he was 'afraid of the churchmen', Bod. MS Aubrey 9, f. 54^v.

¹⁶⁵ Winn, *Dryden and his World*, pp. 161-78; Nethercot, *The Muse's Hannibal*, p. 230; Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 246-78.

influence. The difference lies in the political relativism and defactoism which the poets adapted from Machiavelli, and, grounded more systematically in kinetic psychology, from Hobbes. Poets of the English Renaissance had believed uncontroversially that they could formulate and dramatize theoretical concepts in their writing, at least since Sidney's *Defence of Poesy* (ca. 1579):

[the poet] yieldeth to the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the philosopher bestoweth but a wordish description, which doth neither strike, pierce, nor possess the sight of the soul so much as that other doth. For as in outward things, to a man that had never seen an elephant or a rhinoceros, who should tell him most exquisitely all their shapes, colour, bigness, and particular marks... might well make the hearer able to repeat as it were by rote, all he had heard, yet should never satisfy his inward conceit with being witness to itself of a true lively knowledge; but the same man, as soon as he might see those beasts well painted... should straightways grow, without need of any description, to a judicial comprehending of them.¹⁶⁶

Sidney's 'speaking picture of poesy' involved a metaphorical way of thinking, in which difficult concepts could be 'figured forth' by poetic imagery. He also thought this method was readily applicable to political theory, as he included Sir Thomas More's 'patterning a commonwealth' in the *Utopia* as an example of poetry.¹⁶⁷ Davenant's *Preface to Gondibert* was an intervention in the humanist debate over poetry initiated and dominated by Sidney, but all the writers in this study were inheritors of this tradition, and believed uncontroversially that writing poetry was a good way of dramatizing political ideas.

This view has surprisingly struggled for acceptance in modern literary studies. Early attempts to relate Renaissance political theory and poetry—that of Marvell in particular—were hamstrung by unsubtle methods and sketchy exposition. John Carey correctly attacked J. A. Mazzeo's attempt to read 'An Horatian Ode' as mere 'versified Machiavelli' as part of a misplaced scholarly effort 'to find a philosophical system which will allow us to dispense with Marvell's poems'.¹⁶⁸ Yet more recent studies like David Norbrook's *Writing the English Republic* have shown in more thickly detailed and critically nuanced ways how Marvell's poetry

¹⁶⁶ Sidney, *Defence of Poesy*, p. 222.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 222-3.

¹⁶⁸ John Carey, 'Introduction', in (ed.) *Andrew Marvell: A Critical Anthology* (Harmondsworth, 1969), p. 69; J. A. Mazzeo, *Renaissance and Seventeenth Century Studies* (London, 1964), pp. 168-81.

engages creatively with republican political ideas and their ambiguities.¹⁶⁹ Although Carey meant it sarcastically, ‘versified Machiavelli’ is precisely the phrase Timothy Raylor has used to describe Waller’s creative method in his *Panegyrick to my Lord Protector*.¹⁷⁰ Raylor studied Waller’s copy of *The Prince* to trace how his annotations formed the basis for draft verses scribbled on the flyleaf—redrafted versions of which eventually found their way into the finished *Panegyrick*.¹⁷¹ This suggests how humanist methods of reading political history could feed into humanist methods of writing poetry (even when, with Hobbes, the argument had left humanist politics behind).¹⁷² This was a mode of dynamic adaptation—with its origins in Cicero’s distinction between *inventio*, finding ideas, *dispositio*, arranging them into the best order, and *elocutio*, providing them with stylistic adornment—but also inflected by Sidney’s notion of ‘figuring’ or ‘patterning’ an unfamiliar concept. Raylor’s findings are corroborated by Aubrey’s notes about Hobbes:

Mr. John Dreyden, Poet Laureat, is his great admirer, and oftentimes makes use of his Doctrine in his Playes—from Mr Dreyden himself.¹⁷³

Aubrey’s phrase ‘makes use of’ is vexingly non-specific. The aim of this study is to flesh out our awareness of how poets would read and extract lessons from political theory, and then put them to work, fashioning them appropriately to the contexts, genres, and vocabularies of their poems.

In the absence of surviving annotated books, what evidence can we use to identify our poets’ ‘use of’ political theory? The predominant method critics have developed to resolve questions of who had read whom is the verbal echo. Again, this is founded in our understanding of early-modern reading practices: schoolboys were taught to extract and keep a record of felicitous phrases and conceits on set themes, to encourage both the emulation and the recycling of eloquence. The poet particularly associated with the verbal echo is Marvell, but they were all at it. Echoes have been put to impressive use in recent studies, most obviously by Blair Worden

¹⁶⁹ Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 245-70 and *passim*.

¹⁷⁰ Timothy Raylor, ‘Waller’s Machiavellian Cromwell: The Imperial Argument of *A Panegyrick to my Lord Protector*’, *RES*, 56 (2005) 386-411, p. 398.

¹⁷¹ *ibid.*, Raylor, ‘Reading Machiavelli; Writing Cromwell’, *passim*.

¹⁷² See Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, ‘Studied for Action: How Gabriel Harvey read his Livy’, *Past and Present*, 129 (1990) 30-78, pp. 30-33, 51-72.

¹⁷³ Bod. MS Aubrey 9, f. 46^v.

and Nicholas McDowell, and I will also advance arguments which rely partly on echoic evidence. But some scholars have called for more ‘rigorous stress-testing’ of what counts as a significant verbal borrowing, as distinct from looser similarities dictated by poetic and verbal convention.¹⁷⁴ A 1695 letter from the poet George Stepney (a friend of Dryden’s) to his publisher Jacob Tonson shows how seventeenth-century poets could echo one another with a freedom and facility they felt was almost unconscious:

The [lines] 92 & 93 came so easy to me that, upon my soul, I know not if I made or stole them. You lent me Waller a little before I left England... You have a better memory, & if you find I have purloin’d, ’tis but just to strike ’em out; there will be no gap in y^e connexion.¹⁷⁵

Perspectives on intellectual property had changed slightly by the 1690s, but the example still indicates how casual and contingent poetic echoes could be—‘there will be no gap in y^e connexion’. If shared language does not always reflect conscious borrowing, it can indicate where writers are working with common intellectual materials. Yet the history of the English Civil War shows that the same words can sometimes carry a wide diversity of meanings. Arguments from verbal similarity are indispensable in this sort of study, but I will endeavour to gauge their relative strength in the context of shared intellectual or linguistic conventions, or classical sources.¹⁷⁶ If this approach seems prey to pedantic over-caution—I will take an unfashionably narrow view of the likely readership of Marvell’s ‘Horatian Ode’—I hope this will have the effect of throwing distinctive or unexpected echoes, when we find them, into sharper relief.

One way to supplement the verbal echo is to focus on metaphorical thinking. This is relevant to a study of political ideas not least because of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s seminal finding that metaphor is fundamental to our ‘conceptual system’:

¹⁷⁴ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, p. 4; Worden, *Literature and Politics*, pp. 9-10; James Loxley, ‘Echoes as Evidence in the Poetry of Andrew Marvell’, *SEL*, 52 (2012) 165-85; Derek Hirst and Steven N. Zwicker, ‘Appendix’, in *Andrew Marvell, Orphan of the Hurricane* (Oxford, 2012), pp. 164-74.

¹⁷⁵ George Stepney to Jacob Tonson, 24th February 1695, letter 18 in Stephen Bernard, ed., *The Literary Correspondences of the Tonsons* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 110-11.

¹⁷⁶ One test suggested by Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, p. 169, is to search a given phrase in the digitized corpus of *EEBO* to gauge its comparative rarity.

Since metaphorical expressions in our language are tied to metaphorical concepts in a systematic way, we can use metaphorical linguistic expressions to study the nature of metaphorical concepts and to gain an understanding of the metaphorical nature of our activities.¹⁷⁷

Lakoff and Johnson were primarily concerned with submerged metaphors in everyday language, rather than the atypical metaphors we sometimes encounter in imaginative literature. But creative metaphors, which draw attention to themselves as such, clearly become important if writers are trying to articulate unconventional or unfamiliar concepts—as in Sidney’s example of explaining an elephant to someone who had never seen one before. The way people thought about poetry in the seventeenth century was dominated by the conceit—and the poets studied here more than most. When humanist readers annotated and filleted their texts, a good conceit was as detachable and borrowable as a good turn of phrase. We will see a vivid example of this in chapter three, when an annotator of *Gondibert* was disgruntled by Davenant’s metaphors: ‘powr a hill, lately a tree, then a fruit, a very metempsychosis’.¹⁷⁸ This list indicates how a humanist reader would collect ‘figures’, although in this instance it was to complain about Davenant’s copiousness, which seemed to be destabilizing his grasp of the subject. McDowell has taken some steps towards a metaphorical criticism, for instance following one metaphor through writings by Hall, Lovelace, and Hobbes which likened political reform to repairing a watch.¹⁷⁹ Seventeenth-century Englishmen habitually thought about sovereign power through concepts of an ancient constitution or divine appointment. Some people believed them literally no doubt, but, strictly speaking, these were also metaphors, designed to structure the concept of sovereignty in a particular way. We will trace how the turncoat poets destabilized and replaced these conventional metaphors. Sidney’s idea of ‘patterning a commonwealth’ remained influential—precisely the word Marvell used in his poem ‘Upon Appleton House’ to describe the ‘naked equal flat, | Which Levellers take pattern at’.¹⁸⁰ This mention of the Levellers shows how Marvell adapted theoretical concepts

¹⁷⁷ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (2nd ed., Chicago, 2003), pp. 3-7.

¹⁷⁸ National Library of Scotland, *Gondibert* (London, 1651), shelfmark AK 4.6, sig. P3^v, annotating stanza III.iii.57; see further Niall Allsopp, “‘Lett none our Lombard author rudely blame for’s righteous paine’: An Annotated Copy of Sir William Davenant’s *Gondibert* (1651)”, *The Library*, 16 (2015) 24-50, p. 34.

¹⁷⁹ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, p. 153.

¹⁸⁰ Marvell, ‘Upon Appleton House’, ll. 449-50.

to current political circumstances, but also his awareness of how a poetic metaphor could encapsulate or ‘pattern’ an abstract idea.

But Hobbes had criticized metaphorical language, as it exploited the imaginative gap between words and their accepted meanings. The plasticity and diversity of language risked aggravating envy and fear between humans:

For though the nature of that we conceive, be the same; yet the diversity of our reception of it, in respect of different constitutions of body, and prejudices of opinion, gives every thing a tincture of our different passions.¹⁸¹

Hobbes claimed to overcome the ‘diversity of signification’ by distilling arguments down to indisputable, demonstrational truths—and yet he reached for a metaphor even when describing this method, relying on an analogy with geometry:

And therefore in Geometry... men begin at settling the significations of their words; which settling of significations, they call *Definitions*; and place them in the beginning of their reckoning.¹⁸²

We will encounter the turncoat poets contemplating the possibility of expressing demonstrational truths in poetry—and one way of expressing such a truth could be through a telling metaphor. As Quentin Skinner has argued, by the time of his exchange with Davenant in 1650-51, Hobbes was prepared to accept the use of rhetorical figures and tropes ‘to supplement the findings of reason’.¹⁸³ *Leviathan*, which he was writing at the time, extensively adapts the traditional conceptual metaphor of the bodily politic, repeatedly likening the commonwealth to an ‘artificial man’.¹⁸⁴ In his *Answer to Davenant’s Preface to Gondibert*, Hobbes embraced ‘Fancy’, or ‘copious Imagery discreetly ordered’, provided it was constrained by ‘the experience and knowledge of nature’.¹⁸⁵ He described how fancy retrieves images from the memory using another metaphor, ‘as a spaniel ranges the field’, which Dryden later lifted verbatim into his

¹⁸¹ *Leviathan*, chapter IV, p. 62; Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 257-71, 329-30; Achinstein, ‘The Politics of Babel’, pp. 17, 33-4.

¹⁸² *Leviathan*, chapter IV, p. 56.

¹⁸³ Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric*, pp. 332-3, 343-9, 383-9.

¹⁸⁴ *Leviathan*, ‘Introduction’, p. 16 and *passim*.

¹⁸⁵ Hobbes, ‘The Answer of Mr. Hobbes to Sir Will. D’Avenant’s Preface Before Gondibert’, in David Gladish, ed., *Gondibert* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 49-51.

‘Account’ of the poem *Annus Mirabilis* (1667).¹⁸⁶ Hobbes and Davenant were building on Sidney’s stated aim that a reader of poetry could ‘satisfy his inward conceit with being witness to itself of a true lively knowledge’, but this witnessing took on new connotations after Francis Bacon had enshrined the observation of nature in his theory of experimental philosophy. The process of converting experience into poetic imagery could be conceived as a type of experiment for dramatizing and observing the underlying, natural principles of society in action. Davenant loved to fashion himself as an experimenter or explorer, charting unfamiliar territory, looking through a ‘perspective glass’, and embarking on ‘so great an experiment as Dying’.¹⁸⁷

The idea that conceits could be a means of dramatizing the results of observation required some adjustments to verse-form. We will trace how Waller and Dryden followed Davenant in adopting iambic pentameter quatrains—Dryden called them ‘Heroique Stanzas’—rather than couplets in major poems like *A Panegyrick to my Lord Protector* and *Annus Mirabilis*. This form clearly enjoyed Hobbes’ support, as he employed it for his own translations of the Homeric epics later in life. Whilst it could slot into a larger narrative or argument, the heroic quatrain was more static and self-contained than the couplet, affording the poet an elevated isolation in which to suspend and work through a conceit’s ambivalent complexity. Davenant’s adversaries parodied the way his quatrains strain to unfold and qualify the intricacies of his metaphors with a tangle of parentheses:

(Nor without cause)(for what our eyes behold
Unto our sense most evident hath been;
But still we doubt of things by others told,
(For Faith’s the evidence of things not seen.)¹⁸⁸

The satirist pinpoints the tension between Davenant’s metaphorical copiousness and his anxieties about metaphorical language, his insistent need to foreground the difficulties of observation and

¹⁸⁶ *Leviathan*, chapter III, p. 42; Dryden, *Annus Mirabilis*, in Paul Hammond and David Hopkins, eds., *Poems* (Harlow, 2007), p. 44.

¹⁸⁷ Davenant, *Preface*, pp. 3, 35; Hobbes, *Answer*, p. 55; Davenant, *Postscript*, p. 55. On the perspective glasses see Malcolm, ‘Introduction’, p. 135, and further in chapter three.

¹⁸⁸ John Denham *et al*, *Certain Verses Written by Severall of the Authors Friends, to be Re-Printed with the Second Edition of Gondibert* (London, 1653), p. 18.

interpretation. Perhaps the stanza of elevation and qualification was necessary to make metaphors safe to use.

Twentieth-century criticism, under the influence of Northrop Frye, often tended to favour one type of metaphorical thinking in particular: allegory.¹⁸⁹ This has resulted in some flawed reading, and I adopt John Wallace's caveat that the poetry of Dryden reflects 'a shift in critical opinion, already well established by 1650, away from the Spenserian mode'.¹⁹⁰ This thesis focuses on some of Dryden's first poetic influences, and Wallace presumably had in mind Davenant's strident criticism of Spenser in the *Preface to Gondibert*: 'His allegoricall Story (by many held defective in the connexion) resembling (me thinks) a continuance of extraordinary Dreames'.¹⁹¹ As Christopher Tilmouth has argued, *The Faerie Queene* was structured on an Aristotelian and Calvinist model of *psychomachia*, which conceived of the passions as external forces acting upon the soul. Spenser allegorized the passions as the monstrous foes besetting the knights errant, who strove to reassert rational control—using the conceptual metaphor of horsemanship we encountered at the outset.¹⁹² Hobbes, as we have seen, reinterpreted the passions as material processes in the mind—an integral, normative part of human psychology rather than an external, spiritual force.¹⁹³ Davenant's *Preface* defines poetry as 'truth operative, and by effects continually alive', inculcating this sense of continual motion.¹⁹⁴ Spenserian allegory posited a mythic connection between a fictional signifier and a separate, abstract concept. But this was not observable in nature in the same way as the concepts of sovereignty and obligation described by Hobbes, as psychological effects rather than objective forces. The turncoat poets were interested not in allegories but a more dynamic mode of dramatization which

¹⁸⁹ Frye claimed that 'all commentary is allegorical interpretation' in *Anatomy of Criticism* (rev. ed.; Princeton, 1971), p. 89. But see Gladish's non-starting attempts to establish a "key" to the characters in *Gondibert* in his 'Introduction', p. xv.

¹⁹⁰ John Wallace, 'Dryden and History: A Problem in Allegorical Reading', *English Literary History*, 36 (1969) 265-90, p. 266; see also Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England 1640-1660* (New Haven, 1994), p. 217.

¹⁹¹ Davenant, *Preface*, p. 7.

¹⁹² Tilmouth, *Passion's Triumph Over Reason*, pp. 37-53.

¹⁹³ *ibid.*, pp. 222-37.

¹⁹⁴ Davenant, *Preface*, p. 11; see further chapter three.

could observe how obligations were generated by contingent psychological circumstances in a restlessly changing world.

There are several ways in which we can detect our poets' conceptualization of allegiance. We have external evidence of correspondence, circulation, annotation, and subsequent readers' responses. We have the evidence of verbal echoes and shared terminology, properly contextualized. And we have conceptual metaphors which can show how a poet was trying to construct a concept, but which might also sometimes function like an echo, and suggest to us what their sources may have been. Finally, rather than allegory, we have a mode of dramatization, trying to observe how a theoretical concept like allegiance works in practice. Unpicking these will rely, to a large extent, on extended close readings of the poems in question. This can hopefully be an interesting practice in itself, but I aim not just to account for a writer's sources, but to demonstrate how those intellectual resources animated and shaped their thinking. Emphasizing particular aspects of a text—the conceptualization of allegiance and the influence of Hobbes or Machiavelli—inevitably diminishes others. *Gondibert* and *Davideis* in particular are heterogeneous and often jumbled poems, and I neither want to underplay their intellectual and technical diversity, nor artificially make too much sense of them. Although sometimes intricate, I hope to show how an engagement with political theory drives and enlivens these texts; that Davenant, Marvell, Waller, and Cowley were more sophisticated, or at least more creative, political thinkers than they have been given credit for; and, finally, that early literary responses to Hobbes, as a theorist of change and instability, were more sustained and versatile than has been realised. Although many of their poems went out of fashion, the turncoat poets contributed to the circulation of a new relativism and rationalism in political ideas, challenging received discourses of loyalty and constancy in the process. And these ideas, reframed in new contexts, continued to influence thinking about political obligations long after the initial crisis had passed.

Chapter Two

Waller and the Rhetoric of Allegiance

Waller has often been perceived as an archetypal turncoat poet, a writer who symbolizes the inconstancy of poets in general.¹ This chapter will ask how that perception came about. On the surface, Waller's poetry reveals little of the difficulty, toughness, and ambivalent energy of Davenant, Cowley, or Marvell. But this very smoothness and facility has often been associated with political inconstancy, the ability to slither between contradictory positions with the appearance of ease. Surveying responses to Waller by contemporaries who observed him closely—Edward Hyde and Lucy Hutchinson—David Norbrook argues: 'praise of his linguistic gifts gradually emerges as a devastating condemnation of his moral emptiness'.² Some scholars have attributed this to Waller's temperamental preference for compromise: to his biographer John Safford he was the consummate moderate; to Penelope Anderson, the 'affable time-server'.³ But this is to read biographically what was primarily a rhetorical pose. This chapter will explore Waller's themes of harmony and loyalty as rhetorical conventions, and ask how they were challenged by the polarization of the early 1640s.

I have already noted an important social distinction between Waller and the other turncoat poets. Waller's considerable wealth liberated him from the need to work as a tutor or secretary, or to attract financial patronage.⁴ Conventionally, at least, his landed status would have deterred him from print publication. But it also qualified him for elevated ambitions in his own right, for which he required a different form of political patronage.⁵ Waller's occasional manuscript poems of around 1636-40 therefore have a different social context to the more

¹ See for instance Robert Wild [?], *The Incomparable Poem Gondibert, Vindicated From the Wit-Combats of Four Esquires* (London, 1653), discussed below and in chapter three; and anon., *Wit and Loyalty Revived* (London, 1682), discussed in chapter five.

² Norbrook, 'Lucy Hutchinson versus Edmund Waller', p. 64.

³ Penelope Anderson, *Friendship's Shadows*, p. 46; Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter I, pp. 3-7 and *passim*.

⁴ In fact, he extended patronage to the younger poet Thomas Higgons (see chapter six).

⁵ Safford, *Life of Waller*, Chapter IV, p. 2.

programmatic intellectual experiments Davenant and Cowley pursued in print in the 1650s. It demanded less intellectual consistency, but a greater ability to adapt and synthesize ideas to occasions with tact. In the first section, we will consider how Waller's attempts to manage that synthesis were disrupted by the crisis of the early 1640s. In the second and third sections we will explore the solutions to this problem he formulated in two later bodies of writing, his parliamentary speeches of 1640-43, and the *Panegyrick to my Lord Protector* he presented to Cromwell in 1654.

1. Waller's Courtly Poetry

To a politically ambitious man like Waller, the 1630s were a challenge. He had been, in Hyde's phrase, 'almost nursed in parliaments', but that major route to political advancement had been closed since 1629. This helps explain Waller's otherwise surprising decision to begin publicly circulating his poetry in around 1635, at the age of thirty, when, again in Hyde's words, 'other men used to give over writing verses'.⁶ This was a reasonable means of pursuing political patronage at court. His poems fashion the relationships of cultural display, kinship, and mutual obligation on which the soft power of aristocratic factional politics depended.⁷ Waller has been described as 'house laureate' to the faction centred on the Sidney and Percy families in the queen's court.⁸ Norbrook has argued this made Waller 'a member of the opposition', pointing out the Percies' quasi-republicanism, their 'proud tradition of independence from, and if necessary overt resistance to, monarchical power'.⁹ The faction's rallying call was Protestant militancy, expressed through colonial expansion, an anti-Hapsburg military alliance with the French; and

⁶ Clarendon, *Life*, p. 25; discussed by Raylor, 'Early Poetic Career', pp. 242-3, 259-60.

⁷ On the role of culture in noble politics in the 1630s, see John Adamson, *The Noble Revolt* (London, 2007), pp. 30-4; and R. Malcolm Smuts, 'The Structure of the Court and the Roles of Artist and Poet under Charles I', *The Court Historian*, 9 (2004) 102-118.

⁸ Raylor, 'Early Poetic Career', p. 256.

⁹ Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 73.

paranoia about popish innovations in the Church and constitution.¹⁰ The central members were Algernon Percy, tenth Earl of Northumberland, and his sisters: Dorothy, who was married to Robert Sidney, Earl of Leicester; and Lucy, the Countess of Carlisle. Through his mother, Northumberland was also first cousin to two peers who were *persona non grata* under the personal rule, the Earls of Essex and Warwick.¹¹ Warwick's younger brother the Earl of Holland was a key ally of Northumberland's and Carlisle's at court.¹² Northumberland and Holland were the only Privy Councillors to oppose Charles' dissolution of the first parliament of 1640, and amongst the leading defenders and beneficiaries of Warwick's dominance in the second.¹³ John Adamson has interpreted the oppositional politics of the early 1640s through the collaboration between these interrelated noble patrons and their gentry clients.¹⁴ This provides us with a contextual structure which can clarify the occasions of Waller's poetry, but also suggest how they may have been distorted by subsequent events.

Such a reading is necessarily an act of reconstruction: although Waller's early poetry was mostly written in 1636-40, our surviving textual sources consist of the seven slightly later manuscript collections of Waller's verse, transcribed in the rough period 1640-44, and the two rival printed editions which appeared in 1644-45.¹⁵ This apparent mismatch between the contexts of composition and circulation is all the more striking because Waller had supposedly renounced poetry in the spring of 1640 in a dedicatory epistle to Lady Sophia Murray, looking forward to a graver vocation as an orator in the new parliament.¹⁶ This did not prevent him from continuing to circulate the poems he had already written. 'If you publish them,' he warned Lady Murray, 'they become your own': but this was a consciously disingenuous convention, belying the assumption

¹⁰ R. Malcolm Smuts, 'The Puritan Followers of Henrietta Maria in the 1630s', *English Historical Review*, 93 (1978) 26-45, pp. 27-9, 36-40.

¹¹ Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 25-7, 31-5.

¹² Smuts, 'The Puritan Followers of Henrietta Maria', pp. 31-3; Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 38n, 545-6n.

¹³ Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 16-19, 38-9.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 14-15 and *passim*.

¹⁵ Raylor, 'Early Poetic Career', pp. 243-44, 263 (and *passim*), cites evidence for Waller's releasing manuscript copies of individual texts before 1640, but not for his circulating them as a collection.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 261-63. Reprinted in George Thorn-Drury, ed., *The Poems of Edmund Waller* (London, 1893), pp. xi-xiv.

and, almost certainly, intention that Murray would indeed pass them on—borne out by this preface's survival in a scribal copy.

A homogeneous core of poems on court affairs appears in all of the witnesses.¹⁷ These poems remained in recognizable clusters, whose consistency probably suggests something of the original collections assembled by Waller, but also that later scribes and readers were able to recognize and preserve these groups. The most significant is the major sequence of poems about the king and queen, which included 'Of the danger his Majesty (being Prince) escaped at the rode at St. Andere', 'To the King on his Navy', and 'Upon his Majesties repairing of Pauls'.¹⁸ This group, with only minor variations of ordering, usually takes pride of place at the head of the collections, but remains a recognizable sequence in the one surviving exception.¹⁹ Raylor identified these poems as the centrepiece of a 'votive offering' Waller originally intended to present to the queen in around 1638.²⁰ Waller later conceded that plan was rendered 'unseasonable' by the Scottish rebellion of 1639 and the calling of two hostile parliaments in 1640.²¹ Yet he persisted in circulating the poems—with the dedication to Henrietta—in manuscript. Poetic dedications were public acts, with a wide intended audience, to whom Waller still felt it worth broadcasting his poetry.

The most interesting poem of this cluster is 'Of the danger his Majestie (being Prince) escaped at the rode at St. Andere'. The poem depicts Charles' return from his failed wooing mission to the Spanish Infanta in 1623, which ran into a storm at Santander. The storm allegorizes the political crisis and militantly anti-Catholic outrage which had greeted Charles'

¹⁷ Peter Beal, 'Edmund Waller', author introduction, under 'Formal Scribal Collections of the 1640s', in (ed.) *Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts, 1450-1700*: <https://celm2.digsum.kcl.ac.uk/introductions/WallerEdmund.html> (accessed 20th October 2015); Raylor, 'Moseley, Walkley, and the 1645 Editions of Waller', pp. 250-1. I have been able to consult the 1645 printed editions, Bod. MS Don. d. 55, and Rawl. Poet. 174. Beal also lists the contents of King's College Cambridge, Keynes MS 90; Yale, Gen. MSS Misc. Group 2759, Item V-1; and Landesbibliothek Kassel, 2^o MS. poet. et roman. 4.

¹⁸ Using the titles as given in Moseley's edition of 1644; texts cited from Thorn-Drury, ed., *Poems*.

¹⁹ Bod. MS. Don. d. 55, ff. 12^r-16^v.

²⁰ Raylor, 'Early Poetic Career', p. 246, 247-55 *passim*.

²¹ *ibid.*, pp. 244-45, Thorn-Drury, ed., *Poems*, pp. ix-xi.

attempted rapprochement with Spain.²² Waller resolves this tension through the ahistorical entrance of Henrietta-Maria, whose love promises future cosmic harmony and enables Charles to weather the storm.²³ When the tempest hits, Charles' courage is sparked by the 'dear remembrance of that fatal glance | For which he lately pawned his heart in France' (101-2). The metaphor of the fatal glance was an amatory convention, but there is a second, more unusual metaphor of pawning: implying an expected payment (i.e. a dowry), but also an ongoing obligation, which Charles may be expected to satisfy in the future. It is no coincidence that the rhyme emphasizes Henrietta's Frenchness—the quality which aligned her with the foreign policy aims of the militant Protestants and the Percy-Sidney faction, an anti-Hapsburg *entente cordiale*.²⁴ This is a recurrent theme in the poem:

When France shall boast of her, whose conquering eyes
Have made the best of English hearts their prize (27-8)

The metaphor of conquering eyes is a conventional amatory trope, but, again, by rhyming it with 'prize', Waller seems to emphasize a quality of financial obligation.²⁵ He justifies returning to such an awkward moment by reminding readers of Charles' love-match, but also foregrounding the ways in which it had entailed certain financial and political obligations, conceived in contractual, transactional terms.

The metaphor of conquering eyes also suggests the libertine trope of sexual conquest, which in turn offers further, political connotations of military conquest. The defactoism I outlined in chapter one had not yet arrived in the late 1630s, but an emphasis on conquest was one of its intellectual foundations, implying a contingent view of sovereignty defined by *de facto* supremacy.²⁶ Conquest was an important recurring crux for the turncoat poets. Waller uses anaphora to extend the conceit into a political context in the following couplet:

Have power to alter the decrees of Fate,
And change again the counsels of our state. (29-30)

²² R. Malcolm Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England* (Philadelphia, 1987), pp. 33-36.

²³ Raylor, 'Early Poetic Career', pp. 249-52.

²⁴ Smuts, 'Puritan Followers of Henrietta-Maria', pp. 40-42.

²⁵ Slipping between *OED*, 'prize', n. 2 and n. 1, senses 1 and 3.

²⁶ Discussed by Malcolm, 'Introduction', pp. 32-3.

Waller may have been attributing to Henrietta that power to assert control over Fortune which we identified in chapter one as characterizing Machiavellian *virtù*.²⁷ In a poem broadly characterized by fatalism and Charles' passive fortitude, Waller here slips in a contrasting instance of agency, the capacity to 'change'. Indeed, the phrasing, 'change *again* the counsels of our state' (my emphasis) presumably hopes for a future repeat of the reversal of 1623, away from Spain, towards France.²⁸

This early passage focuses on a significant historic precedent for a king's changing his mind: King Edward IV, who reneged on his contract to the Lady Bona of Savoy (Louis XI's sister-in-law) in order to marry Elizabeth Woodville. Waller vindicated Charles from any suspicion of dishonour in abandoning his Spanish match, by presenting the alliance with France as an honour-restoring corrective to the historic wrong perpetrated by Edward.²⁹ But this precedent opened a can of worms:

Brought Mars and Warwick to the conquered side;
Neglected Warwick (whose bold hand, like Fate,
Gives and resumes the sceptre of our state) (18-20)

Warwick, thwarted and humiliated, went over to Henry VI and reignited the Wars of the Roses. Waller alludes provocatively to the overthrowing of kings, and the contingency of royal power, and draws attention to what Adamson has described as the 'baronial context' of the English Civil War—a context exemplified by Robert Rich, the contemporary Earl of Warwick.³⁰ Rich identified with his predecessor in his self-fashioning as one of the '*consilarii nati*'—noblemen as the king's 'counsellors born'. This context gives Waller's epithet 'Neglected Warwick' a more controversial edge: despite his personal petitions, the contemporary Earl had been humiliatingly debarred from high office in the 1630s.³¹ Waller's historical counterpoint to Charles' marriage

²⁷ As in *The Prince*, chapter XXV, p. 209 (trans. Bondanella, pp. 86-7).

²⁸ See Smuts, *Court Culture*, pp. 37-42.

²⁹ Raylor, 'Early Poetic Career', p. 250.

³⁰ Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 518-19. The 'baronial context' is a specifically qualified version of Adamson's earlier, heavily contested reading of the Civil War as the last English baronial revolt; it holds that baronial history provided one framework through which contemporaries could interpret events.

³¹ *ibid.*, pp. 30-33.

serves a double turn, opening out a separate precedent, for the consequences faced by monarchs who neglect their noblemen.

This affects the rhetoric of harmony in the poem. Arion's 'harmonious lay' (33) ironically offers a history of 'foreign war with civil rage' (24). The 'delighted dolphins' dancing to the music turn out to be omens, presaging the 'sea's ensuing rage, | Which must anon this royal troop engage' (34-6). The repetition of 'rage' emphasizes the conventional metaphorical connection between a raging sea, violent passions, and civil war. Its rhyme, 'engage', punning ironically on the contractual (and marital) sense, configures the storm as a military engagement.³² This conceptual metaphor is sustained as the 'yielding deep' transforms into 'the seat of sudden war | Between the wind and tide that fiercely jar' (43-4). 'Jar' offers a different metaphor for civil conflict, its etymological sense of discordant sound providing the direct antithesis of harmony. And the counterpoint with 'yielding' is oddly ambivalent, characterizing the preceding peace as submissive, even effeminized by contrast with the spirited resistance Charles now faces.

Waller constructs these forebodings through the genre of prophecy, contrasting the ominous 'prophetic Muse' (31) of Arion's song with Henrietta's dazzling beauty which 'foretells the fervour of ensuing day' (122). In the Virgilian tradition, prophecy could naturally support royal panegyric, but it was also a vehicle for godly criticism of the Stuart regime.³³ Waller later used a prophecy from Livy in a parliamentary speech to cast the ship money judges as 'ill boading birds' of impending civil war; prophecy in that context described fracture and disorder, not Providential pacification.³⁴ The ending of the Santander poem works in a similar mode of Roman fatalism:

³² *OED*, 'engage', v., senses I, II, and IV.

³³ For instance, Warwick's Devereux cousins were long-standing patrons and often subjects of prophetic writing; see Ariel Hessayon, *Gold Tried in the Fire: The Prophet ThearauJohn Tany and the English Revolution* (Aldershot, 2007), p. 221.

³⁴ *Mr Wallers Speech in Parliament, At a Conference of both Houses in the painted Chamber* (London, 1641), p. 9.

Well sung the Roman bard, 'All human things
 Of dearest value hang on slender strings.'
 [...]

 On which the fabric of our world depends;
 One link dissolved, the whole creation ends. (163-70).

Norbrook glosses this as an 'assertion of fragility', recalling the 'sense of the precarious of the cosmic machine' in Lucan's *Pharsalia*.³⁵ The redemptive forces Waller offers in the poem are disturbed by that disconcertingly emphatic ending, with its apocalyptic undertow, 'the whole creation ends'. These omens of civil war might be too prescient to be believable: the anxiety about 'foreign war with civil rage' (24) could perhaps more plausibly be taken as a reference to the Scottish rebellion of 1639. Waller later spoke about the Scottish invasion as a war which was complicatedly both foreign and civil in his ship money speech in 1641.³⁶ The Santander poem may have been written in the summer of 1640—we at least know Waller chose to circulate it in manuscript collections at that time. The line on 'Neglected Warwick' became even more controversial as Warwick and his allies strong-armed Charles into calling a parliament, and again in February 1641, when Charles admitted several reformist peers to the Privy Council but humiliatingly omitted Warwick.³⁷ For all its canvassing a rhetoric of harmony, the instability of the Santander poem offers a markedly contingent view of royal power—reliant on the authority of conquest, on the artifice of rhetoric, and on the crucial support of noblemen like 'Neglected Warwick'.

Waller's other courtly poems are generally less ambivalent, excluding oppositional voices like Warwick's, and praising royal policies which dovetailed with the Percy-Sidney faction's aims—particularly Charles' 'wise choice' of Northumberland as Lord Admiral.³⁸ A pair of poems on Northumberland's admiralship reliably clusters together in the early manuscript and printed witnesses, celebrating his dedication to public service:

³⁵ Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 74; the allusion is to Ovid, *Ex Ponto*, IV.iii.35.

³⁶ *Mr Wallers Speech in Parliament*, pp. 9-10.

³⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 199-200.

³⁸ In 'Of his Majesties receiving the newes of the Duke of Buckingham's death'; and, implicitly, in 'To the King on his Navy'; Raylor, 'Early Poetic Career', pp. 247, 252-53.

You on the barren seas, my lord, have spent
Whole springs and summers to the public lent...³⁹

This shift into financial language ('lent') inflects our sense of how the country is 'obliged' to Northumberland, implying a transactional arrangement, in which Northumberland can expect some return as his due.⁴⁰ This reinforces a sense of Northumberland as one of the *consilarii nati*, entitled to participate in government, fashioning him in the republican *persona* of the 'public man'.⁴¹ Another cluster of poems performs a similar operation for the Earl of Leicester, celebrating his appointment as ambassador to Paris in 1636—and 'that peace with France which keeps thee there'.⁴² Waller acted as a sort of dynastic custodian to the Sidneys—commemorating their family estate at Penshurst, and supporting Leicester's efforts to secure a good match for his daughter Dorothy (a.k.a. Sacharissa) by courting her in elegant poetry:

Or if she walk, in even ranks they stand,
Like some well-marshalled and obsequious band.
Amphion so made stones and timber leap
Into fair figures from a confused heap;⁴³

We will see in chapter four how Marvell appropriated an ironized version of this image, exploring its more problematic sexual connotations, in 'Upon Appleton House'. Waller suppresses the phallic implications of 'stand' by assimilating it to the conceit of Amphion, conventionally a regal figure but whom he has transferred into the country context of the Sidneys' estate.⁴⁴ These connotations of courtliness—and the language of 'harmony'—are predicated on the Sidneys' natural entitlement to participate in government.⁴⁵

Entitlement to high office was crucial in a political culture which tended not to think in terms of programmatic agendas but of personnel. Adamson illustrates this point by citing Northumberland's letter to Leicester ahead of the parliament of November 1640, which set out

³⁹ 'To my Lord Northumberland, upon the Death of his Lady', ll. 25-6 (paired with 'To my Lord Admirall, of his late sickness and recovery').

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, l. 29.

⁴¹ Richard Cust, 'The "Public Man" in late Tudor and early Stuart England', in Peter Lake and Stephen Pincus, eds., *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 2007).

⁴² 'To My Lord of Leicester', l. 12.

⁴³ 'At Penshurst' ('Had Sacharissa lived...'), ll. 15-18; Raylor, 'Early Poetic Career', p. 257.

⁴⁴ Waller also used the figure in 'On his Majesties Repairing of Pauls'; Marvell later re-appropriated it in *The First Anniversary of the Government under his Highness the Lord Protector*.

⁴⁵ 'At Penshurst' ('Had Sacharissa lived...'), l. 20.

not the forthcoming legislative initiatives, but rather the court offices expected to fall vacant.⁴⁶ Waller's poems engage in 'bridge-building', drawing alignments between potential officers, and implicitly advertising himself as the link between them.⁴⁷ Thus, 'To my Lord of Falkland' heralds the 1639 war: 'Brave Holland leads, and with him Falkland goes' (1), uniting Waller's allies amongst puritan peers at court (Holland) and his reformist friends at Great Tew (Falkland).⁴⁸ Maintaining that community of interest was to become an essential function of Waller's parliamentary career in 1640 and 41.⁴⁹ Significantly, this poetic bridge-building included the Rich family: Waller had a strong religious and economic interest in Warwick's colonial projects, and held shares in the Summer Islands Company, an important nexus for Warwick clients.⁵⁰ This would also later define his engagement with the Cromwellian Protectorate.⁵¹ His mock-heroic celebration of Protestant colonial expansion, 'The Battle of the Summer Isles', offers a miniature panegyric:

Warwick's bold Earl! Than which no title bears
A greater sound among our British peers;
And worthy he the memory to renew,
The fate and honour to that title due, (II.50-4)

Waller harks back once again to Warwick the Kingmaker, using a language of obligation to insist on the 'honour... due' to the Earl. But the poem also highlights 'the sweet sound of Sacharissa's name', which might make 'the listening savages grow tame' (I.70-1)—Dorothy Sidney's beauty combines with Warwick's governance in quelling disorder. This poem almost always appears in the early collections alongside Waller's elegy on Warwick's daughter-in-law Ann, 'Upon the death of my Lady Rich', which invokes a similar counterpoint between a violent state of nature—Warwick's estates 'prove all a desert', populated by 'savage beasts, or men as wild as they' (1-4)—and the Riches' orderly government. Again, Waller emphasizes Lady Rich's 'sacred friendship' with Dorothy Sidney, a relationship he also commemorated in 'Of the Friendship

⁴⁶ Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 132-33, citing letter from Northumberland to Leicester, 19th November 1640, in HMC 77, *De L'Isle and Dudley MSS*, vol. 6, ed. by G. Dyfnallt Owen (6 vols.; London, 1966).

⁴⁷ Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, p. 89.

⁴⁸ Although Falkland in fact served with the Earl of Essex: Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter VIII, p. 2.

⁴⁹ See Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 311-12.

⁵⁰ Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter VII, p. 20; Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 27, 54.

⁵¹ Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, pp. 123-5.

betwixt Sacharissa and Amoret'.⁵² The two young women allow Waller to idealize the friendship between the Sidney and Rich families, but the poems also place this alliance between noble families in a context of political governance.

Waller invoked rhetorical themes of order and harmony in a manner which was heavily contingent on the links of friendship and family between godly noblemen, and the continued preferment of those noblemen to high office. He supported this by invoking a sense of instability, a world characterized by 'rage', or 'savages', and counterpointing it with a language of obligation, through which government by the godly nobility, the *consilarii nati*, could bring order to the state. But the poems were not originally designed to be circulated in collections, and the act of compilation in 1640 changed their complexion. For instance, Waller's habit of rhetorical recycling now looked decidedly awkward. The dedicatory epistle to Henrietta-Maria used the Virgilian trope of echoing woods to construct a 'country' voice which could lay claim to impartiality:

And though the court and universities have no other mater of their song, yet if
our Ma^{tie} please to listen what Echo the county returns to so loud a praise,
Wee shall likwayes teach the woods to sound your royall name...⁵³

But this was culled almost verbatim from 'The Country to my Lady of Carlisle':

Nor ought the tribute which the wondering court
Pays your fair eyes, prevail with you to scorn
The answer and consent to that report
Which, echo-like, the country does return:
Mirrors are taught to flatter, but our springs
Present the impartial images of things. (7-12)

The distinction between flattering 'mirrors' and honest 'springs' comes under pressure when we are aware of the mirroring of this formula in the epistle to Henrietta. This poem makes an audacious allusion to the Judgement of Paris, introducing Carlisle to the beauty contest between 'Juno, Pallas, and the Queen of Love' (16)—the 'Queen of Love' being an epithet Waller had

⁵² On this identification, Thorn-Drury, ed., *Poems*, p. 307n.

⁵³ *ibid.*, p. ix.

elsewhere applied to both Carlisle and Henrietta.⁵⁴ Waller casts himself, with rather disingenuous modesty, as the ‘rural judge’ (13)—an allusion to Paris, the shepherd prince. The allusion is disrupted by the inescapable detail that Paris was not impartial but had in fact been bribed by Venus, and that this contention between goddesses indirectly caused the Trojan War. Readers aware of the long-running rivalry between Henrietta and Carlisle would have been struck by this puzzling implication.

In 1636-39, Waller’s praise of the Sidneys and Percies represented a factional alignment comprehensible within an overriding structure of loyalty to the king—although his panegyrics to the renegade Earl of Warwick stretched this convention to the limit. By 1640, this structure had been broken by the Scottish Rebellion. It is notable that Waller did not contribute a panegyric on Northumberland’s elevation to Lord General in February 1640, an appointment Northumberland worried would make him ‘as greate a reprobate as any Bishop’.⁵⁵ Northumberland’s opposition to Charles in the summer of 1640 saw him humiliatingly sidelined, and the conveniently-timed bout of illness he suffered now provided an interesting new context for ‘To my Lord Admiral, of his late sickness and recovery’.⁵⁶ When what was to become the Long Parliament convened in November, Waller’s poetic bridge-building helped cement the cooperation between moderate peers like Northumberland and his more radical connections in Warwick’s Junto—legitimized by a rhetorical umbrella of loyalty to the king. This fashioning of collective alignment was essential in a fractious coalition given to bouts of internal tension—as at the trial of Strafford in the spring of 1641.⁵⁷ Waller’s connections with the Percies and Sidneys explain why he was able to continue working with the Junto as the increasingly ‘Venetianizing’ or quasi-republican policies of 1641 drove his Great Tew allies Hyde and Falkland into the emerging royalist party.⁵⁸ When Charles made his last-ditch attempt to arrest the Five Members in January 1642, the Countess of Carlisle was instrumental in warning the Commons of the impending coup, betraying the

⁵⁴ ‘To the Queen, occasioned upon sight of her Majesties Picture’ (12); ‘In answer to a libell against her’ (2).

⁵⁵ Northumberland to Warwick’s son, Viscount Mandeville, cited in Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, p. 38.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 19, 50.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 157-8, 191-201.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 311-12, 392-405, 449-55, 480-2.

confidence of Henrietta-Maria, and attracting a great deal of misogynistic opprobrium as ‘the Legislative Lady, | Who now makes *Pym* her baby’.⁵⁹ The union which Waller’s early poetry collections had attempted to fashion between the puritan peers and the royal couple was now decisively fractured.

Waller’s compromised position was exposed by the escalation of events. After Waller played a leading role in the Oxford peace negotiations arranged between his allies Northumberland and Hyde in January 1643, Pym decided to move decisively against him, construing his information-gathering and coalition-building activities as evidence of a crypto-papist plot.⁶⁰ When Waller committed a violation of honour by attempting to involve Northumberland in the investigation, Northumberland acknowledged their personal links, but abandoned Waller ruthlessly to his fate.⁶¹ Waller saved himself, as we know, with a timely recantation and bribe, and he escaped with only a sentence of banishment. Soon afterwards the ‘opportunistic stationers’ Thomas Walkley and Humphrey Moseley moved to cash in on the ‘aura of ultra-royalist scandal’ by preparing their print editions of Waller’s poems.⁶² Raylor has shown how Moseley and Walkley’s commercial rivalry produced collections which aimed more for controversial impact than literary coherence—stitching Waller’s parliamentary speeches into the sequence of poems.⁶³ Contrary to common scholarly assumptions, in 1644 Moseley had yet to establish his later association with literary publishing, and likewise neither he nor Walkley were yet identifiable as royalist partisans.⁶⁴ Walkley was involved in publishing parliamentary documents—notably a list of Commons members with asterisks identifying those, Waller among them, who had ‘deserted the Parliament since it began’.⁶⁵ The resulting editions of Waller presented a series of contradictions: the poems praised royal policies which were subsequently

⁵⁹ Anon, *The Cities Farewell to the Parliament*, London, [?] early-1640s; see Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early-Modern England, 1550-1720* (Oxford, 1998), p. 376.

⁶⁰ Braddick, *God’s Fury, England’s Fire*, pp. 291-3; Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter X, pp. 12-14, 24-5.

⁶¹ Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter XI, pp. 1-6, 14-19.

⁶² Raylor, ‘Moseley, Walkley, and the 1645 Editions of Waller’, pp. 252-5.

⁶³ *ibid.*, pp. 251-9.

⁶⁴ Steven N. Zwicker, ‘The Day that George Thomason Collected his Copy of the *Poems of Mr. John Milton, both English and Latin, compos’d at Several Times*’, *RES*, 64 (2013) 231-45, p. 232.

⁶⁵ Thomas Walkley, *A new catalogue of the names of the knights for the counties, citizens and burgesses for the boroughs, and barons for the ports for the House of Commons, for this Parliament*. (London, 1644).

attacked in the speeches, and foregrounded the relationships between men and women who were now implacable enemies.

Steven Zwicker has noted how Moseley's follow-up to the Waller volume, the 1645 edition of Milton's *Poems*, carefully supplies dates of composition in the 1620s and 30s, 'distancing [the poems] from the controversies of the mid-1640s'.⁶⁶ We could see this as a response to the damaging effect on Waller's canon of its repurposing in the 1640s, where, Raylor argues, 'the delicate nuances and distinctions of his poems, their constant quest for moderation and balance, would have been lost'.⁶⁷ This is analogous to the flattening out of chronological nuance Rachel Weil has described as an effect of Civil War polarization in public rituals of oaths, speeches, and confessions, wherein complex personal histories became simplified occasions for the 'reaffirmation' of allegiance.⁶⁸ Waller's recantation speech—with which the volumes culminated—fell into an established genre of turncoat confessions and conversion narratives it was possible to project backwards, onto the preceding texts.⁶⁹ The homogenization of his works, their decontextualization and reduction to simplified genres, transformed him into the epitomic literary turncoat. In 1653, an anonymous poet (probably Robert Wild) mistakenly included Waller amongst the authors of a series of satires against Davenant, in whose mock-defence he was writing a new sequence of libels:⁷⁰

The Wits they grant, though one turnes Coat,
And writes now *Contra*, that *Pro* wrote.⁷¹

The allegation that Waller had attacked Davenant, despite also having contributed a commendatory poem to *Gondibert*, draws on a wider perception of Waller as a turncoat which reaches back to the editions of 1645.⁷²

⁶⁶ Zwicker, 'The Day that George Thomason...', pp. 237-9.

⁶⁷ Raylor, 'Moseley, Walkley, and the 1645 Editions of Waller', p. 255.

⁶⁸ Rachel Weil, 'Thinking about Allegiance in the English Civil War', *History Workshop Journal*, 61 (2006) 183-91, pp. 184-85.

⁶⁹ Hopper, *Turncoats and Renegadoes*, pp. 157-76.

⁷⁰ See chapter three.

⁷¹ *The Incomparable Poem*, p. 6.

⁷² Pace Thorn-Drury, who misinterprets this as a chronologically impossible reference to Waller's *A Panegyrick to My Lord Protector*, which Waller had not yet written: p. 324n.

2. Waller's Parliamentary Rhetoric

The remainder of this chapter will consider how Waller responded to the crisis of allegiance which disrupted his courtly poetry, starting with the parliamentary oratory for which he claimed to have abandoned poetry in 1640. Using the evidence of Waller's printed speeches and scribbled notes of his remarks in manuscript diaries, we can chart how he attempted to hold his difficult bridging role between the godly peers and moderate Commons-men like Falkland. Once again, we find Waller maintaining a dominant rhetorical convention—no longer that of harmony, but now the coherence of parliament's status as a court of law. But he also began to apply some distinctive intellectual resources, drawing on the Roman historians, Francis Bacon, and Machiavelli.

His first major contribution to parliamentary debate was the speech he gave in the Short parliament, around 23rd April 1640, on the English parliamentary tradition and on the Bishops. It circulated in several manuscript collections of Short Parliament speeches, and eventually reached the press in 1641 (under an erroneous title relating it to 'this present Parliament'). Waller draws on the conventional language of 'Custome', but simultaneously begins to apply a prudential mode of reasoning in Machiavellian vocabulary:

the occasion seemes to importune no lesse, necessity is come upon us like an armed man... it hath ever been the Custome of Parliaments by good and wholesome Lawes to refresh the *Common-wealth* in generall, yea to descend into the Remedies of particular grievances before any mention made of supply...⁷³

The image of an importunate 'armed man' suggests a Machiavellian understanding of the 'occasion' as a critical moment, demanding the exercise of *virtù*—Machiavelli had argued lengthy parliamentary debates were dangerous: 'when they are to cure that which cannot stay for time'.⁷⁴ Waller adds a language of 'necessity'—an important term in Machiavellian rhetoric, but also in Guicciardini's reason of state—appealing to an external, objective authority capable of

⁷³ Waller, *A Worthy Speech Made in the House of Commons, this Present Parliament* (London, 1641), p. 1.

⁷⁴ *Discourses*, Book I, chapter XXXIV, p. 144 (trans. Walker, p. 195).

dissolving constitutional protocols or obligations.⁷⁵ The next sentence turns on a contrast between ‘Custome’ and the need to ‘refresh’ the commonwealth, a language of cautious renovation, fashioned as ‘reduction’ in the Machiavellian sense of ‘restoration’ (*‘ridurre ai principii’*).⁷⁶ It was also a theme Bacon had emphasized in his Machiavellian essay ‘Of Innovations’, which had advised against ‘Experiments in States’ unless ‘the Necessity be Urgent’.⁷⁷ Waller illustrates the point in this speech with two Biblical proverbs: *‘Qui conturbat domum suam possidebit ventum... by new ways they seek to accomplish wonders, but in truth they graspe the wind’*, and *‘Stare super vias antiquas, & remove not the ancient bounds and land-markes which our Fathers have set’*. The forms of the proverbs as cited by Waller were lifted not from the Bible but from Bacon’s paraphrases in the *Advancement of Learning*.⁷⁸

Bacon was hardly a controversial authority to cite, particularly for Waller—a member of the Great Tew Circle and an intimate of Bacon’s old secretary, Hobbes. But innocuous authorities could sometimes be put to controversial use—as Waller shows with his citation of another standard Great Tew text, Richard Hooker’s *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*. Hooker, he avers, was ‘no refractory man’, yet:

[he] thinks that the first government was arbitrary, vntill it was found that to live by one mans will, *became the cause of all mens miseries, and that this was the originall of inventing Lawes*.⁷⁹

Waller paraphrases Hooker’s argument in Book I of the *Laws* that supreme power was constrained by its foundation in popular consent.⁸⁰ This was a striking reversal of received

⁷⁵ See Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric*, pp. 56-7; Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 18-19; Baldwin, ‘Reason of State and English Parliaments’, pp. 635-40.

⁷⁶ This had been a key theme of Waller’s earlier poem ‘On his Majesties repairing of Pauls’: Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 77; Raylor, ‘Waller’s Machiavellian Cromwell’, p. 393.

⁷⁷ Although Bacon also urged that ‘a Froward Retention of Custome, is as turbulent a Thing, as an *Innovation*’; Francis Bacon, ‘Of Innovations’, in *The Essayes or Counsels, Civill and Morall*, ed. by Michael Kiernan (Oxford, 1985), pp. 75-6.

⁷⁸ Waller, *A Worthy Speech*, p. 4. The borrowing is obvious from textual comparison, but unacknowledged in the print and manuscript witnesses. Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, ed. by Michael Kiernan (Oxford, 2000), pp. 28, 161. The injunction to ‘make a stand upon the Ancient Way’ is also paraphrased in English in the other Bacon text Waller had evidently consulted, the essay ‘Of Innovations’, *Essayes*, p. 76.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*, p. 5.

⁸⁰ Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book I, chapter X.5; ed. by Georges Edelen (3 vols.; Cambridge MA, 1977), vol. 1, p. 100.

perceptions of Hooker: Archbishop Laud and even the Great Tew circle had suppressed the contractual element in Hooker's thought in order to protect the *jure divino* claims of Church and monarchy.⁸¹ Waller was strikingly ahead of the parliamentary revaluation of Hooker spearheaded by Henry Parker in 1641.⁸² His speech quietly radicalizes Hooker's position, conveniently forgetting that Hooker's next move was to forbid any resistance to reigning monarchs.⁸³ Moreover, he complicates Hooker's reputation as a theorist specifically of the English polity by foregrounding the more abstract, general nature of his contractual argument. Waller rounds off the section by once more paraphrasing Bacon's essay 'Of Innovations':

*we all know how dangerous Innovations are, though to the better, and what hazard those Princes run that enterprise the change of a long established government.*⁸⁴

This mode of abstraction (talking about 'Princes' in general) shows Waller trying to debate in axiomatic rather than specifically English constitutional terms.

It is hard to tell whether any of this would have made much impact in the House. Studies of Waller's neighbour and fellow-MP Sir William Drake have indicated that more Commons-men may have studied humanist political thought than has been realised.⁸⁵ But it remains the case that Waller was operating near the limits of the genre of parliamentary speeches—where citations of common-law precedent and scripture remained the dominant modes of argument.⁸⁶ Shortly afterwards, Waller clashed with Pym (not for the last time) when he asked whether Ship Money was 'illegal', or merely a 'grievance'; Pym refused to countenance the distinction, demanding, 'if not illegal why doe we then Complayne of it?'⁸⁷ Pym was leaning on the convention of parliament's legal authority to constrain royal prerogatives—whereas Waller was seeking to

⁸¹ Michael Brydon, *The Evolving Reputation of Richard Hooker: An Examination of Responses, 1600-1714* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 46-57; see also Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 273-76, contra Trevor-Roper, 'Great Tew', pp. 191-94.

⁸² Brydon, *Evolving Reputation*, pp. 57-9.

⁸³ Hooker, *Laws*, Book I, chapter X.8; ed. Edelen, p. 103: 'to be commanded we do consent, when that societie whereof we are parte hath at any time before consented'.

⁸⁴ Waller, *A Worthy Speech*, p. 5.

⁸⁵ Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions*, pp. 176-7, 330-3; Mendle, 'A Machiavellian in the Long Parliament'.

⁸⁶ Baldwin, 'Reason of State and English Parliaments', pp. 627-28; Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 270-74.

⁸⁷ Debate on 29th April, 1641; Judith Maltby, ed., *The Short Parliament (1640) Diary of Sir Thomas Aston* (London, 1988), p. 97.

frame the question in more flexible terms. We should not exaggerate this division: Waller, like his Great Tew friends and noble patrons, worked in concert with the Junto, in the Short Parliament of May 1640, and in the early months of the Long Parliament called in November.⁸⁸

But he continued to raise eyebrows with some of his more unorthodox positions. The puritan antiquary Sir Symonds D'Ewes recorded a confrontation in March 1641 over an Elizabethan statute on the rights of Catholics. When Waller questioned its provenance, 'the clarke saied that he found it amongst the papers of that yeare', and Waller replied that 'it was a light answer', 'for which divers called him to the barre'. D'Ewes claims that he smoothed things over by intervening: 'he had offended by speaking slightlie of what hee should have spoaken seriouslie'.⁸⁹ Waller's scepticism about common-law methods of argument was something he shared with Hobbes and the other future turncoat poets; it reappeared again in the debate on the Bill of Attainder against Strafford the following month. Waller was amongst the moderates, including Northumberland, who hoped that Strafford's acquittal (or, at least, prosecution on non-capital charges) could be the price of a compromise with the king.⁹⁰ D'Ewes professed himself 'much amazed to see soe many of the house speake on the Earle of Straffords side'.⁹¹ Waller's approach was to attack the ideological underpinnings of the clause which accused Strafford of subverting the constitution: he 'doubted what weere the fundamentall lawes'. This prompted the godly common lawyer John Maynard to reply: 'he y^{at} did not know y^e fundamentall lawes of this kingdome is noe fitt man to sitt here.'⁹² By casting doubt on such fundamental components of parliamentary rhetoric, Waller aimed to slow down the radicalization of the House. As the paranoia following the Army Plot in May 1641 more sharply polarized debate, Waller stepped in

⁸⁸ Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 149, 223-25, 324-6, 339-40; Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter IX, pp. 13, 23.

⁸⁹ 15th March 1641; Wallace Notestein, ed., *The Journal of Sir Simonds D'Ewes, from the Beginning of the Long Parliament to the Opening of the Trial of the Earl of Strafford* (New Haven, 1923), p. 494.

⁹⁰ Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 240-44, 259-64.

⁹¹ BL Harley MS 163, f. 45^r.

⁹² 14th April 1641; that Waller made this intervention is evident from comparing D'Ewes, BL Harley MS 163, f. 45^r, with the unattributed comments recorded in Moore, BL Harley 476, f. 179^v.

to calm tensions and defend his friend Davenant, who had been arrested for his role in the conspiracy.⁹³

Waller's struggle against the tide of radicalization became much harder in the controversy unleashed that summer by the debates on the 'root and branch' abolition of bishops.⁹⁴ He made some heavyweight contributions to this debate, and one diarist's account further illustrates the difference of emphasis with antiquarians like D'Ewes:

Mr Simon Duce brought an authority out of an auncient Greeke MS. worth as he said very well a thousand poundes. Mr Waller proposed to spaike first of another government, whereof y^e platforme to be first adumbrated before they should proceed, saying y^t it was not the best way to take downe y^e wodden causeway, before it was seconded by another of earth or stone, here the waters would overflow all the groundes, & hinder even y^t better project...⁹⁵

This image of an inundation sweeping away causeways is reminiscent of Machiavelli's metaphor for Fortune's power to ruin the institutions of state:

And I liken her to a precipitous torrent, which when it rages, over-flows the plaines, overthrowes the trees, and buildings, removes the earth from one side, and laies it on another, everyone flyes before it, everyone yeelds to the fury thereof, as unable to withstand it[.]

This passage remained a crucial touchstone for the future turncoat poets as Machiavelli opened out an engineering metaphor to illustrate how human artifice and *virtù* could 'make provision against these excesses':

...with banks and fences so, that afterwards when it swells again, it shall all passe smoothly along, within its channel, or else the violence thereof shall not prove so licentious and hurtfull.⁹⁶

Waller's conceit constructs church government as one such work of engineering against the torrents of Fortune. Much as he may have wished to rebuild the foundations—he was after all no friend to episcopacy—the risks to the Commonwealth were too grave. A similar (perhaps redrafted) version of this speech, printed on 3rd July, re-configures episcopacy as a 'Counter-

⁹³ BL MS Harley 5047, f. 64^r.

⁹⁴ Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 327-28.

⁹⁵ BL Sloane MS 1467, f. 101.

⁹⁶ *The Prince*, chapter XXV, pp. 203-4 (trans. Bondanella, pp. 84-5).

scarf, or outwork' which risks being 'taken by this assault of the people'.⁹⁷ This Spenserian image of a beleaguered fortress appeals more to godly sensibilities, but retains a Machiavellian sense (not necessarily incompatible with Spenser) of the artificiality of religion, as a human instrument of social control.⁹⁸ Waller's description of church government as 'this Mysterie once revealed' hovers ambiguously between the spiritual sense of 'Mysterie', and the secular sense of *arcana imperii*. In opposing the abolition of episcopacy root-and-branch, Waller was in the majority and not in fact out of step with the Junto leadership, who wished to contain religious controversy.⁹⁹ And yet he persisted in applying a Machiavellian rhetoric which closed down constitutionalist perspectives and, instead, fashioned institutions of state as artificial constructions with a more narrowly pragmatic purpose.

A few days later, on 6th July, Waller made a major public gesture of solidarity with the Junto when he gave the speech indicting the ship money judge Justice Crawley at a conference of both Houses.¹⁰⁰ He began by politely acknowledging that 'it has not beene my happinesse to have the Law a part of my breeding'; in fact, the purpose of the speech was not to present a watertight legal argument, but rather to represent the judicial imposition of ship money as a 'conspiracie against the Common-wealth'.¹⁰¹ The speech sets out from constitutionalist anxieties about the creep of the reason-of-state vocabulary of 'necessity', 'which dissolving all Law is so much more prejudiciall to his Majestie then to any of us'.¹⁰² But this initial attack refers not to the ancient constitution, but rather to a more reductive principle of 'preservation', specifying laws that have 'power to kill, but none to protect us'.¹⁰³ Waller's espousal of self-preservation suggests he was willing, where his Great Tew colleagues were not, to embrace those aspects of contemporary

⁹⁷ *A Speech Made by Master Waller Esquire, in the Honorable House of Commons, Concerning Episcopacie, Whether it should be committed or rejected* (London, 1641), p. 4.

⁹⁸ On Spenser's Machiavellianism, see Petina, *Machiavelli in the British Isles*, pp. 17-18.

⁹⁹ Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 342-43.

¹⁰⁰ Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter IX, pp. 18-20.

¹⁰¹ *Mr Wallers Speech in Parliament*, pp. 1-2.

¹⁰² *ibid.*, p. 4; Baldwin, 'Reason of State and English Parliaments', pp. 627-29, 635-36.

¹⁰³ *Mr Wallers Speech in Parliament*, pp. 4-5.

theorists, Grotius, Selden, and Hobbes, which had made political obligations contingent on self-preservation.¹⁰⁴ He does not attack the language of ‘necessity’ *per se*, but merely argues that ship money was a ‘suppositious impos’d necessity’, applying a reason-of-state vocabulary of his own: ‘this mysterie is revealed, this visour of necessity is pull’d off’, implying another allusion to the *arcana imperii*.¹⁰⁵ He does briefly mention Magna Carta, but immediately returns to the more reductive concept of self-protection, citing the Old Testament law against boiling ‘a Kid in his mothers milk’ to abstract the secular maxim that ‘we should not use that to the destruction of any creature which was intended for its preservation’.¹⁰⁶

Next, Waller uses his nautical theme as a pretext to launch another conceit of inundation:

how barbarously would these men have let in the sea upon us, at once to wash away our Liberties, & to overwhelm, if not our Land, all the propriety wee have therein, making the supply of our Navy, a pretence for the ruine of our Nation.¹⁰⁷

Again, this metaphor constructs government as artificial, human engineering—which Waller directs his audience to consider in pragmatic terms of the ‘fruit and consequence of this judgement’. The climactic rhetorical *chiasmus* audaciously reappropriates the language of ‘necessity’:

as it changed our reall propriety into the shadow of a propriety, so of a feigned it has made a Reall necessity.¹⁰⁸

This represents another point of convergence between Waller’s position and Henry Parker’s. In his slightly earlier pamphlet *The Case of Shipmony*, Parker had similarly appropriated the language of necessity in order to argue not that ship money was illegal, but merely that it had not been beneficial to the common good.¹⁰⁹ Parker was building towards his declaration of parliamentary absolutism founded on popular sovereignty in 1642—concepts which remained unacceptable to Waller. But Waller’s metaphor constructing the state as a piece of human engineering, and his adoption of reason-of-state terminology, suggested he shared Parker’s

¹⁰⁴ See chapter one, and Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 276.

¹⁰⁵ *Mr Wallers Speech in Parliament*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p. 7-8.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁰⁹ Mendle, *Henry Parker*, pp. 43-5.

‘scepticism about the self-evidence of the law’ and willingness to expand the political remit of parliament.¹¹⁰

The final third of the speech supports this argument with two examples from Livy. The first was mentioned earlier, comparing the ship money judges with ‘ill boading birds’ that ‘have call’d necessity upon the State’. The judgement was ‘a cause of the unfained necessity we now suffer’, Waller argues, because of the ‘regret and discontent’ it had ‘bred among us’—again, focusing on political consequences rather than strict legality.¹¹¹ He clarifies this causal relationship with a second example from Livy, the rule of the Decemviri, which also features heavily in Machiavelli’s *Discourses*.¹¹² Waller discusses how ‘oppression... may wel suspend the courage of the valiant’, moving into a Machiavellian vocabulary of ‘valour’ (‘valour’ being Edward Dacres’ favoured translation of ‘*virtù*’).¹¹³ The Decemviri’s subversion of the laws ‘caused them to be lesse valued by their Neighbours’, encouraging the Sabines to invade. This perspectival understanding of power, as being ‘valued’ by one’s neighbours, was a Machiavellian concept which Hobbes also later adapted.¹¹⁴ Waller concludes that parliament must pursue ‘not the restitution of our ancient Lawes alone, but the restauration of our ancient courage’—returning to the Machiavellian topic of *ridurre ai principii*, which Waller connects specifically with a sense of *virtù*, here ‘ancient courage’.¹¹⁵ Machiavelli held that renovation could be undertaken through the *virtù* of a great man, or an institution.¹¹⁶ We will encounter the former in Cromwell, below; here, Waller is thinking about the institutional *virtù* of parliament. The example of the *Decemviri* fashions the Personal Rule as an alien and politically destabilizing dictatorship, implying that regime-change might be a plausible and historically not unprecedented consequence.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 46-7.

¹¹¹ *Mr Wallers Speech in Parliament*, p. 9.

¹¹² *Discourses*, book I, chapters XL-XLV, pp. 165-84 (trans. Walker, pp. 233-48).

¹¹³ *Mr Wallers Speech in Parliament*, p. 10; e.g. in *The Prince*, chapter VI, p. 33.

¹¹⁴ See further in chapter three.

¹¹⁵ *Mr Wallers Speech in Parliament*, pp. 10-11.

¹¹⁶ *Discourses*, book III, chapter I, pp. 436-41 (trans. Walker, pp. 387-90).

By this time most of Waller's reformist aims had been met, and his later interventions show him strenuously rowing back from the position he had arrived at in the ship money speech. He was as yet unable to accompany Parker and the Junto any further on their march towards *de facto* parliamentary sovereignty.¹¹⁷ In a letter to Charles, Edward Nicholas now included Waller with Hyde and Falkland as 'Champions in the maynten'nce of yo' Prerogative'.¹¹⁸ The so-called 'additional instruction'—which asserted a parliamentary veto over royal military appointments—provoked Waller's first major clash with the Junto since the debates on Strafford, an occasion to which he alluded:

as the Earle of Strafford had advized the King that because wee did not releive him hee was absolved from all rules of government; soe by this addition on the contrarie, wee should pretend that if the King did not remove his ill Counsellors wee were absolved from our duties [.]¹¹⁹

By comparing the additional instruction with Strafford's infamous advice that Charles was 'absolved from all rules of government', he accused the Junto of abandoning constitutionalism for the language of reason of state.¹²⁰ We can discern a reason for this newfound conservatism in the blood-curdling warnings about the consequences of military mobilization he began to issue in the spring of 1642:

Mr. Waller showed that this providing of arms and money would in issue draw on a civil war which would destroy the law, which did put a difference between man and man, and so all in the issue must come to a parity and confusion.¹²¹

The distinctive points in this account of civil war— a difference 'between man and man' rather than between contending factions, and a 'parity', or equality of strength—might suggest he had by now read Hobbes' manuscript tract on politics, *The Elements of Law*, or perhaps the newly-printed *De Cive*.¹²² A few weeks later, it fell to Waller to defend the king's 'Answer to the

¹¹⁷ Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 396-99, 414-20, 424-27, 432-36; Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter IX, p. 24.

¹¹⁸ Nicholas to Charles, 29th October 1641; William Bray and Henry Wheatley, eds., *Diary of John Evelyn* (2nd ed., 4 vols.; London, 1906), vol. 4, p. 116; quoted in Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter X, p. 3.

¹¹⁹ 6th November 1641: Willson Havelock Coates, ed., *The Journal of Sir Simonds D'Ewes From the First Recess of the Long Parliament to the Withdrawal of King Charles from London* (New Haven, 1942), p. 95. Pym's furious response forced Waller to withdraw from the chamber.

¹²⁰ On Strafford's reason of state, see Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, pp. 18-19.

¹²¹ 6th June 1642: Vernon F. Snow and Anne Steele Young, eds., *The Private Journals of the Long Parliament, 2 June to 17 September 1642* (New Haven, 1992), p. 44.

¹²² Hobbes, *The Elements of Law*, chapter XIX, in J. C. A. Gaskin, ed., *Human Nature and De Corpore Politico* (Oxford, 1997), p. 103.

Nineteen Propositions' in the Commons. Whereas Falkland, who drafted the Answer, had persuaded Charles to adopt a moderate constitutionalist stance, the brief record we have of Waller's position deviates markedly onto more pragmatic territory: 'Let us first look to our saifty, then to our honour'.¹²³ In the context of seventeenth-century (and especially parliamentary) codes of honour this was controversial stuff, in which John Safford also saw 'an echo of his reading Hobbes'.¹²⁴

The more learned diarists were still able to perceive lessons in political theory in his speeches—D'Ewes condensed one such intervention in July as 'artificial thing. Otho and Vitellius, father and son'.¹²⁵ Otho was thwarted in his ambition to become adopted heir to the childless Roman Emperor Galba, due to his perceived effeminacy; he violently avenged himself on his usurper, Piso, but committed suicide in the face of a revolt by his rival Vitellius. The major source of the story was Tacitus, and Henry Savile's translation indicates the lessons which early moderns could draw from it:

In Galba thou maiest learne, that a good Prince gouerned by euill ministers is as dangerous as if hee were euill himselfe. By Otho, that the fortune of a rash man is *Torrenti similis*, which rises at an instant, and falles in a moment.¹²⁶

Savile borrowed the Machiavellian metaphor of a torrent to describe the uncertain rising and falling of Otho's fortunes. We will encounter Dryden using this story in a similarly Machiavellian context in chapter six. The allusion served Waller's purposes here by incorporating the necessary critique of evil counsellors—a convention of parliamentarian rhetoric—whilst also warning against rash, impetuous action. But D'Ewes' cryptic note 'artificial thing' suggests Waller had raised a further point, about the artificiality of sovereignty.¹²⁷ This suggests a further decisive step towards adopting Hobbesian theory, although it is not clear how it fitted into Waller's overall argument—perhaps by emphasizing the mutability of sovereign power he hoped to focus his

¹²³ 23rd June 1642: Bruce, ed., *Verney Papers*, p. 181.

¹²⁴ Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter X, p. 18.

¹²⁵ 15th July 1642: Snow and Young, eds., *Private Journals*, p. 217.

¹²⁶ Sir Henry Savile, 'A. B. To the Reader', in, trans., *The Ende of Nero and Beginning of Galba: Fower Bookes of the Histories of Cornelivs Tacitvs* (London, 1591), sig. ¶13^r.

¹²⁷ The modern editors' claim that Waller was illustrating the traditional theory of the King's Two Bodies is possible but not clear from D'Ewes' note: Snow and Young, eds., *Private Journals*, p. 217n.

colleagues' minds on the consequences of rash innovations, and their pragmatic obligation to avert war.

Although Waller made far fewer recorded interventions in the House in the months between the outbreak of war and his expulsion in June 1643, his efforts to disrupt Junto operations were sufficiently determined for Pym to move decisively against him. D'Ewes recorded Waller's transformation once he was on trial for his life:

diverse of the Howse seing his sad and dejected Condition at the Barre whom they had formerly heard Speake in publike with soe much applause could not forbear shedding of teares...¹²⁸

Waller pleaded to be exempt from a military tribunal (which would almost certainly have executed him), offering pragmatic reasons against such a potentially dangerous precedent. He even recapitulated some of his old vocabulary: 'Necessity has of late forced you into untrodden paths', apparently paraphrasing Machiavelli's advice, 'to many things that reason doth not perswade thee, necessity bindes thee'.¹²⁹ According with this reasoning, he now accepted parliamentary sovereignty (perhaps he was still reading Parker): 'you governe in chiefe'.¹³⁰ This passage of the speech made an impact on D'Ewes, who recorded Waller's argument that 'many eyes are on us' and 'wee were soe tender of giuing way to the exercising and execution of martiall law' almost verbatim.¹³¹ But Waller also ventured a more audacious argument, that 'God that can bring light out of darkenesse... hath made this businesse in the event usefull to you', because 'you have by it made an happy discovery of your Enemies'.¹³² D'Ewes seems not to have noticed the subterfuge here—Waller was directly recycling his defence of Davenant after the Army Plot in 1641: 'Out of darknes god brings light, & of this we have had many good aduantages'.¹³³ Waller was evidently ready to weave a Calvinist vocabulary into his speeches

¹²⁸ BL Harley MS 165, f. 144^r.

¹²⁹ *Discourses*, book I, chapter VI, p. 35 (trans. Walker, p. 123).

¹³⁰ *Mr Wallers Speech in the House of Commons, On Tuesday the fourth of July, 1643* (London, 1643), p. 2.

¹³¹ BL Harley MS 165, f. 145^v; compare with Waller's passage 'the eyes of the world are upon us' in *Mr Wallers Speech*, p. 2.

¹³² *Mr Wallers Speech in the House of Commons*, p. 4.

¹³³ 12th August 1641, BL MS Harley 5047, f. 64^r.

when he needed to impress the godlier members of the House—but met only derisive irony in D'Ewes' account:

Mr Wallers credit & testimony became of a very low esteem & value. Some other particulars hee spake of lesser moment showing that now hee found the waies of piety & godlines to bee the only excellentest & best & safest waies.¹³⁴

Waller now appeared to be a backslider in both religious and political senses—and his duplicitous attempt to adopt Calvinist rhetoric merely hardened this perception.

3. Waller in Cromwellian England

If Waller wrote poetry in exile, little has survived. His occasional poems to George Rogers in 1646 and Lady Morton in January 1650, and his dedicatory poem on *Gondibert* in the same month, all bemoan a season of confusion and exile, but also look forward in elegantly vague terms to a more peaceful England. When Waller hoped that Rogers would 'return, reclaim our frantic isle' (23)—this sentiment aimed at a physician, rather than a king—he had already corresponded with Hobbes about how he 'might without blame pass the seas'.¹³⁵ If Waller had been alarmed by some of Henry Parker's conclusions, he now had plenty of time to read further in other bodies of theory which sought to redefine political obligations, but without asserting the problematic doctrine of popular sovereignty. Parker had set out to 'confront and dismiss the theology of kingship'; Hobbes too, albeit to more acceptably anti-democratic ends.¹³⁶ Waller offered to translate *De Cive*, and must have followed the exchange in the *Preface* to *Gondibert*, to which he contributed a dedicatory poem. As his purchasing and annotating a new copy of *The Prince* in 1654 indicates, Waller was also still interested in Machiavelli.¹³⁷ He may have been returning to Machiavelli in the light of what he had found in Parker and Hobbes, developing the

¹³⁴ BL MS Harley 165, ff. 144^r-145^r.

¹³⁵ Hobbes to Waller, 29th July 1645, letter 39 in Malcolm, ed., *Correspondence*, vol. 1, p. 125; Safford, *Life of Waller*, chapter XII, p. 24.

¹³⁶ Mendle, *Henry Parker*, p. 87.

¹³⁷ Raylor, 'Reading Machiavelli; Writing Cromwell', pp. 10-11.

more absolutist implications of Machiavellian thought—‘a quest’, according to Raylor, ‘for strategies to allow a ruler to consolidate his grip on dominions acquired by force’.¹³⁸ Waller followed Hobbes back to London in 1652, and set about establishing his loyalty to the Cromwellian regime, and applying his new understanding of rationalist absolutism to Cromwellian literature.

A Panegyrick to my Lord Protector appeared in May 1655. The second edition, which appeared soon afterwards, organized Waller’s heroic couplets into quatrains—if this were an authorial decision, it would reflect an interest in the iambic pentameter quatrain that Davenant had experimented with in *Gondibert*. It seems at least certain that Davenant’s literary theory influenced Waller’s representation of Cromwellian power. His declaration, at the climax of the poem, ‘let the Muses, with such notes as these, | Instruct us what belongs unto our peace’ (173-4) expressed in the traditional language of panegyric the objective which Davenant had now bolstered with his psychological theory in the *Preface to Gondibert*:

since Persuasion is the principall Instrument which can bring to fashion the brittle and misshapen mettall of the Minde, none are so fitt aides to this important worke as Poets.¹³⁹

Raylor has shown in detail how much of Waller’s *Panegyrick* is ‘little more than a versified summary’ of passages in Machiavelli: ‘empire and sinews, *virtù* and *forza*: the Machiavellianism of such terms could hardly be more apparent’.¹⁴⁰ Raylor devotes much attention to Waller’s suppression of Machiavelli’s republicanism:

in an energetic misreading, the poet studiously ignored the constitutional foundations of Machiavelli’s imperial argument (republican liberty), grafting it instead onto the domestic politics of *The Prince*...

But, on the other hand, Machiavelli himself was ‘explicit that what he has in mind is the establishment *either* of a republic *or* a kingdom’.¹⁴¹ What is at stake here is Machiavelli’s relativism, a set of political attitudes that are indifferent to particular constitutional forms: the

¹³⁸ *ibid.*, p. 397.

¹³⁹ Davenant, *The Author’s Preface to his Much Honor’d Friend, M. Hobbes*, in Gladish, ed., *Gondibert*, p. 38.

¹⁴⁰ Raylor, ‘Waller’s Machiavellian Cromwell’, p. 399.

¹⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 401.

Panegyrick attempts to show how Cromwell's *virtù* transcends the old institutions and alliances.¹⁴² It also encourages readers to follow Waller in re-imagining political obligations as contingent, and transferrable.¹⁴³

Cromwell's constitutional title provides an ideal opportunity to launch this conceptual argument at the beginning of the poem: 'Protect us from ourselves, and from the foe' (3). We saw the question of self-preservation rising in importance in Waller's parliamentary speeches; now he formulates it in distinctively Hobbesian terms: sovereignty is constituted by protection, which consists in the capacity to enforce the law ('protect us from ourselves'), and defend against external attack ('and from the foe'). He marries this to two further concepts: 'Make us unite, and make us conquer too' (4). The impulse to 'unite'—in the poem's subtitle, identifying the 'joint interest' of the nation—continues the poetic bridge-building, fashioning a community of interest, we saw in the earlier poems. But 'interest' was a new term for Waller, offering a usefully pragmatist, nonpartisan mode of analysis.¹⁴⁴ We also saw the earlier Waller emphasizing martial conquest; but, again, the Revolution had transformed the theme by establishing a militaristic regime which could stake its legitimacy on the concept. Waller expressed his approval of Cromwellian militarism in a letter to Hobbes in 1656, praising the Major Generals' regime for 'reducing us to provinces', a phrase lifted verbatim from the *Discourses*, applying Machiavelli's theory of 'territorial expansion as a mode of government'.¹⁴⁵ The *Panegyrick*'s depiction of the Scots as 'Preferred by conquest, happily o'erthrown' (93) suppresses the sexual connotations of the conceit and foregrounds its theoretical role as a basis for political legitimacy. Waller strives to unite these concepts of protection and conquest by implication when Cromwell grows into 'the world's protector' (32).

By comparison with Waller's earlier poetry, one group who are conspicuous by their near-absence in the *Panegyrick* are the nobility. With the old king dead and his cousin Cromwell

¹⁴² *ibid.*, pp. 388-91.

¹⁴³ See Edward Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, p. 91: 'Waller made a forceful case for his readers to reconceptualize their political loyalties'.

¹⁴⁴ Raylor, 'Waller's Machiavellian Cromwell', p. 395.

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 398; Waller to Hobbes, July 1656, letter 88 in Malcolm, ed., *Correspondence*, vol. 1, p. 297.

in charge, Waller no longer needed to win preferment by elevating baronial rhetoric. He does praise Cromwell's gentlemanly extraction, which 'gives hope again that well-born men may shine' (126). This is clearly meant to be reassuring: 'the noble rest secured in your blood' (128). But he places this relationship in an antithesis with 'the meanest', who rely on Cromwell's 'nature, mild and good' (127)—in fact, Cromwell stands in between the classes. He fulfils the role Machiavelli described in the *Discourses* of mediating between the plebeians and nobility.¹⁴⁶ Raylor also saw an allusion to this argument in the poem's opening observation that Cromwell can 'bridle faction' (2).¹⁴⁷ According to Machiavelli, it was the nobility who particularly needed bridling, because they were likelier to cause 'great tumults' than the plebeians, 'because the feare of loosing doth breed in them the same desires, which are in those, who aime at conquest'.¹⁴⁸ Waller continues:

Let partial spirits still aloud complain,
Think themselves injured that they cannot reign (5-6)

The 'partial spirits'—partial in that they are holding out against the 'joint interest' of the nation—vaingloriously refuse to accept 'they cannot reign'. That markedly monarchical verb undercuts any remnants of royalist loyalty by applying it to delinquent personal ambition. It also puns on 'rein', along with the previous 'bridle', invoking the horsemanship conceit, the conventional metaphor for the governance of wayward passions we encountered in chapter one.¹⁴⁹ The 'partial spirits' might remind us of Marvell's attack on the Scots' 'parti-coloured mind' in the 'Horatian Ode', but perhaps also the 'emulous' parliamentarians who had tried to challenge Cromwell.¹⁵⁰ There is no evidence Waller had read the Ode, but both poets were using Machiavelli to think about conflicts between factional interests and the state; and both had access to Davenant's *Preface to Gondibert*. As we will see in the next chapter, Hobbes and Davenant had followed Machiavelli in highlighting vainglorious emulation as the particularly destructive passion embodied by sections of the nobility.

¹⁴⁶ *Discourses*, Book I, chapters III-V, pp. 17-27 (trans. Walker, pp. 111-18).

¹⁴⁷ Raylor, 'Waller's Machiavellian Cromwell', p. 400.

¹⁴⁸ *Discourses*, Book I, chapter V, p. 27 (trans. Walker, p. 118); see further in chapter three.

¹⁴⁹ Tilmouth, *Passion's Triumph Over Reason*, pp. 42-3.

¹⁵⁰ Marvell, 'Horatian Ode', in Nigel Smith, ed., *Poems* (2nd ed.; Harlow, 2007), ll. 18, 105.

In the next couplet, Waller expands his charge against the ‘partial spirits’ by introducing the heavily contested term ‘liberty’:

And own no liberty but where they may
Without control upon their fellows prey. (7-8)

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes had subverted classical republicanism by defining ‘liberty’ very negatively, as mere ‘absence of Opposition’—a view we will also encounter in the other turncoat poets.¹⁵¹ Waller may not only have had republicanism in his sights: the term ‘liberty’ was also used by common-lawyers. He himself had used it in a constitutionalist context in his parliamentary speeches, arguing that liberty resided in the protection of landed property—a connection he may sustain ironically here, with a pun on ‘own’. The poem deflates other aspects of constitutional language: access to English territory is a ‘prerogative’ (45) bound not by the common law but by the Protector’s naval power. But Waller subverts ‘liberty’ principally by association with a brutal state of nature, where men ‘without control upon their fellows prey’. Raylor suggests that ‘prey’ connotes a Hobbesian bestiality; and ‘fellows’ may also offer a Hobbesian context with its levelling sense of equality, eliding distinctions of rank.¹⁵² The line also paraphrases Shakespeare’s Richard III, seeking to undermine his nephews’ legitimacy by casting doubt on Edward IV’s sexual continence: ‘Without control, lusted to make a prey’.¹⁵³ As he had in the Santander poem, Waller looked to the Wars of the Roses, now for a more obviously Machiavellian precedent for the collapse of legitimate monarchical rule in the face of violent innovation. All of this inflects our interpretation of Waller’s claim that:

The meanest in your nature, mild and good,
The noble rest secure in your blood. (127-8)

Waller puns on ‘blood’ in the sense of pedigree, but the overriding sense is generated by the structural counterpoint between Cromwell’s mildness and his ‘blood’ in the sense of sanguinary

¹⁵¹ *Leviathan*, chapter XXI, p. 324.

¹⁵² Raylor, ‘Waller’s Machiavellian Cromwell’, pp. 400-1.

¹⁵³ William Shakespeare, *Richard III*, III.v.84; ed. by James R. Siemon (London, 2009).

violence, the martial *virtù* which enables him to ‘secure’ both the nobility’s property and their rebellious instincts.¹⁵⁴

Cromwell acquires some of the language that Waller had previously used to fashion the baronial political culture of the late 1630s:

Our minds with bounty and with awe engage,
Invite affection, and restrain our rage. (111-12)

‘Affection’ reaches back to the amatory rhetoric he had mobilized in support of the personal rule. As in the Santander poem, it is tied in an unstable binary with ‘rage’, the passion associated with civil unrest. Waller also repeats his favoured rhyme of ‘rage’ with ‘engage’.¹⁵⁵ ‘Engage’ still offers the complex pun on political obligation, marital contract, and martial encounter. But the verb’s object is now specifically ‘our minds’, re-describing these engagements as psychological acts. Waller also introduces two less familiar terms. ‘Bounty’ reflects Waller’s attempts to enshrine economic pragmatism, rather than religion, as the basis for political action.¹⁵⁶ ‘Awe’, meanwhile, borrows the language of psychological coercion from *Gondibert*: we will observe Davenant’s habit of using a fortuitous rhyme to equate ‘awe’ with ‘law’ in the next chapter. A few lines later, Waller configures Cromwell as a Roman dictator:

[You...] Could order teach, and their high spirits compose;
To every duty could their minds engage,
Provoke their courage, and command their rage. (162-4)

The ‘high spirits’ recall the ‘partial spirits’ from earlier in the poem, but now used more explicitly as a psychological term, aligned with the ‘minds’ which Cromwell seeks to ‘engage’, juxtaposed once again in its rhyme with ‘rage’. Cromwell’s role is not just to ‘awe’ but to ‘provoke their courage’. This might seem to build on the Machiavellian ‘restauration of our ancient courage’ Waller had called for in his speech on ship money. But with his new psychological emphasis, he was now also influenced by Davenant’s belief (discussed in the next chapter) that it was

¹⁵⁴ OED, ‘blood’, n., senses 9 and 12.

¹⁵⁵ The rhyme was not an unconventional one, with precedents in Joshua Sylvester’s translation of du Bartas’ *Deuine Weekes* (London, 1605) and Sir Arthur Gorges’ translation of *Lucan’s Pharsalia* (London, 1614).

¹⁵⁶ Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, p. 94.

necessary to harness delinquent ambition into the ‘active motion of empire’.¹⁵⁷ As the homophonic internal half-rhyme of Waller’s line suggests, this restless ambition remained in essence the same force, but could be turned either to destructive ‘rage’ or productive ‘courage’.

It is this capacity to generate psychological order which determines Cromwell’s legitimacy:

Dazzling the eyes of all that did pretend,
To fierce contention gave a prosperous end. (139-40)

This ‘dazzling’ reinforces the sense of ‘awe’, overcoming the vainglorious spirits of ‘all that did pretend’. That phrase also has an analogue in Marvell, in ‘Tom May’s Death’ (1650) where Ben Jonson is ‘Sworn enemy to all that do pretend’ (30). The phrase is perhaps not quite distinctive enough to rule out coincidence—‘pretend’ was generally used to describe self-delusional overreaching.¹⁵⁸ But it shows the common terminology Marvell and Waller used to explore the problematic distinction between praiseworthy Machiavellian *virtù* and vainglorious pretension. The *Panegyrick* diplomatically stops short of offering a negative judgement on the royalist cause, conceding that there had been ‘fierce contention’. But this also opens out a relativist perspective: either side could have won, but it is Cromwell’s *virtù* that has brought a ‘prosperous end’ (we will see Cowley reach a similar conclusion in chapter five). A few lines earlier, Waller had already argued:

The only cure, which could from Heaven come down,
Was so much power and clemency in one! (123-4)

Paradoxically, and perhaps disingenuously, providential order does not intervene in favour of any particular constitutional solution, but rather to guarantee the maxim from Machiavelli’s *Discourses* that a state must be reformed through the *virtù* of one exceptional man, ‘he that uses violence... for redresse and order’.¹⁵⁹ Waller’s repeated exclamation, ‘one!’ (124-5) also finds a Machiavellian analogy in Marvell’s ‘Horatian Ode’, which emphasized, ‘so much one man can do’. What links both poems is the way in which incursions of providential rhetoric serve only to

¹⁵⁷ Davenant, *Preface to Gondibert*, p. 30.

¹⁵⁸ See Norbrook’s reading of ‘pretend’, *English Republic*, p. 276.

¹⁵⁹ *Discourses*, Book I, chapter IX, p. 50 (trans. Walker, p. 132); Raylor, ‘Waller’s Machiavellian Cromwell’, p. 401, citing Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 305.

authenticate a markedly anthropocentric dispensation in which Cromwell is defined by his singular agency:

Still as you rise, the state, exalted too,
Finds no distemper while 'tis changed by you;
Changed like the world's great scene! When, without noise,
The rising sun night's vulgar lights destroys. (141-44)

Waller had praised Henrietta-Maria in the Santander poem for her capacity to 'change again the counsels of our state'. The Revolution had made 'state' an even more usefully ambiguous, mutable term (as Davenant and Marvell would also find).¹⁶⁰ In the context of royal panegyric, the Augustan image of the sun rising might suggest a providential or teleological order (this was true of Henrietta in the Santander poem); now, it suggests to Raylor 'a Polybian view of history as a cyclical process'.¹⁶¹ On this view, the Stuart monarchy had simply had its day, and Cromwell had refashioned the state into a new form. To this we can add the theatrical metaphor of the 'world's great scene'—conceiving the state as a work of artifice, perhaps with an eye to Davenant's absolutist theory of drama, and casting Cromwell, rather than God, as the determining dramatist.

The *Panegyrick* legitimizes a view of the universe as characterized by change, in which states are artificial constructs fashioned by those with the agency to harness such change. Appropriately, whilst we can discern some conceptual and linguistic continuities with Waller's earlier poetry, his basic theoretical framework has been transformed: by a re-engagement with Machiavelli, as a theorist of revolution rather than state prudence, by Hobbes' *Leviathan*, and by Hobbes and Davenant's exchange over *Gondibert*. The *Panegyrick* works to refashion concepts of obligation and legitimacy as psychological categories, governed by Cromwell's capacity to guarantee stability by harnessing the nation's wayward courage into colonial expansion. The English Revolution liberated Waller from the cautious emphasis on tradition and renovation—in opposition to innovation—which he had maintained in his parliamentary speeches. Coupled with his reading of Hobbes, this enabled him to fully embrace the rationalist authoritarianism he had dabbled with in some of his speeches. This helps explain the poem's evasiveness about whether

¹⁶⁰ Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, p. 91; see further in chapter four.

¹⁶¹ Raylor, 'Waller's Machiavellian Cromwell', pp. 399, 401-2.

Cromwell is, or ought to be, a king: Waller reads little essential significance into such surface nomenclature; what matters now is not just Cromwell's *de facto* power, but his expansionist *virtù* and its capacity to 'bridle faction'. Waller continued to pursue a sense of unity and community in his poetry—but had had to throw out much of the old rhetoric in order to do so. The next two chapters, on Davenant and Marvell, will explore the contexts and debates in 1649-51 that shaped the transition we have discerned in Waller—and focus particularly on the extensive statement of rationalist theory in *Gondibert*.

Chapter Three

Davenant, Hobbes, and Romance

Davenant the poet laureate, army plotter, and pirate had a well-earned reputation as an extreme royalist. But the *Preface to Gondibert* he published in 1650 marked a new equivocality in his thinking. He defines ‘Courts’ as ‘all abstracts of the Multitude; either by King, or Assemblyes’. Later, he defends the ‘desire of Fame’ by claiming: ‘without it, hereditary Power, or acquir’d greatnesse can never quietly governe the World’.¹ The phrase ‘King, or Assemblyes’ would have been familiar to readers of Hobbes, who frequently used this and similar constructions to emphasize the general nature of his theory of sovereignty, not invested in any particular constitutional form. The concept of ‘abstracts of the Multitude’ may also reflect Hobbes’ theory of representation, whereby the sovereign ‘personated’ the people (rather than represented it in a more democratic sense)—again, it is usefully non-prescriptive about constitutional specifics.² And Davenant’s distinction between ‘hereditary Power’ and ‘acquir’d greatnesse’ has a direct analogue in Hobbes’ taxonomy of commonwealths by ‘inheritance’ and ‘acquisition’ (Davenant shared his terminology here), both equally valid models for government.³ This chapter argues that Davenant had been reading Hobbes carefully, and that this helped him formulate a new way of thinking—which made normative statements about both monarchies and republics, and inheritance and conquest. He now expressed a surprisingly equivocal view of regime change:

the Peoples anger, by a perpetuall coming in of new Oppressors is so diverted in considering those whom their Eyes but lately left, as they have not time enough to rise for the Publique: and evill successors to power are in the troubled Streame of State like succeeding Tides in Rivers, where the Mudd of the former is hidden by the filth of the last (p. 33)

¹ Davenant, *Preface to Gondibert*, pp. 12, 26.

² Malcolm, ‘Introduction’, pp. 16-17.

³ *Leviathan*, chapters XIX and XX, pp. 300-2, 306-8, *passim*.

Davenant's channel of argument does not seem clouded by any nostalgia ('Mudd') for his loyalty to Charles I.

Gondibert is programmatic and expansive (a term Davenant coined), not constrained by the adventitious poses of Waller's poems.⁴ Hence this chapter follows a different structure to the previous one, charting how Davenant's ideas play out across the *Gondibert* project at greater length. Davenant ceased to be the poet of divinely-inspired love between monarchs and subjects, and the loyal client of royal patronage. His newly depersonalized understanding of political obligations broke this ideological link, and enabled him to transfer his allegiance to the Commonwealth. The *Preface* ventures a dynamic synthesis of Hobbes and Machiavelli's thinking on political relationships, which, in turn (as I suggested last chapter with Waller's *Panegyrick*) influenced the other turncoat poets. We will also reflect further on the significance of Aubrey's remark on Davenant's religion, cited in chapter one:

His private opinion was that Religion at last, —e.g. a hundred years hence,—
w^d come to a settlement, & that in a kind of ingeniose Quakerisme.⁵

The first section will outline the context for this move; the second will suggest how it can be discerned in *Gondibert*. In the third, I will sketch some aspects of and responses to Davenant's career in the 1650s, to see how far the trajectory projected by *Gondibert* continued in its aftermath.

1. Davenant in 1650-51

Davenant had good reason to be ambivalent about the royalist cause when he wrote his *Preface* to *Gondibert* at the end of 1649. After the catastrophe of the regicide, Charles II had offered significant concessions to the Scottish Covenanters to secure their alliance in restoring his three kingdoms. Although their faction, centred on Henrietta-Maria at the Louvre, seemed to be

⁴ *OED*, 'expansive', adj., sense 1. a.; see also Allsopp, 'An Annotated Copy', p. 36n.

⁵ Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, vol. 1, p. 145.

in the ascendancy, this shift sidelined Hobbes and Davenant. Charles had conceded command over the militia, against Hobbes' strongest advice (supported by Davenant in *Gondibert*). Charles' relinquishment of the Church of England was more welcome to Hobbes and Davenant, but he did so by embracing the very group they, like many royalist wits, thought even worse: the Presbyterians. An opportunity to replace the defunct Church with an anti-episcopal, Erastian settlement had been squandered by Charles but seized by the Cromwellian Independents in England. The protective amity of the Cavendish household notwithstanding, the exiled court was in a cycle of fractious inertia.⁶ Aubrey reports, on Hobbes' recollections, that the first drafts of *Gondibert* which Davenant circulated in manuscript were met with satirical mockery by Cavalier wits in John Denham's circle:

To sacrifice thy sleep, thy diet,
Thy business; and what's more, our quiet.⁷

When Davenant was posted to the colonies in 1650, Denham and friends revelled in *Gondibert*'s reduction to a 'West Indy Rat'.⁸ The move was effectively a demotion—as we saw in chapter one, Davenant's standing had been badly damaged by his irreverence for the Church. Even Waller's dedicatory verse in *Gondibert* fashions Davenant as Ovid, the political exile, using the verb 'to banish'.⁹ Hobbes specified banishment, in a newly expanded section of his theory in *Leviathan*, as one of the conditions sufficient to dissolve a subject's political obligations and enable the transferral of allegiance.¹⁰ This, we recall, was the clause which legitimated Hobbes' own defection in 1652.¹¹ Davenant published his *Preface to Gondibert*, with its *Answer* from Hobbes, in January 1650. And he did not merely circulate it in manuscript amongst the exiled royalist community: he went to the extent of having a French publisher, Matthieu Guillemot, publish it in English, and presumably expected the *Preface* to be read in London as well as in Paris.

⁶ Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, p. 101.

⁷ Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, vol. 1, p. 143.

⁸ *Certain Verses*, p. 4.

⁹ Waller, 'To Will. D'avenant, Upon his Two first Books of *Gondibert*', in Thorn-Drury, ed., *Poems*, l. 19.

¹⁰ *Leviathan*, chapter XXI, p. 346.

¹¹ Malcolm, 'Introduction', pp. 96-99.

It is hard to tell how far Davenant was abreast of the debates in London into which his *Preface* would emerge. But Hobbes remarked in *Leviathan* on the ‘divers English books lately printed’, probably thinking of the two writers in the Engagement controversy who had specifically cited his works, Anthony Ascham and Marchamont Nedham.¹² Hobbes’ earlier tract *The Elements of Law* was pirated in 1650 in two halves, *Humane Nature* and *De Corpore Politico*, by Engagers repurposing his definition of sovereignty in terms of *de facto* power to support the Republic. Jon Parkin has argued this reappropriation ‘allowed readers to see exactly how flexible Hobbes’ theoretical defence of sovereignty could be’.¹³ In England, it proved possible to read the *Preface to Gondibert* as bound up with this context, literally so in the copy of the second edition (also 1650) now held in the Cambridge University Library, which is joined in a contemporary binding with the Engager pirate edition of *Humane Nature*.¹⁴ Readers interested in Hobbes’ psychology could turn to *De Corpore Politico* for its political, and Davenant’s *Preface* for its literary implications. Nedham also perceived this connection: when the poem *Gondibert* eventually went on sale in December 1650, he gave it a marketing push alongside an advertisement for *Humane Nature* in the new state newsbook *Mercurius Politicus*.¹⁵ Nedham had championed Davenant’s cause in the pages of *Politicus* intermittently through the summer and autumn of 1650; and we will explore in Chapter Four how Marvell also became interested in Davenant at this time.¹⁶

Meanwhile, the American venture had barely got past the Channel Islands. Davenant was captured in May 1650 and imprisoned in the Tower; in July, the Commons voted to try him for treason. He added the pessimistic postscript to the unfinished *Gondibert* in October—‘I am interrupted by so great an experiment as Dying’ (p. 250)—and it was entered in the stationers’ register by Thomas Newcomb in November. But Davenant had no intention of dying. We might see the publication of *Gondibert* at the end of 1650 as part of a concerted campaign to secure his

¹² *ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

¹³ Parkin, *Taming the Leviathan*, p. 73.

¹⁴ Cambridge University Library, shelfmark: Hunter.e 65.12.

¹⁵ *Mercurius Politicus*, no. 29, 19th-26th December 1650, p. 486.

¹⁶ *Mercurius Politicus*, 5 (4th-11th July 1650), p. 70, and 6 (11th-18th July 1650), p. 85.

pardon and release. He supervised the volume's production carefully—Newcomb was evidently able to send the printed sheets to him in the Tower (not far from his shop at Baynard's Castle).¹⁷ Almost all of the surviving copies carry corrections in Davenant's own hand.¹⁸ Harold Love has cited this edition as an example of a print author trying to fabricate the prestige and intimacy of manuscript publication.¹⁹ The corrections are incomplete and unsystematic, and occasionally seem calculated to be intrusive—again, projecting a sense of prestige and intimacy.²⁰ For example, Davenant rectified a missing plural 's' in 'Priests' (II.i.35) not by inserting a superscript character, but by laboriously deleting the whole word and writing it out again in the margin—one early reader irritably struck out this intervention.²¹ He even subverted his proclamation of imminent death in the *Postscript* by making a barely-substantive emendation of 'to' to 'till' in the phrase, 'I beseech thee... not to take it ill, that I run not on *till* my last gasp' (p. 250).²² Even when playing dead, Davenant's hand appears, drawing attention to his continued survival—and his capacity for self-amendment.

The reason for making this effort is suggested by the presentational copies Davenant made to potential patrons. Two of the surviving inscriptions, signed from the 'Tower' on 19th December 1651, were directed to prominent parliamentary grandees. One was to the Republic's leading intellectual, John Selden, whose affinities and friendship with Hobbes we noted in chapter one.²³ The other was Major John Wildman, the Leveller, who had recently distanced himself from his radical colleagues and accommodated himself to the Republic.²⁴ Selden and Wildman were part of the coalition of opinion able to support the nascent regime. We can also

¹⁷ Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, pp. 116-19; Gladish, ed., *Gondibert*, pp. xxxiii-xxxv.

¹⁸ D. H. Woodward, 'The Manuscript Corrections and Printed Variants in the First Edition of *Gondibert* (1651)', *The Library*, V, 20 (1965), 298-309, p. 302; Niall Allsopp, "'Lett none our Lombard author rudely blame for's righteous paine": An Annotated Copy of Sir William Davenant's *Gondibert* (1651)', *The Library*, VII, 16 (2015) 24-50, pp. 25-8.

¹⁹ Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1993), p. 54.

²⁰ Woodward, 'Manuscript Corrections', p. 301; Allsopp, 'An Annotated Copy', p. 28.

²¹ Corpus Christi College, Oxford, shelfmark LC.5.d.4, sig. Cc2^v. Gladish, ed., *Gondibert* reproduces a similar example on p. xxiv.

²² *Gondibert* (1651), sig. Kkk1^v, my emphasis.

²³ Bodleian Library, shelfmark D. 8. Art. Seld.; see Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, pp. 164-65.

²⁴ Princeton University Library, shelfmark RHT 17th-148. Richard L. Greaves, 'John Wildman', *ODNB*, www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29405 (accessed 20th October 2015).

assume signed copies were directed towards two further grantees, Henry Marten and Bulstrode Whitelocke, who were primarily responsible for winning Davenant's reprieve in the House of Commons.²⁵ He seems to have thrown the net wide in search of patrons and protectors. Marcus Nevitt has described the first, quarto edition of *Gondibert* as 'the calling card of a well-connected mind for hire, who is ready... to be put into the service of the newly modelled state'.²⁶ Davenant's release was nominally agreed by the end of 1651; in July 1652, he wrote to Marten thanking him for his aid, in a highly suggestive wording: 'the *obligation* you lay upon me shall be for ever acknowledg'd'.²⁷ If his expulsion from the court had been interpreted by some as banishment, after his release from prison he now found himself fulfilling another of the key conditions Hobbes had specified as legitimizing a transferral of allegiance:

If a Subject be taken prisoner in war; or his person, or his means of life be within the Guards of the enemy, and hath his life and corporall Libertie given him, on condition to be Subject to the Victor, he hath Libertie to accept the condition; and having accepted it, is the subject of him that took him; because he had no other way to preserve himself.²⁸

All of this offers us some clues to the politics of *Gondibert*. We can add to this the theoretical position Davenant maps out in the *Preface*. He constructs the *Preface* as a covering letter attached to a copy of Books I and II which he left with Hobbes when his departure for America interrupted work on Book III (p. 44). But, he claims, Hobbes had already given the poem 'a daylie examination as it was writing' (p. 4). Hobbes replies graciously in his *Answer*, telling Davenant 'I have used your Judgment no lesse in many thinges of mine' (p. 54). Hobbes scholars, taking a dim view of Davenant's capabilities, have tended to discount this politeness, but we will conjecture in the course of this chapter what Hobbes might have gained from at least

²⁵ Bod. MS Aubrey 6, marginal insertion on f. 47^r; Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, vol. 1, p. 144; Edmonds, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, p. 118.

²⁶ Nevitt, 'Insults of Defeat', p. 292.

²⁷ HMC 31, *Report XIII, Appendix Part IV: Rye and Hereford*, ed. by William Dunn Macray (London, 1892), p. 389; quoted in Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, p. 118 (my emphasis).

²⁸ *Leviathan*, chapter XXI, p. 344.

hearing Davenant's perspective.²⁹ We saw at the outset the equivocality that appears in Davenant's rhetoric. He follows Sidney in distancing his poem from historical specifics:

wise poets think it more worthy to seeke out truth in the passions, then to record the truth of actions; and practise to describe Mankinde just as wee are persuaded or guided by instinct, not particular persons, as they are lifted, or levell'd by the force of Fate (p. 5)

As I argued in chapter one, this should discourage us from seeking topical allegories in *Gondibert*, which works instead to 'seeke out truth in the passions', that is, to dramatize a general theory of psychology and the political relations it entailed. Davenant moves beyond the Sidneian basis of the argument to contrast the 'dead' truth of history with poetry's 'truth operative, and by effects continually alive' (pp. 10-11). The sense of truth as 'operative' seems to capture the restless motion of kinetic psychology. He goes on to characterize poetry as a military operation, which could also operate upon the mind of the reader.³⁰ All this justifies his decision to choose a distant, romance setting, in a heroic Lombard past:

for men (even of the best education) discover their eyes to be weake, when they looke upon the glory of Vertue (which is great actions) and rather endure it at distance then neer; being more apt to beleeve, and love the renowne of Predecessors, then of Contemporaries, whose deeds excelling theirs in their owne sight, seeme to upraid them, and are not reverenc'd as examples of Vertue, but envy'd as the favours of Fortune (p. 11)

He follows Spenser's justification of his setting *The Faerie Queene* 'furthest from the daunger of enuy', but annexes a more detailed structural account of envy: Hobbes' inclusion of 'glory' as one of the three causes of civil war had made envy a major force in his political psychology, as humans guarded their own reputation and sought to emulate others'.³¹ And yet Davenant persists in identifying glory with 'Vertue', which he specifies as 'great actions'—closer to the Machiavellian sense of masculine force, held in dynamic tension with *fortuna*, necessitating a careful distinction between 'great actions' and 'the favours of Fortune'.³² By performing this

²⁹ e.g. Malcolm, 'Introduction', p. 106; Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, pp. 142-43.

³⁰ See also Niall Allsopp, 'Sir Robert Howard, Thomas Hobbes, and the Fall of Clarendon', *The Seventeenth Century*, 30 (2015) 75-93, pp. 78-81.

³¹ The 'Letter to Raleigh' in Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. by A. C. Hamilton (rev. ed.; Harlow, 2007), p. 715; *Leviathan*, chapter XIII, p. 192.

³² Machiavelli reflected on 'the one and the other of these wayes about the attaining to be a Prince, by Vertue, or by Fortune', *The Prince*, chapter VII, p. 43 (trans. Bondanella, p. 24).

negotiation between *virtù* and *fortuna* Davenant argues he can fulfil ‘the principall Art of Poets’, which is ‘to make great actions credible’ (p. 11).

In the next section, Davenant attaches this argument to a particular social group:

the most necessary are those who become principall by prerogative of blood (which is seldom unassisted with education) or by greatnes of minde, which in exact definition is Vertue. The common Crowd (of whom wee are hopeless) wee desert; being rather to be corrected by lawes (where precept is accompany'd with punishment) then to be taught by Poesy; (p. 13)

This address to noble readers—‘principall by prerogative of blood’—continued the sense of social prestige which the manuscript features added to the first edition of *Gondibert*. Davenant again insists on the ‘exact definition’ of ‘Vertue’ as ‘greatnes of minde’, which still foregrounds connotations of resilience and valour. Yet the nobility’s ‘greatnes of minde’ caused problems, as we saw in Waller’s *Panegyrick*. Machiavelli had argued in the *Discourses* that the nobility are most likely to cause ‘great tumults’:

because the feare of loosing doth breed in them the same desires, which are in those, who aime at conquest: because men thinke, they hold not surely what they have, unlesse they make a new addition of somewhat else... and this also may we adde, that their unlimited and ambitious behaviours, kindle in the breasts of those that have not, a desire to have, or to be reveng’d on those that despoile them...³³

Machiavelli’s sense of ‘unlimited and ambitious behaviours’ is closely compatible with Hobbes’ theory of mankind’s

perpetuall and restless desire of Power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death... because he cannot assure the power and means to live well, which he hath present, without the acquisition of more.³⁴

Both Waller and Davenant were struck by this close convergence, and Davenant highlights the way appetitive desire is kindled in the nobility:

the Characters of men (whose passions are to be eschew’d) I have deriv’d from the distempers of Love, or Ambition: for Love and Ambition are to often the raging Feavers of great minds. (p. 13)

But he suddenly turns to praise aristocratic ambition:

³³ *Discourses*, Book I, chapter V, p. 27 (trans. Walker, p. 118).

³⁴ *Leviathan*, chapter XI, p. 150.

Yet Ambition (if the vulgar acception of the Word were corrected) would signifie no more then an extraordinary lifting of the feet in the rough ways of Honor, over the impediments of Fortune (p. 13)

Once again, he specifies a qualified definition, this time of the term ‘Ambition’, which foregrounds its Machiavellian aspects, of *virtù* grappling for mastery over fortune.³⁵ He begins with a warning against the nobility’s dangerous susceptibility to ‘Love and Ambition’, but ends up declaring, ‘good men are guilty of too little appetite to greatnesse’, and equating ‘contentednesse’ with ‘Lasynesse’ (p. 13). The association of ambition with love goes back to a basic categorical distinction Hobbes had made between appetite (love or desire) and aversion (hate or fear), according to which ambition constituted a ‘*Desire* of Office, or precedence’.³⁶ Davenant maps this psychological distinction onto one of social class: he evidently thinks the ‘common Crowd’ can be governed through fear, or ‘punishment’, but the nobility require a different sort of government which can meet their more elevated passions of love and ambition.

In a later section of the *Preface*, Davenant proposes his solution which, again, is suggestive as a source for Waller’s *Panegyrick*: adapting Machiavelli’s recommendation of colonial expansion as a way of harnessing disruptive ambitions.³⁷ But Davenant ties it to a more obviously Hobbesian conceptual argument, beginning from the bestial state of nature:

unapt for obedience (in the condition of Beasts whose appetite is Liberty, and their Liberty a license of Lust). (p. 30)

This reductive concept of ‘license’ is founded on Hobbes’ ultra-negative definition of ‘Liberty’ as mere ‘absence of Opposition’, which we encountered last chapter.³⁸ Davenant invokes the nobility as ‘the painfull Protectors, and enlargers of Empire; by whom it actively moves’ (p. 30).

Here is another image of restless motion, drawing a deterministic analogy with the ocean:

such active motion of Empire is as necessary as the motion of the Sea; where all things would putrifie, and infect one an other, if the Element were quiet; so it is with mens minds on shore... the Mindes of Men are more monstrous, and require more space for agitation and the hunting of others, then the Bodies of Whales (p. 31)

³⁵ See *The Prince*, chapter XXV, p. 203 (trans. Bondanella, pp. 84-85).

³⁶ *Leviathan*, chapter VI, pp. 78-80, 84; Tilmouth, *Passion’s Triumph Over Reason*, pp. 237-43.

³⁷ *Discourses*, book II, chapters IV, XXI, pp. 275-83, 366-9 (trans. Walker, 283-8, 341-3); Raylor, ‘Waller’s Machiavellian Cromwell’, p. 398.

³⁸ *Leviathan*, chapter XXI, p. 324.

The monstrous ‘Bodies of Whales’ pun on Hobbes’ concept of the Leviathan. As I argued in chapter one, Hobbes’ mechanistic psychology interpreted passions like ambition as normative rather than intrinsically degenerative forces, and which could hypothetically be harnessed to productive ends.³⁹ So violent appetites could safely be exercised through military endeavour—and, accordingly, Davenant appeals to the nobility in their traditional role as ‘Leaders of Armies’:

as to very necessary Men (whose office requires the uttermost aides of art, and Nature, and rescues the sword of Justice, when tis wrested from supreme Power by Commotion) (p. 31)

This closely parallels Hobbes’ insistence in the *Elements of Law* that ‘the power of defence, that is to say the sword of war, be in the same hands wherein is the sword of justice’ (Davenant repeats the maxim again two paragraphs later).⁴⁰ But Davenant goes further than Hobbes in that the sword ‘requires the uttermost aides of art’: ‘how much those Images of Action prevaile upon our minds, which are delightfully drawne by Poets?’ (p. 31) The poet’s role is to foster political order by provoking readers’ heroic appetites for glory, but channelling them into the ‘active motion of empire’.

This focus on military commanders pinpointed a problematic ambiguity in Hobbes’ theory. At the time of writing, Davenant presumably knew that Hobbes was greatly expanding the political role he would ascribe to military leaders in *Leviathan*, making a marked concession to contingency:

A Commander of an Army in chiefe, if he be not Popular, shall not be beloved, nor feared as he ought to be by his Army; and consequently cannot performe that office with good successe. He must therefore be Industrious, Valiant, Affable, Liberall and Fortunate, that he may gain an opinion both of sufficiency, and of loving his Souldiers. This is Popularity...⁴¹

We are accustomed to the primary role of fear in Hobbes’ theory, but here he espouses the rather alien concept of popularity.⁴² There is also a concentration of vocabulary with markedly Machiavellian connotations: *industria*, valour (Edward Dacres’ preferred translation for *virtù*),

³⁹ See also Tilmouth, *Passion’s Triumph Over Reason*, pp. 222-33.

⁴⁰ *Elements of Law*, chapter XX, p. 112.

⁴¹ *Leviathan*, chapter XXX, p. 550.

⁴² Malcolm glosses the word as ‘being liked by the people’ and ‘cultivating the favour of the people’: *Leviathan*, p. 132n.

and *fortuna*.⁴³ Like the Prince, Hobbes' commander must negotiate between the competing aims of being 'belov'd' and being 'feard'.⁴⁴ Hobbes' focus on reputation—the commander need only 'gain an opinion... of sufficiency'—calls to mind Machiavelli's advice that there is 'no necessity for a Prince to bee endued with all these above written qualities, but it behooves well that he seeme to be so'.⁴⁵ Reputation had become important in Hobbes because of his inclusion of glory as one of the three causes of civil war: 'Reputation of power, is Power'.⁴⁶ And here is the problematic ambiguity: Hobbes' theory of sovereignty supposedly obviates the need to compete for glory by investing all power in a unitary sovereign; but that sovereign power is enforced by military leaders whose own personal authority now depends on their popular reputation.⁴⁷ So Davenant's reading of Hobbes accentuates those ambiguous aspects most inflected by Machiavellianism. By expanding the roles for glory, *virtù*, and reputation, he opened himself up to the very problem—envy—which he had begun by warning against.

The danger was that Machiavellian *virtù* could tip over too easily into vainglory. In the *Elements of Law*, Hobbes defined vainglory as a false belief in 'vain and unprofitable' endeavour, 'as when a man imagineth himself to do the actions whereof he readeth in some romant'.⁴⁸ In *Leviathan*, Hobbes had continued his mockery of 'Vain-glorious men' who 'delight in supposing themselves gallant', and who, having 'a strong opinion of their own wisdome in matter of government, are disposed to Ambition'.⁴⁹ For Victoria Kahn, Hobbes found romance dangerous because it encouraged vainglory as a type of envy, or 'emulous identification', producing a wayward 'desire to imitate and master others'.⁵⁰ Davenant exploited the resources and dangers of romance to explore precisely this boundary between *virtù* and vainglory.

⁴³ See Brian Vickers, 'Machiavelli and Marvell's Horatian Ode', *NQ*, 36 (1989) 32-8, pp. 35-8; also Raylor, 'Waller's Machiavellian Cromwell', p. 399.

⁴⁴ *The Prince*, chapter XVII, pp. 130-1 (trans. Bondanella, pp. 57-8).

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, chapter XVIII, p. 139 (trans. Bondanella, p. 61).

⁴⁶ *Leviathan*, chapter X, p. 132.

⁴⁷ See also Allsopp, 'Sir Robert Howard', p. 80.

⁴⁸ *Elements of Law*, chapter IX, pp. 50-51.

⁴⁹ *Leviathan*, chapter XI, pp. 154-56.

⁵⁰ Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, p. 143.

This helps explain why critics have often seen the poem as invested primarily in emotions rather than politics: Kevin Sharpe saw it as a sort of training manual in civilized passions for noble readers.⁵¹ Colin Burrow presented this as evidence of mid-seventeenth-century epic romance's turn away from Spenserian politics:

The civic dimension of *The Faerie Queene* is strangled and stifled and repeatedly denied, with an insistence that indicates that Davenant regarded it as the most dangerous freightage of the epic tradition... *Gondibert* labours to make the main subject of epic to be *only manners*.⁵²

Burrow is right that *Gondibert* resists traditional humanist terms of civic engagement. But manners were not entirely apolitical. In *Leviathan* Hobbes defined 'manners' broadly as 'those qualities of man-kind, that concern their living together in Peace, and Unity'.⁵³ Hobbes had distinguished between three principal causes of war, 'Competition', 'Diffidence', and 'Glory'. Whilst manners could conceivably mediate all three, the third category, 'Glory', was the most capacious, driven not by economic but by cultural forces: 'a different opinion, and any other signe of undervalue'.⁵⁴ *Gondibert* is about manners in this specifically political sense, in which humans' culturally-conditioned traits of emulousness and vainglory threatened to destroy the political obligations on which peace depended.

As Christopher Tilmouth has argued, Hobbes' theory overturned conventional early-modern thinking about the passions, the Aristotelian and Calvinist model of *psychomachia*. That earlier mode of thought was embodied, for Tilmouth, by Spenser's knights errant striving to assert reason against the monstrous external forces of the passions acting upon them—offering the conceptual metaphor of horsemanship for temperate government in the state.⁵⁵ Hobbes re-interpreted the passions as normative internal motions, characterized by a restless appetite for power, which found their public expression through 'manners', and which needed to be

⁵¹ Kevin Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment: The Politics of Literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 102.

⁵² Colin Burrow, *Epic Romance: Homer to Milton* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 241-42.

⁵³ *Leviathan*, chapter XI, p. 150.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, chapter XIII, p. 192.

⁵⁵ Tilmouth, *Passion's Triumph Over Reason*, pp. 37-53.

harnessed, not suppressed, to generate peaceful order.⁵⁶ Political obligations were society's means of overcoming this universal restlessness—they were not inherently natural, but artificial, and hence mutable and transferrable. In the next section, I will return to *Gondibert* the poem (two thirds of which Davenant had already completed when he broke off to write the *Preface*), and explore how it dramatizes this relativistic way of thinking about political obligations in terms of kinetic psychology. Ambition, the appetite for glory, has the potential to generate political order when channelled into imperial, military expansion, but in its delinquent forms produces vainglory and envy, the fuel of civil war.

2. Reading *Gondibert*

The poem begins by invoking its central theme, the political importance of war:

To conquer Tumult, Nature's sodain force,
 War, Art's delib'rate strength, was first devis'd;
 Cruel to those whose rage has no remorse,
 Least civil pow'r should be by Throngs surpris'd. (l.i.4)

This establishes two essential qualities of sovereign power: its artificiality, and militarism. Nature is characterized by the 'sodain force' of 'Tumult', against which 'civil pow'r' is constructed through 'Art's delib'rate strength' of military force. This condenses Hobbes' definition of commonwealth as an 'Artificiall Man' whose sovereignty is founded on a protective and coercive military power.⁵⁷ As chapter one argued, this was a controversial point for royalists, as it seemed to make sovereign power contingent and, hence, transferable. Proponents of this view, on the other hand, tended to emphasize conquest as a way of legitimizing *de facto* power.⁵⁸ We saw Waller experimenting with ambiguous conceits of sexual and military conquest last chapter; the motif makes its first appearance in *Gondibert* here: 'to conquer Tumult'. Against this, the

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 222-37.

⁵⁷ Malcolm, 'Introduction', p. 16; *Leviathan*, 'Introduction' and chapter XVII, pp. 16, 260.

⁵⁸ Malcolm, 'Introduction', pp. 32-3.

opening canto concludes by dwelling on the forces of delinquency which threatened to overturn sovereign order:

Ah how perverse and froward is Mankinde!
Faction in Courts does us to rage excite;
The Rich in Cities we litigious finde,
And in the Field th'Ambitious make us fight: (I.i.79)

Davenant alludes to Hobbes' critique of litigiousness—a theme shared with Waller and Cowley.⁵⁹

He also opens another typically Hobbesian front in the following stanza, against the ambitions of the clergy:

And fatally (as if even souls were made
Of warring Elements as Bodies are)
Our Reason our Religion does invade,
Till from the Schools to Camps it carry warre. (I.i.80)

The coordinating conjunction with the previous stanza implies a categorical continuity, including religion in the list of types of vainglory, following factionalism, litigiousness, and ambition. Davenant develops a military conceptual metaphor, configuring religion as invasion against 'Reason', and bodies as composed of 'warring Elements' (with its heterodox conjecture of a corporeal soul).⁶⁰ Images of 'warring Elements' recur throughout the first book of the poem, at the first appearance of Oswald's rebel army ('Their posture kept 'gainst warring Elements', I.i.59), and in the ensuing battle, when Gondibert warns his army against retreating ('As if you back to Elements were fled', I.v.17). This figurative analogy of humans with atoms reinforces a literal claim of Hobbesian materialism—that human violence resulted from the disordered motion of matter in the mind.⁶¹ Conversely, when Borgio admires Gondibert's generalship, he uses language with alchemical connotations ('Who men so scatter'd can so firmly mix', I.v.29) to suggest the capacity of military commanders to contain such disorder.

The second canto of the poem sees Gondibert and his followers embark on a hunt. Davenant's key source here was John Denham's poem 'Cooper's Hill' (first published in 1642, reprinted and expanded thereafter). 'Cooper's Hill' featured a hunting sequence in which the herd

⁵⁹ See Hobbes' attack on common lawyers in *Leviathan*, chapter XXVI, pp. 420-23.

⁶⁰ Hobbes argued the materiality of the soul in *Leviathan*, most obviously chapter XXXIV, pp. 610-20.

⁶¹ *Leviathan*, chapters VI and XI, pp. 78-80, 90-6, 150-52.

secured their collective safety by yielding up their leader, the royal stag, to the dogs. For Denham, the beast fable reflected melancholically on the country's disloyalty to Charles I.⁶² But Davenant provocatively re-stages it in justification of self-protective action:⁶³

We blush to see our politicks in Beasts,
Who Many sav'd by this one Sacrifice;
And since through blood they follow interests,
Like us when cruel should be counted wise. (I.ii.41)

Davenant introduces a language of 'interests' to reinforce the relativist point that cruelty can be a positive force, within the ruthless psychology of self-preservation. This episode develops another key conceptual metaphor in the poem, the herd. Davenant reappropriates what was in origin a Biblical metaphor to describe the population projected by rationalist absolutism: pliable and docile, but with a sense of obligation which could prove changeable and contingent. Later in the same canto he describes cities as 'wise States-men's Folds for civil sheep' (I.ii.76); and the rebel army is later compared with 'Cattell in the Field' (II.ii.6). An ironically inverted version of the metaphor in the *Preface* makes a related point about sovereignty's martial foundations:

If any man can yet doubt of the necessary use of Armyes, let him study that which was anciently call'd a Monster, the Multitude (for Wolves are commonly harmless when they are met alone, but very uncivill in Heards) and he will not finde that all his kindred by *Adam* are so tame, and gentle, as those Lovers that were bred in *Arcadia* (pp. 12-13)

'Uncivill' humans in the state of nature become 'Wolves', a particularly provocative instance which shows how the Biblical metaphor could be completely inverted, and indeed spliced with a rival metaphor derived from Plautus via Hobbes' *De Cive*: '*homo homini lupus*' ('man is a wolf to man').⁶⁴ Davenant also develops his critique of Sidney, contrasting his own wolfish understanding of politics with the 'tame and gentle' fantasies offered in the *Arcadia*.

During the hunt, Gondibert is ambushed by his rival Oswald, contending for the hand of Princess Rhodalind and thus the throne of Lombardy. Gondibert reproaches Oswald for his

⁶² Denham, 'Cooper's Hill', in Theodore Howard Banks, ed., *The Poetical Works of Sir John Denham* (2nd ed.; New Haven, 1969), 1642 text, ll. 243-74. See Timothy Raylor, 'The Hunting of the Stag: Denham, Davenant, and a Royalist Dispute over Poetry' in Philip Major, ed., *Sir John Denham* (Farnham, forthcoming).

⁶³ See further Allsopp, 'Sir Robert Howard', pp. 82-3.

⁶⁴ Gianni Paganini, 'Hobbes, Gassendi, and the Tradition of Political Epicureanism', *Hobbes Studies*, 14 (2001) 3-24, pp. 15-17.

‘wilde Ambition, the most rank of weeds’ (I.iii.27), offering to meet him in single combat to prevent the ‘sacrifice’ of ‘whole offencelesse Herds’ (I.iii.32). Although he is ostensibly the villain, Oswald’s reply undercuts this conventional piety, and comes much closer to the Machiavellian argument of the *Preface*. He professes, ‘I wish it were not needful to be great’ (I.iii.34), but maintains:

But more then Heav’ns, Men, Man’s authoritie
 (Though envy’d) use, because more understood;
 For but for that Life’s Utensils would be,
 In Markets, as in Camps the price of blood. (I.iii.35)

Here is an example of Davenant’s heroic stanza working to suspend a knotty argument whilst he works through its intricacies. Oswald insists that religious authority is insufficiently ‘understood’ to have force on earth—as Davenant argues in the *Preface*, ‘Divines have fail’d in governing Princes (that is, of being intirely beleev’d by them)’ (p. 29). Although it provokes envy, Oswald claims, secular power is nevertheless necessary for order. The alternative would be a bloody war caused by competition over ‘Life’s Utensils’—the first of Hobbes’ three causes of civil war.⁶⁵

Oswald concludes:

Since the Worlds safety we in greatness finde,
 And pow’r divided is from greatness gone,
 Save we the world, though to our selves unkinde,
 By both indang’ring to establish one. (I.iii.36)

This paraphrases Davenant’s defence of ‘appetite to greatnesse’ in the *Preface* (pp. 13-14). Oswald’s argument is not merely a spurious defence of vainglorious rebellion. He specifies that he and Gondibert are ‘indang’ring to establish *one*’ (my emphasis) because ‘pow’r’ is ‘divided’: civil war is an inevitable consequence of the division in the Lombard state. We might conventionally expect Oswald to tempt and deceive the hero at this point in an epic romance; instead, Oswald articulates the political analysis, especially the concerns over divided sovereignty, which Davenant himself seems to espouse in the *Preface* and later in the poem.

Cantos iv and v depict the ensuing battle, in which Oswald is killed. Gondibert’s eulogy on Oswald is so beautiful, Davenant claims, ‘as the Foe did praise’ (I.v.20);

⁶⁵ *Leviathan*, chapter XIII, p. 192.

Yet 'twas Ambition's praise, which but approves
Those whom through envy it would fain subdue; (I.v.21)

The 'Foe' is now Oswald's younger brother Hubert, who bears out Davenant's warning in the *Preface* that praise can kindle envy by vowing to seek 'vain Revenge' (I.v.55). When Gondibert finally defeats Hubert, he uses it as an opportunity to inveigh against the evils of ambition once again:

Be not with Honor's guiled Baites beguiled;
Nor think Ambition wise, because 'tis brave; (I.v.75)

But his reasonable words have no effect:

But *Hubert's* grief no precept could reform;
For great grief council'd, does to anger grow;
And he provided now a future Storm,
Which did with black revenge o'recast his Brow. (I.v.77)

This is the first sense we have that Gondibert is a flawed, insufficient hero. His conventional ethical 'precept' and 'council' are powerless to 'reform' Hubert's grief. This is not to justify Hubert, whose irreconcilable grief is itself a form of vainglory. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes categorized 'dejection' under the heading of vainglory as '*Griefe*, from opinion of want of power'.⁶⁶ But this provides the first hint that platitudes on 'Honor's guiled Baites' will not solve the crisis in Lombardy. The 'future storm' portended by Hubert's 'o'recast' brow indicates a final reckoning remains to be had. This presumably is the 'something that looks like an obscure promise of designe' which, Davenant argues in the *Preface*, is supposed to conclude the first Book (p. 16).

Book I ends in repose, with Gondibert withdrawing to the House of Astragon to recuperate from his wounds. Here, Gondibert retreats from the life of *negotium*, of civic involvement, and into that of *otium*, retired philosophical contemplation. He also falls in love with Astragon's daughter Birtha, implicitly renouncing his claim to Rhodalind and the Lombard throne. He offers the following advice to Goltho, an eager young blade in his retinue:

Awake (said *Gondibert*) for now in vain
Thou dream'st of sov'raignty, and War's success;

⁶⁶ *Leviathan*, chapter VI, p. 88.

Hope, nought has left, which Worth should wish to gain;
And all Ambition is but Hope's excess. (II.viii.52)

These are peculiar words from a man who has just won a major battle. Some critics have seized on this apparent departure to induct the poem *Gondibert* into a historical narrative of royalist poetry's turn to consolatory retreat in the face of defeat:

State politics repeatedly pry at the edges of Gondibert's romance retreat, seeking a way in, but they become mere occasions for passionate display—outbursts of tender feeling that end in reaffirmations of private love against the burdens of empire.⁶⁷

This view assumes too easily that Gondibert is an idealized hero, rather than an unreliable one. But Davenant's modern editor David Gladish noted the ambivalence of Gondibert's conduct: 'From Gondibert's glib renouncing of responsibility arise all the conflicts to follow'.⁶⁸

Using the completed fragment to hypothesize the poem's projected final shape, and ethical conclusions, is a risky business. The *Preface* argues that Book II—which had just been completed in 1649—need only contain 'some little performance of that designe which was promis'd'. Still to come—and left unwritten when he went to press in November 1650—were the 'ample turn of the maine designe, and expectation of a new' which was to end the third book, the 'conterturne to that maine designe' in the fourth, and the 'easy untying of those particular knots' in the fifth (p. 16). And Book II does present itself as a digression ahead of future reversals. Before embarking on his lengthy tour around the House of Astragon in canto II.v, Davenant says, 'though I Fame's great Book shall open now, | Expect a while' (II.v.2)—'expect' in the sense of wait patiently, while the story pauses. Likewise, at the beginning of canto II.vii, 'A while then let this sage Historian stay' (II.vii.3), again implying the narrative is on hold. After all, in canto II.iv we learn that Hubert is planning to continue his war; and Davenant reminds us early in Book III that Gondibert's army is still in the field (III.ii.3-4). On this evidence, we can see Gondibert's withdrawal not as Davenant's disillusioned response to political crisis, but as the blocking agent which prolongs its resolution. Indeed, near the beginning of Book II, Tybalt praises Gondibert to

⁶⁷ Anthony Welch, 'Epic Romance, Royalist Retreat, and the English Civil War', *Modern Philology*, 105 (2008) 570-602, p. 589.

⁶⁸ Gladish, ed., *Gondibert*, p. 307n.

the Lombard king, Aribert, in a phrase which seems to distil a key pattern in Gondibert's character: 'First how unwilling, then how bold in fight' (II.ii.16).

As we have seen, the *Preface* strongly endorses political activism and ambition, in the proper conditions, rejecting 'Contentednesse' as 'some melancholy precept of the Cloyster' (pp. 13-14). Davenant sought to reconcile his sense of Hobbesian restlessness with the more conventional civic humanist praise for the active life. He may have been reading Milton: his language here comes close to the 'fugitive and cloister'd vertue' disparaged in *Areopagitica* (1644).⁶⁹ The metaphor also distanced him from Catholicism—developing Hobbes' trenchant criticism of the abstract scholastic ethics which monastic culture had fostered.⁷⁰ Notwithstanding Gondibert's conventional, and potentially unreliable, defences of *otium*, Davenant's narrative voice sustains his defence of activism in the first two books of the poem. The very first canto (a passage I have already quoted from above) carefully distinguishes between two contrasting sorts of virtue, in terminology remarkably consistent with the parallel tension between the 'lasyneſſe' of the 'Cloyster' and 'painfull activenesse of vertue' in the *Preface* (pp. 13-14):

But painful vertue of the war ne'r pays
It self with consciousness of being good,
Though Cloyster virtue may beleve even praise
A salary which there should be withstood.

For many here (whose vertue's active heat
Concurs not with cold vertue which does dwell
In lassie Cells) are vertuous to be great,
And as in pains so would in pow'r excel. (I.i.74-5)

These lines (again, suspending the extended metaphor across two heroic stanzas) work to destabilize the ethics of the 'Cloyster' through the conceptual metaphor of 'salary', constructing 'praise' as a transactional value rather than a marker of intrinsic goodness—a metaphor we have already encountered in Fane and Waller. The *Preface* quotes Hobbes' metaphor in *Leviathan*, that 'Mony is the life blood of the People' (p. 34) within the artificial man of the commonwealth.⁷¹ Yet the value of money is arbitrary and variable, dependent on contingent circumstances—not

⁶⁹ John Milton, *Areopagitica*, ed. by Ernest Sirluck, in Don M. Wolfe et al, ed., *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton* (8 vols.; New Haven, 1953-82), vol. 2, p. 515.

⁷⁰ e.g. in *Leviathan*, chapter XLVI, pp. 1074-1102.

⁷¹ Compare *Leviathan*, chapter XXIV, p. 394: 'Mony the Bloud of a Commonwealth'.

least the strength of a commonwealth guaranteed by sovereign power—rather than fixed ethical ideals or teleology. This is evidence for some consistency of philosophical design in both poem and *Preface*: defending military and political activism against the temptations of *otium*, but doing so with recourse to an unconventional relativism that reframes questions of moral value in terms of their contingent, transactional relationship with sovereign power.

This inflects our judgement of Gondibert's withdrawal. Even while Gondibert languishes in his contemplative retreat, the problem which Oswald had articulated earlier continues to impress itself on the poem—the division of sovereignty. In the account of the Lombard court in canto II.ii, King Aribert's 'strong numerous Guards denote him wise' (II.ii.14).⁷² But, this prudence notwithstanding, Aribert does not in fact have a monopoly on military power, as in the next canto we witness Hubert continuing his rebellion:

For *Gondibert* (to whom the Court must bow,
Now War is with your Fav'rite overthrown)
Will by his Camp of Boys at *Bergamo*,
Wed her, who to your Valor owes the Crowne. (II.iii.41)

Hubert gestures to the logic of the *de facto* argument—that Oswald has been 'overthrown' on the battlefield—but refuses to accept its conclusion. He seems unconvinced that Gondibert's 'Camp of Boys' really does wield supreme military authority by comparison with his own 'Valor'. This relates to the problem we identified earlier in *Leviathan*, that the popularity of generals, '(if caution be not given of the Commanders fidelity,) is a dangerous thing to Sovereign Power'.⁷³ Hubert embodies this problem by behaving, in some respects, like an exemplary Hobbesian general, appealing to popularity:

He bids him now the Armies rage allay;
By rage (said he) only they Masters are
Of those they chuse, when temp'rate, to obey:
Against themselves th'impatient chiefly warre.

We are the Peoples Pilots, they our winds;
To change by Nature prone; but Art Laveers,
And rules them till they rise with Stormy Mindes;
Then Art with danger against Nature Steers. (II.iv.31-2)

⁷² Saul adopts the same policy in the *Davideis*, in Waller, ed., *Poems*, p. 382.

⁷³ *Leviathan*, chapter XXX, p. 550.

These lines appear in a speech where the unscrupulous courtier Hermegild offers his political advice to Hubert, having been seduced into joining the rebellion by Hubert's sister Gartha. But it was one of the most influential passages in the poem: as we will see in chapters five and six, both Cowley and Dryden later adopted the distinctive piece of technical, nautical vocabulary, 'laveering'. It evoked a Machiavellian sense of 'Art' used to tack against the prevailing winds of nature; it was, moreover, a heroic endeavour, beset with 'danger', and therefore an opportunity for the exercise of *virtù*. It symbolizes the potent combination of popularity and vainglory which threatens to tear the forces of military organization apart.

Davenant characterizes the crisis in Lombardy as a division of sovereignty wrought by charismatic but vainglorious military commanders. Hobbes had identified unitary military command as the essential, inalienable right without which sovereign power could not function; as we have noted, it was this principle which turned Hobbes against Charles II's policy of conceding control of the militia to appease the Scots.⁷⁴ Significantly, this is the issue to which Davenant devotes the climactic passage of the *Preface*, a lengthy exposition of the conflict between 'the Foure cheef aides of Government, (*Religion, Armes, Policy, and Law*)... weake by an emulous war amongst themselves' (p. 37). This discussion is also governed by the conventional metaphor 'Government resembles a Ship', in which the four arms of state, 'the trusted Pilots', are fatally 'divided at the Helme' (p. 34). We earlier saw Oswald highlighting the first of Hobbes' three causes of civil war, economic competition. Here, the tension between the arms of state is driven by the second and third causes, diffident fear and vainglorious envy.⁷⁵ The generals look on the politicians:

Sometimes with the Eye of Envy (which inlarges objects like a multiplying-glasse) they behold those *Statesmen*, and think them immense as *Whales*; the motion of whose vast bodys can in a peacefull calme trouble the Ocean till it boyle (p. 35)

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, chapter XVIII, p. 278; Malcolm, 'Introduction', pp. 24-9.

⁷⁵ *Leviathan*, chapter XIII, p. 192.

Davenant again plays with images of monstrous whales—via the ‘multiplying-glasse’ punning on Hobbes’ plans for the anamorphic frontispiece of *Leviathan*.⁷⁶ In a twist of dramatic irony, Davenant next vocalizes the very similar thoughts of the politicians as they look back at the generals:

Statesmen beleeve [the Generals are] more dangerous to government then themselves: for the popularity of *Statesmen* is not so frequent as that of *Generalls*; or if by rare sufficiency of Art it be gain’d; yet the force of Crowds in Cittys, compar’d to the validity of men of Armes, and discipline, would appeare like the great number of sheep to a few Wolves, rather a cause of Comfort then of Terror (p. 36)

Davenant again deploys his metaphor of herd animals, configuring the civil ‘sheep’ threatened by the ‘Wolves’ of the army. He draws the crucial lesson (almost quoting Hobbes) that military leaders’ popularity can be ‘dangerous to government’. This is because of the ‘validity’ of arms: ‘validity’ can simply mean force, but it naturally carries the limited sense of legal authority; Davenant’s usage collapses the distinction.⁷⁷ In the absence of a unified sovereign power, Davenant falls back on the *de facto* argument from ‘validity’ of arms—backed up, in the *Preface*, with the coercive psychological power of poetry.

The structure of a private household occupied an important, if complex, position in Hobbes’ theory, as the original commonwealth, the main constituent unit of a commonwealth, and also a conceptual metaphor:

And as small Familyes did then; so now do Cities and Kingdomes which are but greater Familyes (for their own security) enlarge their Dominions...

...a great Family if it be not part of some Commonwealth, is of itself, as to the Rights of Sovereignty, a little Monarchy...⁷⁸

Hobbes classes households (‘dominion paternal’) in the same category as military states founded on conquest (‘despotal’), ‘Common-wealth by Acquisition’.⁷⁹ The House of Astragon in *Gondibert* accords well with Hobbes’ definition, offering a microcosm of a well-governed

⁷⁶ Malcolm, ‘Introduction’, p. 135.

⁷⁷ OED, ‘validity’, n., senses 1 and 3.

⁷⁸ *Leviathan*, chapters XVII and XX, pp. 254-56, 314.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*, chapter XX, pp. 306-12.

commonwealth, under Astragon's benign despotism. The heavy influence of Bacon's *New Atlantis* reinforces this impression, but also allows us to see how Astragon's pursuit of philosophical knowledge could be conceived as a form of productive action: 'wisely *Astragon*, thus busy grew' (II.v.18). One incident which closely echoes Bacon sees Astragon's Copernican astronomers ridiculing earlier theories of a static earth, 'As if 'twere great and stately to stand still' (II.v.20).⁸⁰ This espousal of universal motion justifies Astragon's busyness, whilst also corroborating the universal restlessness described by Hobbes' kinetic psychology. But, whereas the *Preface* depicted martial heroes channelling their restlessness into 'the active motion of Empire', in Books II and III of *Gondibert* the House of Astragon becomes the scene for a different type of impulsive action, praised as 'diligence' (used of Birtha, III.i.18; Gondibert, III.ii.26; Orgo, III.iii.14; and by Ulfin, III.vi.21). This display of busyness and diligence offers an alternative to imperial expansion as a means of harnessing Hobbesian restlessness.⁸¹

The other significant feature of Astragon's political system is his anti-episcopal church, distilled to the fundamentals of praise, prayer, and penitence, under Astragon's Erastian control. Although it uses intensely baroque aesthetic effects—Davenant, as he had in the *Preface*, privileging the artist and especially the poet—it uses no priests, and encourages individual spirituality. Perhaps this is what Davenant meant by the 'ingeniose Quakerisme' he described to Aubrey. The House of Penitence is full of baroque elaboration ('Here all the Ornament is rev'rend black', II.vi.16), piling up ingenious visual paradoxes of blackness and darkness. But it is a space for silent, individual reflection, where worshippers 'having softly mourn'd away their sin, | They grow so certain, as to need no Hope' (II.vi.23). It was this canto of the poem which most interested Marvell: we will see him punning on it in 'Upon Appleton House' in the next chapter. But Marvell's irony was not straightforwardly hostile. In *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* (1672) he argued that, by comparison with the authoritarian Church of England envisaged by

⁸⁰ See Gladish, ed., *Gondibert*, pp. 302-3n.

⁸¹ Chapter five will argue Cowley took a different view of the effects of philosophical enquiry on mental restlessness.

Samuel Parker, ‘all Astragon appear’d to me the better *Scheme of Religion*’.⁸² The joke may trade on a perception of Astragon as ridiculous, yet it also suggests a shared Hobbesian perspective on religion as an artificial ‘Scheme’ rather than divine institution.⁸³ Marvell suddenly signals, ironically but perhaps also nostalgically, his sympathy for the more irenic possibilities of 1650s Independency which he had once shared with men like Davenant and Hobbes.

Astragon’s spirit of philosophical enquiry provides Davenant with an occasion to unpack his central themes of sovereignty and vainglory. Canto II.viii promises a dialogue between Astragon and Gondibert, ‘shewing, high Ambition is of use, | And Glory in the Good needs no excuse’ (II.viii.A). Astragon opens the discussion with a familiar justification of militarism, coupled with a familiar warning about its risks:

Though Wars great shape best educates the sight,
And makes small soft’ning objects less our care;
Yet War, when urg’d for glory, more then right,
Shews Victors but authentick Murd’ers are. (II.viii.23)

If Astragon takes a more cynical view of vainglorious pretenders than we have seen hitherto, reducing them to mere ‘Murd’ers’, he still takes care to maintain the *de facto* validity of conquest: ‘Victors’ are still necessarily ‘authentick’. In reply, Gondibert insists that ‘Ambition kindled not this Victor’s heat’, and reveals for the first time the true source of his ‘warmth’, ‘my Fathers prudence’ (II.viii.28):

Who cast on more than Wolvish Man his Eie,
Man’s necessary hunger judg’d, and saw
That caus’d not his devouring Maledy;
But like a wanton whelp he loves to gnaw. (II.viii.29)

The ‘devouring Maledy’ puns on the sense of humans’ insatiable appetite and the more reflexive sense in which this appetite consumes the human mind itself. ‘Devouring’ is something beyond the ordinary satisfaction of appetite—not simply ‘necessary hunger’, but how man ‘loves to

⁸² Martin Dzelzainis and Annabel Patterson, eds., *The Prose Works of Andrew Marvell* (2 vols.; New Haven, 2003), vol. 1, p. 201.

⁸³ Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, pp. 37-47; Parkin, ‘Liberty Transpros’d’, p. 274.

gnaw' (my emphasis). This distinction between eating and gnawing is founded on Hobbesian restlessness:

the object of mans desire is not to enjoy once onely, and for one instant of time; but to assure for ever, the way of his future desire... So that in the first place, I put for a generall inclination of all mankind, a perpetuall and restlesse desire of Power after power, that ceaseth only in Death.⁸⁴

This was not just a desire to hold power once, to satisfy appetite, but a mechanistic drive to exercise and extend power for its own sake:

Man still is Sick for pow'r, yet that disease
Nature (whose Law is temp'rance) ne'r inspires;
But 'tis a humor, which fond Man does please,
A luxury, fruition only tires. (II.viii.30)

Although the state of nature was characterized by war (as quoted earlier in *Gondibert*, 'Tumult, Nature's sodain force'), the law of nature derived from it is, paradoxically, 'temp'rance'; in Hobbes, 'to seek Peace' by curbing one's natural appetites.⁸⁵

According to Hobbes, humans' restless desire for power made them diffident but also envious and emulous of others' glory.⁸⁶ *Gondibert* develops this point about vainglory in the next stanza:

And as in persons, so in publick States,
The lust of Pow'r provokes to cruel Warre;
For wisest Senates it intoxicates,
And makes them vain, as single persons are. (II.viii.31)

Conceiving 'publick States' as 'single persons' replicates Hobbes' representation of the state as an 'Artificiall Man' in the opening and indeed frontispiece of *Leviathan*.⁸⁷ In the next stanzas, *Gondibert* expands on how vainglory multiplies the potential causes of war, beyond the initial appetite for power:

Whilst change of Languages oft breeds a warre,
(A change which Fashion does as oft obtrude
As womens dresse) and oft Complexions are,
And diff'rent names, no less a cause of feud. (II.viii.34)

⁸⁴ *Leviathan*, chapter XI, p. 150.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, chapter XIV, pp. 198-200.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, chapter XIII, p. 192.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, 'Introduction', p. 16.

This alludes to the problem of linguistic difference we encountered in chapter one, which, Hobbes argued, ‘gives every thing a tincture of our different passions’.⁸⁸ In Hobbes’ account of the ‘causes of quarrel’ quoted earlier, this comes under the third category of ‘Glory’, the cultural causes of war ‘for trifles, as a word, a smile, a different opinion, and any other signe of undervalue’.⁸⁹ At this point, Gondibert introduces the solution his father devised: to draw all humanity into a single commonwealth, under a unitary absolute power. He begins by reiterating the points about human bestiality (the verb ‘devour’ reappears) and restlessness (causing ‘continu’d’ massacres):

Since Men so causelessly themselves devour;
 (And hast’ning still, their else too hasty Fates,
 Act but continu’d Massacres for pow’r,)
 My Father ment to chastise Kings, and States.

To overcome the world, till but one Crown
 And universal Neighbourhood he saw;
 Till all were rich by that alliance grown;
 And want no more should be the cause of Law. (II.viii.35-6)

Davenant telescopes Hobbes’ contractual theory here, skipping straight to his own favoured solution, heroic military conquest.

Gondibert Senior may ultimately have had peaceful intentions: the word ‘Neighbourhood’ appears as a symbol of peaceful, communal order (compare the *Preface*’s description of Christian commonwealth as like ‘Village neighbourhood’, p. 10). He adds to this a sense of economic self-interest: a unified commonwealth will abolish ‘want’, satisfying appetites, and even grow ‘rich’. A further advantage, Gondibert continues, would be the assertion of Erastian control over the church:

Nor could Religion’s heat, if one rul’d all,
 To bloody War the unconcern’d allure (II.viii.38)

But this attractive settlement nevertheless follows from the Lombards’ violent plan ‘to overcome the world’: basically a violent rampage across Europe, in which Gondibert’s father himself ‘lost... his last dear blood’ (II.viii.41). Gondibert seems also to have realised that the expansionist

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, chapter IV, p. 62.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*, chapter XIII, p. 192.

strategy produced the conditions which caused the current civil war in Lombardy. Not only has it mobilized the vainglorious aristocracy and provided them with their own martial power-bases, but it has also created an immense prize for them to covet: the aspiration to court Rhodalind is now inextricable from ‘the lust of Empire’ (II.viii.44). Hence Gondibert’s unwillingness to wield power: ‘That Universal Crown I would not weare’ (II.viii.43). Given Davenant’s enthusiasm for heroic endeavour, and the care with which he reasons through his theory in this canto, Gondibert’s yielding here might seem like a paradox, even a contradiction, in the poem. But as we will see, his withdrawal does not resolve his problems; it compounds them.

Besides, despite Gondibert’s misgivings, later parts of the poem seem to corroborate the basic account of power he sets out here. In Book III, King Aribert himself arrives at the House of Astragon to congratulate Gondibert in person, and arrange his marriage to Rhodalind. In so doing, he exercises another of the inalienable powers which, Hobbes held, along with control over the militia and religious doctrine, were essential components of sovereignty: the power to determine the succession.⁹⁰ As Davenant summarizes: ‘Kings, like God, may chuse whom they wil chuse’ (III.iii.51). Aribert reinforces the *de facto* argument from conquest, without any of Astragon’s ambivalence, casting it as the foundation of absolute power which Gondibert will one day hold:

Reward even of a Crown, and such a Crown,
As by Heav’n’s Model ancient Victors wore;
When they, as by their Coyn, by Laws were known;
For Laws but made more curreant Victors pow’r.

A Crown soon taught, by whom Pow’r first was given;
When Victors (of Dominion cautious made
By hearing of that old revolt in Heaven)
Kept Pow’r too high for Subjects to invade. (III.iv.7-8)

To rule through conquest, Aribert thinks, is to follow ‘Heav’n’s Model’—after all, if God’s rule counts as ‘Dominion Paternall’, Hobbes had categorized that with ‘Despotically’ conquerors under ‘Common-wealth by Acquisition’.⁹¹ As we saw above, Davenant telescopes Hobbes’ theory to strengthen the claims of conquest: ‘Laws but made more curreant Victor’s pow’r’. Here, again, we

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, chapter XIX, pp. 298-300.

⁹¹ *ibid.*, chapter XX, pp. 306-12.

see the relativistic metaphor of currency—legitimacy is a quantity whose value is unfixed, but determined arbitrarily according to the *de facto* military power wielded by the sovereign. This is reinforced here with a spatial metaphor: conquerors wield a ‘Pow’r too high for Subjects to invade’, counteracting that invasion we saw earlier, of religion against reason (I.i.80). Aribert emphasizes his militaristic absolutism:

A Crown, which ends by Armies their debate,
Who question height of Pow’r; who by the Law
(Till plain obedience they make intricate)
Would not the People, but their Rulers aw. (III.iv.9)

The rhyme juxtaposes the ‘Law’ (perhaps recalling the Hobbesian attack against litigiousness we also saw earlier in the poem, I.i.79) with a verb which more properly describes the relationship between sovereign and subject, ‘aw’. Aribert completes the defactoist argument by eroding the traditional symbols of monarchical legitimacy:

To Pow’r adoption makes thy title good;
Preferring worth, as birth gives Princes place;
And Vertue’s claim exceeds the right of blood,
As Souls extraction does the Bodies Race. (III.iv.10)

Meritocracy, or ‘Vertue’s claim’—still carrying the Machiavellian connotations discussed earlier—can displace the traditional ‘right of blood’, further suggesting Davenant’s growing indifference to the principle of hereditary monarchy. There is a remarkable consistency between the three accounts of power, Aribert’s, Gondibert’s (in canto II.viii), and Davenant’s (in the *Preface*). This suggests the mentality which Davenant was keen to impress on his readers: indifference to constitutional specifics and the traditional symbols of legitimacy; of civil conflict driven by vainglorious appetite for power; and the resultant necessity of unitary absolutist sovereignty founded on *de facto* military conquest.

This austere militaristic account of sovereignty is disrupted by the workings of love, producing the central, and ultimately insoluble, entanglement of Books II and III of *Gondibert*. In his writings as poet laureate, Davenant had evolved a theory of love as the prime agent of social harmony. In Kevin Sharpe’s account:

...marriage, the physical and spiritual union of two beings, reconciles human sexuality and order and so gives legitimate expression to natural appetites that have the potential to be destructive.⁹²

This reconciliation of sexual appetite with civic virtue was ripe for assimilation to the equivalent moves from the corporeal to the political in Hobbesian theory. Thus, in the *Preface*, love appears in a definition condensed closely from the *Elements of Law*:

...in the Wicked, good men suspect it for Lust; and in the good, some spirituall men have given it the name of Charity: And these are but termes to this which seemes a more consider'd Definition; that indefinite Love is lust; and Lust when it is determin'd to one, is Love (p. 15)⁹³

This indefiniteness of lust reflects the insatiable restlessness of human desires in Hobbes' psychology. Hobbes had identified sexual love as the remit of poets—and with his reservations about epic romance, this was not necessarily intended as a compliment. But if Hobbes really did take anything from his exchanges with Davenant, it may be the importance of love, which appears far more regularly in *Leviathan*, under a more compact definition: 'that which men Desire'.⁹⁴ It is regularly pressed into service as a psychological explicator ('Love of Vertue, from love of Praise', etc.).⁹⁵ It can also describe political allegiance: Hobbes deprecates himself as 'a man that love my own opinions', and prescribes that 'People are to be taught, First, that they ought not to be in love with any forme of Government... more than with their own'.⁹⁶ Finally, and most significantly, Hobbes places love and fear in tandem within the politics of honour: 'To shew any signe of love, or feare of another, is to Honour; for both to love, and to feare, is to value'.⁹⁷ If this is another of those aspects of Hobbes inflected by Machiavellianism—negotiating between the relative merits of being loved or being feared—it is this political dimension of love which disrupts the poem now.

⁹² Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment*, pp. 74-5.

⁹³ Compare *Elements of Law*, chapter IX, pp. 55-7.

⁹⁴ *Leviathan*, chapter VI, p. 80.

⁹⁵ *ibid.*, chapter XI, p. 152 and *passim*.

⁹⁶ *ibid.*, 'dedicatory epistle' and chapter XXX; pp. 6, 524.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, chapter X, p. 136.

Gondibert focuses particularly, and patriarchally, on the feelings of love aroused by female beauty, and the conventional, defining quality of female beauty is—of course—submissiveness. Pretty young women are valued because they ‘could soften Tyrant Kings’ (II.ii.42, although only ‘could’). This is evident in Birtha’s unquestioning deference to the authority of her father, Astragon:

For as she once from him her being took,
She howrly takes her Law; reads with swift sight
His will, even at the op’ning of his look,
And shews, by haste, obedience her delight. (II.vii.15)

The metaphor of reading—the ‘op’ning of his look’ implying a submerged rhyme with ‘book’—associates Astragon’s paternal authority with his status as a philosopher, a suitably Baconian figure of male reason taming effeminate passion. In Hobbes’ theory, domestic power is definitively gendered as ‘Dominion Paternall’. Female power is a condition of the state of nature, where mothers (Hobbes assumes) hold a natural claim on their offspring’s affections; in a civilized commonwealth power transfers to the father (Hobbes adds, satirically, ‘for the most part’).⁹⁸ Birtha’s obedience to Astragon because she ‘once from him her being took’ reverses Hobbes in favour of the traditional patriarchal assumption about the progenitor to whom a child felt a native obligation. Her mother is barely mentioned. In the *Preface*, Davenant used patriarchal marriage as a conceptual metaphor for the process by which the mind ‘may be gain’d by Persuasion’ through presumably male-authored poetry:

when the minde is conquer’d, like a willing Bride, Force should so behave it selfe, as noble Husbands use their power; that is, by letting their Wives see the Dignity and prerogative of our Sex (which is the Husbands harmless conquest of Peace) continually maintain’d to hinder Disobedience, rather than rigorously impose Duty: (p. 39)

This harked back to the amatory rhetoric through which Davenant had idealized Stuart patriarchy in the 1630s, reconfiguring force as a loving favour.⁹⁹ But it was now inflected by Hobbes’

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, chapter XX, pp. 308-10.

⁹⁹ Smuts, ‘Force, Love, and Authority’, pp. 38-9; Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment*, pp. 61-5.

‘Dominion Paternall’, categorized under ‘Common-wealth by Acquisition’—in Davenant governed by the defactoist metaphor of ‘harmless conquest’.¹⁰⁰

As I argued in chapter two, images of sexual conquest were very easy to involve with military and political connotations. In Book III, Laura is grieving the death of her lover, Arnold, when Tybalt arrives, and:

Trys, since her wary Governour is dead,
How the fair Fort he may by Treaty gain. (III.i.75)

Accordingly, Laura recognizes she must transfer her allegiance: ‘unhappy *Arnold* she forsakes’ (III.i.76), and ‘*Hugo* and [Tybalt], as Leaders now she names’ (III.i.79). Laura provides a counterpoint to Hubert’s fearsome sister Gartha, who is defined by untamed rebelliousness and sexual autonomy: ‘Unconquer’d as her beauty was her minde’ (II.ii.73). When Gartha seduces the courtier Hermegild, his declaration of love subverts the metaphor’s conventional gender assignments:

Scarce *Greece*, or greater *Rome* a Victor shows,
Whom more Victorious Love did not subdue (II.iv.22).

That Hermegild could even venture this comparison indicates his delinquent vainglory. But the love affair which causes the central problem in the plot, that between Gondibert and Birtha, is the most strikingly ambivalent. Davenant supplies both the normative male-conquering-female version of the metaphor: ‘when her solitude he did invade’ (II.vii.48), and the more subversive, inverted form: Gondibert himself now appears ‘like an aw’d, and conquer’d Enemy’ (II.vii.49). This paradoxical ambivalence is problematical precisely because—as the martial imagery indicates—the defactoist implications of ‘conquest’ remain tightly entangled with the poem’s amatory plot.

In the next stanzas, Gondibert develops the conquest metaphor into an imaginary moment of political submission to a new, conquering authority:

And to that Soul thus spake, with tremb’ling voice;
The world wil be (O thou, the whole world’s Mayd!)
Since now tis old enough to make wise choice,

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, chapter XX, pp. 306-10.

Taught by thy minde, and by thy beauty sway'd.

And I a needless part of it, unless
 You think me for the whole a Delegate,
 To treat for what they want, of your excesse,
 Vertue to serve the universal State. (II.vii.52-3)

Davenant plays paradoxically with Hobbes' concept of the sovereign as an artificial person who represents (or 'personates') a larger population: Birtha's seemingly irresistible beauty and innocence have made her 'the whole world's Mayd', Gondibert, 'for the whole a Delegate'.¹⁰¹ Their mutual submission would form an imaginary social contract which could redeem their private, delinquent appetites:

And I with the apostate world should grow,
 From sov'raigne Nature, a revolted Slave,
 But that my lucky wounds, brought me to know,
 How with their cure my sicker minde to save. (II.vii.56)

Love can 'save' Gondibert's 'sicker minde'—anticipating his claim that humans are 'sick for pow'r' (II.viii.30)—by engendering a new social contract. This is projected against a defective world where no obligations hold firm, configured in language of the breaking of allegiances, as 'apostate' and 'revolted'. Birtha, an appropriately-named figured of procreative regeneration, embodies redemptive hope—even in the eyes of amatory rivals like the young blade Goltho:

And they shall love as quietly as we;
 Their Beauty's pow'r no civil War will raise;
 But flourish, and like neighb'ring Flowres agree;
 Unless they kindly quarrel in our praise. (III.ii.91)

Again, love and beauty inspire a fantasy of civic harmony: Davenant's word 'neighb'ring' appears again, and the world shall love 'quietly'. But the 'universal State' of Birtha's amatory conquest (II.vii.52) stands in tension with the 'universal crown' envisaged by Gondibert's father in the following canto (II.viii.43)—foreshadowing the climactic crisis of the extant poem.

But no sooner does Davenant configure love relationships through political metaphors, of contracts founded on conquest, than the resulting amatory obligations are forced into conflict

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, chapter XVI, pp. 248-50.

with real political ones. Goltho's illicit infatuation with Birtha compromises his prior obligation of loyalty to his commander, Gondibert:

Th'obedient and defencelesse, sure, no law
Afflicts, for law is their defence, and pow'r;
Yet me, Loves sheep, whom rigour needs not aw,
Wolf-Love, because defenceless, does devour (II.viii.68)

Goltho ostensibly understands the Hobbesian analysis: 'law' is generated for the purpose of 'defence', and this 'pow'r' of protection necessarily commands 'th'obedient'; he tries to configure himself using the metaphor of herd animals, as 'Loves sheep', who has no need of psychological coercion (completing the recurring rhyme), 'aw'. But by submitting to his delinquent desire for Birtha, Goltho has unleashed an unavoidably predatory drive: 'Wolf-Love', and the recurring verb, 'devour'. He protests his innocence, claiming Gondibert's 'Laws are still to my obedience dear, | Who was my Gen'ral, though my Rival now' (III.ii.84), but immediately belies himself by continuing to fantasize about possessing Birtha against Gondibert's will. More problematically still, even Gondibert's pledging himself to Birtha contravenes a prior obligation, Aribert's power to betroth him to Rhodalind:

His stormy rage will it rebellion call;
Who claims to chuse the Brides of his Allys (III.ii.11)

Gondibert is being disingenuous when he describes himself as one of Aribert's 'Allys'—when he is in fact his adopted heir, and subject to Aribert's inalienable right to manage his succession. He begins his long speech to Astragon in canto II.viii by trying to invoke the language of conquest to claim he can obediently love Rhodalind as a subject, and remain true to Birtha:

Think not Ambition can my duty sway;
I look on *Rhodalind* with Subjectes Eies,
Whom he that conquers, must in right obey. (II.viii.26)

But given the work Davenant has done to intertwine the concepts of political and amatory conquest, neither Astragon, nor Birtha, nor the reader find this speech reassuring. When Aribert later encounters Gondibert's unwillingness to marry Rhodalind, he naturally assumes Gondibert must be dissembling: 'a disguise which sodain passion makes, | To hide more joy then prudence should express' (III.iv.37).

In a sense, Gondibert's position really is false—as Astragon suggests:

But you must pay that blood your Army spent,
And wed that Empire which our wounds deserve. (II.viii.57)

The forces of 'Empire' have generated obligations ('deserve') which Gondibert is not at liberty to break. Birtha, meanwhile, had resigned herself to this from the start. Immediately after configuring their love as a social contract (in canto II.vii, above), she stretches the conceit even further, as she anticipates Gondibert's breaking of contract:

That she the payment he of love would make
Less understood, then yet the debt she knew;
But coyne unknown, suspiciously we take,
And debts, till manifest, are never due. (II.vii.66)

Birtha tries to emphasize her obligations to Gondibert—she is more sensible of the 'debt' than any future 'payment'. But, by shifting into a transactional, financial metaphor, she introduces a pragmatism which seems to cut against the magniloquence with which Davenant elevates love elsewhere. As the suspicion of 'coyne unknown' implies, the value of money is arbitrary and contingent rather than intrinsic. Hobbes held that debts were inherently unstable, because unless they could be enforced (in Davenant's term, 'manifest') they could not technically be 'due':

If a covenant be made, wherein neither of the parties performe presently, but trust one another... upon any reasonable suspicion, it is Voyd... For he that performeth first, has no assurance the other will performe after; because the bonds of words are too weak to bridle mens ambition, avarice, anger, and other Passions, without the feare of some coërcive Power.¹⁰²

Later in the poem, Birtha disowns her vows to Gondibert, which expressed her 'passion' rather than her 'truth':

Since such a Prince has forfeited his pow'r,
Heav'n give me leave to make my duty lesse,
Let me my vows, as sodain oaths abhor,
Which did my passion, not my truth expresse.

Yet yours I would not think were counterfeit,
But rather ill and rashly understood;
For 'tis impossible I can forget
So soon, that once you fatally were good. (III.ii.38-9)

Vows are made only of words—which may not always 'expresse' the 'truth'—and Birtha sustains the monetary metaphor, even as she fervently hopes Gondibert's were not 'counterfeit'.

¹⁰² *ibid.*, chapter XIV, p. 210.

Gondibert has acted ‘ill and rashly’, fashioned in the next stanza with the tellingly bestial verb: ‘For weaknesse soon invites you to devour’ (III.ii.40). We are now rather remote from the notion that love is a sure foundation of civic harmony—in different ways, Gondibert, Birtha, and Goltho find they have been led astray by ‘passion’. Power, rather than being sustained by love, has become ‘Love’s shun’d Impediment’ (III.iv.64).

This impasse causes the central crisis of the extant poem. Gondibert has the capacity to resolve the Lombard civil war by accepting Aribert’s adoption, but he ‘undoes the world in being true’ (III.iv.A). This dramatic irony is pointed when Gondibert admits to Aribert that he has become guilty of the very passion he has railed against throughout the poem: ‘Farr in Ambition’s Feaver am I gon!’ (III.iv.27). His love for Birtha, against his sovereign’s command, has turned into a form of vainglory. Davenant was renovating the conventional heroic conflict between love and honour: Gondibert is caught in a conflict between his love and his political obligations. This remains unresolved when the poem abruptly stops. But there may be something revealing in the very open-endedness with which *Gondibert* finally peters out. The solution should have been simple: the metaphorical link between civic obligations and love was a central myth of Caroline power, at the heart of Davenant’s court masques. But the extant poem denies this easy resolution by insisting on the restlessly disruptive force of wayward desire. The poem can find no constitutional solution—or at least none that carries indissoluble or teleological authority. Monarchs like Aribert trace their legitimacy not from any inherent moral, spiritual, or emotional value, but from their contingent capacity to conquer their people with *de facto* coercive power—as the repeated rhyme collocates ‘law’ with ‘aw’. Dramatizing this account of obligations in the genre of romance enabled Davenant to explore the distinction between politically useful *virtù*, which contributed to that end, and destructive vainglory. The poem’s non-conclusion does not offer partisan royalism, but rather a sense that political obligations remain provisional, and subject to change.

3. Davenant in the 1650s

By the end of the decade, Davenant had reintroduced drama to puritan England as a form of Cromwellian propaganda, and was accused of being ‘Master of the Revells to Oliver the Tyrant’, albeit not by unbiased observers.¹⁰³ His concerted effort to re-open the theatres began at the end of 1653, when he drafted his pamphlet entitled *A Proposition for Advancement of Moralitie*. The *Proposition* re-stated the argument from the *Preface to Gondibert* on the coercive function of heroic poetry and drama, coupled with a more pragmatic argument from economic development.¹⁰⁴ Davenant sought exposure for his ideas in high places: one copy reached Samuel Hartlib, and a manuscript summary sent to John Thurloe in 1656 survives in the Bodleian Library.¹⁰⁵ Nicholas McDowell has cited the *Proposition* as evidence of possible links between Davenant and John Hall of Durham.¹⁰⁶ Hall’s pamphlet *A True Account and Character of the Times* was a major early attempt to reconcile royalists with the Independents’ cause; we encountered it in chapter one, and will do so again next chapter.¹⁰⁷ Hall argued ‘it were a good way to mollifie peoples minds to suffer Play-houses againe’, his psychological emphasis indicating at least a close similarity of interest with Davenant. His verb ‘mollifie’ offered a metaphor similar to those Davenant had used in the *Preface* to ‘fashion the brittle and misshapen mettall of the Minde’ (p. 38).¹⁰⁸ Hall, McDowell conjectures, may have been involved in circulating Davenant’s *Proposition* in the mid-1650s. The tactic of using a proposition document to lobby for political support bears notable similarities with that used by another of Hall’s associates, Nedham, who cemented his defection to the Republic in 1650 by tabling a proposal

¹⁰³ There is no evidence for the charge, levelled by Davenant’s rival Sir Henry Herbert at the Restoration: Joseph Quincy Adams, ed., *The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels, 1623-1673* (New Haven, 1917), pp. 122-23.

¹⁰⁴ Jacob and Raylor, *Opera and Obedience*, pp. 214-22.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 205-8; Bod. MS Rawl. 46, f. 293.

¹⁰⁶ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 96-101, 240.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 90-1; Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 169-70.

¹⁰⁸ Compare Edmund Spenser, *Amoretti*, sonnet XXXII: ‘The paynefull smith with force of feruent heat | the hardest yron soone doth mollify’; the metaphor of mollifying metal originated in Horace’s *Ars Poetica*: ‘faber imus... molles imitabitur aere capillos’. *Amoretti and Epithalamion: A Critical Edition* ed. by Kenneth J. Larsen (Tempe, 1997), p. 161n.

for what became *Mercurius Politicus*.¹⁰⁹ If there is indeed a link via Hall, it may suggest how Davenant conceived and implemented the strategy.

The *Proposition for Advancement of Morality* formed the basic blueprint for Davenant's Cromwellian operas. As these have received detailed critical attention elsewhere, I pass over them briefly here. But we should note that Susan Wiseman has detected a 'quasi-Hobbesian analysis of power' in *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656).¹¹⁰ Edward Holberton has advanced a more concrete reading of the operas' use of jingoistic colonial rhetoric to ennoble and legitimize Protectoral foreign policy—*The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* (1658), for instance, climaxing with the redcoats of the New Model Army defeating the barbaric Spanish.¹¹¹ For Holberton, this dovetails with Raylor's Machiavellian reading of Waller's *Panegyrick to my Lord Protector*: enacting Machiavelli's advice on channelling wayward energies into colonial conquest.¹¹² This colonial emphasis enabled both Waller and Davenant to develop their re-conception of the state as an economic entity, resisting religious mystification in favour of pragmatism.¹¹³ But this secularization only went so far: as Davenant's theme in *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* suggests, it could still call upon post-Elizabethan nostalgia for a militant English Protestantism, now refracted through the ultra-Protestant Cromwellian lenses of toleration and Independency.¹¹⁴

Two further 1650s poems expound aspects of Davenant's political and literary theory. The first is 'To Mr. Benlowes, on his Divine Poem', a dedicatory poem in Edward Benlowes' *Theophila, Or Loves Sacrifice* (1652).¹¹⁵ *Theophila* had much in common with *Gondibert*, as Benlowes also made extensive manuscript corrections and additions, and presentational

¹⁰⁹ See Worden, *Literature and Politics*, pp. 19-23; on Hall and Nedham, McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 160-61.

¹¹⁰ Susan Wiseman, "'History Digested': Opera and Colonialism in the 1650s", in Thomas Healy and Jonathan Sawday, eds., *Literature and the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 198-99.

¹¹¹ Edward Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, pp. 137-40.

¹¹² *ibid.*, pp. 119-21; see also Raylor, 'Waller's Machiavellian Cromwell', p. 403.

¹¹³ Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, p. 94.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 120.

¹¹⁵ Gibbs, ed., *Shorter Poems*, pp. 177-79, 429n.

inscriptions to friends and potential patrons (including John Selden).¹¹⁶ Davenant signed his poem from the Tower, and he may have wished to highlight his and Benlowes' shared plight as former royalists, estranged from the old Church of England, seeking patronage and protection under the Commonwealth. He begins with a series of conceits implying a critical view of monarchy:

Where Kings, Gods Counterfeits, reach but the skill,
In study'd Scenes to act the Godhead ill;
Where Cowards, smiling in their Closets, breed
Those Wars which make the vain and furious bleed; (13-16)

Davenant sustains the analysis of war, in terms of 'vain and furious' passions, we found in *Gondibert*. But his criticism is now directed specifically towards 'Kings', with their ill counsellors lurking secretively in 'Closets', and their tendency to 'act the Godhead ill', offering a distinct criticism of the histrionics of recent English monarchs. The artificiality of kings—as 'Gods Counterfeits'—enables Davenant to deflate the concept of sacred monarchy:

Where Beauty playes not merely Natures part,
But is, like Pow'r, a Creature form'd by Art;
And, as at first, Pow'r by consent was made,
And those who form'd it did themselves invade (18-20)

He goes on to criticize kings for their mistake in assuming power is 'Native' and that 'duty too is Natural' (31-2). Davenant now suggests that power was generated by 'consent'—reinstating the contractual step in Hobbes' theory which, we saw earlier, he had tended to elide in favour of simple conquest in *Gondibert*—if anything, a further step away from royalism.¹¹⁷ He reintroduces the conquest conceit in the following line, with the verb 'invade' to imply subjects' self-conquest, over their own wayward private appetites. If this was not a major theme in *Gondibert*, chapter five will consider its central importance in Cowley's *Davideis*. The most striking consistency with *Gondibert* appears in Davenant's alignment of power with beauty, the idea that submission to coercive force is a psychological process enforced by artists and especially poets:

But they by studying Numbers rather knew
To make those happy whom they did subdue. (63-4)

¹¹⁶ Woodward, 'Manuscript Corrections', p. 298; P. G. Stanwood, 'Edward Benlowes', *ODNB*, www.oxforddnb.com/view/Article/2097 (accessed 20th October 2015).

¹¹⁷ *Leviathan*, chapters XVIII and XX, pp. 264, 312.

The remainder of the poem praises Benlowes' theological enquiries. Again, we will explore royalist poets' adaptation to 1650s piety further in chapter five.

The second text to note is a more conventional patronage poem, addressed to the dramatist Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill. It was entered in the Stationers' Register as 'Poem to My Lord Broghill' in December 1657, although, so far as we know, it did not reach the press until the posthumous edition of Davenant's *Works* in 1673, under Broghill's post-Restoration title, Earl of Orrery.¹¹⁸ Broghill's exchange of poems with Cowley in 1657 may have been what emboldened Davenant in making his own address to Broghill that year. Broghill had known Davenant in the 1630s, and, despite his family's royalism, he remained one of the only Cromwellian statesmen who offered substantial literary patronage.¹¹⁹ He was an important figure in the courtier wing of mid-century culture, and an ideal reader for Davenant's theories on the political role of the nobility. Davenant felt confident enough to celebrate his revival of the theatre in 1656 and reprimand the preceding puritan zealotry that had suppressed it (perhaps explaining why the poem may not have been printed). He fashions Broghill as the ideal courtier in a more aristocratic and authoritarian Protectorate.

The poem centres on the alliance between 'the most important Things (which are | Empire and Arts)' (526-27), supporting sovereign order with a combination of martial strength and charisma:

Civility does those with softness gain
Whom Armies else by rigour must restrain:
Armies, whose civil strength prevents the wrongs
Attempted by unarm'd uncivil Throngs:
And thus as Pow'r does scatter'd strength collect
And Arm, That it from Throngs may Pow'r protect,
So should the People that form'd Force esteem,
Since from their own fierce rage it rescues them. (256-65)

The terminology derives almost verbatim from *Gondibert*—where 'rage' often described violent, passionate excess (I.i.4, I.i.79, II.iv.31); military organization was 'devis'd', 'Least civil pow'r

¹¹⁸ in Gibbs, ed., *Shorter Poems*, pp. 107-22, 397n.

¹¹⁹ Toby Barnard, 'Roger Boyle, first Earl of Orrery', *ODNB*, www.oxforddnb.com/view/Article/3138 (accessed 20th October, 2015).

should be by Throngs surpris'd' (I.i.4); and, through military leadership, 'men so scatter'd' could 'firmly mix' (I.v.29), again offering an analogue with the visual metaphor in the *Leviathan* frontispiece. But Davenant maintains the ambiguous caveat we saw in *Leviathan*, that military force can only secure power by gaining 'esteem' (264).¹²⁰ That verb, 'gain' (256), suggests another occurrence of the metaphor of conquest, but also the language of Machiavellian aphorisms on how to 'gain' and 'maintain' power—like the ending of Marvell's 'Horatian Ode'.¹²¹ As in *Gondibert*, Davenant emphasizes that obedience can be gained through 'Eloquence':

Yours can all Turnes and Counter-turnings find
To catch Opinion, as a Ship the winde;
Which blowing cross, the Pilot backward steers,
And shifting Sayles, makes way when he Laveers. (282-85)

Again, this replicates almost verbatim the passage we saw earlier in *Gondibert* (II.iv.32), using the distinctive nautical metaphor 'Laveers' to suggest the use of skill and guile in governing the unruly masses. The 'Turnes and Counter-turnings' relate this skill to other connotations of artifice, recapitulating language from the *Preface to Gondibert*, which described the 'conterturne' of the epic romance plot (p. 16), and perhaps also gesturing towards Ben Jonson's use of 'Turne' and 'Counter-Turne' to mean the *strophe* and *antistrophe* of a Pindaric ode.¹²² The artificiality of government also implies its mutability and plasticity—a further connotation of the imagery of tacking and counter-turning—which extends the etymological sense of 'verse', and is implicated in the language of changing allegiances ('trimming', 'reversal', 'tergiversation', 'turncoat').

Davenant seizes this opportunity to canvas his theory of the civic role of poets in enforcing sovereign power: 'the Muses Regents were in *Greece* and *Rome*' (519), recapitulating an argument from the *Preface* (p. 31). But he adopts a more cautious vocabulary of 'civility' and 'softness' (256)—perhaps motivated by Hobbes' misgivings about poetic fancy in his *Answer* to

¹²⁰ As in *Leviathan*, chapter XXX, p. 550.

¹²¹ see Brian Vickers, 'Machiavelli and Marvell's Horatian Ode', pp. 34-35; *OED*, 'gain', v., sense 5.

¹²² See further in chapter five; Ben Jonson, 'To the immortall memorie, and friendship of that noble paire, Sir Lucius Cary and Sir H. Morison', in *The Underwood*, ed. by Colin Burrow, in David Bevington *et al*, ed., *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson* (7 vols.; Cambridge, 2012), p. 220n.

the *Preface*, insisting that it must be constrained by judgement.¹²³ Davenant continues to endorse restless imperial expansion—‘Empire ever must intend increase’ (455)—but this must be governed by ‘A well establishd Judgment’ like Broghill’s (453). He concludes with a strong warning against vainglory:

The Courage which the vain for Valor take
 (Who proudly dangerseek for Glory’s sake)
 Is impudence; and what they rashly do,
 Has no excuse, but that ’tis madness too.
 Yet when confin’d, it reaches Valors name;
 Which seeks fair Vertue and is met by Fame.
 It weights the cause ere it attempts the Fact,
 And bravely dares forbear as well as act. (537-42)

This is the closest Davenant ever came to articulating the distinction between *virtù* and vainglory, which had proved so paradoxically elusive in *Gondibert*. He continues to play on the ambiguity of ‘Vertue’—shifting between the Christian sense of ethical good, and the Machiavellian sense of ‘Valor’—but now argues that ‘Courage’ must be ‘confin’d’, that forbearance can be as brave as action. This circumspection is unusual in a Davenant poem, but it reflects the uneasy and conservative temper of the late Protectorate.

Stuart panegyrists at the Restoration depicted Hobbism as one of the worst symptoms of Cromwellianism.¹²⁴ We can trace one way in which these perceptions took shape via satirical responses to Davenant. With his conceptual debts to Hobbes (and, equally incriminatingly, to Machiavelli), his political theories were very easy for satirists to creatively misinterpret. His defence of absolutism could look suspiciously convenient alongside his evident desire to impress potential patrons. Likewise, his defence of ambition could be made to look like a simple prop for his own cynical, trimming tendencies. This innuendo was made in 1653 by the poet Nicholas Hookes in the dedicatory epistle to his collection of amatory lyrics, *Amanda*. Hookes addresses

¹²³ Hobbes, *Answer*, pp. 49-50; Parkin, *Taming the Leviathan*, p. 83.

¹²⁴ See further in chapter six.

his patron Edward Montagu—the Earl of Manchester’s royalist cousin.¹²⁵ Confronting the dearth of literary patronage in puritan England, he praises Montagu’s generosity: ‘Had you liv’d sooner at *Sucklings* Sessions, you had sav’d Sir *W. Davenant* an oath’.¹²⁶ The reference to Suckling’s ‘Sessions of the Poets’ harks back to the older cavalier culture of conviviality and patronage, in which Davenant had once been a leading figure. By contrast, Hookes supposes, Davenant must have taken ‘an oath’ of allegiance to the Commonwealth (probably the Engagement)—a supposition, at least, as Davenant’s biographers have found no evidence for this allegation. But it was a reasonable assumption nonetheless, given Davenant’s release from prison in October 1652. Hookes could conceive of no other explanation for this reversal in fortunes than Davenant’s mercenary submission to his new masters.

The most obvious source for gossip and innuendo about Davenant is the volume of scurrilous satires on *Gondibert* by John Denham and his associates (who included William Crofts and John Donne the younger). As noted above by Aubrey, the satires were first composed and circulated in the exiled courts at Paris and The Hague in 1650-53. Denham returned to London in March 1653, and printed the collection as *Certain Verses Written by severall of the Authors Friends, to be Re-Printed with the Second Edition of Gondibert*. A second edition appeared later in the year accompanied by a sequel, *The Incomparable Poem Gondibert, Vindicated From the Wit-Combats of Four Esquires*, which has been attributed, not implausibly, to Robert Wild.¹²⁷ The second volume, whilst light-heartedly mocking the authors of *Certain Verses*, is a distinctly backhanded defence of *Gondibert*. The focus in both books is relentlessly venereal, undermining Davenant’s intellectualism and moralizing with a lowering context. Marcus Nevitt has read this

¹²⁵ Peter Davidson and William McLellan, ‘Nicholas Hookes’, *ODNB*, www.oxforddnb.com/view/Entry/13700; Richard Cust, ‘Edward Montagu, first Baron Montagu of Broughton’, *ODNB*, www.oxforddnb.com/view/Entry/19011 (accessed 20th October 2015).

¹²⁶ Nicholas Hookes, *Amanda, A Sacrifice to an Unknown Goddess* (Oxford, 1653), sig. A6^r.

¹²⁷ The above attributions are accepted by Timothy Raylor, who rejects the alleged involvement of Waller, Buckingham, and Adrian Broderick, but adds Thomas Killigrew. Raylor, *Cavaliers, Clubs, and Literary Culture: Sir John Mennes, James Smith, and the Order of the Fancy* (Newark, 1994), pp. 198 with 288n. Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, vol. 1, p. 143. *The Incomparable Poem Gondibert, Vindicated* cited in the more easily accessible standalone edition of 1655.

as a reaction against Davenant's shifting allegiance by restoring him to a bibulous, libertine, and convivial milieu of cavalier satire (albeit now as the butt rather than fellow-reveller).¹²⁸ Two governing conceits in particular seem to reflect fears that he was enacting some sort of transformation. The first configures him as Ovid Naso, a punning reference to his nose (which had collapsed after his botched attempt to cure his syphilis by inhaling mercury), but also to Ovid as the poet of metamorphosis. As we saw earlier, Waller had drawn this comparison in his dedicatory epistle to *Gondibert* to underline Davenant's banishment from the Stuart court. The second configures him as Ovid's nymph Daphne, transformed into a laurel tree to escape Apollo's violent advances—emasculating him and ironically literalizing his status as poet laureate. Both conceits construct Davenant's sexual misfortunes in terms which also associate him with changeability.

Before turning to the satires, we should note the existence of a related and possibly antecedent text, a dense and hostile set of annotations to the copy of *Gondibert* now held at the National Library of Scotland.¹²⁹ The annotations, like the satires, were made collaboratively by a group of royalists well-versed in cavalier poetry—one of whose hands bears a close resemblance to Denham's. The annotations share cryptic jokes and verbal echoes with some of the *Certain Verses* poems—especially Denham's use of the neologism 'Davenantisme'. Satirical responses to Davenant's knotty style were recorded and exchanged in the annotated copy, before being incorporated into satirical poems eventually published in *Certain Verses*.¹³⁰ One annotator sarcastically identified Davenant's phrase 'Tyrant Kings' (II.ii.42) as a putative example of 'Pleonasmus' (i.e. tautology), and added a note: 'ask the Parliament if Kings and Tyrants haue anie difference'.¹³¹ 'Tyrant kings' would only seem like a tautology to an extremist republican, and the annotation implies it was, in fact, parliament who had made this error. The annotator pinpointed a moment where Davenant's rhetoric had failed to assimilate itself to a republican logic. Some other notes by the annotator seem to highlight anxieties about Davenant's

¹²⁸ Nevitt, 'Insults of Defeat', pp. 295-96, 303n.

¹²⁹ Edinburgh, NLS, shelfmark AK 4.6.

¹³⁰ See Allsopp, 'An Annotated Copy', pp. 32-37.

¹³¹ *Gondibert* (4to, 1651), sig. Ee3^v.

theoretically tangled political transformations: ‘the poetical Papist is here a Calvinist’; later comparing him with a ‘Cameleon’.¹³² These particular aspersions did not find their way into *Certain Verses*, but the wider suspicion of Davenant’s inconstancy did.

Davenant’s relationship with Hobbes held particular fascination for the authors of *Certain Verses*: ‘Nor can old Hobbs | Defend me from dry bobbs’.¹³³ They repeatedly use the metaphor of a leviathan to transfigure Davenant into a Hobbist monster, consumed by his fascination with tyranny, and grotesquely embodying his own theory of poets as coercive agents of power. One Latin epistle compares Davenant’s collapsed nose to the blowhole of a giant whale, out of which his verse emanates like vomit (perhaps also like Spenser’s monstrous Error).¹³⁴ The companion to this piece in *The Incomparable Poem* turns this attack back on the satirists as themselves animalistic (or, at least, ichthyoid): ‘Plaise-mouth’d fellowes’.¹³⁵ But the later satirist noticeably fails to rebut the charge of Davenant’s Hobbism. Another text in *The Incomparable Poem* declares:

What, doth he baffle *Hobs* the *Nathan*?
Hook in, old boy, thy *Levi-athan*.¹³⁶

‘Baffle’, here, means ‘disgrace’, by exposure to ridicule and perhaps simply by association.¹³⁷ The couplet alludes to Alexander Ross’ contemporaneous attack on Hobbes’ theology, *Leviathan Drawn out with a Hook*.¹³⁸ By comparing Hobbes with Nathan the prophet, the satirist subverted Hobbes and Davenant’s rationalist anti-clericalism as itself priest-like in its hubris.

The leviathan metaphor is worked out in more detail in another *Certain Verses* poem which gives Davenant a mock-coronation as sovereign of the realm of poetry:

Thus then secur’d, thy Babe shall not miscarry,
Since all doe bow to Fames *Fine Secretary*.
So have I heard the great *Leviathan*,

¹³² *ibid.*, sigs. Mm3^v (II.vi.10), and Aaa3^v (III.iii.1).

¹³³ *Certain Verses*, p. 9. A ‘dry bob’ was a firm blow which did not break the skin: *OED*, ‘bob’, n. 3, sense 1.

¹³⁴ *ibid.*, p. 13; Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, I.i.20.

¹³⁵ *The Incomparable Poem*, p. 17.

¹³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 6.

¹³⁷ *OED*, ‘baffle’, v. 1.

¹³⁸ Alexander Ross, *Leviathan Drawn Out with a Hook* (London, 1653); see Parkin, *Taming the Leviathan*, p. 120.

Let me speak true, and not bely-a-man,
 Raign in the Deep, and with tyrannick Power
 Both Costick *Codd*, and squallid *Sprats* devour.¹³⁹

‘Fame’, which we earlier saw Davenant elevating in the *Preface* is deflated here with the servile epithet ‘Secretary’, painting him as a professional hireling, hinting at the suspicion that he had launched an appeal for patronage from the new regime. The contrived rhyme for ‘Leviathan’, ‘bely-a-man’, implies that advocates of absolutism like Davenant, by contrast with the honest satirist, are dishonest flatterers. ‘Bely’ might also pun on ‘belly’, used as a transitive verb, opening out the final image of the whale devouring the smaller fry, but also meaning ‘to swell’, as Davenant’s body becomes monstrously engrossed.¹⁴⁰ The satirist evidently picked up on the recurring verb ‘devour’, which, we saw, in *Gondibert* connotes violent bestiality, compounded now by the physical grotesquery of ‘squallid’ and the scatological ‘Costick’.¹⁴¹ The companion piece in *The Incomparable Poem* reappropriates this representation but, once again, reinforces it:

Whilst thou whale *Gondibert* shalt feast, thy dish,
 Such as these, shabs, shurks, sea-calves, & swordfish.
 Let the whole shoale of lesser Pamphlets swim,
 As the Wit-frye. Secur’d alone in him.¹⁴²

This continues to play with imagery of an artificial Leviathan, with various small, discordant individuals being ‘Secur’d’ within one giant body—an aquatic parody of the *Leviathan* frontispiece. The ‘shoale’ may also parody the metaphor of herd animals, which Davenant used in *Gondibert* to conceptualize an absolutist polity. But, as before, whilst belittling Davenant’s opponents with ichthyoid imagery, the satirist retains the image of Davenant as a violent, devouring Hobbist.

The suspicion was that Davenant’s political ambitions, his advocacy of absolutism, and his conversion to Cromwellianism were all connected:

And him like to a *Civill sheep*
 In Gaole (*Nice Statesmens pound*) they’l keep.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ *Certain Verses*, p. 20.

¹⁴⁰ *OED*, ‘belly’, v., and n, sense 5.

¹⁴¹ As in ‘costive’: *OED*, ‘Costic’, adj..

¹⁴² *The Incomparable Poem*, p. 23.

¹⁴³ *Certain Verses*, p. 16.

This echoes Davenant's description of cities as 'wise States-men's Folds for civil sheep' (I.ii.76, quoted earlier), recalling the recurring metaphor of herd animals which configured the docile population projected by rationalist absolutism. Davenant was now in the hands of the 'Nice Statesmen'—and Hobbesian reasoning dictated that he should submit to them. *The Incomparable Poem* explicitly voices the suspicion Davenant saved his life by offering his services as a propagandist:

But Davenant was releas'd, we know it,
The man was pardon'd for the Poet.¹⁴⁴

The latter collection meditates more extensively than the earlier *Certain Verses* on the contingency and changeability of allegiances, perhaps reflecting its later composition: it was wholly written after the spate of royalist defections, including those of Davenant, Hobbes, and Waller, in the early 1650s. It draws a particularly pointed connection between Davenant's turncoaterly and Waller's, in the lines quoted in chapter two, who 'writes now *contra*, that *pro* wrote':

You think they feign, that is, they lie,
That spake of *Gondibert* so high.
If that their Verses were much taller,
Waller hath since out-Gondid *Waller*.¹⁴⁵

The pun on 'outdid' continues the theme of vainglorious emulation which characterized the world of *Gondibert*. The coinage suggests *Gondibert*'s currency as a symbol of poets' concealing their own political ambition behind their advocacy and flattery of authoritarian power.

Certain Verses encouraged widespread emulation, and several scurrilous poems on 'Daphne' circulated in the 1650s. One contribution to the genre was by Milton's nephew, the republican apologist John Phillips, in *Sportive Wit: The Muses Merriments* (1656). This development indicates the convergence between royalists and Independent republicans, who united in turning the cavalier genre of the lampoon against authoritarian Protectorians like

¹⁴⁴ *The Incomparable Poem*, p. 13.

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

Davenant.¹⁴⁶ The poem, ‘How Daphne payes his Debts’, imagines Davenant beset by creditors; with *Gondibert* having ‘scarce paid for paper & printing’, he hatches a new plan to become ‘master o’th Revels’. He then pronounces:

*The State hath promis’d this to me,
As the Clerk of the Parliament saith,
And I hope that you will do as I do,
Believe the PUBLIQUE FAITH.*¹⁴⁷

The passage combines cavalier-style scurrility with a civic humanist alarm at Davenant’s theory of the coercive function of poetry. Similarly to the earlier satirist’s depiction of Hobbes as Nathan the Prophet, Phillips’ sinister ‘PUBLIQUE FAITH’ subverts Davenant’s Hobbist claim to rationalism, instead fashioning him as the would-be priest of a new authoritarian dogma. His quixotic attempts to escape the ‘Bayliffs’ further deflate this specious ‘FAITH’ with purely cynical motives.

Another poet watching Davenant attentively in the 1650s was Marvell. Davenant’s cameos in Marvell’s 1650s poems belong in their proper context, in the next chapter. But I will conclude here by noting how Marvell returned to *Gondibert* when he came to consider political absolutism and allegiance in *The Rehearsal Transpros’d* (1672). This was apt because, as Marvell points out, the first, manuscript version of *The Rehearsal* (ca. 1667) had been directed at Davenant rather than Dryden.¹⁴⁸ Earlier we saw the moment of ironic rapprochement, when Marvell hinted at his sympathy with *Gondibert*’s Erastian Independency, in his ambiguous line, ‘All Astragon appear’d to me the better *Scheme of Religion*’.¹⁴⁹ Elsewhere, Davenant appears more simplistically as a harbinger of absolutism:

This is the *Syntagm* of Mr. Bayes his Divinity, and *System* of his Policy: The Principles of which confine upon the *Territories* of Malmsbury, and the stile, as far as his Wit would give him leave, imitates that Language: But the Arrogance and Dictature with which he imposes it on the world, surpasses by far the presumption either of *Gondibert* or *Leviathan*.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Compare Lucy Hutchinson’s refutation of Waller’s *Panegyrick*: Norbrook, ‘Lucy Hutchinson versus Edmund Waller’, pp. 61, 63-4.

¹⁴⁷ John Phillips, *Sportive Wit: The Muses Merriments* (London, 1656), pp. 120-22.

¹⁴⁸ Dzelzainis and Patterson, eds., *Prose Works*, vol. 1, p. 284.

¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p. 201.

¹⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p. 94.

This equation, ‘*Gondibert* or *Leviathan*’, is abrupt, and never clearly explained: we should assume that Marvell could rely on contemporary, cultural associations between the two. Marvell cites *Gondibert* in relation to the politics of literary style: ‘Dictature’, meaning political dictatorship, also puns on the etymological sense of dictation, or speaking.¹⁵¹ Marvell later suggests that Sir William ‘might as well have pretended to be’ his cousin, ‘the *Bishop Davenant*’—an elegant version of the suggestion we have already encountered, that Hobbist poets like Davenant had set themselves up as the new priests of absolutist dogma.¹⁵² But here, Marvell was in fact siding with Hobbes, who had himself warned against the dangers of arbitrary and inflammatory rhetoric in his *Answer to Davenant’s Preface*, maintaining that poets, like priests, must constrain their fancy with judgement. As Jon Parkin has shown, Marvell’s support of Charles II’s use of his prerogative powers to enforce religious toleration created considerable common ground with Hobbes.¹⁵³ The acerbic question of whether Parker’s ‘Wit would give him leave’ to imitate Hobbes seems to imply Marvell held Hobbes in comparatively high esteem. *The Rehearsal Transpros’d* launches a defence of quietist toleration, enforced by the arbitrary, Erastian authority of Charles’ prerogative power.

Parker detected more than a hint of Cromwellianism in Marvell’s defence of John Owen, and his allusions to Hobbes and Davenant helped shape this perception. In his *Reproof to the Rehearsal Transpros’d*, Parker dredged up an old episode from *Certain Verses* where Davenant, upon being sprung from jail, produces an ‘antique medal’:

On the reverse whereof was graved,
Th’alliance betwixt Christ and David.¹⁵⁴

The original poem generates an ironic contrast between the sacred alliance of Anglican royalism and the ambivalent religious politics of *Gondibert*, leaning towards Erastianism and

¹⁵¹ *OED*, ‘Dictature’, n.

¹⁵² Dzelzainis and Patterson, eds., *Prose Works*, vol. 1, p. 201. Parkin, *Taming the Leviathan*, p. 83; Parkin, ‘Liberty Transpros’d: Andrew Marvell and Samuel Parker’, in Warren Chernaik and Martin Dzelzainis, eds., *Marvell and Liberty* (London, 1999), pp. 273-7.

¹⁵³ Parkin, ‘Liberty Transpros’d’, pp. 281-83; see further chapter six and Allsopp, ‘Sir Robert Howard’, pp. 77-8, 88-90.

¹⁵⁴ *Certain Verses*, p. 17; see Samuel Parker, *A Reproof to the Rehearsal Transposed* (London, 1673), p. 27.

Independency.¹⁵⁵ Parker was trying to transfer some of these connotations to Marvell, but it proved to be a misstep. In *The Rehearsal Transpros'd, The Second Part* (1673), Marvell was able to counter by hinting at the ambiguity of Parker's own 1650s allegiances (he had been a Presbyterian, and his father a republican).¹⁵⁶ In fact, as chapter six will argue, by opening this battle over past loyalties with the precedent of *Gondibert*, Parker unwittingly supported Marvell's case that political flexibility was a normative principle.

Davenant sustained a coherent political theory in *Gondibert* and his later writing—which contemporaries noted, although not generally with approval. He continued to conceptualize sovereignty as an artificial construct founded on *de facto* military power and linguistic coercion. Contemporary satirists presented this as mercenary pragmatism from a monstrous Hobbist crazed by his own Hobbesian lust for power. Davenant's complex engagement with the kinetic psychology of the passions was thus reflected back onto him as a grotesque bestiality—rather than an analyst of vainglory, he was transfigured into its embodiment. This cynical reaction was not politically neutral, but was pushed by disaffected royalists and republicans, dismayed at the pragmatic coalition of interests which constituted the Protectorate, and for whose defactoism Davenant had marshalled a substantial intellectual case. At a further remove, the ex-Cromwellian Marvell offered a more measured critique, hinting ironically at his former sympathies with Davenant's ecclesiological views, but expressing concern about his coercive reading of Hobbes' theory of language. The very fact Marvell was still interested in such questions twenty years later indicates how the image of Davenant as Hobbist—established by Denham on strong evidence in *Gondibert*—gained widespread notoriety as the paradigm of the Hobbist turncoat poet. In the next chapter we will return to the time of crisis which produced *Gondibert*, and chart more

¹⁵⁵ On David's political ambiguity, see chapter five and Anne Lake Prescott, 'The 2011 Josephine Waters Bennett Lecture: From the Sheephook to the Scepter: The Ambiguities of David's Rise to the Throne', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 65 (2012) 1-30, pp. 14-18.

¹⁵⁶ Dzelzainis and Patterson, eds., *Prose Works*, vol. 1, pp. 288-89n.

closely how the example of Davenant shaped Marvell's thinking about political action and obligation.

Chapter Four

Marvell, Machiavelli, and Militancy

Andrew Marvell's shifts of allegiance in 1650 are amongst the best known of the English Civil War: this chapter aims to clarify the political ideas and rhetoric that framed them. Marvell had avoided the Civil War by travelling in Europe, probably as tutor to a young nobleman, and he returned to England in 1647.¹ As Nicholas McDowell has shown, Marvell engaged closely with the cavalier literary culture of the late 1640s.² How far cavalier literary culture reciprocated is more open to debate, but we know Marvell wrote a bitter elegy on Buckingham's younger brother Francis in 1648, in which he fantasized about killing Cromwell and Fairfax, and contributed to two of the most significant royalist publications of 1649, with a dedicatory ode in Richard Lovelace's *Lucasta*, and an elegy on Henry, Lord Hastings in *Lachrymae Musarum*. Marvell's address to Lovelace and appearance alongside John Hall of Durham link him plausibly with the royalist patron Thomas Stanley.³ Yet the following year Marvell seemingly abandoned royalism in his 'An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland' of June 1650. Whatever that poem's ambiguities, few critics now doubt it displays a powerful enthusiasm for Cromwell and the Republic.⁴ But our next datable poem, 'Tom May's Death', written around late November 1650, returns to a belligerent royalism not unlike that of the Lovelace poem—although, I will argue, we need to consider its ambiguities more carefully. Soon afterwards Marvell shifted yet again, albeit more subtly. He returned to his career as a tutor, this time to Thomas Fairfax's daughter Mary. Fairfax's ambiguous political situation was the context for Marvell's major poem of July 1651, 'Upon Appleton House'.

¹ Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 45-6.

² McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, passim.

³ Smith, ed., *Poems*, pp. 14-17; Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 69-78; McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 29-30.

⁴ See Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 245-70.

Marvell scholars have correctly warned us to be cautious about imposing misleadingly consistent narratives on his personal development through this turbulent year. Because Marvell's poems were composed exclusively for manuscript circulation, some of the caveats I raised in chapter two about the different occasions, genres, and readers of Waller's poems apply here. We cannot easily compare Marvell's poems without adjusting for the diverse and quite specific circumstances of politics and patronage under which they were written. But we can trace the different ways they responded to a growing field of writing that formulated a rationalist understanding of political allegiance as contingent and transferrable—particularly the exchanges between Hobbes and Davenant that emerged in 1650-51, in the pirated editions of *The Elements of Law*, *Gondibert* and its *Preface*, and ultimately *Leviathan*. Marvell's interest was particularly caught by the unstable synthesis between Hobbesian and Machiavellian ideas ventured by Davenant. His thinking was shaped by the dynamic tensions between individual agents, social classes, and institutions which structured Machiavelli's analysis of republican politics in the *Discourses*; but also the insight of *The Prince* that political relations and institutions are fashioned artificially, through rhetoric. In Victoria Kahn's account, Machiavelli had adapted the humanist method of arguing on both sides of a question—in *utramque partem*—to analyze political disagreements in terms of this artificiality, as contrasts between different rhetorical voices: 'positive terms are logically implicated in and give rise to their opposites'.⁵ This chapter attends to Marvell's modes of rhetorical address as performances which expose their own limitations and their capacity for reappropriation. Marvell tests rhetorical conventions against the practicalities of post-Revolutionary politics, dramatizing the way in which England's political institutions, vocabularies, and, as a consequence, obligations have been transformed.

⁵ Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric*, pp. 18-21.

1. Marvell, Davenant, and the Engagement Controversy

Since John Wallace's and Quentin Skinner's pioneering 1960s work on Marvell and Hobbes respectively, scholars have recognized the Engagement controversy as 'the most relevant and manageable context in which to situate Marvell's political thinking at this crucial period'.⁶ The Engagement oath was first published on 11th October 1649 (and extended to all male citizens on the following 2nd January), although Wallace dated the controversy from Francis Rous and Anthony Ascham's first defences of the Republic the previous spring.⁷ Norbrook and McDowell have cited even earlier texts—such as Hall's *A True Account and Character of the Times*—as evidence of longer-term efforts to persuade royalists of the validity of the Independent cause.⁸ Hall maintained that the Independents' plan for a 'severely limited monarchy' was compatible with 'cultural and political order'.⁹ He added:

That it is a brave and a gallant way to peace, to extinguish the names of parties,
and not to discountenance malignants.¹⁰

Some royalists evidently took note of these sentiments: we will see in the next chapter how Cowley came to argue in almost identical language that the 'Names of *Party*... should be extinguished' in the preface to his 1656 *Poems*.¹¹ Hall's chosen example of partisan vocabulary, 'malignant', features prominently if ambiguously in Marvell's poems of 1650. McDowell has argued that Marvell's poems have close affinities with the writings of Hall and Nedham, with their emphasis on wit, hostility to the Presbyterians, and rationalist political theory.¹² A great deal of the Engagement controversy, largely animated by John Dury, revolved around spiritual themes of casuistry, the nature of oaths, and the interpretation of key Biblical texts like Romans 1:13.¹³

⁶ R. I. V. Hodge, *Foreshortened Time* (Cambridge, 1978), p. 97. See Wallace, *Destiny His Choice*, pp. 48-67 and *passim*, and 'The Engagement Controversy', pp. 385-9. Skinner's work on Hobbes was reissued in *Visions of Politics* (3 vols., Cambridge, 2002), vol. 3, *Hobbes and Civil Science*.

⁷ Wallace, 'The Engagement Controversy', pp. 384-6, 390.

⁸ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 90-91.

⁹ Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 169-70.

¹⁰ Hall, *A True Account and Character of the Times* (London, 1647), p. 8.

¹¹ Cowley, 'The Preface of the Author', in Waller, ed., *Poems*, p. 455n.

¹² McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 211-12, 223-39.

¹³ See for instance John Dury, *A Case of Conscience Resolved* (London, 1649); Barbara Donagan, 'Casuistry and Allegiance in the English Civil War' in Derek Hirst and Richard Strier, eds., *Writing and Political Engagement in Seventeenth Century England* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 92-103.

These were major points of religious controversy which Marvell's poems of 1649-51 almost completely pass by.

When Hall argued that extinguishing the names of parties would be 'a brave and gallant way to peace', he took a significant secularizing step by adopting the vocabulary of romance, and its underlying assumption that political conduct ought to be 'gallant'. This was part of his strategy of appealing to cavalier readers by drawing dividing lines between anti-clerical republican wits and reactionary Presbyterians.¹⁴ Hall was exploiting an important ambiguity in romance itself. We might stereotypically think of it as a royalist genre, but as we have seen in the case of *Gondibert*, romance could also dramatize a more radical instability and contingency, a political world governed by restless passions, and the force and fraud of glamorous Machiavellian military chiefs.¹⁵ Secularizing Engager arguments relied on demonstrating from historical example that power in England had always been essentially *de facto* in character, a Machiavellian demystification of rulers represented not how they ought to have been, but as they actually were (i.e. armed usurpers).¹⁶ In both his royalist and parliamentary propaganda, Nedham pushed a secular method of political analysis based on interest, and the central defactoist assumption that political power is founded on military might.¹⁷ Romance offered Nedham a mode for dramatizing these insights, veering into a celebratory cavaliering style in *Mercurius Pragmaticus*, but a more cynical mock-romance in *Mercurius Britannicus* and later *Mercurius Politicus*, fashioning Charles as the anti-hero 'Tarquin'.¹⁸ This reappropriation of romance can be discerned in the wider Engagement debate: in one pamphlet, the republican Albertus Warren mocked the royalist 'Gallants' who 'had rather goe slinking up and downe *London* in thredbare Coates, glorying in their sufferings forsooth' than recognize 'that heroicall vertues are further'd more (not hinderd) under a Democraticall Government then under a Monarchicall'.¹⁹ Warren presented himself satirically as adviser to the gallant gentry (but was in fact playing to the

¹⁴ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, p. 91; Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 169.

¹⁵ See Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, pp. 15-17, 140-43.

¹⁶ e.g. Francis Rous, *The Lawfulness of Obeying the Present Government* (London, 1649), pp. 2-5.

¹⁷ Worden, *Literature and Politics*, pp. 16-25.

¹⁸ See *Mercurius Politicus* 4 (22nd June-4th July 1650), p. 49.

¹⁹ Albertus Warren, *The Royalist Reform'd* (London, 1649), p. 4.

gallery). His argument is indebted to Machiavelli's *Discourses*, that *virtù* is greater in the unstable tension of a republic, but inflected with the 'heroicall' language of epic romance.²⁰ This posture enabled satirists like Warren to throw down the metaphorical gauntlet to the growing cavalier discourse of grief and retreat.

Hall and especially Nedham liked to present themselves as embodying the civic humanist ethic of *negotium* by wielding the 'pen militant' which 'gives spurs to resolution' (another cavaliering metaphor borrowed from romance).²¹ If this sort of vocabulary was intended to goad royalists like Stanley or Lovelace, it was probably misjudged.²² Stanley had never been much interested in romance anyway, and in 1649 he withdrew to the country, cutting himself off from London in favour of contemplative retirement.²³ Likewise, although Lovelace's *Lucasta* anthologizes several earlier poems which celebrate the active, martial life (e.g. 'To Lucasta, Going to the Warres'), the collection overwhelmingly turns towards themes of mourning, stoic resignation, quiet hedonism, and compensatory fantasy (e.g. 'The Grasse-hopper').²⁴ The dedicatory poems at the beginning of *Lucasta* work to cordon Lovelace off from the national crisis, filtering his poems through consolatory tropes of conviviality and escapism.

Marvell's contribution also rehearses the conventional nostalgic contrast between the 'candid age' of civility which produced men like Lovelace, and the present 'civil wars' which 'have lost the civic crown' (5, 12).²⁵ But he strikes a dissonant note by insisting that *Lucasta* was inescapably—'already'—caught in political battles: 'The air's already tainted with the swarms | Of insects which against you rise in arms' (17-18). Lovelace had previously been imprisoned,

²⁰ See Machiavelli, *Discourses*, Book I, chapter IV, pp. 19-22 (trans. Walker, pp. 113-15).

²¹ Marchamont Nedham, trans., *Of the Dominion, or Ownership, of the Sea*, by John Selden (London, 1652); cited by Worden, *Literature and Politics*, p. 20.

²² See Christopher Orchard, "'in time of Warre... our Language is all corrupt with military Terms": The Politics of Martial Metaphors in Post-Regicide England', in Graham Parry and Joad Raymond, eds., *Milton and the Terms of Liberty* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 105-8.

²³ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 215-17.

²⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 128-43. I am less persuaded by James Loxley that Lovelace's performance of royalist grief and retirement is sufficiently strident or confrontational to count as activism: *Royalism and Poetry in the English Civil Wars: The Drawn Sword* (Basingstoke, 1997), pp. 216-23; and Orchard, 'Politics of Martial Metaphors', p. 108.

²⁵ The civic crown, as Smith notes (ed., p. 21n), was a wreath awarded for saving a citizen's life in battle: i.e. an act of gallantry.

and his estates had been sequestered, as Marvell helpfully reminds him (27-32). Although disparaging the Presbyterians, Marvell does seem to relish the colourful language of pamphlet controversy in which he situates *Lucasta* (with compounds like ‘word-peckers’ and ‘book-scorpions’ apparently adapted from Hall and Nedham’s journalism). He even toys with identifying himself as one of ‘the rout’.²⁶ The final section of the poem constructs Lovelace as a romance hero (‘Whose hand so rudely grasps the steely brand’, 37), albeit one who has to be defended by an unruly band of ‘beauteous ladies... though yet undressed’ (33-40). This is to re-imagine Lovelace as effeminized and sexually voluptuous.²⁷ We could read this mock-romance image as analogous to Warren’s goading of his impotent ‘Gallants’.

Marvell’s espousal of *negotium*, active civic participation, is well known, but his consistent tendency to fashion this commitment through tropes of romance militancy is less widely noted. The genre of cavalier elegy in which Marvell participated during 1648-49 was increasingly a forum for articulations of grief, resignation, and withdrawal.²⁸ But critics have identified a ‘tonal dissonance’ in Marvell’s efforts, moving from passive grief to eroticism (which McDowell reads as ‘bathetic and mock-heroic’) and very extreme violence.²⁹ We can speculate how Marvell’s challenging departures from what Loxley has called the ‘isotopy of royalist verse’ might have stemmed from his dissatisfaction with the postures of *otium* his colleagues had increasingly adopted.³⁰ We could also conjecture whether this may be discernible in less obvious ways in other poems Marvell probably wrote during this period. For instance, ‘To His Coy Mistress’ wittily surpasses its peers’ attempts on the *carpe diem* theme (including a poem by Hall), rejecting amatory imagery of languishing by rivers, and aspiring instead towards vigorous, violent, and climactic action (‘rough strife’, 43).³¹ In a religious context, ‘The Coronet’ invokes a form of sensuous worship, represented as gathering flowers in gardens to weave a

²⁶ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 22n; Worden, *Literature and Politics*, pp. 60-1; McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 191-200.

²⁷ See McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, p. 10.

²⁸ See Loxley on ‘the funeral of active royalism’, in *The Drawn Sword*, p. 201.

²⁹ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 166-79; Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 172-73, 180-82.

³⁰ James Loxley, ‘“Prepar’d at last to strike in with the tyde”? Andrew Marvell and Royalist Verse’, *Seventeenth Century*, 10 (1995) 39-62, p. 54.

³¹ See McDowell on the date: *Poetry and Allegiance*, p. 31.

‘rich... chaplet’, but which turns out to be delusional, corrupted by ‘fame and interest’, intertwined with ‘the serpent old’ (5-6, 10, 13, 16).³² The poem suddenly turns, displacing this sensuality with an austere militant faith, calling down violent destruction from heaven: ‘shatter too with him my curious frame’ (22). We could read the poem as an anti-clerical attack on the accoutrements and vestments of the Caroline church.³³ On that reading, the poem displaces the morally ambiguous *otium* of flower gardens with an iconoclastic call for religious reform.³⁴ Finally, the ‘forward youth’ who opens the Horatian Ode is impelled to abandon his ‘numbers languishing’, alluding to the ‘shadows’ of contemplative garden poetry and the pejorative Latin word *languor* (1-4).³⁵ By contrast, the echoes of Lucan might encourage us to identify the ‘forward youth’ himself as a figure from epic romance, taking up arms and emerging into a public world of force and fraud.³⁶

Recent studies have situated Marvell most successfully somewhere between Stanley, Lovelace, Hall, and Nedham. But less attention has been given to the only living poet who, after Lovelace in 1649, Marvell actually names in his poetry of these years: Davenant. The idea that Marvell was interested in Davenant was first developed by Wallace in the 1960s, and scholars have generally assumed such an interest, if it existed, could only be an antagonistic or at least ironic one. Wallace read ‘Upon Appleton House’ as a mini-epic attempting to ‘answer’ *Gondibert*. He drew a contrast between the modest, ‘sober frame’ (2) of Nun Appleton and Aribert’s ‘proud palace... so vast of height’ in *Gondibert* (II.ii.6-7).³⁷ Marvell, on this reading, appealed to his puritan patron Fairfax by quietly disparaging the hubristic court poet. Several

³² Again, see McDowell on the date: *ibid.*, pp. 47-8.

³³ Especially if ‘chaplet’ puns on ‘chapel’, both etymologically related to different kinds of ceremonial dress: *OED*, ‘chaplet’, n., and ‘chapel’, n.

³⁴ On *otium* see Brian Vickers, ‘Leisure and Idleness in the Renaissance: the Ambivalence of *Otium*’, *Renaissance Studies*, 4 (1990) 1-37 and 107-54, pp. 149-51 and *passim*.

³⁵ *ibid.*, p. 151. I disagree here with Worden, who thinks ‘numbers languishing’ means all poetry: ‘The Royalism of Andrew Marvell’, in Jason McElligott and David Smith, eds., *Royalists and Royalism during the English Civil Wars* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 218.

³⁶ Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 254-57, 261-62.

³⁷ Wallace, *Destiny his Choice*, pp. 240-44.

critics have noted that Marvell's line 'virgin trebles wed the manly bass' (10) in the lyric 'Music's Empire' echoes the 'Virgin-Trebles' which 'call the bolder marry'd Tenor forth' in the House of Astragon (II.vi.80).³⁸ Nigel Smith reads 'Music's Empire' as Marvell's 'alternative... to Davenant's scarcely hidden contempt for the new regime': in contrast to Davenant's specious courtly harmony, Marvell's 'jarring winds' reflect a Machiavellian 'conception of the state as a vibrant aggregation of (dis)harmonious elements'.³⁹ But this slightly oversimplifies Davenant's lines, where the Tenor's 'Manly voyce' actually '*challeng'd* the Giant Base' (my emphasis). On Davenant's absolutist model, the 'Giant Base' could be a Leviathan-like image of brute sovereign power, or, punning on a metaphorical, social sense of 'base', it could be the monstrous rabble, wrenched into harmony through being 'marry'd' to the higher voices.⁴⁰ Either way, Davenant does make a small but significant concession to internal tension and the artificiality of power.

It is true that Marvell tended to be ironic and critical when singling out fellow writers; but readings like Smith's have tended to suffer from a stereotyped view of Davenant as a 'diehard Royalist' with a 'distinctly anti-populist neoclassical and rational aesthetic'.⁴¹ But rationalism is not the same as royalism, and we should remember the contingency and disillusionment we saw last chapter in the *Preface to Gondibert*. There, Davenant had seemed resigned to revolutions in the state; the erstwhile laureate noticeably failed to contribute to the outpouring of cavalier grief. And many of Marvell's associates—many republicans—shared rather than condemned Davenant's 'anti-populist' prejudices.⁴² As Jeffrey Collins has shown, they were soon to find a congenial ally in Hobbes.⁴³ And the very passage of 'Upon Appleton House' which mentions Davenant also alludes tactfully to Fairfax's crushing of Leveller activity.⁴⁴ In 'Music's Empire', Marvell even experimented with an iambic pentameter quatrain reminiscent of *Gondibert*, albeit

³⁸ The phrase 'virgin trebles' is unique to Marvell and Davenant in a keyword search of digitized texts in the EEBO corpus.

³⁹ Smith, ed., *Poems*, pp. 148-49.

⁴⁰ OED, 'base', n. 6, II. 6. I discussed the political emphasis Davenant placed on marriage in chapter three.

⁴¹ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 119.

⁴² Nedham and Marten are partial exceptions.

⁴³ Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, pp. 121-61.

⁴⁴ Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, pp. 17-18.

in paired couplets, like the second edition of Waller's *Panegyrick*; the heroic stanza was nevertheless proving a useful vehicle for a Cromwellian courtly mode.

Davenant's appeal may have been broader than we think. Henry Marten had defended him in the House of Commons, and Milton may also have had a hand in his rescue (and both may have had links with Marvell by this time).⁴⁵ He was also cheered on by Nedham in *Mercurius Politicus*.⁴⁶ Another of Davenant's parliamentarian patrons was Bulstrode Whitelocke, with whom Marvell also forged links in 1653 over the Swedish embassy.⁴⁷ A few years later we find Davenant addressing a poem to Edward Lawrence, who was also a recipient of one of Milton's sonnets and a member of Milton's social circle with Marvell and Nedham.⁴⁸ Finally, 1657 saw both Davenant and Marvell providing songs, and perhaps even collaborating, for the court wedding of Mary Cromwell to Fairfax's kinsman Lord Fauconberg, although Davenant's contribution is now lost.⁴⁹

An admittedly selective reading of *Gondibert* reveals how Davenant's position could sometimes move beyond his overt absolutism and offer a republican reading. One of the most markedly relativist passages of the *Preface* (cited in chapter three) invokes 'the Peoples anger', 'so diverted' by previous 'Oppressors' that it does not have 'time enough to rise for the Publique' (p. 33). There is a concept of 'Publique' here which could be read as a synecdoche for the 'public interest'—such as Nedham was formulating at the time, and which Marvell also deploys rather ambiguously in the Horatian Ode. Davenant's conception of 'the Peoples anger' engaged with the Machiavellian context identified by Smith, the tensions between 'disharmonious elements' in the state. In the *Discourses*, Machiavelli had praised the 'stirres and noyses' between the plebeians and the nobility which 'made the Commonwealth both free and mighty'.⁵⁰ If Davenant had struggled to find such conflict praiseworthy, he nevertheless imagined the institutions of state

⁴⁵ Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, pp. 117-18.

⁴⁶ *Mercurius Politicus*, 5 (4th-11th July 1650), p. 70, and 6 (11th-18th July 1650), p. 85.

⁴⁷ Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, pp. 117-20; Worden, *Literature and Politics*, pp. 73-77, 134-35.

⁴⁸ Davenant, 'To Mr. Edward Lawrence', in Gibbs, ed., *Shorter Poems*, pp. 156, 421n; Worden, *Literature and Politics*, p. 33.

⁴⁹ Gibbs, ed., *Shorter Poems*, p. xxxiii; Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 316.

⁵⁰ *Discourses*, Book I, chapter IV, p. 19 (trans. Walker, p. 113).

locked in an ‘emulous warr’, which had to be reconciled by poets.⁵¹ This tension between institutions and individuals also animates Marvell’s poems, as he imagines how Cromwell and the Republic re-shaped political obligations in England.

I also argued in chapter three for the influence of Machiavelli’s *Discourses* underlying Davenant’s celebration of ‘the painfull activeness of Vertue’ (p. 14). Davenant’s major distinctive departure from Hobbes was the space he left open for civic action: ‘no government receaves assistance from any man meerly as he is good; but as that goodnesse is active in temporall things’ (pp. 32-3). I suggested that Davenant had been reading Milton, with a suggestive echo of the ‘fugitive and cloister’d vertue’ disparaged in *Areopagitica* underlying his criticism of *otium* as ‘some melancholy precept of the Cloyster’ (pp. 13-14).⁵² In *Gondibert* itself, Astragon’s scholars read the Qur’an alongside the Gospel because, Davenant argues, ‘Men injure Truth, who Fiction nicely hide’ (II.v.52). This is again close to the same passage of *Areopagitica*, where Milton maintains that even the Bible ‘ofttimes relates blasphemy not nicely’.⁵³ If both poets welcomed free enquiry into good and evil, Davenant nevertheless constrained this to the elite coterie of Astragon’s scholars. Davenant’s stature amongst Commonwealthsmen has been underestimated because his pretentious baroque absolutism can seem so absurd alongside Milton’s austere republican sublime. But at a time when republicans like Hall were turning to the arbitrary power of the state to enforce religious toleration, the gap between republicans and rationalist authoritarians could seem much narrower on some points than on others.⁵⁴

Marvell himself may provide the best evidence for how readers could distinguish between the courtly authoritarian and the rationalist Erastian Davenant: in the previous chapter, we saw how *The Rehearsal Transpros’d* denounces ‘the Arrogance and Dictature... of *Gondibert* and *Leviathan*’ but claims ‘all Astragon appear’d to me the better *Scheme of Religion*’.⁵⁵ Clearly that admission of religious sympathy is hedged with irony: markers of intellectual interest do not

⁵¹ Davenant, *Preface*, p. 37.

⁵² Sirluck, ed., *Areopagitica*, p. 515.

⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 517.

⁵⁴ Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, pp. 161-71; McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 232-48.

⁵⁵ Dzelzainis and Patterson, eds., *Prose Works*, vol. 1, pp. 94, 201.

necessarily have to mean bosom friendship.⁵⁶ Yet there are passages in the *Preface to Gondibert* which we can imagine Marvell agreeing with. For instance, Davenant distances himself from the convivial drinking culture of cavalier verse: ‘those must needs prophecy with ill successe, who make use of their Visions in Wine’ (p. 21). Marvell, who according to Aubrey ‘would never drinke hard in company’, also parodied cavalier bibulousness in ‘Tom May’s Death’.⁵⁷ And we might wonder whether Marvell sat down to write the Horatian Ode having seen passages in the *Preface* like this:

why is it not lawfull for vertuous men to be cherish’d, and magnify’d with hearing their vigilance, Valour, and good fortune (the latter being more the immediate guift of Heaven, because the effect of an unknowne cause) commended, and made eternall in Poesy? (p. 31)

Vigilance, valour, and fortune are three central concepts in the Horatian Ode. This extended passage of the *Preface* also extols the ‘active motion of Empire’ as a means of harnessing the people’s naturally violent restlessness (pp. 30-31); in the Ode Marvell likewise channels Cromwell’s restlessness into the motion of empire. Davenant’s central argument was that celebrating the heroic *virtù* of military leaders was the best means of achieving political settlement. I turn now to consider how far Marvell adapted and applied this lesson to Cromwell’s situation in 1650.

2. Political Choices: the ‘Horatian Ode’ and ‘Tom May’s Death’

On a simplistic reading, the Horatian Ode cites the established fact of the regicide, offers some defactoist generalizations about the ‘madness’ of resisting or blaming Providence, and then celebrates Cromwell’s martial prowess. We should not necessarily assume that early readers of the poem (if there were any) would have penetrated much deeper. But Norbrook warns us that

⁵⁶ James Loxley, ‘Echoes as Evidence’, pp. 172-73.

⁵⁷ Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, vol. 1, p. 344.

such a reading risks missing ‘the sharply aggressive tone’ of Marvell’s writing.⁵⁸ Engagers like Nedham seized on the language of romance to try to fashion *de facto* submission as a source of strength, formulating a cynical and secularizing style which could defuse the spiritual and ethical dimensions of the debate and clear the way for rationalist pragmatism. The Ode engages in a similar project, taking a ‘forward youth that would appear’ (1) and confronting him with the real political problems facing the Republic. And several scholars, since Joseph Mazzeo’s rather sketchy reading of the Ode in 1960, have argued that Marvell shared the Engagers’ Machiavellianism.⁵⁹ When James Scudamore met Marvell in France in 1655, he described him as a ‘notable English Italo-Machavillian’.⁶⁰ Scudamore was probably venturing a pun on ‘villain’, and some critics have read the Ode’s Machiavellianism as a hostile critique of Cromwell.⁶¹ But Norbrook and Brian Vickers have shown how Marvell makes positive use of the *Discourses* and *The Prince* respectively.⁶² I suggest some supplementary points below. Marvell’s Cromwell has ‘reached power in the first and most honourable way’, pursuing his ‘industrious valour’—terms for *industria* and *virtù* shared with Edward Dacres’ 1640 translation of *The Prince*.⁶³ We should read the Ode as a Machiavellian and pre-eminently a rhetorical poem, addressing and constructing its reader in a particular way. The poem’s famous ambiguities may tell us more about the appeal to an implied reader than Marvell’s own feelings. Even sustaining ambiguity itself could have been a political speech-act at a time when most royalist writers were literally demonizing ‘Craftie Cromwell’.⁶⁴

Who were those readers? McDowell cites the distinctive verse-form, adopted around the same time by royalist poets Thomas Stanley and Richard Fanshawe, and Marvell’s lines on the

⁵⁸ Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 244.

⁵⁹ Mazzeo, *Renaissance and Seventeenth-Century Studies*, pp. 168-81.

⁶⁰ Smith, *The Chameleon*, p. 133.

⁶¹ Worden, ‘The Royalism of Andrew Marvell’, pp. 229-33.

⁶² Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 262-66 and *passim*.; Vickers, ‘Machiavelli and Marvell’s Horatian Ode’, pp. 33-4.

⁶³ Vickers, ‘Machiavelli and Marvell’s Horatian Ode’, p. 34, referring to *The Prince*, chapter VI, ‘Of new Principalities, that are acquir’d by ones own armes, and valour’, p. 33 (trans. Bondanella, p. 20); Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 275n.

⁶⁴ Mercurius Melancholicus, *Craftie Cromwell: Or, Oliver ordering our New State. A Tragi-Comedie* (London, 1647).

regicide, as evidence that the Ode had its first origins amongst the royalist elegies of 1649. But he concedes that Marvell retains ‘little of the anger and none of the defiance’; the verbal similarities between the Ode and royalist elegies are slight.⁶⁵ Norbrook reads the poem as a calculated provocation to royalist readers, invoking but challenging or parodying Horatian expectations of balance with Cromwell’s sublime violence and energy.⁶⁶ A slightly different approach has been suggested by Paul Hammond, focussing solely on the directions of ‘Marvell’s Pronouns’. Hammond thinks the Ode ‘carefully avoids implicating the speaker in the poem, or even implying a community of interest between poet and reader’; he concludes, “‘I’ and ‘we’”, the grammar of commitment, did not come easily to Marvell’s pen’.⁶⁷ Hammond’s method offers striking insights, but his calculated elision of context can obscure how acts of isolation or distancing could be structured in political ways. When the ‘forward youth’ forsakes his ‘numbers languishing’ he also implicitly abandons the Horatian-Jonsonian theme of conviviality which so often accompanied tropes of contemplative withdrawal in royalist volumes like *Lucasta*. Instead, Marvell fashions a mode of militant action which is more isolated, and singular.⁶⁸ So isolation might not be a way of deferring commitment, but of denying easily available royalist contexts. We need to study Marvell’s pronouns in the wider context of his rhetorical address, his epithets, metaphors, and verb-forms, to determine what sort of political actions he presents as possible, prudent, or necessary.

After his *exordium* on the ‘forward youth’, Marvell introduces his main theme, ‘restless Cromwell’. Restlessness was the state which defined the Hobbesian subject. In *The Elements of Law*—published separately as *Humane Nature* in May 1650—Hobbes had insisted ‘there can be no contentment but in proceeding’, fashioning life through the metaphor of a race in which there

⁶⁵ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 221-22.

⁶⁶ Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 252-60; accepted with qualifications by McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 228-36.

⁶⁷ Paul Hammond, ‘Marvell’s Pronouns’, *Essays in Criticism*, 53 (2003) 219-34, pp. 224, 228-32.

⁶⁸ See Worden, *Literature and Politics*, p. 54.

is ‘no other goal... but being foremost’, and where ‘to forsake the course is to die’.⁶⁹ He formulated this more pithily the following year in *Leviathan* as the ‘restlesse desire of Power, after power’ which constituted the ‘generall inclination of all mankind’.⁷⁰ We saw in the previous chapter how Davenant theorized an inexorable ‘active motion of empire’.⁷¹ Marvell’s Cromwell is driven by impulsive motion which ‘could not cease’ (9). This first section of the Ode makes a similarly restless series of transitions between historical narrative and abstract reasoning. Lines 16-20 are a digression (marked in parentheses in Smith’s edition), where the grammatical subject has shifted away from Cromwell’s ‘he’ to abstract ‘it’ (‘’tis all one’, 16). Marvell introduces a conceptual distinction between ‘the emulous or enemy’ (17), which Hammond has glossed as ‘terms of no historical depth, no ideological character’.⁷² But one significant precedent is the ‘emulous warr’ between statesmen, generals, and divines, supposedly on the same side, dramatized by Davenant in the *Preface to Gondibert* (p. 37). The ‘emulous’ in this context is a Hobbesian category, one type of the restless desire for power which disrupts the state—in the definition of the *Elements of Law*, ‘grief arising from seeing one’s self exceeded or excelled’.⁷³ In Davenant’s *Preface* it can be contained and mastered only by martial *virtù* reinforced with heroic poetry; in Marvell’s poem, by Cromwell’s ‘courage high’.

Lines 21-4 transition back to narrative and the subject is ‘he’, Cromwell, again; in lines 25-6 it is once more the abstract ‘it’. This recurrent abstraction does represent an incursion of impersonality, but its effect is to disrupt the personal, epideictic ties of patronage, friendship, and above all loyalty which structured royalist discourse, interposing a more impersonal, deliberative register. ‘To blame’ was one of the traditional functions of epideictic rhetoric, and Marvell dismisses it out of hand at this point:⁷⁴

⁶⁹ *Elements of Law*, chapter VII, p. 45, and chapter IX, pp. 59-60; Tilmouth, *Passion’s Triumph Over Reason*, pp. 222-5.

⁷⁰ *Leviathan*, chapter XI, p. 150; on this shift, see Tilmouth, *Passion’s Triumph Over Reason*, p. 230.

⁷¹ Davenant, *Preface*, pp. 30-1.

⁷² Hammond, ‘Marvell’s Pronouns’, p. 229.

⁷³ *Elements of Law*, chapter IX, p. 54.

⁷⁴ Some critics feel the poem is not always adept at offering praise either: e.g. Hammond, ‘Marvell’s Pronouns’, pp. 230-31; Worden, ‘The Royalism of Andrew Marvell’, pp. 221-22, 228-32.

'Tis madness to resist or blame
The force of angry heaven's flame; (25-6)

This raises the first significant question about Marvell's rhetorical address: who is supposed to be doing this putative resisting or blaming? They are a hypothetical postulate, no-one within the poem (not even Charles, who does *not* call 'the Gods with vulgar spite', 61); and not necessarily the reader. In the following couplet, Marvell suddenly abandons the impersonality and says 'we' for the first time:

And, if we would speak true,
Much to the man is due. (27-8)

If it isn't clear what sort of community between poet and reader is implied by this 'we', it does at least construct poet and reader as agreeing that 'much to the man is due', and therefore *not* the imaginary person who might be contemplating resisting or blaming. If Marvell's 'much to the man is due' seems like ironically faint praise, it may be due to the strain involved in finding common ground on this point. There is an analogy here with the sort of argument recommended by Hobbes in the *Elements of Law*:

when a man reasoneth from principles that are found indubitable by experience,
all deceptions of sense and equivocation of words avoided...⁷⁵

Hobbes presented this as an objective mode of reasoning, with analogies in geometry (although, as Skinner notes, this was not always to be taken seriously).⁷⁶ Where Marvell claims to 'speak true', he distils the point about Cromwell to the simplest demonstrable truth to which all readers could assent, that 'much to the man is due'. Several more such apparent axioms are handed down in what follows.

And the verb 'speak' is significant here: Marvell co-opts the reader in his speech-act. How to 'speak true' in poetry was a classic debate, but the major recent intervention on the question was Davenant's: distinguishing between the 'Truth narrative' of historians ('a dead thing'), and the poet's 'truth operative, and by effects continually alive' (pp. 10-11). As I suggested in chapter three, Davenant's phrase echoes the 'continual' operation of atoms in the

⁷⁵ *Elements of Law*, chapter V, p. 38.

⁷⁶ Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric*, pp. 334-52.

mind in Hobbesian psychology.⁷⁷ As we saw, he constructed poetic truth as something that operated upon the reader, and liked to conceptualize this as a military operation. The Horatian Ode also envisages its young poet as a military operator, and Marvell's concern with speaking truth coincides with his first rhetorical move to construct the reader using 'we'. Poetry, Davenant continued, represented 'the glory of Vertue (which is great actions)', a markedly Machiavellian definition of 'Vertue' to mean masculine force and prowess. This representation prevented virtue from being 'envy'd as the favours of Fortune', now placing his familiar Hobbesian emphasis on the disruptive passion of envy. In this way, 'the principall Art of Poets' was 'to make great actions credible' (p. 11). At this point in the Ode, meanwhile, Marvell turns away from 'the force of angry heaven's flame' to focus on the great actions of 'the man'. And his concern is also partly to make Cromwell's actions credible, stressing that he 'could' (33) climb.⁷⁸ Marvell praises Cromwell's 'industrious valour'—the translation of Machiavelli's *industria* and *virtù* I cited above. As Norbrook has argued, Cromwell fulfils the role described in Machiavelli's *Discourses*, where the establishment of liberty depends on the *virtù* of one great man.⁷⁹ Marvell's efforts in this vein surpass most of *Gondibert*, but he does seem to have concurred in Davenant's view that performing the Machiavellian negotiation between *virtù* and *fortuna* was essential to presenting a hero truthfully in poetry.⁸⁰ The axiom 'much to the man is due' is productively ambiguous: the things 'due' to Cromwell could mean the momentous actions which he has authored, or the obligations which his actions have generated.⁸¹ The relationship between these actions and obligations provides the central tension of the poem.

The 'man' in line 28 returns us to the subject of Cromwell again, and the oscillation between narrative and abstraction continues, shifting abruptly back into the abstract at line 37:

Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient rights in vain; (37-8)

⁷⁷ See Hobbes on the 'continuall progresse of the desire', *Leviathan*, chapter XI, p. 150.

⁷⁸ i.e. the indicative 'was able to', rather than subjunctive: *OED*, 'can', v. 4a.

⁷⁹ *Discourses*, book I, chapter IX, pp. 47-53 (trans. Walker, pp. 131-34); Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 265-66.

⁸⁰ See Vickers, 'Machiavelli and Marvell's Horatian Ode', pp. 35-6.

⁸¹ cp. *OED*, 'due', adj., senses 1.a and 9.c, the latter an emergent sense in the mid-seventeenth century.

This closely mirrors the previous moment of abstraction, making a parallel deterministic *de facto* argument, although the predetermining agency is now ‘Fate’ rather than ‘angry heaven’. Marvell destabilizes the concepts of ‘Justice’ and the ‘ancient rights’ when he claims:

But those do hold or break,
As men are strong or weak. (39-40)

Once again, he interrupts the impersonal abstraction with a new plural subject, this time the third person, ‘men’, rather than ‘we’, but doing similar work: turning away from ‘the man’ to think about a public context of ‘men’. And where the previous ‘we’ were confronted with the implicit choice not to ‘resist or blame’, these men must implicitly choose to be ‘strong’ rather than ‘weak’. This is an important crux for the question of how *de facto* compliance could be a sort of strength. The ‘ancient rights’ draw upon the traditional language of constitutional royalism, but by making them so contingent on men’s relative strength, Marvell may have been moving closer to Machiavelli’s concept of *ridurre ai principii*. As a consequence of restless change, Machiavelli held, it was ‘necessary oftentimes to reduce [states] to their first grounds’.⁸² We saw Waller make an analogous appeal to the ‘restoration’ of the ancient rights, contingent on that of ‘our ancient courage’, in chapter two.⁸³ According to Machiavelli, renovation could be achieved either ‘by the vertue of some man, or the force of some order’ (in modern translation, ‘institutions’).⁸⁴ Cromwell is, again, the obvious example of the former, but here Marvell seems to be thinking about the latter, collective strength; how this relates to institutions in the state becomes a question in the second half of the poem. But there is another sense in which ‘Justice’ and ‘rights’ could be contingent: Hobbes’ argument that such concepts have no real existence outside of a social contract enforced by sovereign power.⁸⁵ This was hypothetically compatible with the Machiavellian view in 1650 because the *de facto* sovereign power in question was a republic, reliant on the *virtù* and engagement of many men for its political authority.

⁸² *Discourses*, book III, chapter I, p. 433 (trans. Walker, p. 385).

⁸³ See Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 77; Waller, *Mr Wallers Speech in Parliament*, pp. 10-11.

⁸⁴ *Discourses*, Book III, chapter I, p. 436 (trans. Walker, p. 387).

⁸⁵ *Elements of Law*, chapter XIV, pp. 79-81.

The next lines continue in abstraction:

Nature that hateth emptiness,
 Allows of penetration less:
 And therefore must make room
 Where greater spirits come. (41-4)

Marvell returns to the imperative mood which he had employed at the poem's opening, 'must', implying a sort of logical demonstration. Nigel Smith glosses this as a 'specious syllogism', but as Norbrook points out, such 'self-consciously "scientific" language' was commonplace amongst the defactoist Engagers.⁸⁶ Nedham stressed this terminology:

those whose title is supposed unlawful and founded merely on force, yet being possessed of authority, may lawfully be obeyed. Nor *may* they only, but they *must*.⁸⁷

Marvell constructs his argument as an axiomatic claim about nature 'that hateth emptiness', perhaps analogously, again, to Hobbes' method of reasoning outwards from simple, demonstrable truths. Although Hobbes himself did not engage closely with the problem of the vacuum until the 1660s, it was a postulate of materialist philosophy which interested Hobbists. Cowley's Pindaric ode 'To Mr. Hobs' praises Hobbes' solid 'Proportions', which 'As much as *Nature, Emptiness* detest'.⁸⁸ This sort of language displaces the ethical and spiritual dimensions of allegiance with an appeal to rationalism: Marvell purports to be merely demonstrating the necessary natural consequences of Cromwell's *virtù*, or 'greater spirits'. Davenant had also shifted into a language of necessity on this point, arguing that ambition was 'necessary for every virtuous breast: for good men are guilty of too little appetite to greatnesse' (p. 13). Davenant's Machiavellian sense of the 'painfull activeness of vertue' (p. 14), grappling for mastery over Fortune, is also comparable with Marvell's commemoration of Cromwell's 'industrious valour' and 'deepest scars' in this passage of the Ode (33, 46). The Machiavellian context also permits us to read Cromwell's subtle cunning, narrated in the next few lines (42-52) as, in theory at least, an admirable quality.

⁸⁶ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 275n; Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 263.

⁸⁷ Nedham, *Case of the Commonwealth*, p. 28.

⁸⁸ Waller, ed., *Poems*, p. 188, ll. 13-18; the phrase was conventional, rather than a distinct echo.

We now arrive at the celebrated digression in the centre of the poem, and the main grammatical subject (the 'he', 57) becomes Charles. Cromwell disappears as an active presence for twenty lines. But so does the plural perspective, the 'we', and 'men'. The spectating 'they' in this scene are specifically the 'armed bands' (55-6). Charles is isolated, and does not have an interlocutor on his stage—he does not even call to the Gods, and his eye alights only on 'the axe's edge' (60), occluding the executioner and most of the axe itself. This is the poem's strongest act of isolation. Marvell emphasizes that Charles' 'right' is 'helpless' (62); if he expresses regret, it is passive, resigned to Charles' fate. 'That memorable scene' of the regicide (58) is almost straightaway displaced by 'that memorable hour' (65) of the republic. Grammatically, the regicide digression begins with Marvell forming the subjunctive with 'might': 'Charles himself might chase' (51), 'The tragic scaffold might adorn' (54). This hovers ambiguously, either suggesting events are still unfolding and contingent, or being shaped instrumentally by Cromwell's intention.⁸⁹ But then the mood shifts back to the indicative, and Marvell relies heavily, even by seventeenth-century standards, on the auxiliary verb 'do'.⁹⁰ The construction is perhaps necessary to the tight verse-form, but it becomes especially intense in this passage: the armed bands 'did clap their bloody hands' (56), Charles 'The axe's edge did try' (60), the architects 'did design' (67), and the bloody head 'did fright' them (70). This frequency makes the construction seem more and more emphatic, especially as Marvell pointedly manipulates 'do' when Cromwell resurfaces at the end of the passage: 'So much one man can do | That does both act and know' (75-6), deliberately playing with the different grammatical possibilities of the verb. The cumulative effect of these emphatic constructions presents the reader with a set of actions, doings, which are accomplished facts, aligned with the imperatives encountered earlier, in insisting on demonstrable truths.

⁸⁹ *OED*, 'may', v., 18 and 22.

⁹⁰ *OED*, 'do', v., 11.

The regicide is followed by the first of two epic similes in the second half of the poem:

So when they did design
The Capitol's first line,

A bleeding head where they begun,
Did fright the architects to run (67-70)

Marvell fashions the republican statesmen as pusillanimous architects, with whom the reader is not asked to sympathize.⁹¹ But rather than contrasting their squeamishness with courageous Cromwell, the antithesis Marvell actually forms is with a new, abstract subject, 'the State' (71). Smith glosses this as an expressly republican usage of the word (this was also the sense in which Hobbes tended to use it).⁹² But in the context of this simile, its precise application to England is usefully ambiguous: it appears more neutrally later in the poem to refer to monarchies (103). Davenant used it frequently in his *Preface* as a constitutionally neutral word, once again invoking a concept of the 'publique Interest':

Though the Peoples right, and publique Interest be the same, yet usually by the
People, the Ministers of Law meane Private men, and by the other the State;
and so the State and the People are divided. (p. 36)

This problem, the tendency for the 'State' to become detached from the 'People', also defines the major ambiguities in the second half of the Ode.

After this puzzling abstraction, the poem temporarily returns to a more conventional epideictic mode, as the defeated Irish attest to Cromwell's virtues.⁹³ Cromwell is the subject (the 'he') again, but the grammatical objects he interacts with are now a series of abstract synecdoches, which are ambiguously not quite mutually consistent: 'the Republic's hand' (82), 'the Commons' feet' (85), 'the public's skirt' (90). All three allude in subtly different ways to the traditional conceit of the body politic.⁹⁴ We have noted how Nedham and Davenant elevated the 'publique' into a theoretical concept, a metonym for the public interest. 'The Republic's hand', by contrast, implies political manipulation by the governing institution, parliament. This ambiguity is crystallized in the phrase 'The Commons' feet'. The 'Commons', alluding to

⁹¹ Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 266.

⁹² Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 277n; Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, p. 91.

⁹³ Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 245-7.

⁹⁴ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 277n.

parliament, is the manuscript emendation of Bod. MS. Eng. poet. d. 49 (accepted by Smith). The original state of the 1681 *Miscellaneous Poems* gives ‘the Common feet’, making Cromwell appeal past the senate, directly to the common people, as Caesar might. Cromwell ‘presents’ the commons with ‘A kingdom for his first year’s rents’ (85-6), and this is ambiguous too: ‘rents’ are a legally enforceable property right, but the verb ‘presents’ implies a more metaphorical sense of Cromwell’s agency and magnanimity. Marvell may have had in mind Machiavelli’s advice (in modern translation) that ‘A Republic or a Prince should ostensibly do out of Generosity what Necessity constrains them to’.⁹⁵ The ambiguity of this passage is between a republic whose proprietary authority to extract ‘rents’ lies in its questionable claim to be aligned with the public interest, and a public to whom Cromwell was able to launch his own charismatic appeal. It is provocatively fuzzy, asking the reader where precisely their allegiance lies.

At this point, Marvell embarks on the second of the two epic similes, with the appearance of ‘the falcon’ (91), suddenly representing Cromwell through an image of bestial, predatory violence (now gendered disconcertingly as ‘she’). More puzzling, a new ‘he’ enters the poem here, in the figure of the ‘falc’ner’ who ‘has her sure’ (95-6). We might assimilate the falconer’s with ‘the Republic’s hand’, whom Cromwell apparently ‘still’ obeys (82).⁹⁶ But the use of a ‘lure’ and the potentially sinister, trapping sense of ‘has her’ suggest a manipulative cunning on the part of the falconer/Republic—not unlike that Cromwell employed against Charles.⁹⁷ In the chapter of the *Discourses* immediately following the one cited above, Machiavelli maintains (again, in modern translation) that ‘The Safer and Less Scandalous Way to repress the Arrogance of One who has risen to Power in a Republic is to forestall him in the Methods he uses to come by this Power’.⁹⁸ This is the corollary to the poem’s better-known conclusion, ‘The same arts that did gain | A power, must it maintain’ (119-20)—but the metaphor of the falconer suggests this logic is not only applicable to Cromwell. Davenant had also reached for a predatory metaphor

⁹⁵ *Discourses*, book I, chapter LI, trans. Walker, p. 234; Dacres mistranslates Machiavelli’s ‘*liberalità*’ as ‘of a free mind’, p. 201.

⁹⁶ Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 256, 263.

⁹⁷ *OED*, ‘have’, v., 15a.

⁹⁸ *Discourses*, Book I, chapter LII, trans. Walker, p. 235; Dacres translates Machiavelli’s ‘*preoccuparli*’ as ‘seize beforehand, and so prevent’, p. 202.

(albeit not a bird of prey) to dramatize the tense relations between statesmen and generals: ‘like the great number of Sheep to a few Wolves’ (p. 36). Marvell may have been correcting for Davenant’s Hobbesian image of martial power by formulating a rival metaphor for the Republican statesmen’s Machiavellian capacity to reassert themselves.

Marvell transitions into the final section of the poem by suddenly using the first person plural again. If the previous ‘we’ co-opted the reader’s perspective, Marvell now appeals explicitly to patriotism, constructing a ‘we’ who identify sympathetically with Cromwell (‘What may not then our isle presume? | While Victory his crest does plume’, 97-8), in contradistinction to foreign ‘others’ (99). He develops another hunting metaphor in the following lines (109-12)—an epic romance trope which Nedham had adopted in his republican propaganda, but which Davenant also used in the *Preface* and *Gondibert*.⁹⁹ The final lines contain the only direct apostrophe to Cromwell in the poem, using the second person (‘thou’, 113). The ‘we’ which Marvell resurrected at the beginning of the passage has disappeared again; if he was addressing a hypothetical reader, he is now talking past them. Cromwell’s erect sword (116) configures him as an epic romance hero (recalling his ‘valour’ earlier in the poem, 33), indeed, as Aeneas.¹⁰⁰ He is ‘the War’s and Fortune’s son’—again enacting the Machiavellian negotiation between *fortuna* and martial *virtù* necessary to representing a military hero. The concluding Machiavellian maxim rehearses the central defactoist argument that power resided in military might (‘the same arts that did gain | A pow’r must it maintain’, 119-20). But, again, we could interpret ‘arts’ more widely, to include the cunning Marvell has recommended to both Cromwell and the Republic. From this second perspective, the key acts which will consolidate the new balance of power have yet to be accomplished, and remain open. Crucially, this implies the nation’s obligations are not yet definitively settled, and are still in the contingent process of transferral.

Much of the poem’s ambiguity arises because of its multiple addressees: in the later stages, Cromwell, but in the earlier stages a more nebulous reader, a plural perspective implied

⁹⁹ e.g. *Mercurius Politicus* 4 (22nd June-4th July 1650), p. 49; Davenant, *Preface*, pp. 30-31.

¹⁰⁰ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 279n; McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, p. 235.

by constructions with ‘we’ and ‘men’. Marvell also manipulates the grammatical mood to create a tension between contingent events using the subjunctive, and accomplished, demonstrable facts, using the emphatic ‘do’ or imperative ‘must’. The moments of contingency and uncertainty create the sense of a pressing decision to make; the moments of abstraction and demonstration, a tone of elegant cajolement. Whereas the first half of the poem presented the imputed plural observers with a series of choices, the second half confronts their (and Cromwell’s) ambiguous relationship with a series of abstract entities, the ‘Republic’, the ‘Commons’, and the ‘Public’. But the two halves of the poem are linked together, by Marvell’s challenge in the first half that the ancient rights will ‘hold or break | As men are strong or weak’, and his ambivalent questions in the second about the Republic’s capacity to ‘lure’ its ‘falcon’ and extract its ‘rents’. The ambiguity between the senses of ‘Commons’, as institution and as people, reveals how the two concepts could diverge; it is only as they can be reunited through their collective *virtù* and the concept of the ‘public’ that the regime will be able to assimilate and harness Cromwell’s power. In this way, we can read the Ode’s ambiguities as constructed to nudge the reader towards a particular set of defactoist questions: briefly mourning Charles, and then quickly asking what new obligations had been generated by the Republic. The Ode takes it as a given that the old obligations have been dissolved, but demands attention for the question of how a new settlement could be determined. And if Marvell’s rhetoric seems coercive, we might see it in light of Davenant’s definition of poetry as ‘the martiall art of constraining’ (p. 37).

We can only build this reading by hypothesizing how the poem manipulates its readers’ assumptions and perspectives. But did it have any readers? On the face of it, there seems plenty of evidence to support John Carey’s insistence that Marvell was ‘haranguing an empty room’.¹⁰¹ Samuel Parker, searching for sticks to beat Marvell with in his *Reproof to the Rehearsal Transpros’d*, was apparently unaware of what would surely have been his prize exhibit. When Aubrey went searching for the sublime in Milton’s manuscript sonnets to Cromwell and Fairfax,

¹⁰¹ Carey, ‘Introduction’, p. 22.

meanwhile, he evidently did not come across the more sustained sublime imagery in Marvell's Ode.¹⁰² McDowell and Hammond claim persuasively to have identified echoes of the Ode in some poems by Dryden: the distinctive conceit of 'His to enclose and yours to be enclosed... except an emptiness had come between' in Dryden's 'To my Lord Chancellor' (1662), and the appearance of the apparently unique phrase 'vulgar spite' in *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681).¹⁰³ But overwhelmingly the likeliest opportunity for Dryden to have read Marvell's manuscript poetry was their period as colleagues in the Office of Foreign Tongues in 1657-59. Dryden was still a schoolboy when the Ode was first written, and therefore not one of its immediate readers. McDowell also hears an echo of the Ode in Cowley's pamphlet *The Visions and Prophecies Concerning England*, where St. George appears through the clouds 'like light rather than lightning'—but here Marvell and Cowley shared a source in Lucan's *Pharsalia* (a poem Cowley knew well, having adapted it in his own poem *The Civil War*).¹⁰⁴ In fact, as we will see in the next chapter, Cowley may have had an opportunity to read Marvell's manuscript poems when he met Fairfax in 1657. But it would have been implausibly tactless for Marvell to show the Ode, with its praise of Cromwell's Scottish campaigns, to Fairfax, who had resigned in protest against them.

Another possible reader of the Ode was the populist republican poet R. Fletcher. Frustratingly little is known about Fletcher, but the case for positing some sort of friendship with Marvell is strengthened by the confusion over the authorship of the later poem 'On the Victory obtained by Blake over the Spaniards' (1657), which survived amongst Marvell's papers to be published as one of his *Miscellaneous Poems* in 1681, but which appears in a manuscript copy signed 'R. F.'.¹⁰⁵ In February 1651, not long after Marvell first wrote the Ode, Fletcher published

¹⁰² Discussed by Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 269. See Bod. MS Wood F. 39, f. 372^r; compare Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, vol. 1, pp. 344-5.

¹⁰³ Dryden, 'To My Lord Chancellor', ll. 40-2, *Absalom and Achitophel*, l. 353, in *The Poems of John Dryden*, ed. by Paul Hammond and David Hopkins (5 vols.; Harlow, 1995), vol. 1. See McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 254-55; Paul Hammond, 'Dryden's use of Marvell's Horatian Ode in *Absalom and Achitophel*', *NQ*, 233 (1988) 173-74. The phrase 'vulgar spite' is unique to Marvell and Dryden in a keyword search of digitized texts in the *EEBO* corpus.

¹⁰⁴ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 256-58.

¹⁰⁵ Discussed in Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 425.

Radius Heliconicus in support of the Republic.¹⁰⁶ Adriana McCrea has concluded that the two poems share a Machiavellian spirit, but that Fletcher adapted Marvell's arguments to a more radically republican purpose; both nevertheless celebrate Cromwell's military prowess.¹⁰⁷ But McCrea failed to note the couple of small but close verbal similarities between the poems. Fletcher describes republican liberty as a 'publique right | We're bound to vindicate 'gainst Hells despight', which seems to echo and counterpoint Charles' refusal 'to vindicate his helpless right' in the Ode.¹⁰⁸ Despite Fletcher's strident republicanism, he also replicates Marvell's comparison of Cromwell with Caesar:

*Caesar, and Cromwell: why, 'tis all but C.
And why not England now, as Italie?*

This seems to adapt Marvell's similar rhetorical question, 'What may not our isle presume', if Cromwell is 'A Caesar he ere long to Gaul, | To Italy an Hannibal' (101-2). Fletcher had clearly digested a wide range of republican and Engager pamphlets, picking up terminology used by Milton ('Man hath a free | Tenure and birthright of his libertie') and Nedham (referring to Charles II as 'Tarquin').¹⁰⁹ But at the beginning of the poem, he also appropriates the language of romance 'Gallantry' to fashion his sublime republican mode, which 'should ramble in the stile | Of roaring Torrents', recalling Machiavelli's metaphor for Fortune in *The Prince*.¹¹⁰ Davenant had used the same allusion in the *Preface to Gondibert*, to describe the Machiavellian gallantry of military leaders: 'by accident, when they rage, a deluge to their own land' (p. 36). Fletcher's opening maxim, 'Fame is the life of action', offers a similar slogan to Davenant's defence of the 'desire of fame' and the 'painfull activeness of vertue' in the *Preface*.¹¹¹ Fletcher provides further evidence for the thematic convergence, at least, between Davenant and the republicans in the early 1650s, and suggests how writers immersed in the Engagement Controversy could draw ideas Davenant had voiced into that context.

¹⁰⁶ See Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 197, 230-31.

¹⁰⁷ Adriana McCrea, 'Reason's Muse: Andrew Marvell, R. Fletcher, and the Politics of Poetry in the Engagement Debate', *Albion*, 23 (1991) 655-60, pp. 671-79.

¹⁰⁸ R. Fletcher, *Radius Heliconicus* (London, 1651), single page.

¹⁰⁹ Alluding to the language of Milton's *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (London, 1650) and Nedham's *Mercurius Politicus*, e.g. issue 4 (22nd June-4th July 1650), p. 49.

¹¹⁰ *The Prince*, chapter XXV, pp. 203-4 (trans. Bondanella, pp. 84-5).

¹¹¹ Davenant, *Preface*, pp. 12-14, 25-6.

The Horatian Ode closes off royalist perspectives and implicates its readers in the new questions of allegiance posed by the Republic (even if they do not necessarily feel well disposed towards its progenitors). In this sense, Fletcher found aspects of it ripe for assimilation to his own Engagement poetry. A few months later, Marvell wrote ‘Tom May’s Death’, also a poem about allegiance, but with a very different perspective—which Norbrook calls ‘a staggering reversal’.¹¹² The republican poet and historian Thomas May is depicted awaking in Elysium, and being berated by the ghost of Ben Jonson, who accuses him of being a ‘mercenary’ (40) and ‘Malignant’ (42). The ambiguous nuances in the concept of ‘State’ teased out in the Ode are brushed roughly aside. In place of the pusillanimous architects startled by the ‘bleeding head’ in the Ode, the ghost now refers dismissively to the ‘novice statesmen’ (43) and attacks May as the ‘Foul architect’, who ‘hadst not eye to see | How ill the measures of these states agree’ (51-2). From the renovating energies of the Ode, Marvell has seemingly retreated to a normative royalist position which demonized constitutional innovation as ‘Apostatizing’ (73).

Attempting to account for this, scholars have, as with the Ode, tried to speculate about the possible manuscript audience for whom Marvell was writing. McDowell reads the poem as Marvell’s attempt to maintain bridges with the Stanley circle. Jonson was the spiritual father of cavalier survivalists like Lovelace and Stanley; the allusions to ‘better times’ and May’s ‘Apostatizing from our arts’ recall the nostalgia for Jonsonian literary culture Marvell had previously voiced in his dedicatory poem to *Lucasta* (69, 73). Like the Lovelace poem, ‘Tom May’s Death’ juxtaposes a Jonsonian tradition of disinterested civic virtue against the creep of partisan polemic. On McDowell’s reading, May’s really serious crime was not his tergiversation, but his ‘mercenary pen’, his selling out to the government and becoming a propagandist.¹¹³ Blair Worden has offered an alternative conjecture, not necessarily incompatible with McDowell’s, that ‘Tom May’s Death’ was written as a provocation to the republican set around Nedham and

¹¹² Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 272.

¹¹³ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 263-67.

Marten, who had been friends with May and arranged his funeral, to which the poem alludes. That circle seems to have relished displays of political brinkmanship, travesty, and paradox (Worden cites the apparent collusion between Nedham and Hall in 1648, whilst Nedham was writing for the royalists, to produce rival newsbooks which took diametrically opposed lines).¹¹⁴ This might explain why the ghost suddenly shifts into the plural, ‘Until you all grow consuls in your wine’ (46), which we could then read as a piece of friendly ribbing, aimed at May and the notoriously bibulous friends who survived him, and their Romanizing pretensions. Smith suggests one of the things that most provokes the ghost (and possibly royalist readers) is the ‘specific perversion of Tribe of Ben tavern culture’ represented by the republicans.¹¹⁵ The poem’s allusions to Davenant, too, might have had special relevance to Marten and Nedham, who had led the case for Davenant’s defence, in the House of Commons and in *Mercurius Politicus* respectively.¹¹⁶ Worden’s conjecture is attractive, but there is ultimately no concrete evidence for it.

It does, however, alert us to the ways in which the poem’s royalism can seem artificial. Marvell was ventriloquizing a stock figure in his royalist ghost of Jonson—and, as a series of ironies alerts us, subtly travestyng him too. In his most famous lines the ghost defends a militant ideal of civic humanism, but he first appears in a different posture, ‘Amongst the chorus of old poets laid’ (14). This puns on the senses of the poetic lay and of lying prone—lying, that is, in the ‘dusky laurel shade’ (13), the languishing in shadows which the opening lines of the Horatian Ode had memorably cast aside. Jonson is initially defined by the mode of hedonistic withdrawal, his ‘corpulence and port’ (11), punning on both the senses of his size and his drink of choice. In the context of contemporary royalists’ deification of ‘Saint Ben’, this ‘corpulence’, lumping him in with a ‘chorus of old poets’, sounds discordantly irreverent.¹¹⁷ Moreover, the themes of retirement and drinking are decoupled from the usual accompanying topos of conviviality:

¹¹⁴ Worden, *Literature and Politics*, pp. 73-6.

¹¹⁵ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 117.

¹¹⁶ Worden, *Literature and Politics*, p. 77.

¹¹⁷ Contrast Herrick’s ‘His Prayer to Ben Jonson’ in Tom Cain and Ruth Connolly, eds., *The Complete Poetry of Robert Herrick* (2 vols.; Oxford, 2013), vol. 1, p. 201.

McDowell tells us ‘the theme of broken friendship... reverberates’.¹¹⁸ Ben, Marvell tells us, is ‘severe’ (31) and ‘knew not neither foe nor friend’ (29)—hardly the rambunctious figure celebrated by his friends. He stands apart from the royalist discourse which took friendship as a conceptual metaphor for political allegiance.¹¹⁹ As we know, Jonson and May had been friends, and Jonson had written a commendatory verse for the Lucan translation his ghost now reviles, callously unresponsive to his old friend’s grief (58). Furthermore, several objects of the ghost’s attack are in fact inaccurate: May’s allegedly republican *Continuation* of Lucan was actually dedicated to Charles I; he did not tend to employ the method of parallel or ‘Roman-cast similitude’ (44); one such alleged parallel, ‘Brutus and Cassius, the people’s cheats’ (18), were in fact the heroes of Jonson’s own *Catiline*.¹²⁰ Both Norbrook and Smith have noted elements of satire on Jonson’s persona as literary dictator, lashing Virgil and Horace with his ‘dread whisk’ (35).¹²¹ In this light his branding May ‘Dictator of the glass’ (47) seems somewhat hypocritical. Likewise, the criticism of May’s ‘Roman-cast similitude’ (44) seems a bit rich coming from arch-classicist Jonson.

Remnants and disciples of the Tribe of Ben amongst Stanley’s circle, and May’s republican friends Marten and Nedham, would surely have noticed all this. Worden has argued that ‘the May poem, which is straightforward in its royalism, is opposite only to one of the Ode’s two sides’.¹²² But we need to recognize that ‘Tom May’s Death’ is itself a double-sided poem, marking contradictions and ironies in the ghost’s position as well as in May’s. The ghost’s strain of royalist lament for the regicide is hard to miss—when we are told the virtuous poet ‘arraigns successful crimes’ (70) it is hard to think what else he could mean. But elsewhere in the poem, simple royalist partisanship comes under more pressure. We have already noted how Jonson ‘knew not neither foe nor friend’. He later asks: ‘Must we | As for the basket, Guelphs and Ghib’lins be?’ (61-2), referring to the parties in the Italian papal-imperial wars of the thirteenth

¹¹⁸ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, p. 266.

¹¹⁹ See chapter one and Anderson, *Friendship’s Shadows*, pp. 1-2 and passim.

¹²⁰ Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 274-77; Smith, ed., *Poems*, pp. 117-20.

¹²¹ Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 274; Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 120.

¹²² Worden, ‘The Royalism of Andrew Marvell’, p. 222.

to fifteenth centuries. The allusion implies a weariness and scepticism of entrenched religio-political partisanship, perhaps reflecting Hall's advice (quoted earlier) on the preferability of seeing the names of party extinguished. The ghost whips May 'o'er the pate', we are told, 'like Pembroke at the masque' (38), alluding to an episode involving the former Lord Chamberlain Philip Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, in 1634. But, by 1650, Pembroke was known as a leading puritan Peer, who had been placed in charge of the king's imprisonment, and who had successfully moved to the Commons as a pro-regime MP after the abolition of the House of Lords.¹²³ This is an odd comparison to make with Jonson, blurring the ghost's partisanship at least. The ghost also accuses May of being 'Malignant' (42)—a heavily contested term, which different critics have tried to claim as evidence of both royalist and parliamentary commitment. But the point is surely that 'Malignant' is a tortured word, pulled this way and that and rendered ambiguous by the vituperations of both sides.¹²⁴

The turn towards militant imagery at the poem's climax starkly contradicts the previous fashioning of Jonson in the posture of royalist withdrawal, 'sworn enemy to all that do pretend' (a phrase which, we saw in chapter two, Waller may have borrowed for his *Panegyrick to my Lord Protector*).¹²⁵ The ghost now envisages the poet as a belligerent, active figure:

Then is the poet's time, 'tis then he draws,
And single fights forsaken Virtue's cause. (65-6)

'Draws' puns on the alternative persona of the poet as painter, and perhaps also, given the drunkenness of the poem's opening, on drawing ale. But its primary sense is the martial one, of drawing a sword—like Marvell's earlier images of Cromwell, the forward youth, and Lovelace. And we have been tracing how, elsewhere, defactoist writers had appropriated the romance knight-errant as a secular figure of militant activism, in order to pose the provocative question of how civic, activist values would survive in the post-revolutionary world. Crucially, the poet 'single' fights, an embattled individual outside of conventional partisanship.

¹²³ David Smith, 'Philip Herbert', *ODNB*; www.oxforddnb.com/view/Article/13042 (accessed 20th October, 2015); Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 277.

¹²⁴ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 122n; debated between McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 217-18n, and Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, p. 86n.

¹²⁵ See Norbrook's reading of 'pretend', *English Republic*, p. 276.

Personal ties of friendship, patronage, and loyalty are occluded in this part of the poem as much as in the Horatian Ode. Instead, we find a series of more abstract terms with Machiavellian connotations, which come closer to the Ode, and to Davenant's *Preface*. The ghost of Jonson suggests how the chief arms of state have been compromised:

When the sword glitters o'er the judge's head,
And fear has coward churchmen silenced (63-4)

This glances at the contemporary constitutional crisis and controversy over *de facto* power, but in dramatizing the diffident fear between soldiers, judges, and divines, Marvell may also have borrowed from the 'emulous warr' between the arms of government in Davenant's *Preface* (pp. 28-37). In Davenant, we recall, the resulting paralysis demanded the 'collateral help' of poetry; the corresponding crisis in Marvell constitutes 'the poet's time', for fighting 'forsaken Virtue's cause'. We could interpret 'Virtue' in a spiritual or ethical sense (as in royalist elegy), but, in *The Prince*, Machiavelli had also deplored the forsaking of *virtù* for the abjection of sixteenth-century Italy.¹²⁶ We also saw Davenant take up this theme in his *Preface*: 'good men are guilty of too little appetite to greatnesse' (p. 13). The ghost argues it is necessary for poets to espouse virtue 'when the wheel of empire whirleth back' (67)—and the metaphor of a wheel suggests Fortune, the capricious deity against whom Machiavellian *virtù* strove in the secular field of 'empire'. Again, we might see parallels in Davenant's *Preface*, where empire, 'that Element of greatnesse and honor', was the central stage for heroic *virtù*; when empire stops enlarging (although in Davenant it 'stands still' rather than 'whirleth back') then 'all things would putrifie, and infect one another' (pp. 30-31). Finally, the virtuous poet, according to the ghost, 'sings still of ancient rights' (69)—a phrase we recall Marvell using ambiguously in the Ode, hovering between the traditional royalist concept, and a modified, Machiavellian sense of *ridurre ai principii*.

Just when the ghost expresses his relief that May died before he could 'great Charles his death relate' (76), the argument is overtaken by a more urgent point:

¹²⁶ See *The Prince*, chapter XXIV: 'Wherefore these our Princes who for many yeares had continued in their Principalities, for having afterwards lost them, let them not blame Fortune, but their own sloth', p. 201; also chapter XXVI, p. 216 (trans. Bondanella, pp. 82 and 87).

But what will deeper wound thy little mind,
Hast left surviving Davenant still behind,
Who laughs to see in this thy death renewed (77-9).

At a simple level, Davenant was an obvious referent for the poem as Jonson's successor and May's rival to the laureateship. But the juxtaposition between Davenant's laughter and May's 'death renewed' (i.e. being disbarred from Elysium) becomes ironic and morbidly pointed if we remember that, at the time of writing in November 1650, Davenant was in prison at risk of execution, and his options were running out. As Nedham had reported regretfully in July, the Commons had already voted to try him for treason; by November, Marten's efforts to save him may already have been in full swing, and *Gondibert* itself was on the press.¹²⁷ By now, Davenant's 'surviving' had little to do with his royalism. And the fact he appears after the only explicit mention of the regicide is significant. Davenant was an example of cavaliering romance militancy, now faced with a difficult choice about how to proceed, about whether poetic activism was sustainable in this post-royalist moment.

Noting the elements of irony, ambiguity, and discordance in the royalism of 'Tom May's Death' is not the same as claiming it as an anti-royalist poem. As Loxley concluded, this is the poem that performs the 'isotopy' of royalist verse more than any other of Marvell's.¹²⁸ Norbrook argues persuasively that the Ode and the May poem are 'rival experiments, exploring the challenges of different poetic modes', perhaps even a deliberate exercise in engaging *in utramque partem*.¹²⁹ The Ode goes much further in rehearsing republican enthusiasm, but engages proactively with constitutional ambiguities yet to be ironed out. 'Tom May's Death', on the other hand, goes further in performing royalist lament, but retains puzzling ambiguities, omissions, and ironies which complicate any firm partisan commitment and point the reader back to the difficult circumstances of 1650. Significantly, both poems celebrate an identifiable set of values: singular activism configured through markedly militant imagery drawn from romance and Machiavellian *virtù*, and distanced from royalist discourses of conviviality and loyalty. Both poems implicitly

¹²⁷ See chapter three.

¹²⁸ Loxley, 'Marvell and Royalist Verse', p. 56.

¹²⁹ Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 280.

ask—through the complicated examples of Cromwell and Davenant, of ‘the forward youth’ and ‘the poet’—what future this mode of action might have in post-revolutionary England. Victoria Kahn has argued that dialectical reasoning *in utramque partem* was essential to Machiavellianism, precisely as a means of deliberating between alternative modes of conduct, and how their ideological value could shift with circumstances:

What appears to be virtue may in fact turn out to be vice... in showing the reader how to think rhetorically—on both sides of a question—about notions such as imitation, virtue, and the good, Machiavelli exposes the ideological nature of all such terms.¹³⁰

This was a mode which eroded the essential spiritual claims of royalism, by insisting on the artificiality and mutability of the concepts of power, obligation, and virtue. In this light ‘Tom May’s Death’ reads as a performance of royalist rhetoric which also alerts the reader to its artificiality and which tests its practicality in a new context. If arguing *in utramque partem* was a way of reconciling the good with the prudent, Marvell’s political poems of 1650 salvage a sense of ‘wretched good’ (70) which could nevertheless prove politically viable. They suggest how the cavalier trope of romance militancy as civic action might be re-appropriated after the fall of royalism, to other purposes and by other regimes.

3. Political Virtues: ‘The Unfortunate Lover’ and ‘Upon Appleton House’

A few months later, Marvell was engaged as tutor to Mary Fairfax. He accompanied tutee and family into their rural withdrawal at Nun Appleton in the summer of 1651.¹³¹ The theme of retirement, which Marvell had rarely mentioned more than satirically in his poetry of 1649-50, was now thrust upon him as an implicit condition of patronage.¹³² Fairfax retained considerable political prestige: when the Scots invaded, the Council of State petitioned strongly for his return to active service, to which Fairfax reluctantly agreed (organizing the defence of Marvell’s home

¹³⁰ Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric*, p. 19.

¹³¹ Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, pp. 12-19; Smith, *The Chameleon*, pp. 88-94.

¹³² Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 271.

town, Hull). Nedham hailed this as a public relations coup for the regime.¹³³ That was in August, and Derek Hirst and Steven Zwicker have pinned down the most probable date for the completion of ‘Upon Appleton House’ to around Mary Fairfax’s birthday on 30th July.¹³⁴ This enables them to read the poem as driven by the ‘very specific decision, whether to take up arms in an uncertain cause’; the protagonists William and Mary Fairfax ‘play out analogous decisions in the distant past and a prophetic future’.¹³⁵ This is a convincing argument, but Hirst and Zwicker’s overriding aim—their psychoanalysis of Marvell—arguably leads them to miss the puzzle their conclusion raises. Up until now, Marvell had approached the question of political commitment with a set of intellectual resources—belligerent activism, defactoism, anti-clerical Machiavellianism—which made him a poor choice of retainer for Fairfax, increasingly drawn towards his wife’s Presbyterianism and the literature of retired contemplation. As with my previous readings of the Ode and ‘Tom May’s Death’, I will consider how Marvell’s rhetoric in ‘Upon Appleton House’ is governed by his appeal to a reader—Fairfax—and how he adapts his political and intellectual materials to this challenging new context.

I will approach the poem via another lyric Marvell probably wrote around this time, ‘The Unfortunate Lover’. Once again, we find Marvell developing a figure drawn from romance, the Unfortunate Lover, to deliberate upon the value and possibilities of action (configured as military action). Hirst and Zwicker have brought the poem dramatically to life as a psychological meditation on the ‘wounds of desire’, but ignore the repeated tropes and language of governance which locate the baroque imagery in a civic context.¹³⁶ Most obviously, the poem is bookended by contested images of ‘ruling’ (10, 64). When Marvell says ‘the seas | Ruled’ (9-10) he unsettles the language of governance by applying it paradoxically to the forces of anarchy—as with the equally paradoxical ‘master-wave’ (13). The sea is ungovernable and, as with other tempests we

¹³³ Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, pp. 20-21.

¹³⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

¹³⁵ *ibid.*, p. 21.

¹³⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 24-9.

have explored in Waller and Davenant, political disorder is intimately connected with the wayward passions: the Unfortunate lover's 'bitter tears' are 'lent' him by the sea, whilst the 'winds... through his surging breast do roar' (17-20). The 'shipwrack' in a tempest (9) was a conventional metaphor for political catastrophe, which we have already encountered in Waller's Santander poem and in *Gondibert*. Davenant's solution was to channel the tempestuous passions into productive heroic endeavour: 'such active motion of Empire is as necessary as the motion of the Sea' (p. 30). Similarly, in 'The Unfortunate Lover' the shipwreck is configured as a 'Caesarean section' (16), manufacturing an heroic analogy with Caesar, as Marvell had done for Cromwell in the Horatian Ode.¹³⁷ Another heroic analogy follows later: 'betwixt the flames and waves, | Like Ajax, the mad tempest braves' (47-8). Taking on the persona of Ajax enables the Lover to battle the 'tempest'—once again configured in terms of psychological breakdown ('mad'). Again, the Lover's pugnacity is rather like Cromwell, and Marvell replicates vocabulary and imagery from the Ode: we have the force of 'angry heaven' (41), and the lightning which 'breaks | Through frighted clouds in forked streaks' (21-2), alluding, via the Ode, to Lucan's description of Caesar. And, as in the Ode, this deterministic rhetoric sets up the Machiavellian confrontation between *fortuna* and individual *virtù*: 'Fortune and he are called to play' (43). Like the Machiavellian hero, the Unfortunate Lover is framed grappling with Fortune, and the amatory, sexualizing connotations offered by the verb 'play' may suggest Machiavelli's metaphor of Fortune as a capricious 'mistresse' to be conquered.¹³⁸

This reading relates 'The Unfortunate Lover' to Marvell's poetry of 1650. Scholars have found little difficulty in dating the poem to this period, although their reasoning has sometimes been open to question. The debate over the word 'malignant' (59) at least locates the poem in the language of the later 1640s; as I argued above, Marvell was probably attracted to it precisely as an ambivalent, bipartisan term of vituperation. McDowell has traced a series of slight echoes between the poem and Stanley's verse adaptation of the *Eikon Basilike, Psalterium Carolinum*

¹³⁷ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 89n.

¹³⁸ *The Prince*, chapter XXV, p. 209 (trans. Bondanella, pp. 86-7); *OED*, 'play', v., 11b.

(ca. 1649), although some of these resemblances could be attributed to shared conventions.¹³⁹ On the whole, attempts to read ‘The Unfortunate Lover’ as a cavalier allegory have failed to make much convincingly of the poem.¹⁴⁰ Stronger evidence for a dating of circa 1650 lies in ‘the masque of quarr’ling elements’ (26): Marvell also made striking allusions to masques in the Horatian Ode, ‘Tom May’s Death’, and ‘Upon Appleton House’—the latter two poems also featuring cameos by the leading contemporary masque-writer, Davenant.¹⁴¹ Rather than offering coded political allegories, ‘The Unfortunate Lover’ deliberates more abstractly on the topic of *otium* and *negotium*. We have already witnessed this theme lurking at the edges of the Ode, where Cromwell emerged from his ‘private gardens’ (29) to enter the wars, and later transfigured into the falcon whose withdrawal to a ‘green bough’ provided the opportunity for the republican falconer to seize him (94-6).¹⁴² The opening of ‘The Unfortunate Lover’ similarly invokes but dispels a fleeting moment of greenery:

Alas, how pleasant are their days
With whom the infant Love yet plays!
Sorted by pairs, they still are seen
By fountains cool, and shadows green. (1-4)

The infantilizing garden retreat, with its allusions to the ‘fountains cool’ and ‘shadows green’ of Virgil’s Eclogues, offers a life of pleasurable idleness. But it is displaced by a mode of singular, militant action: ‘to that region climb, | To make impression upon Time’ (7-8), recalling Cromwell’s capacity to ‘climb | To ruin the great work of Time’ in the Ode (33-4). This fits the pattern of sustaining a brief image of languishing *otium* only to reject it in favour of decisive action which I traced through several of Marvell’s contemporary poems earlier.

This might also suggest some connection with another Marvell poem, ‘The Garden’, which performs almost the direct converse. The *otium* criticized in the first stanza of ‘The Unfortunate Lover’ becomes conversely praiseworthy amongst the ‘green shade’ and ‘fountain’s sliding foot’ of ‘The Garden’ (48-9); ‘The Garden’, meanwhile, begins by invoking ‘uncessant

¹³⁹ McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 218-21; Thomas Stanley, *Psalterium Carolinum* (London, 1660).

¹⁴⁰ See Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, pp. 77-8, 86-7.

¹⁴¹ See Horatian Ode, ll. 53-6; ‘Tom May’s Death’, ll. 38, 96-100; ‘Upon Appleton House’, ll. 441-8, 679-80.

¹⁴² On the green bough, Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 256.

labours' (3) only to reject them in favour of contemplation.¹⁴³ We could imagine 'The Garden' as a sort of companion to 'The Unfortunate Lover', as 'rival experiments' (as Norbrook described the Ode and 'Tom May's Death'), engaging *in utramque partem* to explore the merits and limitations of *otium* and *negotium*.¹⁴⁴ This possibility has been obscured by Allan Pritchard's re-dating of 'The Garden' based on apparent echoes of garden poems by Cowley and Katherine Philips which were not printed until 1667-68.¹⁴⁵ But Hirst and Zwicker have more recently argued on thematic grounds to restore 'The Garden' to the group of poems Marvell wrote for Fairfax in 1651.¹⁴⁶ Susan Clarke has traced a cluster of horticultural poems which circulated in manuscript in the late 1640s and early 1650s that share source materials and near-echoes with Cowley, Philips, and Marvell.¹⁴⁷ And Cowley may have had the opportunity to read Marvell's poem in manuscript when he met Fairfax in 1657.¹⁴⁸ In this light, some of the phrases Pritchard cited as echoes—most obviously 'herbs and flowers'—can seem like conventional *formulae* rather than conscious echoes (and the phrase 'herbs and flowers' even appears in *Gondibert*, II.v.29).¹⁴⁹ There is a case, then, for dating at least the origins of 'The Garden' to around 1650, when Marvell was particularly interested in debating between *otium* and *negotium*. Brian Vickers has read the poem as an exercise in inhabiting 'a way of life known to be wrong, leading as it does to inertia, sterility, and death'. The verbs Marvell uses to fashion his languishing carry some disconcerting spiritual threats: 'Insnared with flow'rs, I fall on grass' (40).¹⁵⁰ These ambiguities in the poem generate its deliberative activity, by signalling the temptations and dangers of the ethic it assumes—an effect we will encounter again in 'Upon Appleton House'.

¹⁴³ Perhaps counterpointing Cromwell's incessant industry in the Ode.

¹⁴⁴ Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 115.

¹⁴⁵ Allan Pritchard, 'Marvell's "The Garden": A Restoration Poem?', *SEL* (1983) 371-88; Paul Hammond, 'The Date of Marvell's "The Mower Against Gardens"', *NQ*, 251 (2006) 178-81; Nicholas von Maltzahn, 'Marvell's Restoration Garden', *Andrew Marvell Society Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2009), www.st-andrews.ac.uk/marvellsociety/newsletter/marvells-restoration-garden/ (accessed 20th October 2015).

¹⁴⁶ Hirst and Zwicker, 'Appendix', in *Orphan of the Hurricane*, pp. 164-74.

¹⁴⁷ Susan A. Clarke, 'Marvell in Restoration Gardens', *Andrew Marvell Society Newsletter*, vol. 2, no. 2 (2010), www.st-andrews.ac.uk/marvellsociety/newsletter/susan-a-clarke-marvell-in-royalist-gardens/ (accessed 20th October 2015).

¹⁴⁸ See chapter five.

¹⁴⁹ See Loxley, 'Echoes as Evidence', pp. 167-68.

¹⁵⁰ Vickers, 'Leisure and Idleness', p. 153.

In a similar way, Marvell marks limitations and contradictions in ‘The Unfortunate Lover’. Despite celebrating heroic action, the poem’s central image puts the Lover in a striking posture of passivity, as the ‘corm’rants black... famish him, and feast’ (27, 37).¹⁵¹ Victoria Kahn has suggested that by engaging in passionate action the romance hero opened himself up to forces of contingency—the whims of Fortune and passions of others—which could paradoxically render him more passive, with less agency.¹⁵² ‘The Unfortunate Lover’ is inconclusive: we see the Lover ‘lock, | And grapple’ in his struggle with Fortune, but, although this effort is praiseworthy in itself, we never find out the end result (51-6). When Marvell uses the language of heraldry to fashion the Lover explicitly as a chivalric romance hero in the final stanza, ‘the only banneret | That ever love created yet’ is merely the blood he has lost in the fight (57-8). Hirst and Zwicker read this conclusion as ‘the triumph of the imagination’, but they miss how the word ‘only’ creates an ambivalent sense of limitation.¹⁵³ Even when the language of governance reasserts itself—‘he in story only rules’—this qualifying ‘only’ limits the Lover’s power to the sphere of fiction. The problem with fashioning political actors as romance heroes—as both Davenant and Marvell found—was that a mode characterized by restlessness does not easily offer closure. The risk was, particularly once the teleological structure of divine monarchy had been unfixed, that any governing settlement might prove endlessly provisional and contingent.

‘Upon Appleton House’ confronts the problematic nature of political action by conducting a similar deliberation on the competing merits of engagement and retirement. In the early part of the poem, Marvell adapts to the sensitivity of Fairfax’s political circumstances by transferring his martial activism to his ancestor, William Fairfax. Thus William becomes yet another epic romance figure, ‘valiant’ (203), with ‘successive valour’ (243)—albeit in a language of Protestant rather than Machiavellian militancy, accosting the nuns in distinctly Spenserian

¹⁵¹ McDowell claims a parallel here with a slightly different conceit in Stanley’s *Psalterium Carolinum: Poetry and Allegiance*, pp. 218-21.

¹⁵² Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, pp. 138-43.

¹⁵³ Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, p. 85.

vocabulary: ‘Hypocrite witches, hence avaunt’ (205).¹⁵⁴ William is also more circumspect than earlier Marvellian heroes with their erect swords:

Sometimes resolved his sword he draws,
But reverenceth then the laws:
For justice still that courage led;
First from a judge, then soldier bred. (229-32)

It is not clear that the poet who ‘draws’ in ‘Tom May’s Death’ would observe such constitutional niceties. William’s conscientiousness allows him to reconcile the offices of judge and soldier, which we earlier saw both Marvell and Davenant present in fierce contention.

Marvell sustains the theme of Protestant militancy in the next section of the poem, in the present day, where Thomas Fairfax appears in his gardens:

Who, when retired here to peace,
His warlike studies could not cease (283-4)

Marvell is still recycling language from the Ode, where Cromwell ‘could not cease | In the inglorious arts of peace’ (9-10), but the conceit of restlessness is stretched almost to breaking point when applied to gardening. Whereas the Ode had praised Cromwell’s ‘industrious valour’, Marvell now uses a symbol of industriousness drawn from Virgil’s *Georgics*, the bee, ‘Beating the *dian* with its drums’ (292). Fairfax becomes ‘Governor’ of a garden fort (297), a tactful way of commemorating his martial achievements whilst observing his retirement. But the unstable alignment of militant and georgic imagery suggests Marvell was straining for ways of reconciling garden retreat with a residual sense of civic obligation. Fairfax is now intent on moral reformation, using his ‘utmost skill’ to ‘Ambition weed, and conscience till’ (353-34), completely turning on its head the Machiavellian praise for ambitiousness we saw earlier in both Marvell and Davenant. Marvell needed to emphasize ‘conscience’ in order to conform to Fairfaxian piety.

The Reforming zeal of the nunnery passage is continued by the ‘invisible artillery’ of Fairfax’s militarized garden, training ‘the batt’ry of its beams’ against Cawood Castle and

¹⁵⁴ See Judith Sproxton, *Violence and Religion: Attitudes Towards Militancy in the French Wars and the English Revolution* (London, 1995), pp. 79-88.

‘Th’ambition of its prelate great’, the former Archbishop of York.¹⁵⁵ Marvell’s anti-episcopal imagery tactfully emphasizes the religious common ground he shared with his patron. He sustains imagery of Reformist militancy through the central episode of the poem, when the mowers appear as ‘Israelites’, fashioned via the traditional Protestant analogy with God’s chosen nation, as metonymic representatives of the English people (389).¹⁵⁶ The conceit offers an elegiac lament on the Civil War, but also attempts to equate violent religious reform with productive, georgic fieldwork: the mowers ‘massacre the grass along’ (394), and the field appears ‘a camp of battle newly fought’ (420). Like the Unfortunate Lover, the mower is idealized through an oddly intimate, sensuous analogy with a classical military hero’s body: he ‘Smells like an Alexander’s sweat’ (428). Gary Hamilton has read the poem as supporting the anti-clerical, secularizing church settlement of the Revolution, locating civic and religious authority in the conscientious governance of the godly gentry.¹⁵⁷ This extended conceit of the Israelite army implicitly reinforces Fairfax’s role as a ‘Governor’, configuring his economic dependents, his paid labourers, as troops in his spiritual army, called to reform the nation.¹⁵⁸

The mowing scene is followed by the most abstract section of the poem, in the meadows. Marvell complicates his reflection on the politics of retirement by launching a more ambitious argument from first principles:

This scene again withdrawing brings
A new and empty face of things;
A levelled space, as smooth and plain,
As cloths for Lely stretched to stain.
The world when first created sure
Was such a table rase and pure. (441-46)

The masque metaphor primes the reader for the approaching reference to Davenant, whilst also foregrounding the theme of political artifice. England now appears as a ‘levelled space’ open for innovation—and as the word ‘levelled’ suggests, these lines move into controversial territory.

¹⁵⁵ Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 289.

¹⁵⁶ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 227n.

¹⁵⁷ Gary D. Hamilton, ‘Marvell, Sacrilege, and Protestant Historiography: Contextualizing “Upon Appleton House”’, in Donna B. Hamilton and Richard Strier, eds., *Religion, Literature, and Politics in Post-Reformation England, 1540-1688* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 161-81.

¹⁵⁸ See Joanna Picciotto, *Labors of Innocence in Early Modern England* (Cambridge MA, 2010), pp. 356, 712n.

England without the Stuarts is a *tabula rasa*, with no inherent natural or divine order; whatever enters to fill the blank will be a work of artifice, like a masque or a painting. This imagery is Marvell's clearest attempt to formulate a defactoist sense of the commonwealth as an artificial and mutable construct. Peter Lely is an interesting choice of illustration: rather like Davenant in 'Tom May's Death' he was a royalist whose options had run out, and was now establishing himself as portraitist to the Commonwealth.¹⁵⁹ The oddly pejorative connotations of the verb, 'stain', might suggest Marvell took an ironic view of the value of Lely's new allegiance.¹⁶⁰

Next, Marvell introduces a danger at the opposite extreme: the 'Levellers' who 'take pattern at' the 'naked equal flat' (449-50), whose activities Fairfax had recently crushed.¹⁶¹ The Levellers are followed by pointedly autonomous 'villagers', no longer economically obligated to Fairfax (unlike the mowers), but chasing their own cattle 'in common', that is, on common land (451-2).¹⁶² 'In common' might also mean together, even *equally* with, their cattle—a blurring of the line between humans and beasts which the syntax sustains into the next stanza, with its indistinct plural 'They' (457). This commonality with beasts was a condition of Hobbes' state of nature—Hobbes' metaphor of a 'race' is possibly recalled here by Marvell's 'common chase'.¹⁶³ These anarchical dangers are reinforced by the diabolical pun when the field 'is pinched yet nearer by the beast' (454). Marvell complicates this by returning to an image of courtly painting:

Such, in the painted world, appeared
Dav'nant with th'universal herd. (455-6)

The risk that Leveller anarchy opens the way to tyranny is suggested by Davenant's appearance along with the metaphor of the herd which, as the previous chapter traced in *Gondibert*, fashioned the sort of population projected by absolutism. Marvell alludes to a wall painting in Astragon's House of Praise which depicted the animals on the sixth day of Genesis, staring at one another 'with levell'd Eies' in the brief period of suspension before the creation of humans, 'whilst yet their Tyrant is unmade' (II.vi.60). Marvell adapts this to the moment of political genesis in

¹⁵⁹ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 229n.

¹⁶⁰ Picciotto reads the implications of 'stain' in more generalized terms, *Labors of Innocence*, p. 360.

¹⁶¹ Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, p. 17.

¹⁶² Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 229n.

¹⁶³ *Elements of Law*, chapter XI, pp. 59-60.

England, when the nation had been reduced to a ‘levelled’ herd without a sovereign. Davenant’s ‘painted world’ suggests one form of political artifice which could generate a new settlement—although the metrical awkwardness of ‘th’universal herd’ might suggest Marvell harboured ironic misgivings about the efficacy of absolutism.

The next stanza invokes a new metaphor of optical and perspectival illusions: ‘a landskip drawn in looking-glass’ and ‘fleas’ which ‘in multiplying glasses lie’ (458-62). An obvious source for this sort of anamorphic imagery in 1651 would have been Hobbes’ *Answer to Davenant’s Preface*:

I beleeeve (Sir) you have seene curious kind of perspective, where he that looks through a short hollow pipe, upon a picture conteyning diverse figures, sees none of those that are there paynted, but some one person made up of their partes, conveighed to the eye by the artificiall cutting of a glasse. (p. 55)

Noel Malcolm interprets this as an in-joke, alluding to Hobbes’ plans for the frontispiece of *Leviathan*, where the jostling, discordant bodies of the people are resolved into the single artificial body of the sovereign.¹⁶⁴ Marvell finally resolves his disparate ‘spots’ and ‘fleas’ into an orderly shape in another image implying a perspective glass, this time a telescope: ‘move | As constellations do above’ (464). Although he retained an ironic detachment from solutions which might seem over-simplistic or tyrannical, Marvell persists in filling his *tabula rasa* with models for the artificial generation of sovereignty, like masques, paintings, or the illusions of perspective glasses. He underlines the need for such artifice in the following stanzas when the meadows are flooded, recalling the Machiavellian metaphor for Fortune.¹⁶⁵ According to Machiavelli, Italy’s reduction to a ‘plain field, without any trench or bank’ resulted in ‘inundation and great alterations’; as we saw in chapter two, human engineering was necessary to ‘make provision against these excesses’.¹⁶⁶ Similarly, political renewal at Appleton House relies on the engineering of sluice gates and ‘cataracts’ (466) on Fairfax’s estate. The inundation creates a sense of dangerous provisionality which energizes Marvell’s restless search for metaphors to model orderly religious governance.

¹⁶⁴ Malcolm, ‘Introduction’, p. 135.

¹⁶⁵ Norbrook, *English Republic*, pp. 291-2.

¹⁶⁶ *The Prince*, chapter XXV, pp. 203-4 (trans. Bondanella, pp. 84-5).

Marvell already had a ready-made genre for finding wider civic connotations in imagery of husbandry and domestic management: the country house poem. The next section of ‘Upon Appleton House’, the withdrawal into the woods, features some of the most intense juxtapositions between the performance of contemplative *otium* and the discovery of national, civic dimensions in Fairfax’s estate. Marvell reasserts the theme of Protestant militancy by comparing the wood with Noah’s ark, but which creatures inhabit ‘in armies, not in pairs’ (438-88). He also creates another optical illusion in which the discordant bodies of the trees suddenly appear as if ‘one great trunk them all did mould’ (500)—if we interpret ‘trunk’ in the sense of body, returning us to a sort of arboreal parody of the *Leviathan* frontispiece.¹⁶⁷ Once he is inside the woods, Marvell turns to a more orderly architectural metaphor, comparing the trees with ‘Corinthean porticoes’ (508), where:

The arching boughs unite between
The columns of the temple green (509-10)

The ‘temple green’ reaches back towards the architectural imagery in Waller’s country house poem ‘At Penshurst’ (‘Had Sacharissa lived’):¹⁶⁸

Or if she walk, in even ranks they stand,
Like some well-marshalled and obsequious band.
Amphion so made stones and timber leap
Into fair figures from a confused heap (15-18).

In chapter two I argued that Waller flattered the Sidneys’ oppositional self-fashioning by transferring the Amphion metaphor, which would normally apply to the monarch, to their country estate. Marvell makes a similar move by applying architectural imagery to Fairfax’s woods in the more authentically republican context of 1651.¹⁶⁹ But as we will see he seems to have been more concerned about the problematic sexual connotations of this image of ‘straightness’—which

¹⁶⁷ *OED*, ‘trunk’, n., 2a.

¹⁶⁸ It also recalled Waller’s architectural metaphors in ‘Upon His Majesties Repairing of Pauls’—see Hammond, ‘Echoes of Waller in Marvell’s Horatian Ode’, *NQ*, 38 (1991) 172-3.

¹⁶⁹ Marvell recycled the Amphion image a few years later in *The First Anniversary of the Government under his Highness the Lord Protector*: Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, pp. 105-6.

Waller had tactfully suppressed. As with Davenant's 'universal herd', Marvell cautiously ironized any artifice which claimed to generate order with a too easy facility.

The wood itself is a space of ease and withdrawal—and Marvell's civic consciousness becomes progressively compromised. The 'hewel' appears as a figure of religious reformation—with apocalyptic connotations when he 'examines' which trees are 'fit to stand and which to fell'—but also more political connotations of husbandry, the 'holt-felster's care', and architecture, 'that for his building he designs' (537-50). If we interpret the 'oak' as a civic symbol, the conceit even draws in an allusion to the regicide:

Who could have thought the tallest oak
Should fall by such a feeble stroke! (351-2)

Like the earlier Israelites, the hewel allegorizes the Reforming energies of the English Revolution, but playfully and unstably. The 'beast' which appeared earlier in the meadows now returns in the form of 'the worm' (punning on the infernal sense of 'dragon').¹⁷⁰ But, we are assured, he 'triumphs not long' (557). Any hints of political revolution are folded into a more introspective, and rather more sanguine, hope of spiritual redemption. As Marvell moves further away from the sphere of Fairfax's governance into the wilder forest he embraces the morally suspect terminology of *otium* more fully: 'easy philosopher' (561), 'languishing with ease' (593).¹⁷¹ Hirst and Zwicker are probably correct in detecting a strain of self-parody in this passage, as Marvell tests the acceptable limits of *otium*: despite the poem's earlier anti-clericalism he now transforms hypocritically into 'some great prelate of the grove' (592).¹⁷² He also tips into hubris:

How safe, methinks, and strong behind
These trees have I encamped my mind; (601-2)

That disruptive qualifier 'methinks' signals his ironic awareness of misprision and superstition, inviting the question of whether this hyperbolic retirement is really the best way to be 'safe' and

¹⁷⁰ *OED*, 'worm', n., l. 1, citing the same pun in Alexander Pope's verse epistle 'To Mr John Moore, Author of the Celebrated Worm Powder', in *The Poems of Alexander Pope: vol. VI: The Minor Poems*, ed. by Nicholas Ault (rev. ed.; London, 1964).

¹⁷¹ Vickers, 'Leisure and Idleness', pp. 149-51.

¹⁷² Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, pp. 22-5; Picciotto, *Labors of Innocence*, p. 362.

‘strong’. He even slides into a bathetic fantasy of penetration (perhaps even, blasphemously, crucifixion) with the command ‘courteous briars nail me through’ (616).

Marvell unbalances the poem in order that Mary Fairfax can arrive to provide the corrective in the final section:

’Twere shame that such judicious eyes
Should with such toys a man surprise;
She that already is the law
Of all her sex, her age’s awe. (653-6)

Her judicious gravity protects her from the risky, blasphemous fantasies Marvell had sustained in the woods—of bestowing ‘straightness’ on the woods (691), and the ‘hooks’, ‘quills’, and ‘toys’ which Hirst and Zwicker read as auto-erotic innuendos (649, 654).¹⁷³ The reference to the ‘law’, and the public entities of Mary’s ‘sex’ and ‘age’, recover the civic context Marvell had threatened to lose sight of. The ‘law’ is collocated—in the recurring rhyme we traced last chapter in *Gondibert*—with ‘awe’, the psychological foundation of power. And Marvell also develops parallels with the domestic government in Davenant’s House of Astragon. Mary shares her status as ‘the law | Of all her sex’ with Astragon’s daughter Birtha, to whom ‘By secret law, each to her beauty bends’ (II.vii.10). Birtha ‘implys’ her ‘vertues’ as ‘busie without noise’ (II.vii.9); Mary, likewise, is virtuously silent, as she ‘employs’ herself learning languages for ‘wisdom, not the noise’ (710)—here Mary actually surpasses Birtha, displacing courtly beauty with a more puritanical ‘wisdom’. Both poets emphasize the importance of the governing patriarchal authority: Davenant maintains that Birtha ‘howrly takes her Law’ from Astragon, and that ‘her Father’s precepts gave her skill’ (II.vii.8-15); Marvell attributes Mary’s virtues to her having been nursed under Fairfax’s ‘discipline severe’ (723). Marvell implies this sort of godly domestic government could count as a contribution to national Reformation by adopting a legalistic vocabulary of inheritance: ‘goodness doth itself entail’ (727).¹⁷⁴ Mary’s virtue enables the Fairfaxes to ‘rejoice, | And make their destiny their choice’ (744-5): this could simply mean that

¹⁷³ Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, p. 25.

¹⁷⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 30-1.

Fairfax must choose to accept his *de facto* circumstances, but it may further translate into a Machiavellian capacity to assert control over Fortune.

We can read ‘Upon Appleton House’ as Marvell’s attempt to adapt his interests in militant imagery and Machiavellianism to the context of Fairfax’s piety and rural retirement. As the passage in the meadows indicates, he continued to draw on Hobbes’ and Davenant’s ideas about the artificiality and mutability of commonwealths. Marvell enters into discourses of horticulture, husbandry, and contemplative withdrawal, but exposes their limitations by carrying them to extremes, or by inflecting them with dissonantly military metaphors. He appropriates metaphors of architecture and Protestant militancy—on occasions drawing from sources in Davenant and Waller—to insist on the civic contexts for Fairfax’s retirement and domestic management. Attempts towards isolation or withdrawal come to seem imprudent or illusory—not dissimilarly, in fact, to the Horatian Ode. The poem also invokes epic romance heroes in its depictions of Fairfax’s ancestor and his mower—continuing the series of political actors Marvell had represented this way in the poems on Lovelace, Cromwell, May, and the Unfortunate Lover.

Marvell’s most consistent tendency is to dramatize political actors as romance heroes, drawing their swords and engaging in the Commonwealth. The remarkable shifts between the poems’ political perspectives (and sometimes within them) can be more easily comprehended if we read them as rhetorical performances, attuned to particular genres, occasions, and audiences. Even the most ostensibly royalist poems show little attachment to traditional idealizations of the ancient constitution or divine-right monarchy. The poems tacitly endorse a commitment to civic activism and Machiavellian renovation—politically relativist themes at the best of times, and which are never far away, even in the royalist poems, from the defactoist question of how such values could be sustained in post-revolutionary England. This reading has offered close parallels with the Machiavellian and defactoist positions in Davenant’s *Preface to Gondibert*, especially concepts of the ‘emulous warr’ between the competing institutions of the state, and the ‘active

motion of Empire' which harnessed restless energies into political order. Marvell's secularizing, deliberative rhetoric and his willingness to countenance constitutional innovation are signalled most clearly in the Horatian Ode, where Cromwell ruins the 'great work of time', and in 'Upon Appleton House', where England appears as a 'table rase and pure'. But even in 'Tom May's Death' Marvell dissolves royalist tropes of withdrawal and conviviality to praise an austere and militant poet who 'single fights'. Marvell was engaging with the rationalist ideas that Hobbes, Davenant, and their new republican friends like Nedham had dragged into mainstream debates—even though Marvell's own poems were not so widely read. The next chapter turns to an altogether more public writer, Cowley, returning also to the group of exiled poets around Hobbes in Paris, to explore a very different response to rationalist political theory.

Chapter Five

Cowley, Hobbes, and the Art of Oblivion

The *Preface* to Cowley's 1656 folio volume of *Poems* opens with a teasing reference to 'my return lately into England'.¹ This was the event most readers would have been curious about. Cowley had been a major royalist functionary as secretary to Henry Jermyn and Henrietta-Maria, regularly transcribing and encrypting court correspondence. He had endured in this post through the worst days of defeat and exile, long after his friends Hobbes, Waller, and Davenant had made their peace with the revolutionary regime and settled in England. But his newsletters to Henry Bennet tailed off in September 1653.² In March 1654, Hyde's informants were complaining that they had not 'heard from Mr Cooley a great while'.³ Cowley received a passport authorized by Cromwell in May, and transcribed his last surviving piece of Jermyn's correspondence in August. He received a second passport from Cromwell that month, and apparently made use of it.⁴ His defence of this act was a major point of interest for readers of the 1656 *Preface*. Hyde wrote to the Marquis of Ormonde that, if Cowley were to continue receiving payments from the Crown, 'you will think it strange after you haue read y^e preface to his booke'.⁵

This chapter will consider how Cowley's 1656 *Poems* presents itself within the cultural and political landscape of Cromwellian England. I will examine the allegiance constructed by the *Preface*, and the formative influence of Hobbes on Cowley's thinking in the volume as a whole. The second section will look in some detail at his unfinished epic, the *Davideis*, and Cowley's rationalist analysis of the conditions in which political obligations could be generated, dissolved, and transferred. The third will map out continuities in his later career, and consider Cowley's

¹ Cowley, 'The Preface', in *Poems* (London, 1656), sig. a1^r; Waller, ed., *Poems*, p. 4.

² Brown, T., ed., *Miscellanea Aulica: Or, a Collection of State-Treatises Never Before Published* (London, 1704), pp. 158-60.

³ H[erbert]. P[rice]. to William Edgeman, 26th March 1654: Bod. MS Clarendon 48, f. 69^r.

⁴ Bod. MS Rawl. A 328, ff. 35, 122; Lord Henry Jermyn to Sir Richard Browne, 7th August 1654, BL Add. MS 78193, f. 86.

⁵ Hyde to Ormonde, 10th May 1656, Bod. MS Clarendon 51, f. 269^r.

problems in establishing his position after the Restoration. His rationalist politics set him at odds with normative royalist beliefs about the divine right of kings and the ancient constitution. We will see this expressed in his resistance to partisan perspectives, turning instead to a more relativist mode of psychological analysis. But we will also encounter important distinctions between Cowley and the other turncoat poets, in his resistance to Machiavellianism and militancy, hoping instead for an ‘art of oblivion’ which could overcome the delinquent passions and achieve a state of well-governed resignation.

1. Cowley in Cromwellian England

We should first note that Cowley was almost certainly *not* involved in subterranean royalist activities after his return to England. This was the exculpatory myth put about by Thomas Sprat in a hagiographical preface to his posthumous edition of Cowley’s *Works*.⁶ Even there, the extent of Cowley’s ‘service’ was merely to ‘persuade the poor oppressed Royalists to conceal their affections, for better occasions’ in order to lull the ‘Usurpers’ into a false sense of security. But, by next arguing that ‘the success of things seems to prove, that it was not very ill grounded’, Sprat inadvertently reveals how his account only makes sense with hindsight, within a post-Restoration narrative of inevitable Stuart resurgence.⁷ Cowley’s early twentieth-century biographer Arthur Nethercot seized uncritically on Sprat’s version of events.⁸ Despite Frank Kermode’s caution that ‘we are under no obligation to believe Sprat’, it has proved surprisingly influential in modern scholarship.⁹ But there is no contemporary documentary evidence. Even Sprat and Nethercot maintain that Cowley’s arrest by the Cromwellian authorities in 1655 was a

⁶ Thomas Sprat, ‘An Account of the Life and Writings of Mr. Abraham Cowley’, in (ed.) *The Works of Mr. Abraham Cowley* (London, 1668).

⁷ *ibid.*, sig. a2^r.

⁸ Arthur H. Nethercot, *The Muse’s Hannibal: Abraham Cowley* (Oxford, 1931), pp. 141-50.

⁹ Frank Kermode, ‘The Date of Cowley’s *Davideis*’, *RES*, 25 (1949) 154-8, p. 157; for instance, see Stella Revard, *Politics, Poetics and the Pindaric Ode: 1450-1700* (Tempe, 2009), pp. 125-9.

case of mistaken identity.¹⁰ The ‘Cooper’ who signed three ‘cant’ letters to undercover royalist agents turns out not to have been Cowley’s alias, but a royalist spy actually called John Cooper.¹¹ In fact Cowley was almost certainly Jermyn’s ‘Clerke with the red head’, spotted fixing up a meeting between Cromwell’s agents and the Duke of Buckingham in March 1655.¹² Besides, he was permitted to publish a volume of poetry in 1656 and take a Doctorate in Physic at the University of Oxford in 1657.

Even Sprat’s original secret history adopts an alternative and completely contradictory line of argument, when it concedes but tries to minimize Cowley’s guilt:

[Cowley’s *Preface*] was published before a Book of Poetry, and so ought rather to be esteemed as a Probleme of his Fancy and Invention, than as the real Image of his Judgement...¹³

The idea that Cowley’s infraction was merely ‘a Probleme of his Fancy’ took its cue from his Pindaric ode on ‘Destinie’, in which his muse warns him:

Thou neither great at *Court*, nor in the *War*,
Nor at th’*Exchange* shalt be, nor at the wrangling *Bar*.
Content thy self with the small *Barren Praise*,
That neglected *Verse* does raise. (p. 193)

Cowley tries to justify abandoning his public service—that is, his service to the king—by claiming it had been demanded by his true vocation, poetry. There is a deliberate tendentiousness to this argument, in accordance with Cowley’s theory of the Pindaric mode as characterized by conscious fanciful excess.¹⁴ But the poem also hints at a more serious religio-political context: the muse has made a ‘*Covenant*’ that ‘Thou of my *Church* shalt be’. This language alludes to the new churches and covenants unleashed by the Civil Wars; the conceit of religious conversion evokes the puritan discourse of Protestant Reformation in England. If diminishing his transgression as a ‘Probleme of his Fancy’ seems tendentious in the ‘Destinie’ ode, and downright contradictory in Sprat, it is because of Cowley’s consistent claims for the moral and religious seriousness of his poetry. We will return to the ‘Destinie’ ode presently, but first we will

¹⁰ Sprat, ‘Account’, sig. a1^v; Nethercot, *The Muse’s Hannibal*, p. 147.

¹¹ David Underdown, *Royalist Conspiracy in England, 1649-1660* (New Haven, 1960), p. 207.

¹² *Nicholas Papers*, vol. 2, p. 219; Nethercot, *The Muse’s Hannibal*, p. 146.

¹³ Sprat, ‘Account’, sig. a1^v.

¹⁴ See Cowley’s ‘Preface’ to the *Pindarique Odes*, p. 155.

consider how Cowley's *Preface* laboured to construct a canon that would make sense in puritan England. The legitimating teleology of Stuart Restoration was not available to Cowley in 1656, as it was to Sprat in 1668; the dominant narrative for Cowley was one of spiritual transformation.

That narrative was prefaced by the demise of monarchy and the courtly, cavalier literary culture which had fostered his early career. In fact, the *Preface* is almost as significant for what it disowns as what it avows. Gone is the courtly masque *The Guardian*, whilst the juvenilia, *Poetical Blossoms*, are dismissed, as 'I would be loth to be bound now to read them all over *my self*'. Also dropped are 'all such pieces as I wrote during the time of the late troubles'—his virulently anti-puritan poems of the early 1640s, including the abortive epic *The Civil War*—for obvious political reasons. With a few significant exceptions, the 'Miscellanies' which form the first section of the 1656 *Poems* pre-date the Civil War. They are chronologically disparate, associated with events and literary themes of the 1630s, and characterized as chance survivals from 'when I was very young' (p. 9). As the section heading implies, they are miscellaneous in style, subject-matter, and also politics. One joins Waller in celebrating Falkland's leadership in the First Bishops' War. Another commemorates the Calvinist bishop John Williams' 'Enlargement out of the Tower', a poem which, we will see, was later accused sharply of disloyalty. This heterogeneity also applies to the politics of literary style. Discussing his editorial cuts, Cowley sustains a distinctly sceptical detachment from the giants of the English canon, whom cavalier poets were supposed to revere:

This has been the case with *Shakespear, Fletcher, Johnson*, and many others;
part of whose *Poems* I should take the boldness to prune and lop away, if the
care of replanting them in print did belong to me (p. 5).

He does not quite disown his connection with a cavalier tradition, but his ironic language—that particularly irreverent verb, 'lop'—certainly distances him from it.

The second section of the volume, *The Mistress*, with its conceited style and libertine themes, had first been published in 1647, and is inescapably cavalier poetry for a royalist milieu. It was almost certainly written after Cowley's arrival in Paris (probably with Henrietta and Jermyn in 1644) and it is marked by his experience of the exiled intellectual community. The

often risqué content is influenced by French *libertin* poetry, whilst several recurring metaphors, drawing on Epicureanism, atomist philosophy, and absolutist politics, chime with subjects debated by the Cavendish circle.¹⁵ Cowley mentions none of this in the 1656 *Preface*. He addresses *The Mistress*' alleged profanity by distancing the collection as 'not the *Picture* of the *Poet*, but of *things* and *persons* imagined by him' (p. 10), that is, as an intellectual exercise rather than a confession of moral or philosophical beliefs. He concludes this argument by emphasizing the superiority of his new godly poetry:

if... the lightness of the matter here displease any body; he may find wherewithal to content his more serious inclinations in the weight and height of ensuing Arguments (p. 10).

He then congratulates himself on the completely new direction he has taken in the *Pindarique Odes*, and wonders whether anyone will be able to understand it.

Cowley presents the *Pindarique Odes* and *Davideis*, not unreasonably, as his culminating achievements. We can date these works fairly precisely using his scholarly footnotes, which justify and contextualize his decisions about language and structure, and therefore must have developed organically with the poems themselves. Because some footnotes in the *Davideis* cross-reference those in the *Pindarique Odes*, we can further assume that the projects developed in parallel, or, at least, that he undertook research which could apply to both.¹⁶ Several footnotes in the *Davideis* cite a French translation of the Bible, which might suggest he was working on the poem whilst in Paris. Footnotes which cross-reference English and French vernacular versions with the Hebrew, Greek, Septuagint, and Vulgate texts might further suggest he was using the Paris polyglot Bible of 1645.¹⁷ He frequently cites Grotius, whose *Annotationes* on the Old Testament were printed in Amsterdam in 1644.¹⁸ As Kermode noted, he also cites Athanasius

¹⁵ Nethercot, *The Muse's Hannibal*, pp. 95-105; Smith, 'French Philosophy and English Politics', pp. 189-98.

¹⁶ *Davideis*, Book II, notes 77 and 85 (pp. 318, 320); see discussions by Kermode, 'Date of Cowley's *Davideis*', pp. 156-58, and Gayle Shadduck, ed., *A Critical Edition of Abraham Cowley's Davideis* (New York, 1987), pp. 9-11.

¹⁷ *Davideis*, Book I, footnote 13 (p. 269).

¹⁸ *ibid.*, Book IV, footnotes 26 and 27 (p. 398).

Kircher's *Musurgia Universalis*, printed in Rome in 1650.¹⁹ This gives a fairly clear indication of the period in which Cowley began research for the *Davideis*, although, given that his spare time was curtailed by his heavy involvement with political correspondence, we might further assume that work only began in earnest after he had completed *The Mistress* in 1647. Sprat attempted to backdate the *Davideis* to Cowley's youth in Cambridge, a claim roundly rejected by Kermode as an attempt to insulate the poem from its more incriminating context in the 1650s.²⁰ In fact, although it is impossible to trace this division with certainty, several of the *Pindarique Odes* seem to imply a connection with Cowley's period in England after his return in 1654. I have already claimed that the 'Destinie' ode offers a covert defence of his defection; we will consider below whether the 'Brutus' ode contains a complementary reference to the regicide. The only two contemporary addressees were both men who reached an accommodation with the Cromwellian regime: Hobbes, and Dr Charles Scarborough, who moved in similar circles to Hobbes and stood Cowley's bail after his arrest in 1655.²¹

The final, Biblical *Pindarique Odes* share a pious spirit with the latest-written texts in the 1656 *Poems*, those securely datable to immediately before the volume's publication. The 1656 *Preface* explicitly constructs the Biblical poems as a project of Reformation in poetry:

It is time to recover it out of the *Tyrants* hands, and to restore it to the *Kingdom of God*, who is the *Father* of it. It is time to *Baptize* it in *Jordan*, for it will never become clean by bathing in the *Water of Damascus*. There wants, methinks, but the *Conversion of That*, and the *Jews*, for the accomplishment of the *Kingdom of Christ*. (pp. 12-13)

This enthusiastic rhetoric, with its urgent anaphora and allusions to Christ's baptism and second coming, effectively relegates the earlier, secular poetry to secondary importance. This language could not help but announce common ground, at least, with the reforming and millenarian zeal of the Commonwealth. Although, with his debts to Hobbes and Grotius, Cowley can hardly be described as a straightforward Calvinist, copious examples can be found of predestinarian and

¹⁹ *ibid.*, Book I, footnotes 32 and 37 (pp. 274-6); Kermode, 'Date of Cowley's *Davideis*', p. 158.

²⁰ As Kermode further argued: Cowley did not trouble to excuse the poem as juvenilia in the *Preface* (unlike the 'Miscellanies'), whilst Dorothy Osborne described it as a 'new thing' when enclosing a manuscript extract to Sir William Temple in June 1654; 'Date of Cowley's *Davideis*', pp. 155-58.

²¹ Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, p. 163.

reforming themes in the *Pindarique Odes* and *Davideis*. As we saw, the ‘Destinie’ ode alluded to the language of reformed churches and covenants in constructing Cowley’s poetic vocation. That poem also hinges on the visionary revelation that all human actions are determined by angels (p. 193).

And Cowley wrote two further poems in 1656 which associated his *Poems* with the reformed institutions of puritan England: the universities. The very first text in the volume is the Latin dedication to his *alma mater*, the ‘most illustrious’ University of Cambridge—which, in 1656, was to praise the reformed University, from which he had been ejected thirteen years earlier. Even before this, readers of the copy in the Bodleian Library encounter a new Pindaric ode which Cowley himself added in manuscript, a dramatic monologue spoken by ‘Mr Cowleys Book presenting it self to the University Library of Oxford’.²² The book compares itself, on arrival in the Bodleian, with an ‘unmalicious Sinner’ admitted into heaven, who, seeing the ‘Patriarchs’, ‘Apostles’, and ‘Martyrs’:

When I my self with conscious wonder see,
Amidst this purifi’d elected Companie.
 With hardship they, and pain,
 Did to this happiness attain:
No Labour I, nor merits can pretend,
I think Predestination only was my friend (pp. 410-11).

The fanciful excess of Cowley’s Pindaric mode often creates an ambivalent tone—it is hard to judge how ironic he is being. He notes that the university has been ‘purifi’d’ but adds, satirically, that ‘some errors will get in, | Like Tinctures of Original sin’. Likewise, his allusion to ‘Predestination’ offers to embrace orthodox puritan theology whilst also seeming a rather flippant turn of wit. He uses this ambivalence to distance his book from the more dogmatic forms of piety: religious earnestness, he implies, can be combined with wit and humour. Religious and cultural values were by no means uniform in 1650s Oxford, and this reformed variation on the conventional modesty *topos* could have been calculated to amuse more moderate puritan

²² Shelfmark: C 2.21 Art; the poem was also eventually printed in *Verses, Lately Written on Several Occasions* (London, 1663).

intellectuals.²³ Certainly, no slight was perceived, as Cowley graduated Doctor of Physic in December 1657. There is some evidence he developed connections within the politically diverse circle around John Wilkins at Wadham College. Most obviously he befriended the young Sprat, then an undergraduate at Wadham, who greeted Cowley's volume with a hero-worshipping ode of his own.²⁴ Dr. Scarborough was also a participant in virtuosic circles linked with Wilkins.²⁵ Beyond this milieu, it seems that even John Owen, the Cromwellian Vice Chancellor, had an interest in Cowley: a copy of the 1672 edition of Cowley's *Works* was listed in a sale catalogue of his library in 1684, and he may also have been the 'John Owen' who owned a scribal copy of the poetry now in the British Library.²⁶ Far from being a cloistered crypto-royalist, then, Cowley and his 1656 *Poems* enjoyed a social, intellectual, and public life in London and particularly Oxford.

The comparatively brief section of Cowley's *Preface* which directly addresses his political defection is not, therefore, an isolated transgression, but part of a broader move away from a royalist, cavalier, and now exiled culture, towards a reformed religious and intellectual culture back in England. This passage—which Sprat excised from his posthumous edition of Cowley's *Works*—offers something more like a theoretical justification for the move sketched out elsewhere. Cowley has abandoned royalist poetry because 'it is so uncustomary, as to become almost *ridiculous*, to make *Lawrels* for the *Conquered*' (p. 455n). His reading of the English Revolution couples a defactoist argument from Providence with a Hobbesian contract metaphor: 'the unaccountable *Will* of *God* has determined the controversie... we have submitted to the

²³ cf. Blair Worden, *God's Instruments: Political Conduct in the England of Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford, 2012), pp. 108-23.

²⁴ Nethercot, *The Muse's Hannibal*, pp. 176-7.

²⁵ Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, p. 163.

²⁶ See Edward Millington, *Bibliotheca Oweniana* (London, 1684), p. 26. BL Egerton MS 2326, with three rough 'John Owen' signatures, experimenting with slightly different hands, on first leaf.

conditions of the *Conqueror*'.²⁷ This alignment between divine will and the social contract proved to be an important Hobbesian component in Cowley's thinking. He followed this argument with what Sprat called his 'errour of... a single Metaphor'—in fact, a pair of metaphors—for the act of defection:²⁸

we must *march* out of our *Cause* it self, and *dismantle* that, as well as our *Towns* and *Castles*, of all the *Works* and *Fortifications* of *Wit* and *Reason* by which we *defended* it... The truth is neither *We*, nor *They*, ought by the *Representation* of *Places* and *Images* to make a kind of *Artificial Memory* of those things wherein we are all bound to desire like *Themistocles*, the *Art* of *Oblivion* (p. 455n).

Cowley may use 'we' to identify himself with the defeated royalists, but his resignation in this passage is the most explicit of any of the turncoat poets. To contemporary readers the phrase '*Art of Oblivion*' would have resonated punningly with the republican 'Act of Oblivion' of 1652, designed to facilitate royalist submission. Cowley develops the conceit using the historical example of Themistocles. His sources would have included Hobbes' translation of Thucydides, but most obviously Cicero's *De oratore*.²⁹ Cicero cited Themistocles as an example of eccentricity—a prodigious man trying to artificially forget his memories—and unworthy of emulation; thus Cowley was inverting Cicero, by imbuing Themistocles with new exemplary value.³⁰ He goes further, reaching for a contractual vocabulary of obligation: 'we are all *bound*' to follow Themistocles' example. The '*Art of Oblivion*' could mean several things to Cowley; as we will see, it was one of the most consistent and striking aspirations of his later career.

But what of the view that all this was merely a 'smokescreen' for crypto-royalist messages?³¹ Some critics, tending to cite Sprat, have maintained that Cowley smuggles in 'apocalyptic warnings that would bring comfort to royalists and might bring Commonwealth

²⁷ See Hobbes' definition of conquest: 'the Acquiring of the Right of Sovereignty by Victory. Which Right, is acquired, in the peoples Submission, by which they contract with the Victor, promising Obedience, for Life and Liberty': *Leviathan*, 'Review and Conclusion', p. 1135.

²⁸ Sprat, 'Account', sig. a2^r.

²⁹ Hobbes, trans., *The Peloponnesian War*, ed. by David Grene (Chicago, 1989), pp. 77-9.

³⁰ James M. May and Jakob Wise, ed. and trans., *Cicero: On the Ideal Orator (De Oratore)* (Oxford, 2001), p. 206.

³¹ T. R. Langley, 'Abraham Cowley's "Brutus": Royalist or Republican?', *YES*, vi (1976) 41-52, p. 41.

England to her senses'.³² Such judgements have been clouded by the teleological assumption that the Restoration was inevitable, and that this inevitability was visible to observers in 1656. It also assumes that secret polemical messages would have been legible to royalists (and modern critics), but invisible to the Cromwellian authorities. We should be suspicious of readings that incorporate a convenient principle of selectiveness into their own procedures: could Cowley's readers have told the difference between supposedly genuine messages and 'camouflage'?³³ Several features of the 1656 volume—*The Mistress*, the exegetical methods of the *Davideis*, or the ode added to the Bodleian copy—would not necessarily have pleased the staunchest puritans. But this is not the same as saying they were anti-puritan; they could have seemed perfectly at home within more tolerant, irenic understandings of the Cromwellian settlement. Further, the crypto-royalist argument is reversible: selective quotation can produce passages, even 'apocalyptic warnings', that seem sharply critical of kings. For every potential symbol of royalist grief, we can find a vainglorious 'heaven-threatening oak', summarily destroyed by God in Book IV of the *Davideis* (p. 387). In the Pindaric ode on 'The Plagues of Egypt', Egypt suffers under a tyrannical monarchy, whilst the Israelites are liberated by their charismatic but constitutionally ambiguous, non-monarchical prophet-leader, Moses. In the final stanza, as the Red Sea surges in, the Egyptian soldiers show 'a *Repentance true too late*', and, interestingly, 'in vain their guilty *King* they upbraid' (pp. 230-31). Here, Cowley seems to concede the culpability of kings—even using the morally loaded term 'guilty'—in their own downfalls.

We find a similar perspective in the conceit of the chess match in the first stanza of the 'Destinie' ode (p. 192). Cowley begins by invoking a Machiavellian language of 'Art', 'Industrie', 'Courage', and 'Policie'—the sort of 'arts' and 'industrious valour' we encountered in the previous chapter in Marvell's Horatian Ode.³⁴ Cowley is more suspicious of the vainglorious risks of Machiavellian rhetoric—that is, of hubristically thinking 'there's nothing *Wise* but *We*'—but nevertheless:

³² Stella Revard, 'Cowley's *Pindarique Odes* and the Politics of the Interregnum', *Criticism*, 35 (1993) 391-418, p. 401.

³³ Corns, *Uncloistered Virtue*, p. 267.

³⁴ Marvell, 'An Horatian Ode', ll. 17, 33, 119.

a proud *Pawn* I admire
 That still advancing higher
 At top of all became
 Another *Thing* and *Name*.

The pawn transforming into a queen dramatizes a Machiavellian sense of climbing from lowly beginnings to high power—we can compare the climbing of Marvell’s Cromwell, who ‘still’ keeps his sword erect as he advances onwards.³⁵ This language foregrounds an abstract and impersonal understanding of sovereignty as a mutable ‘*Thing*’, merely a ‘*Name*’ conferred by the artificial rules of its rhyme, ‘the *Game*’. Cowley remains equivocal—‘admire’ could be either a positive or a neutral term of wonder.³⁶ Likewise, he professes himself ‘amaz’ed’ (another equivocal verb) at ‘th’actions of a *Knight*, | That does bold wonders in the fight’, offering his own version of the romance swordsmen we have encountered in Marvell and Davenant.³⁷ Cowley praises these militant figures ambivalently, but is unequivocally clear about where real guilt lies:

Here I the losing party blame
 For those false *Moves* that break the *Game*,
 That to their *Grave* the *Bag*, the conquered *Pieces* bring,
 And above all, th’ill *Conduct* of the *Mated King*.

Like the Egyptian soldiers in ‘The Plagues of Egypt’, Cowley now seems to upbraid ‘the guilty king’ for his conduct. The reference to ‘conquered *Pieces*’, reinforced by the extended sense of ‘*Mated*’, also returns us to the defactoist language of conquest we saw in the *Preface*.³⁸

Far from providing mere ‘camouflage’, the controversial *Preface* has numerous points of contact with the new poems in the 1656 volume—not least the theme of Oblivion itself, which we will consider further later. In Book I of the *Davideis*, Lucifer hubristically claims of the fallen angels, ‘*Triumphs* they deserve for their *Defeat*’ (p. 246). This is a strikingly direct inversion of Cowley’s argument in the *Preface* that ‘it is so uncustomary, as to become almost *ridiculous*, to make *Lawrels* for the *Conquered*’ (quoted above). He seems to have recycled this conceit deliberately—in order to reinforce his argument for abandoning the cause by connecting it with a

³⁵ *ibid.*, ll. 33, 114-16.

³⁶ cp. *OED* ‘admire’, v., senses 1 (to feel astonishment) and 2 (to consider excellent). Cowley glosses his opening declaration, ‘*Strange* and *unnatural!*’, in a footnote describing the conceit as ‘an extravagant supposition’ (p. 194, note 1).

³⁷ cp. *OED* ‘amazed’, adj., senses 3 (struck with terror) and 4 (struck with wonder).

³⁸ *OED* ‘mate’, v.1.

diabolical example of the converse. This suggests an intriguing thought-experiment, aligning the rebel angels with defeated cavalier revivalists: Lucifer's pathological and self-defeating defiance ('Lov'd to *Rebel* though sure that 'twas in vain', p. 245) could then be read as Cowley's ironic rebuke to the futile royalist uprisings which had caused unnecessary bloodshed—and, indirectly, his arrest in 1655. I do not intend to pursue this allegorical reading: it merely shows how allegories cannot be sustained consistently across the 1656 volume.

Cowley's declared intention of extinguishing the partisanship of the 1640s would seem to rule out an allegorical pitting of archetypal cavaliers against diabolical puritans, such as we find in his earlier abortive epic, *The Civil War*. The *Preface* illustrated this aspiration to oblivion through the example of Themistocles, the general and orator who defected to the Persians after being exiled from Athens. The story does not fit particularly tidily or perspicuously with the situation of English royalists in 1656—it cannot quite be described as allegory, but rather recommends itself as an historical exemplar of a theoretical concept (i.e. the '*Art of Oblivion*'). Similarly, in Book IV of the *Davideis*, Israel is depicted:

As midst the Main a low small *Island* lies,
Assaulted round with stormy *Seas* and *skies*. (p. 375)

The image of a small island besieged with tempests conventionally implies some sort of application to England. But Cowley is explicitly working through epic simile ('As...'; 'Such *Israels* state appear'ed'), again, a mode of example and comparison rather than allegory. As I have argued, allegory posits a stable and transcendent relationship between a categorically distinct symbol and signified. But in Cowley, as in Davenant and Hobbes, concepts like legitimacy or obligation are not absolute qualities, but are contingent on relative political contexts which generate them. They are real social and psychological phenomena, capable of pseudo-scientific observation. When Cowley does occasionally dabble with allegory—as with the chess set in the '*Destinie*' ode—the effect is always transient, and unsettled by ironies and ambiguities.

We should not therefore allegorize away the infamous ‘Brutus’ ode (pp. 195-97) as either a royalist or republican call-to-arms. It is hard not to identify Cowley’s specific praise for a Brutus ‘who would *refuse* the *offer*’ of the crown with Cromwell, the successful regicide who refused to accept the title he had violently vacated. But the main thrust of the poem is the dramatized theoretical counterpoint between Brutus’ stoic virtue and the forces of social and psychological disruption exemplified by Caesar, Antony, and Octavius. Cowley may have been praising Cromwell out of the corner of his mouth, but his significant speech-act is his display of pragmatic flexibility, his willingness to lavish praise on regicidal rebels, provided they had acted in the interests of peace. Had Cowley been intent on allegory, we might have expected Antony and especially Octavius to appear as royalist heroes, kindling hopes of restoration; but he describes them as ‘wild’ and ‘false’ respectively. They appear as charismatic, vainglorious military leaders who fail to behave with proper obedience, exacerbating civil conflict, not dissimilarly to Davenant’s seditious generals in *Gondibert*. But unlike Davenant, Cowley now seems to criticize Machiavellian force and fraud, and the misappropriation of the ethical terminology of ‘*virtù*’. Brutus mourns the semantic twisting of the word ‘*Virtue*’—which, in the stoic sense of resolution and self-denial, he had ‘worshipt’—but which ‘false *Octavius*’ has turned into ‘An *Idol* only, and a *Name*’. Caesar’s rule, too, was marred by wild violence: the hyperbolic image of ‘Our *Mother* robb’ed, and bound, and ravisht’, but ‘Pleas’d with the *Strength* and *Beauty* of the *Ravisher*’, captures the combination of glamorous charisma, passionate violence, and lustful appetite (here made explicitly sexual) that made Machiavellian military heroes so dangerous. Cowley characteristically presents tyranny as a failure of self-governance, and the result is a fracture in the social contract: Caesar bears ‘the *cancell’d Name* of *Friend*’—another case of Cowley’s conceptualizing allegiance as a ‘Name’ which can be changed or extinguished.

The Machiavellian world of the poem lacks a political philosophy which can comprehend Brutus’ stoic virtue: ‘These mighty *Gulphs* are yet | Too deep’. But the conclusion promises:

The *Time's* set forth already which shall quell
 Stiff *Reason* when it offers to *Rebell*.
 Which these great *Secrets* shall unseal,
 And new *Philosophies* reveal.

This language draws 'Brutus' very close to the previous poem but one, the ode 'To Mr. Hobs' (pp. 188-90), where Hobbes reveals the secrets of new philosophies which will make possible the governance of errant human reason. 'Brutus' links this Hobbesian promise with the coming of Christ—but (as we will see) Hobbes hardly shrank from making such claims for himself. Self-conquest, the power to 'quell' one's private judgement (i.e. 'Stiff *Reason*'), helps explain what Cowley meant by the 'Art of Oblivion', a means of mollifying rebellious thoughts which would otherwise breed conflict. Significantly, Brutus is the first historical figure to have a major walk-on part in *Leviathan*, appearing in chapter II as an example of the fallibility of human reason against the corrupt fancy. Hobbes maintains that the apparition of Caesar on the eve of Philippi was 'but a short Dream', which Brutus ought to have dismissed.³⁹ In Cowley's poem, Brutus has clearly learned this Hobbesian lesson: he 'put the trembling *Ghost* to flight' and disregards its warning. Brutus is defeated in the end not by a ghost, but by '*Ill men*, and wretched *Accidents*'; the poem praises him for accepting his '*Ill Fate*' with fortitude. We can see the ideal qualities which explain why Cowley, no republican, was able to hero-worship Brutus. Brutus opposed a Machiavellian tyranny which threatened social order; he was able to show self-government, 'strict rule', and rational control; and when his fate became clear he accepted it with manly resignation.

We have seen how Cowley took care in his 1656 *Poems* to present a canon which made sense within the landscape of Cromwellian England. Far from hiding behind a suitably pious stalking-horse, I have argued he took seriously the project of Protestant reformation, and applied it to his poetry—although, as the manuscript ode added to the Bodleian copy shows, this was not incompatible with wit. In the 'Brutus' ode, we have begun to see how Cowley developed a psychological understanding of civil disruption as a result of wayward appetite and vainglory—the falseness, wildness, and violence of Octavius, Antony, and Caesar. He began to formulate

³⁹ *Leviathan*, chapter II, pp. 32-4.

ideals of stoic resignation and self-governance—through the example of Brutus, or, in the 1656 *Preface*, of Themistocles and his ‘*Art of Oblivion*’. The example of Brutus and the defactoist argument advanced in the *Preface* both also suggest to us the formative influence of Hobbes on Cowley’s thinking. We have also noted his resistance to allegory: people in the poems do not symbolize contemporary figures or moral values, but rather provide examples which dramatize particular theoretical principles in operation. This distinction is important, because it means we do not have to read the *Davideis* or *Pindarique Odes* asking who might symbolize monarchy or rebellion, Charles Stuart or the rebels. Cowley was interested in more theoretical questions about sovereignty, legitimacy, and obligations, indifferently to particular political forms. Although it is set rather earlier in history, the concoction of Hobbes and Christianity which Cowley rather mistily promises at the end of ‘Brutus’ is worked out much more thoroughly, though not completely consistently, in the *Davideis*.

2. Political Theory in the *Davideis*

Discussion of the politics of the *Davideis* has generally focussed around Samuel’s denunciation of tyranny in Book IV, which David recounts in a long speech to King Moab. As Michael Austin has noted, the Biblical source in 1 Samuel was a very familiar text in contemporary debates on monarchy and tyranny.⁴⁰ Both Austin and Chloe Wheatley arrive (via different routes) at the conclusion that Cowley’s presentation of this episode is deliberately ambiguous, admitting of neither standard royalist nor republican interpretations.⁴¹ This is obviously useful, but I want to explore how Cowley’s theories moved beyond just a studied neutrality. Anne Lake Prescott has pointed out that David cut a controversial figure, a shepherd whom God had intervened arbitrarily to install as king, overturning conventional assumptions

⁴⁰ Michael Austin, ‘Saul and the Social Contract: Constructions of 1 Samuel 8-11 in Cowley’s *Davideis* and Defoe’s *Jure Divino*’, *Papers on Language and Literature*, 32 (1996) 410-36, pp. 410-16.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, pp. 417-27; Chloe Wheatley, *Epic, Epitome, and the Early-Modern Historical Imagination* (Farnham, 2011), pp. 107-11.

about social class and political continuity.⁴² David's long speech in Book IV describes in great detail an instance of regime change.⁴³ The fall of the Judges and rise of Saul provide a test-case in political theory, enabling David to suggest conditions in which political obligations can be forged, dissolved, and transferred; in which sovereign power becomes legitimate or illegitimate; and in which violent conflict can be ameliorated and forgotten. Cowley's approach to these questions was based on Hobbesian categories. Readers of the 1656 *Poems* who had noticed the reappearance of Cowley's contribution to *Gondibert* and seen the Pindaric ode 'To Mr. Hobs' would have been primed to look for Hobbesian connections in the *Davideis*. If they had read Hobbes, they would also know that the events of Book IV of the *Davideis* form a major crux in Part III of *Leviathan*, with Hobbes' highly controversial implication that the Israelites' rejection of God was a rebellion on a par with the original Fall itself.⁴⁴

To summarize briefly: Hobbes' rationalist materialism required him to interpret the Biblical 'Kingdome of God' literally as an historical 'Civill Kingdome'—and rewrite Old Testament history accordingly.⁴⁵ He thus defined the Judges as human vicegerents in a system of direct rule by God, which was dissolved at the installation of Saul, and will be restored at the second coming of Christ.⁴⁶ In the meantime, however, the postlapsarian flaws of disobedience and civil war have crept in. This story raises questions about the problematic tension we have already encountered in Cowley's 'Destinie' ode: between one's political obligation to the civil sovereign and one's overriding obligation to a higher, divine power. The Israelites' rebellions against God's rule provided a testing-ground for Hobbes' premise that the *natural* law must be identical with the *divine* law. Hobbes, we remember, defined the natural law as the imperative to seek peace by submitting to a sovereign power; because this submission generates our political obligations to the commonwealth, he went on, 'the Law of Nature, and the Civill Law, contain each other, and are of equall extent'. But he also claims that 'Naturall Lawes being Eternall, and

⁴² Prescott, 'From the Sheephook to the Scepter', pp. 2, 14-15.

⁴³ See further David Trotter, *The Poetry of Abraham Cowley* (London, 1979), pp. 88-95.

⁴⁴ *Leviathan*, chapter XXXV, p. 642.

⁴⁵ *Leviathan*, chapter XXXV, pp. 634-40.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, chapter XL; pp. 748-52.

Universall, are all divine'; the law of nature 'is undoubtedly Gods Law'; and that the 'Divine Lawes' are merely the 'Dictates of Naturall Reason'.⁴⁷ By dramatically collapsing the distinctions between the laws natural, civil, and divine, Hobbes was able to have it both ways: maintaining that law was at root divine, but preserving the ultimate legal authority of the secular sovereign:

I conclude therefore, that in all things not contrary to the Morall Law, (that is to say, to the Law of Nature,) all Subjects are bound to obey that for the divine Law, which is declared to be so, by the Lawes of the Common-wealth.⁴⁸

Hobbes maintains the only two articles essential for one's salvation are '*Faith in Christ*' and '*Obedience to Laws*'. But 'faith in Christ', of course, necessitates obedience to God, and this has already been reduced to merely obeying the law:

For our Saviour Christ hath not given us new Laws, but Counsell to observe those wee are subject to; that is to say, the Laws of Nature, and the Laws of our severall Sovereigns... The Laws of God therefore are none but the Laws of Nature, whereof the principall is, that we should not violate our Faith, that is, a commandment to obey our Civill Sovereigns, which wee constituted over us, by mutuall pact one with another.⁴⁹

Even if the sovereign is an 'Infidel', Hobbes concludes, resistance 'sinneth against the Laws of God (for such are the Laws of Nature)'.⁵⁰

But this argument elided several controversial ambiguities, not least the risk of blasphemy inherent in Hobbes' claim to have distilled God's will down to the simple fulfilment of his own theory of sovereignty. Cowley's Pindaric ode 'To Mr. Hobs' plays wittily with this problem:

'Tis onely *God* can know
Whether the fair *Idea* thou dost show
Agree intirely with his *own* or no.
This I dare boldly tell,
'Tis so *like Truth* 'twill serve our turn as well. (p. 188)

Again, Cowley's Pindaric style generates a puzzlingly ambivalent tone. His language is uncharacteristically monosyllabic and colloquial—perhaps closer to the blunt mode of expression

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, chapters XXVI and XXXI, pp. 418, 442, 444, 560.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, chapter XXVI, pp. 446-8.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, chapter XLIII, pp. 930-2.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, chapter XLIII, p. 954.

favoured by Hobbes himself, but equally harder to interpret.⁵¹ What does it mean to say Hobbes will ‘serve our turn’? Cowley’s ‘turn’, or purpose, can be construed in different ways: in Ben Jonson’s usage, the ‘turn’ is the *strophe* of a Pindaric ode (i.e. Hobbes merely furnishes good matter for a poem); but it can also carry connotations of transferring allegiance (i.e. ‘revolution’, ‘turncoat’, ‘tergiversation’).⁵² The question of ‘Truth’ returns us to Hobbes’ mode of argument which, in the last chapter, I suggested Marvell experiments with in the Horatian Ode (‘if we would speak true’): distilling an argument down to an axiomatic, indisputable truth. When Hobbes defined the divine law reductively as mere obedience to God and to the sovereign, this could claim to be one such distilled truth, but could equally seem like an artificially distorted approximation. Hence Cowley’s apparently flippant concession that Hobbes is ‘*like Truth*’ rather than truth itself. ‘To Mr. Hobs’ leaves this irony unresolved, but the *Davideis* continues to grapple creatively with problems Hobbes had tried to shut down. What happened if a sovereign disobeyed the will of God? If the period of the Judges represented direct rule by God, why was it such a disaster? Why were the Israelites permitted to revolt against it? And was Saul, the principal beneficiary of this revolution, a legitimate sovereign or a tyrant?

Addressing these questions in the form of a Biblical epic compounded the problem of how to write ‘Truth’ by raising the problem of Scriptural exegesis. Joseph Wallace has recently argued that Cowley was striving to ‘convert’ a pagan form—epic poetry—which was an ‘imperfect medium for truth’.⁵³ Here is another intellectual context for Cowley’s resistance to allegory.⁵⁴ Allegory, after all, was an exegetical mode which posited theoretical correspondences between the Old and New Testaments—and which Cowley expressly eschewed in favour of accommodation, the mode which emphasized rational interpretation and historical contextualization, explaining apparent faults or ambiguities in the Bible as the result of limitations in human cognition. The greatest contemporary English exponent of this rationalist

⁵¹ Trotter, *Poetry of Abraham Cowley*, pp. 109-18.

⁵² *OED*, ‘turn’, n., 30 (b) and 8 (a); in Burrow, ed., *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, p. 220n.

⁵³ Joseph Wallace, ‘True Poetry and False Religion in Abraham Cowley’s *Davideis*’, *RES*, 66 (2015) 895-914, pp. 11-12.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

exegesis was Hobbes.⁵⁵ Cowley does not quite reach the effect Milton achieved in *Paradise Lost*, where, in Joad Raymond's view, accommodation becomes an ennobling means of apprehending literal truths about God.⁵⁶ Cowley is more sceptical and historicist than Milton, and much closer to Grotius, whom he frequently cites.⁵⁷ He manipulated the *Davideis* ' anti-chronological structure to place a provocative example of accommodation at the very beginning of the poem, an episode without authority in Scripture: the epic descent into hell and ascent into heaven. At first, he seems to be using a Spenserian allegory, in the gratuitously grotesque figure of Envy dispatched by Lucifer to corrupt Saul (pp. 246-50). But he intervenes in a footnote:

In this, and some like places, I would not have the Reader judge of my opinion by what I say; no more than before in divers expressions about *Hell*, the *Devil*, and *Envy*... to speak according to the common opinion, though it be false, is so far from being a fault in Poetry, that it is the custom of Scripture to do so; and that not only in the Poetical pieces of it; as where it attributes the *members* and *passions* of mankind to *Devils*, *Angels*, and *God* himself... Virgil did not look upon, what might be spoken most *Truly*, but what most *gracefully* (p. 282, n. 24).⁵⁸

Here Cowley defends 'likening spiritual to corporal forms' in terms of poetic fancy—even comparing the Bible with Virgil—and conspicuously without Milton's additional claim:

...what if earth
Be but the shadow of heav'n, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?⁵⁹

Cowley interprets the Bible as an historical source: anything which seems inaccurate or implausible can be dismissed as the result of accommodation (speaking 'according to common opinion'), or a poetic flourish, or corruption in the manuscripts.⁶⁰ This approach would not have endeared Cowley to all puritans: the manuscript copy owned by one 'John Owen' seems to have deliberately omitted the footnotes.⁶¹ But Cowley's attitude was comprehensible within the

⁵⁵ See discussion in Shadduck, ed., *Davideis*, pp. 46-55.

⁵⁶ Joad Raymond, *Milton's Angels* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 164-65, 185.

⁵⁷ See Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 122-23.

⁵⁸ See Trotter, *Poetry of Abraham Cowley*, pp. 101-5.

⁵⁹ *Paradise Lost*, ed. by Alistair Fowler (rev. ed., Harlow, 2007), V.573-6.

⁶⁰ e.g. Book IV, n. 39, p. 400.

⁶¹ BL Egerton MS 2326, ff. 91^v-155^v.

Independent policy of toleration, fostered by more irenic puritans like Selden (the owner, we recall, of a signed copy of *Gondibert*), and which had also attracted Hobbes to the regime.⁶²

So Cowley's foray into allegory at the beginning of Book I is carefully ironized, as an occasion for justifying the mode of accommodation. But it also serves another purpose, introducing a central theme of the poem: the delinquent passions. As I argued in chapter one, Cowley, like Davenant, departed from Spenserian practice by presenting the passions not as allegorized, psychomachic entities, but as internal, psychological processes. This mechanistic psychology viewed the passions as normative rather than degenerative forces.⁶³ This shift appears immediately after Envy has infected Saul:

[He] started back at piec'd up shapes, which fear
And his distracted *Fancy* painted there.
Terror froze up his hair, and on his face
Show'rs of cold sweat roll'd down apace. (p. 250)

Cowley depicts envy as a psychological effect, reflected in corporeal symptoms. This also opens up a political context: according to Hobbes, commonwealths were undermined by the use of private judgement corrupted by delinquent passions—particularly the restless appetite for power.⁶⁴ And, of course, this was of interest to poets—as Davenant speculated in the *Preface* to *Gondibert* about the possibility of using heroic poetry to fashion and mollify the mind. The *Davideis*, rather like *Gondibert*, is concerned with the damaging passions of envy, fear, and vainglory (which Hobbes had explicitly associated with the genre of romance). Colin Burrow has described the *Davideis* as evidence of a 'growing void' in the Spenserian, allegorical tradition of epic romance: because of the extreme teleological significance he ascribed to the passions, Burrow thinks, Cowley became 'uneasy in attributing any motive at all to any of his characters'.⁶⁵ But Cowley frequently offers quite specific details on his characters' psychological state: e.g. the Philistines' 'envy mixt with Rage' in Book III (p. 326). Although the passions are important in

⁶² Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, pp. 164-69.

⁶³ Tilmouth, *Passion's Triumph Over Reason*, pp. 37-59, 222-55.

⁶⁴ *Leviathan*, chapter XXIX, p. 502.

⁶⁵ Burrow, *Epic Romance*, p. 238.

the *Davideis*, their significance is not in fact teleological or allegorical, but has to do with a Hobbesian psychological analysis of social disorder.

This is the context for David's long narration in Book IV. David begins by telling Moab that the period of the Judges' rule was 'In too much freedom past, or forreign thral' (p. 366). Cowley supports this with a footnote, arguing: 'all the wickednesses and disorders that we read of during the time of the Judges, are attributed in Scripture to the want of a *King*' (p. 395, n. 9). This could be a simplistically royalist argument for kingship, but Cowley probably interpreted 'king' as a metonym for the 'sovereign' in general, as Hobbes did: 'where it is said, *there was no King*, is meant, *there was no Sovereign Power* in Israel'.⁶⁶ The conditions David describes correspond to the two Hobbesian categories which defined sovereignty in general: the lack of a protective power to defend against external enemies ('forreign thral'), and a coercive power to enforce the law ('too much freedom').⁶⁷ The Israelites presumptuously exercise their private judgement, but are unable to understand where true power lies. The godly Judges:

...not painted bright
With state to awe *dull* minds, and force t'*affright*,
Were ill obey'd... (p. 367)

Again, this is not really about kingship *per se*, but about a sovereign's ability to command their subject's minds, to 'awe' and 'affright' them. David imagines sovereign power in terms of psychological coercion, and employs a vocabulary of the passions to describe Israelite disobedience:

The *hungry Rich* all near them did devour,
Their *Judge* was *Appetite*, and their *Law* was *Power*. (p. 367)

The verb 'devour' appears in a usage similar to the 'devouring Maledy' we encountered in *Gondibert* (II.viii.29), evoking humans' restless, bestial appetite. The metaphor 'Their *Judge* was

⁶⁶ *Leviathan*, chapter LX, p. 748.

⁶⁷ Hobbes: 'such a Common Power, as may be able to defend them from the invasion of Forraigners, and the injuries of one another'; *ibid.*, chapter XVII, p. 260.

Appetite’ condenses Hobbes’ sense of the dangerous corruption of private judgement.⁶⁸ It also ironically dramatizes Hobbes’ argument, encountered in previous chapters, that ‘where no Covenant hath preceded’—that is, where ‘every man has right to every thing’ according to their appetite—‘no action can be Unjust’.⁶⁹ The fallibility of legal systems appears as a minor theme in the following lines, as it also had in *Gondibert*: David singles out law courts as ‘vexingly’ rapacious. The Judges’ failures:

...did ’tis True a Civil War create
(The frequent curse of our loose-govern’d State) (p. 367)

Notwithstanding the circumspection that we noted earlier in the ode ‘To Mr. Hobs’, we now find Cowley supporting an axiomatic claim—that the failure of sovereign authority has generated a state of civil war—by remarking that ‘’tis True’.

So far, so Hobbist; the next section of the speech also contains quite specific information on how order could be restored. Perhaps surprisingly coming from David, this order is not necessarily monarchical. He praises the *de facto* power of military leaders who were able to deliver the Israelites from foreign thrall:

They serv’d [the pagans’] *Gods* at first, and soon their *Kings*;
Their choice of that this latter *slavery* brings.
Till special men arm’d with *Gods* warrant broke
By justest *force* th’*unjustly forced* yoke. (p. 368)

The Israelites’ errant private judgement—their ‘choice’ of paganism—brought them under the ‘yoke’ of pagan kings. The ‘special men’ who liberate them are ‘arm’d with Gods warrant’—the military metaphor in the verb suggesting one way in which Hobbes’ alignment of the natural and divine laws might be fulfilled.⁷⁰ This hope is embodied by Samuel:

...since Moses none before
So much of *God* in his bright bosom bore.
In vain our arms *Philistian Tyrants* seis’d;
[...]
He held th’unshaken *Ballance* of the *Land*. (p. 368)

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, chapter XXIX, p. 502.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, chapter XV, p. 220.

⁷⁰ The ‘special men arm’d with Gods warrant’ also seem to fulfil Hobbes’ understanding of the Judges as ‘men chosen by God extraordinarily’; *ibid.*, chapter XL, p. 750.

Samuel fulfils the three categories for legitimate peaceful sovereignty: he governs in alignment with God's will; defends the Israelites against pagan aggression; and holds Israel itself in 'unshaken *Ballance*'.

So it is not essential that Israel should be a monarchy: despite their manifest shortcomings, David does offer some praise for the Judges. The image of Samuel bearing God 'in his bright bosom' could suggest (metaphorically) personal loyalty or (literally) divine inspiration; either reading would credit Hobbes' belief that the Judges' regime was ruled directly by God.⁷¹ To skip forward in the speech, David later places precisely that belief in the mouth of Samuel himself. Firstly, in his warning against tyranny, Samuel describes the Judges' rule as 'heav'only *Manna*', a metaphor which contrasts tellingly against the Israelites' debased 'lust for *Bread*' (p. 371). Secondly, and more explicitly, when Samuel eventually renounces power to Saul:

The long-past row of happy years [Samuel] show'd,
Which to his heav'only Government they ow'd.
[...]
In war what conqu'ering Miracles he wrought;
God, then their *King*, was *Gen'eral* when they fought. (p. 381)

Samuel (in David's report) explicitly maintains that God was the '*King*' of Israel during the Judges' rule; he was also a '*Gen'eral*', fulfilling Hobbes' prescription that 'the sword of war, be in the same hands wherein is the sword of justice'.⁷² More broadly—and returning to the early section of the speech—David strongly praises the Judges' simple piety: 'Our *Judges*, like their *Laws*, were rude and plain' (p. 369). Jair and Jephthah's virtuous government even encroaches upon the typological significance of David himself: 'Both at once did keep | The mighty *Flocks of Isra'el* and their *Sheep*' (p. 369). Beyond their obvious Christian symbolism, we have seen how Davenant and now also Cowley used pastoral metaphors to suggest the peaceful order of absolutist regimes. These themes of piety and power reflect the features of the English Commonwealth which Cowley was most able to support. Indeed, comparisons with the Judges

⁷¹ *ibid.*, chapter XXXV, p. 640.

⁷² *Elements of Law*, chapter XX, p. 112.

had already been deployed to praise the puritan regime, most obviously by Marvell in *The First Anniversary of the Government under his Highness the Lord Protector*.⁷³

But David sets the Judges' political value against an explanation of why their regime collapsed. Despite Samuel's piety, his 'wild *Sons*'—'wild' like Mark Antony in the 'Brutus' ode—'expose' Samuel's legacy 'to *Scorn* and *Hate*'. As Hobbes put it, 'grieved with the corruption of the sons of Samuel', the Israelites demand monarchy; for Cowley's David: 'Their hateful acts that *Changes birth* did hast' (p. 368).⁷⁴ The sons of Samuel could not command the Israelites' private judgements (exposing themselves to '*Scorn* and *Hate*'), and nor could they defend the country when the Ammonites invaded (p. 368). David explicitly concedes that the failure to wield a protective and coercive power constitutes the 'just and faultless causes why' the Israelites demanded revolution (p. 369). But this does not excuse them: 'God *ill grains* did in this *Incense* smell'. In particular, although the sons of Samuel have failed to subjugate private judgement, the Israelites are still culpable for actually exercising it:

A mut'inous Itch of *Change*, a dull *Despair*
Of helps *divine*, oft prov'd; a faithless care
Of *Common Means*; the pride of heart, and scorn
Of th'*humble yoke* under low *Judges* born.
They saw the state and glittering pomp which blest
In vulgar sense the *Scepters* of the *East*.
They saw not *Powers* true *Source*, and scorn'd t'obey
Persons that *look'd* no *dreadfuller* than *They*. (p. 369)

The Judges have evidently failed to follow Hobbes' advice that subjects must be taught 'not to be in love with any form of Government they see in their neighbour Nations, more than with their own'.⁷⁵ The repeated emphasis on 'scorn' similarly fulfils in converse Hobbes' dictum that 'reputation of Power, is power'.⁷⁶ But David is not just offering the same sort of Machiavellian advice, that rulers must rely on pomp and awe, as we found in Davenant's *Preface to Gondibert*.

⁷³ See Steven N. Zwicker, 'Models of Governance in Marvell's "The First Anniversary"', *Criticism*, 16 (1974) 1-12, pp. 3-5 and *passim*.

⁷⁴ *Leviathan*, chapter XXXV, p. 640; see also chapter XII, p. 184.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, chapter XXX, p. 534.

⁷⁶ *ibid.*, chapter X, p. 132.

As David's quibble on the true meaning of 'blest' implies, '*Powers true Source*' in this context is God; the Israelites are guilty of ill-faith, or 'dull *Despair*'. Again, this dramatizes Hobbes' pithy analysis: 'Justice fayling, Faith also fayled'.⁷⁷ It was this turn to religious error that unleashed the dangerous passions of despair, envy, and vainglory which undermined the Judges' regime.

It is abundantly clear that the switch to monarchy enjoys the people's consent. But David remains critical when the Israelites gather and appoint a popular orator to demand change. This incident is reminiscent of the 'Orator, of rude, but ready Tongue' appointed by the people of Verona in *Gondibert* (II.i.49). It seems a key set-piece of Hobbesian epic was an orator-figure who could dramatize dangerous republican beliefs about the structural importance of public eloquence and popular sovereignty. The Israelite orator declares:

...for this we all
With an inspir'd, and wantless *Union* call
'Tis *God* alone speaks a whole *Nations* voice;
That is his *Publique Language* (p. 370)

The description of the people's union as 'wantless' (i.e. lacking nothing) implies that every condition of legitimacy has been fulfilled. But David presents this as vainglorious hubris. The orator's '*factious Eloquence*' (p. 371) tips over into blasphemy: his claims that the people's demands are 'inspir'd' and God's '*Publique Language*' do not sit well with Samuel's counter-argument, that the Israelites were in fact rejecting the direct sovereignty of God. The orator also overstates his case: as we will see, the crucial demonstrations of the new monarchy's legitimacy have yet to be made.⁷⁸

To skip forward again, when Saul is eventually crowned king, David's account of his consolidation of power still adheres to Hobbesian categories. It is clear that neither popular consent nor (more controversially) divine election are sufficient conditions: when the Ammonites invade, the unruly Israelites immediately mutiny ('By'his wanton people the new *King* forsook');

⁷⁷ *ibid.*, chapter XII, p. 184.

⁷⁸ Sprat's 1668 and subsequent editions of the poem reinforced this perspective by substituting 'zealous' for 'wantless': 'zealous' more clearly connotes religious hubris whilst softening the radical defactoist claim for the straightforwardness with which a new sovereign power could be constituted; cf. Shadduck, ed. *Dauids*, p. 63.

p. 376). Saul only cements his authority when his conquest of the Ammonites confirms his capacity to protect his subjects from external threats:

This bright success did *Saul's* first action bring,
The *Oyl*, the *Lot*, and *Crown* less *crown'd* him King. (p. 380)

This is one of David's strongest statements of rationalist defactoism: he subordinates all the putative symbols of monarchical legitimacy—the oil and crown—to the Hobbesian contingency of obedience on protection. Even then, Saul still requires a coercive power to enforce the law:

The *Crown* thus several ways confirm'd to *Saul*,
One way was wanting yet to *crown* them all;
And that was Force, which only can maintain
The *Power* that *Fortune* gives, or *worth* does gain.
Three thousand *Guards* of big, bold men he took;
Tall, terrible, and *Guards* e'en with their *Look* (p. 382)

David almost tips into a Machiavellian register here, especially in the second couplet, with its sententious reference to 'Fortune', and aphorism on gaining and maintain power, in the rhyme shared with Marvell's Horatian Ode.⁷⁹ But for Cowley, unlike the other turncoat poets, the Machiavellian possibilities here are not an opportunity for productive synthesis, but rather the first seeds of Saul's descent into tyranny and renewed civil war.

We can chart Saul's decline from Samuel's reply to the Israelites' blasphemous demand for monarchy—the well-known warning against tyranny. Samuel draws a strong connection between the dangers of tyranny and the corruption of reason by ill-governed passions:

Let his power loose and you shall quickly see
How wild a thing *unbounded Man* will be.
[...]
Why *Man* your *God*, and *Passion* made your *Law*? (p. 371)⁸⁰

⁷⁹ As I argued last chapter, it is unlikely Cowley could have read the Horatian Ode by 1656, if at all. The apparent echo is not without precedent (e.g. in Shakespeare's *King John*, III.iii.135-6), and was probably generated by the shared source in Machiavellian rhetoric on 'maintaining' power: see Vickers, 'Machiavelli and Marvell's Horatian Ode', p. 34, and Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 279n.

⁸⁰ Another change made in the 1668 edition was substituting 'mild' for 'wild'; either reading may have been an error, but the change may further reflect Sprat's softening of the poem's argument; cf. Shadduck, ed., *Davidis*, p. 63.

Samuel voices a major criticism of absolutist theory: a sovereign, unconstrained by a higher political order, is effectively still in the state of nature, driven by their private appetites. Defending this position, Hobbes had found it necessary to interpret Samuel's speech as a clear-sighted delineation of the true powers of a sovereign, to which the Israelites then dutifully assented.⁸¹ But Cowley intervenes in a footnote rejecting such readings as 'a vile opinion' which 'might be punished without *Tyranny*' (p. 396, n. 16). The phrase 'might be punished without *Tyranny*' indicates that Cowley wished to preserve tyranny as a category, despite Hobbes' efforts to elide it. The footnote continues that the Israelites were 'enjoyed so strictly to the perpetual reading, persuing, and observing of the Law': that is, even sovereigns are bound to the law of God.

Cowley further hedges Samuel's remarks by having Moab interrupt David for the first time:⁸²

'Tis *Jest* to tell a *People* that they're *Free*,
Who, or *How many* shall their *Masters* be
 Is the sole doubt; *Laws* *guid*, but cannot *reign*;
 And though they *bind* not *Kings*, yet they *restrain* (pp. 371-2)

Moab offers up an underwhelming paradox. What sort of law could 'guid' but not 'reign', 'bind not' but still 'restrain'? This was the sort of woolly constitutional monarchy that Hobbes had blamed for its conceptual weakness.⁸³ But Cowley has also been careful to emphasize that, despite his laudable wisdom, Moab is regrettably pagan: 'almost *too good* for *Hell!*', but only 'almost' (Book III, p. 328). Moab's paganism places a severe limitation on his political wisdom, as it prevents him from understanding Cowley's preferred answer. What is missing from Moab's interruption is a sense of God's will—a law that can guide and restrain, but cannot ultimately bind behaviour, because it is based only on faith (a free gift of God, which cannot be compelled).⁸⁴ This suggests to us how Cowley was adjusting Hobbes' view that the obligation to obey one's sovereign must be identical with the obligation to obey God. Hobbes believed that

⁸¹ *Leviathan*, chapter XX, p. 316.

⁸² See Trotter, *Poetry of Abraham Cowley*, pp. 91-2.

⁸³ *Leviathan*, chapter XXVI, pp. 414-22.

⁸⁴ See Hobbes' definition of faith: *ibid.*, chapters XXVI and XLII, pp. 444, 782.

both obligations were fulfilled by obedience to the sovereign—even if that ruler was an ‘infidel’.⁸⁵ But Cowley disagrees, maintaining that sovereigns who disobey God have broken the alignment of natural and divine law, and must therefore be tyrants.

To the alarm of some readers, Hobbes’ account of divine law seemed to add almost nothing, except faith in Christ, to what was already inherent in our natural law obligations to seek peace.⁸⁶ Cowley has a more securely religious emphasis, ascribing more importance to the Mosaic Law (and, we assume, for Christians, the New Testament). At one point, David attempts to represent this alignment between the natural and divine law through an architectural metaphor:

Firm in this general *Earthquake* of the *Land*,
How could *Religion*, its main *pillar*, stand? (p. 367)

Organized religion, as the nation’s principal institution, is threatened by tectonic political disturbance, but, paradoxically, the country simultaneously depends on religion as its main support, or ‘pillar’.⁸⁷ Several passages cite paganism as one of the greatest threats to peaceful civic order, such as the earlier enslavement of the Israelites (quoted above). The most virtuous Israelites, by contrast, are explicitly associated with the divine law. David says Jonathan’s ‘chief study is *Gods sacred law*’ (p. 378), which indeed turns out to be Jonathan’s saving grace. In Book III, Joab describes how David himself is inspired with special knowledge of the laws natural and divine:

Scarce past a *Child*, all wonders would he sing
Of *Natures Law*, and *Pow’er* of *Natures King* (p. 332)

‘*Pow’er* of *Natures King*’ alludes to God’s discretionary will without making him subject to any laws—it is crucial to the transferral of sovereignty in the *Davideis* that God must be free to change his mind.⁸⁸ Joab constructs David’s special knowledge as part of his capacity as a shepherd (with its metaphorical associations with absolutist sovereignty, and typological

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, chapter XLIII, pp. 930-2, 952.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, chapter XLIII, p. 932, quoted above; see also Malcolm, ‘Introduction’, pp. 150-51; Parkin, *Taming the Leviathan*, pp. 112-15.

⁸⁷ *OED*, ‘pillar’, n., senses 3 and 4a.

⁸⁸ As in Book IV, p. 372.

connotations of Christ). We can also assume Cowley believed David was using this special knowledge in his speech in Book IV.

In the next lines of Book III, Joab immediately contrasts David's virtue against Saul's corruption:

'Twas now the time when first *Saul God* forsook,
God Saul; the room in's heart wild *Passions* took;
 Sometimes a Tyrant-Frensie revell'd there,
 Sometimes black sadness, and deep, deep despair (p. 322)

The collapse of self-governance is concomitant with the forsaking of God, a 'deep despair' echoing the 'dull despair' of which the Israelites are guilty in Book IV. Joab imagines the consequences in markedly psychological terms, of delinquent 'wild *Passions*'. The compound 'Tyrant-Frensie' suggests the conventional psychological metaphor of the passions dictating Saul's behaviour, but further suggests that it is precisely this 'Frensie' which constitutes Saul's political tyranny. Saul is characterized by precisely this combination of delinquent passions and religious disobedience in David's speech in Book IV. David praises Saul's virtuous qualities, but immediately adds:

Till *Power* and *Violent Fortune*, which did find
 No stop or bound, o'rewhelm'd no less his *Mind*,
 Did, *Deluge-like*, the nat'ural forms deface,
 And brought forth unknown *Monsters* in their place.
 Forbid it God, my *Masters* spots should be,
 Were they not seen by all, disclos'd by me! (p. 374)

That caveat reveals David's ambiguous situation: is he guilty of resisting his lawful sovereign? On a narrowly Hobbesian reading he would be; but, he implies, because Saul's backsliding is 'seen by all', the social contract is broken, absolving him of his obligations. Again Cowley reaches for a Machiavellian vocabulary of '*violent Fortune*' to describe Saul's delinquency. He even follows the other turncoat poets in configuring the ruination wrought by Fortune through the Machiavellian metaphor of a flood. Cowley's conceit of inundation differs markedly from Waller's or Marvell's—by alluding more distinctly to Noah's flood in *Genesis* through the compound '*Deluge-like*'—but also by being explicitly psychological. It is specifically Saul's 'Mind' which is 'o'rewhelm'd', its 'nat'ural forms' replaced with 'unknown *Monsters*'.

The most serious transgression which follows from Saul's degeneracy is his usurpation of the high-priest's office:

Jealous of an affront in *Samuels* stay
[...]
And with a pride too nat'ural thinking Heaven
Had given him *All*, because *much Power* t'had giv'en)
Himself the *Sacrifice* and *Offring's* made,
Himself did th'high *selected charge* invade (p. 384)

Again, Cowley offers detailed information about the corrupt psychology motivating Saul's actions. The incursion of vainglory and envy is once again concomitant with religious disobedience, which Cowley dramatizes with a metaphorical verb, 'invade', we saw serving a similar function in *Gondibert*.⁸⁹ This incident was a knotty exegetical problem. Hobbes had upheld the Erastian view that Saul, as secular sovereign, was perfectly within his rights to encroach upon the high-priest's remit; but that, in this instance, he had contravened God's special command.⁹⁰ Cowley concurred in a footnote to these lines:

I confess I incline to believe, that it was not so much *Sauls* invasion of the *Priestly* office, by offering up the *Sacrifice* himself (...) as his disobedience to Gods command by *Samuel*, that he should stay *seven days*, which was the sin so severely punisht in him. Yet I follow here the more common opinion, as more proper for my purpose (p. 400, n. 40).

Cowley cites the principles of accommodation again to justify his poetic licence—softening his own Erastianism, and Scriptural beliefs, to manufacture a more dramatic crux in both the story and his theoretical argument. David quotes Samuel chiding Saul's sin in extreme terms: 'foul *Ingratitude*... To pluck that *Fruit* which was alone *forbid*' (p. 384)—apparently reinforcing Hobbes' suggestion that Saul and the Israelites were guilty of an ungrateful rejection of God comparable with the original Fall.⁹¹

Saul's misdemeanour is occasioned by his panic at the Philistines' invasion. The protective power on which Saul's rule was based is now undermined, and order quickly breaks down:

⁸⁹ See *Gondibert*, I.i.80, III.i.13, III.iv.78.

⁹⁰ *Leviathan*, chapter XL, pp. 750-2.

⁹¹ *Leviathan*, chapter XXXV, p. 640.

The quick *Contagion Fear* ran swift through all,
 And into trembling *Fits* th'infected fall
 [...]

 Some into woods and caves their cattel drive,
 There with their *Beasts* on *equal* terms they live (p. 384)

Cowley once more traces psychological processes through their corporeal effects, with a metaphor of disease and its accompanying verb 'fall', implying a further turning-away from God.⁹² The Israelites regress into a state of nature characterized by their bestiality and equality—as we have seen in previous chapters, conditions emphasized by Hobbes.⁹³ His powers of protection eroded, Saul's usurpation of the high-priest's office, and Samuel's ensuing curse, then undermines his power of coercion. David reports that the Israelite army 'Disbanded now, and fled in troops away', driven by 'Base *Fear*' (p. 384). In this way, Saul's tyranny and the Israelites' corrupt private judgement compound one another, producing the fractures in the divine and natural law which cause the breakdown of social order.

This final outburst of violence was not actually caused by Saul, but by Jonathan, whose unruly 'full thoughts, *Honour*, and youthful Heat' (p. 382) led him into the skirmish with the Philistines which ignited the conflict. Jonathan is certainly a sympathetic figure, but is associated ambiguously with the more dangerous vainglory and 'Heat' of martial heroism. Cowley, like Waller and Davenant, plays extensively with the concept of conquest—once again, we see the amatory metaphor converging with the real political and military act. David has earlier told Moab that Jonathan 'the *Conquer'd* with such *Sweetness* gains, | As *Captive Lovers* find in *Beauties Chains*' (p. 377); military conquest was properly the moment for assuaging disruptive enmity—we might think of Cowley's acceptance of conquest in the 1656 *Preface*—but David compares this with a more disturbing image of lovers held '*Captive*' by their sexual passions. Throughout the poem, the necessity of conquering and assuaging the passions is held in uncertain tension

⁹² *OED*, 'fall', v., senses 1c and 23b.

⁹³ e.g. in *Elements of Law*, chapter XIX, p. 103.

with Jonathan's tendency towards passionate excess.⁹⁴ Jonathan's 'Heat' had begun the eruption of violence, but when he wins the day, David insists that he was *not* motivated by passion, but by divine inspiration:

...th'inspired Prince did nimbly *understand*
God, and his *God-like Vertues* high command (p. 387).

This terminology reflects Hobbes' definition of 'inspiration' not as a literal possession by an incorporeal spirit, but rather a divine 'understanding'.⁹⁵ Jonathan submits to the sovereign authority of Saul—which he had restored in battle—even though the penitent Saul has sentenced him to death for infringing the edict against eating:

The *Prince* alone stood mild and patient by
 [...]
 A victory now o're *himself* might boast;
 He *Conquer'd* now that *Conqu'ror* of an Host (p. 392)

Hobbes had maintained that a death sentence was the only circumstance in which one could legitimately resist one's sovereign.⁹⁶ But Cowley's story required more dramatic stakes, to demonstrate the paramount importance of self-conquest. The resolution is not neat: the Israelites intervene, against Saul's authority, to save Jonathan. But then, this was not the projected ending of the poem.

Jonathan's self-conquest is an example of what I term the 'counter-heroic turn' in Cowley's writing. Unlike the other turncoat poets, Cowley remained distinctly sceptical about martial heroism, which he associated with Machiavellian vainglory, religious disobedience, and the excessive indulgence of violent passions. Davenant had thought heroic poetry might be a solution to the problem of private judgement, channelling the passions into productive endeavour. But in the *Davideis* David sings psalms, rather than heroic operas, in order to interrupt and assuage Saul's rage—and, even then, has little more than a temporary effect (p. 255).⁹⁷ A more

⁹⁴ Compare the homoerotic language of male beauty, appetitive desire, and physical penetration in Jonathan's first encounter with David in Book II: 'Adorn'd with *sweat*, and painted gay with *Blood*, | *Jonathan* pierce'd him through with greedy Eye' (p. 285).

⁹⁵ Taking the example of David's anointing: *Leviathan*, chapters XXXIV and XXXVI, pp. 614, 672.

⁹⁶ *ibid.*, chapter XIV, p. 214.

⁹⁷ See David Kilgore, 'The Politics of King David in Early Modern English Verse', *Studies in Philology*, 111 (2014) 411-441, p. 414-15.

powerful interruption of the passions takes place at the end of Book I, at the College of Ramah. When Saul's 'Troop' arrive to arrest David, 'a new spirit their hearts possess, | Scatt'ring a sacred calm through every brest'—and this happens three times over (p. 264). It is notable that the spirit should manifest itself as 'calm' rather than the more conventional frenzy. The sense of 'possess' here reflects the rationalist interpretation of inspiration as merely a pious understanding or quality of mind (i.e. 'sacred calm').⁹⁸ Cowley observes this psychological transformation again in terms of corporeal symptoms: 'Their cooler veins swell with a peaceful tide'. Upon Saul's arrival at Ramah, he casts off his corrupt passion ('foolish Anger') and heroic accoutrements ('Kingly robes')—although, again, the effect is only temporary. We can compare this with the better-known casting-off of heroic paraphernalia in the resolution of Book III, David's defeat of Goliath. David's status as an innocent shepherd is emphasized in counterpoint to the military heroes around him; he casts aside Saul's elaborate armour, preferring instead 'those *light Arms of Spirit and Innocence*' (p. 337). Crucially, both Saul at Ramah (briefly) and David facing Goliath (more enduringly) forget their errant private judgement, and place their faith in God. The counter-heroic turn involves forgetting one's corrupt self—and, in this respect, we can align it with the self-effacing concept of 'oblivion' articulated in the 1656 *Preface*.

The *Davideis* holds that the only necessary foundation of legitimate sovereignty is a *de facto* protective and coercive power. The argument is mostly made via the mouthpiece of David, who, we are told, enjoys a special knowledge of the natural law. Both the Judges and Saul meet these Hobbesian criteria at different times, and are therefore both theoretically legitimate. But where they have more trouble is in coercing their subjects to give over their private judgements. Cowley attempted to renovate the category of tyranny, which Hobbes had collapsed, and dramatize the conditions under which Saul could still be said to have become a tyrant. He invokes the concept of a divine law, the will of God, to which even sovereigns were subject. This was an adjustment which enabled him to reconcile Hobbes' problematic contention that the natural and

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, chapters XXXIV and XXXVI, pp. 614, 672.

divine laws were identical with his own belief in religious observance as the only sure means of subjugating the private judgement. Hence, the social contract is fractured when religious despair leads the Israelites and Saul to flout God's will, unleashing their delinquent passions. Cowley particularly distrusted military heroism and devised a series of counter-heroic turns which model how the passions could be assuaged and passive compliance restored. This analysis is indifferent to—and offers no allegory of—particular constitutional forms or political figures in England. Rather, Cowley dramatizes the normative general theory of sovereignty and obligations which also underpinned the 1656 *Preface*.

3. After 1656: Responses and Perceptions

Shortly after the *Davideis* was published, Cowley exchanged poems with Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill. We last encountered Broghill as the recipient of a poem from Davenant at around this time. Broghill himself initiated the exchange with Cowley, with a commendatory poem on the *Davideis*.⁹⁹ He was particularly struck by Jonathan's conquering his personal ambition in favour of his friendship with David: 'The Crowne did yield, and kept the friendship too' (28). This emphasis on friendship overriding ambition and strict *de jure* succession chimes well with the theme of pragmatic amelioration in Cromwellian politics and in Cowley's 1656 volume. Broghill had presumably encountered the contrasting example in the 'Brutus' ode, where Caesar bears the '*cancell'd Name of Friend*' and is guilty of perpetuating violence. But he makes bizarrely little of the specifically Christian content of the *Davideis*.¹⁰⁰ He underestimates the danger of the delinquent passions, asking why Saul's tyrannical frenzy wasn't assuaged by the beauty of Michol's eyes:

⁹⁹ Ted-Larry Pebworth, 'The Earl of Orrery and Cowley's *Davideis*: Recovered Works and New Connections', *Modern Philology*, 76 (1978) 136-48, pp. 138-39.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 139-40.

Yet since with such resistless light they shone,
 Which could not be but to her Father knowne,
 Why did he *Israell* in such danger bring?
 Her Eyes had done more then thy hero's sling (43-6)

This was a more conventional solution which Broghill may have learned from Davenant—as we saw in *Gondibert*, female beauty could have such an effect in romance.¹⁰¹ Cowley's piety and resistance to martial heroism do not seem to have appealed to Broghill. Nevertheless, he was a patron worth having, and Cowley wrote a polite thank-you poem, deferring to Broghill's taste for heroic conceits: '*Broghil* in thy defence has drawn his conquering pen' (pp. 406-9)—perhaps also associating Broghill with the theme of *de facto* conquest. Cowley was evidently keen to cultivate what patronage he could amongst Cromwellian elites.

Cowley also renewed his association with another aristocratic turncoat, the Duke of Buckingham—having helped facilitate his defection in 1655 (as we noted earlier). Buckingham began to court Mary Fairfax—largely because his confiscated estates had been awarded to her father, Thomas. The wedding was held in September 1657, and Cowley reportedly stood as Buckingham's best man.¹⁰² Cowley would have been intrigued to meet Fairfax, who shared his developing interests in the literature of retreat, stoicism, and horticulture. It is conceivable that Cowley's, Fairfax's, and Buckingham's common acquaintance Marvell could have come up in conversation—and especially perhaps the great poetry involving precisely those stoic and horticultural themes, and Mary herself, which Marvell had written for Fairfax earlier in the decade. Fairfax had a motive, at least, to bolster his prestige by showing Marvell's poems about his family to his new, culturally elite friends. And we could speculate whether this possible exchange may have influenced Cowley's growing output of stoic and horticultural verse.

¹⁰¹ See *Gondibert*, II.ii.42.

¹⁰² This is asserted by Nethercot, *The Muse's Hannibal*, p. 174, and by Bruce Yardley, *The Political Career of George Villiers, Second Duke of Buckingham (1628-87)*, unpublished D.Phil. thesis, Bod. MS D.Phil. c. 7662, pp. 272-3, on the strength of Clements R. Markham, *A Life of the Great Lord Fairfax* (London, 1870), p. 372; yet there is no basis for this in Markham's source, Brian Fairfax, 'Memoirs of the Life of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham', in *Plays, Poems, and Miscellaneous Writings associated with George Villiers, Second Duke of Buckingham*, ed. by Robert D. Hume and Harold Love (2 vols.; Oxford, 2007), vol. 2, p. 291.

But the most immediate literary product of the Buckingham-Fairfax match was Cowley's epithalamium. This poem has been overlooked, because it remained in manuscript until 1700.¹⁰³ Cowley often preferred to publish poems in manuscript, and the poem would not have been prudent to print after Cromwell's death and the Restoration.¹⁰⁴ Despite not being a state commission, the epithalamium is one of the most optimistic occasional poems of the Protectorate era. Cowley does not bother with any of the ironies or anxieties which disturb the panegyrics of the more solidly Cromwellian Marvell—not even in view of his patrons' discomfort with the Protectorate (or, for that matter, the Protector's discomfort with Buckingham and Fairfax).¹⁰⁵ After praising both patrons' martial prowess, Cowley suddenly turns, in the final stanza, to celebrate marriage as a symbol of peaceful reconciliation between the contending factions of the civil wars. He had used a similar trope in the 1656 *Preface*, claiming 'The *enmities* of *Fellow-Citizens* should be, like that of *Lovers*, the *Redintegration* of their *Amity*' (p. 455n). The epithalamium foregrounds a theatrical metaphor:

For after all the troubles of thy Scene,
Which so confus'd, and intricate have been,
She has ended with this Match thy Tragicomedy.¹⁰⁶

Cowley transfers the cavalier genre of Beaumont and Fletcher to the resolution of Buckingham's troubles under the political settlement founded on Fairfax's victories. The tragicomedy metaphor might imply that this closure has been achieved arbitrarily and artificially, but this would be consistent with the Hobbesian view of sovereignty as an artificial construct. In chapter one we encountered the Presbyterian John Vicars using the tragicomic metaphor to associate the arbitrating, resolving agency with Providence—again, such an implication would be consistent with Cowley's defactoist argument in the 1656 *Preface*.¹⁰⁷ Of course, it was not the first time Mary Fairfax had figured in a theatrical metaphor suggesting regeneration in post-revolutionary

¹⁰³ This is presumably what Nigel Smith means by his mistaken assertion that the poem is lost, *The Chameleon*, p. 141; But the poem circulated in manuscript: Allan Pritchard discovered it amongst the papers of Lady Sarah Cowper, who had acquired it from her neighbour, and Cowley's friend, Martin Clifford: 'Editing from Manuscript', pp. 61-7.

¹⁰⁴ On Cowley's manuscript practice, see Love, *Scribal Publication*, p. 148n.

¹⁰⁵ Yardley, *Political Career of Buckingham*, pp. 39-43.

¹⁰⁶ In Waller, ed., *Essays, Plays, and Sundry Verses*, pp. 462-64.

¹⁰⁷ Vicars, *A Looking-Glasse for Malignants*, p. 3.

England. Another source for Cowley's conceit may just possibly have been Marvell's 'Upon Appleton House'—which had celebrated Mary's virginal rather than marital chastity, in the genre of masque rather than tragicomedy.

The possible presence of 'Upon Appleton House' also alerts us to the role of the masque-writer Davenant in Cowley's adaptation of theatrical metaphors to the English Commonwealth. In 1657 Davenant was staging his first Cromwellian heroic dramas in London.¹⁰⁸ One of the purposes of Davenant's new 'Opera' was to encourage the renewed participation of social elites in the economic and cultural life of the city—an end to which Cowley's theatrical metaphor also appropriates Buckingham and the Fairfaxes. His involvement went considerably further. Princeton University Library holds a letter from Cowley to an unidentified recipient (perhaps Buckingham?) dated April 1656—after the publication of the 1656 *Poems* and just before Davenant's first official performance, *The First Evening's Entertainment at Rutland House*.¹⁰⁹ Cowley describes the plan for 'Entertainments' consisting of staged debates with musical interludes. The subjects under consideration included the merits of 'Morall Representations' (Davenant's euphemism for 'drama'), and the 'right of y^e Spaniards to y^e West Indies'. Although the latter did not make it into the final text of *The First Evening's Entertainment*, it anticipates Davenant's *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* (1658). Only *The First Evening* was ever printed, in 1657, but its title implies that further evenings were projected, at which the Spanish debate and the contributions by Cowley and his correspondent may have been performed.

Cowley was closely involved in the elite cultural life of Protectoral England; but this did not prevent him from attempting to extricate himself when, in late 1659, the Stuart Restoration began to seem inevitable. Cowley fled to Paris in December—an act which Sprat cited as a sign

¹⁰⁸ See chapter three, and Holberton, *Poetry and the Protectorate*, pp. 137-40.

¹⁰⁹ Princeton University Library, Manuscripts Division, Robert H. Taylor Collection, Box 5, Folder 9. I have consulted the photocopy held in the British Library, MUS RP 266.

of impeccable loyalism.¹¹⁰ But the correspondence he initiated with the Marquis of Ormonde shows him instead anxiously petitioning for forgiveness.¹¹¹ If the 1656 *Preface* really had been a mere smokescreen of conformity, Cowley could surely have recanted it straightforwardly. But, instead, we find him equivocating defensively:

I am fully satisfied in conscience of y^e uprightnes of my own sence in those [two] or three Lines w^{ch} have been receiued in one so contrary to it... yet because it seems they are capable of being understood otherwise than I meant them, I am willing to acknowledge, and repent them as an Error.¹¹²

His slightly disingenuous claim that it was all merely a question of interpretation does not seem to have been received favourably at court. Ormonde's reply, a few weeks later, refers with pointed scepticism to the 'ambiguity, at least, of those lines':

if they not be capable of such an interpretation as hath been industriously and yet hitherto unsuccessfully sought for by your reall friends, then certainly an ingenuous & frank recantation, and such an addresse as may best expresse your repentance for them, will not misbecome you...¹¹³

Jermyn lent his support the following month, but received the same answer from Ormonde, who added that he was still awaiting Cowley's recantation.¹¹⁴ The final surviving letter in the sequence is an elaborate but rather misjudged thank-you note from Cowley to Ormonde, in which he anticipates kissing 'his Ma^{tyes} hands'.¹¹⁵ In fact, on his arrival at court in London in May 1660, Cowley's petitions were rebuffed by Hyde (now Earl of Clarendon), with the damning reply: 'Mr. Cowley, your Pardon is your Reward'.¹¹⁶

Cowley's two published works of 1660 are the closest he came to providing the recantation demanded by Ormonde. The *Ode, upon the Blessed Restoration and Returne of His Sacred Majestie, Charls the Second* returns to the panegyric mode of Cowley's original Pindaric

¹¹⁰ Sprat, 'Account of the Life', sig. A1^v.

¹¹¹ Printed, with errors, in C. H. Firth, 'Abraham Cowley at the Restoration', *The Academy*, 1118 (7th October, 1893) 296; corrected against original documents, as below.

¹¹² Cowley to Ormonde, Paris, 26th December 1659, Bod. MS Carte 30, ff. 515-16.

¹¹³ Ormonde to Cowley, Brussels, 17th January 1660, Bod. MS Carte 30, f. 517.

¹¹⁴ Jermyn to Ormonde, Paris, 19th February 1660, Bod. MS Carte 213, f. 598; Ormonde to Jermyn, 21st February 1660, Bod. MS Carte 30, f. 518.

¹¹⁵ Cowley to Ormonde, Paris, 2nd March 1660, Bod. MS Carte 213, f. 634.

¹¹⁶ Matthew Tindal, *The Judgment of Dr. Prideaux* (London, 1721), p. 41; quoted in Anderson, *Friendship's Shadows*, pp. 38-9.

models, and shares some of their language and imagery (pp. 420-32).¹¹⁷ Yet it completely overturns the rationalist analysis of the 1650s: Cowley uses the same word for Cromwellian tyranny he had applied to Saul, ‘*Frenzey*’ (p. 423), but the kinetic psychology which had followed in the *Davideis* is now totally absent. Likewise, he now makes explicit the comparison of the English nation with the Israelites being conducted by ‘*Almighty Mercy... To their own Promis’d Land*’. But rather than intervening to destroy a ‘guilty king’, as in the Pindaric ode on ‘The Plagues of Egypt’, God now acts to restore ‘the *pious King’s eclipsed Right*’ (p. 425). Cowley no longer implies that sovereignty is transferable, but rather that it inheres indelibly in the anointed body of the hereditary Stuart monarch: ‘no *Disguises clowd | His inward Royalty could shrowd*’ (p. 429).¹¹⁸ This implies a more static view of political order—a conceptual shift we might also perceive in the fact Cowley was able and willing to resuscitate the mode of allegory, which his 1650s poetry had either ironized or eschewed. Charles is joined by ‘*Felicitie*’, ‘*Innocence*’, and ‘*Liberty*’ in a triumphal procession to London, in which ‘*Safety* it self brings up the *Rear*’. If ‘*Safety*’ implies a protective military power—that central tenet of rationalist defactoism—we can see how Cowley now structures the concept in an exclusively royalist way when he contrasts these allegorical forces with those of the Commonwealth, ‘*Famine, Sword and Plague*’:

Justly might *Heav’n* Protectors such as those,
And such *Committees* for their *Safety* impose. (p. 423)

We recall how Waller had exploited the term ‘Protector’ to launch his defactoist reasoning in his *Panegyrick to my Lord Protector*; Cowley now reappropriates the vocabulary of Protectoral institutions with sarcasm, to reinforce his normative claim that ‘*Safety*’ could only truly belong to Stuart monarchy.

¹¹⁷ On Pindaric panegyric, see Revard, *Politics, Poetics, and the Pindaric Ode*; on Cowley’s Restoration ode see Nicholas Jose, *Ideas of the Restoration in English Literature 1660-71* (London, 1984), pp. 85-95.

¹¹⁸ On the theme of disguise in 1640s royalist poetry, see Loxley, *The Drawn Sword*, pp. 144-7.

Whereas Cowley's 1656 *Preface* had appealed to a sense of Protestant reformation, he now compares the religious innovations of the 1650s with deformity and, in a suitably Pindaric allusion to the labours of Hercules, animal excrement:¹¹⁹

Will ever fair *Religion* appear
In these deformed *Ruins?* will she clear
Th'*Augæan Stables* of her *Churches* here?

He uses anaphora to extend his series of rhetorical questions to another institution, the law—again, eroding the authority of Cromwellian institutional language with sarcasm:

Will *Justice* hazard to be seen
Where a *High Court of Justice* e're has been?

This was an atypical theme for Cowley—we have seen how the *Davideis*, like *Gondibert*, ventured a Hobbesian critique of law courts—but it enables him to rerun the trial of Charles I:

Will not the Tragique Scene,
And *Bradshaw's* bloody *Ghost* affright her there,
Her who should never fear?

Cowley seems to have abandoned his desire for an 'Art of Oblivion'. By summoning up the ghost of Bradshaw he explicitly invokes the 'Names of *Party*' and 'Titles of *Division*' which the 1656 *Preface* had hoped would be 'extinguished' (p. 455n). Perversely, he insists on reviving these memories despite his fear they might deter 'Liberty' from returning to England:

That *Name of Cromwell*, which does freshly still
The Curses of so many sufferers fill,
Is still enough to make her stay ... (p. 422)

The phrase 'freshly still' is a paradox: Cromwell is freshly still in the sense of recently deceased; the curses on his name are 'fresh' in the senses of being vehement and continually renewed. Yet this renewal clashes with the punning sense of 'still', returning us to a static sense of politics, wherein the restless motion and contingency of the revolution have been banished by the fixity of divine monarchy. We will encounter this perception again in the next chapter, that the '*shaken Nation*' had spent the 1650s in 'a wild and deform'd *Chaos*' and only the return of monarchy had restored political order (p. 424). Cowley overturns the Hobbesian sense of the commonwealth as an artificial body, imagining the Rump Parliament as a 'great *Serpent*, which was all a *Tail*',

¹¹⁹ On the role of Hercules in Pindaric myth, see Revard, 'Cowley's *Pindarique Odes* and the Politics of the Interregnum', pp. 400-1.

rather than the complete human form projected by the *Leviathan* frontispiece (p. 422). The metaphor imposes Cowley's normative judgement by associating the Republic with the temptations of the flesh in its allusions to the serpent and the male genitalia. The Restoration ode consciously works to deny and dispel the political relativism of the 1650s by restoring England to a normative binary in which 'the *Claws of the great Fiend*' briefly interrupt the workings of 'th' *Almighty's hand*'.

Cowley's other contribution to the propaganda surge was a pamphlet, *The Visions and Prophecies Concerning England, Scotland, and Ireland*. This purported to be written by a young puritan visionary, Ezekiel Grebner—a sort of spiritual heir to the sixteenth-century German prophet Paul Grebner—denigrating the Commonwealth, and celebrating the supposedly imminent Restoration. Although the pamphlet is usually dated to its fictional occasion, Cromwell's death in 1658, there is no reason to believe Cowley wrote it until shortly before its publication in 1660. To celebrate the demise of the Cromwellian order so ferociously in 1658 would have been imprudently cavalier—but this was not a bad impression to try and convey in propaganda written in 1660. The pamphlet was anonymous, but probably not opaquely—nobody voiced any surprise when Sprat included it in Cowley's posthumous *Works* eight years later. Arthur Brett's royalist ode, *The Restauration*, asks the muse for a strain which could enable him to surpass Cowley, and fervently hopes for the fulfilment of 'Grebner's prophecy', indicating his interest in the revival of the Grebner figure, and perhaps his awareness of its literary significance.¹²⁰ Besides, the pamphlet alludes fairly openly to Cowley's own quandary, when the evil Protectorate Angel accuses Grebner of being 'a person who was proud and insolent against those dead men to whom he had been humble and obedient whilst they lived' (p. 350).¹²¹

Again, the *Visions and Prophecies* overturn the 1656 *Preface* by reviving a recriminatory language of party (e.g. 'Rebel Red-Coat', p. 355). The defactoist argument is now ventriloquized by the evil angel, energetically refuted by the Grebner/Cowley narrator:

¹²⁰ Arthur Brett, *The Restauration. Or, a Poem on the Return of the Most Mighty and ever Glorious Prince, Charles the II to his Kingdoms* (London, 1660), pp. 3 and 20.

¹²¹ In Waller, ed., *Essays*.

...we must break up humane society, retire into the Woods, and equally there stand upon our Guards against our Brethren Mankind, and our Rebels the Wild Beasts (p. 356)

The retreat into the woods in common with the beasts replicates the Israelites' regression into a Hobbesian state of nature, driven by fearful diffidence, in Book IV of the *Davideis*.¹²² But where Cowley had previously legitimized the transferral of allegiance, he now condemns it as 'Usurpation', defending instead the inviolable authority of Stuart monarchy. He supports this with a thoroughly un-Cowleian reverence for 'the most sacred of our *English* laws, the Petition of Right, and *Magna Carta*' (p. 371). Clearly he felt the need to appeal to constitutionalist sentiment—after all, the person he most needed to win over was Clarendon. But this goes against the consistent omission and rejection of the ancient constitution in the whole course of his other writings, even his royalist epic *The Civil War*, which invokes *Magna Carta* only to record his contempt for it.¹²³

The *Visions and Prophecies* is an ambiguous, bitter, and at times facetious pamphlet—it is not hard to see why it failed to restore Cowley's reputation. Whereas his letter to Ormonde had failed to show enough contrition, he now seemed to be over-compensating. Cowley was tainted by association with Hobbes, the Louvre faction (the authoritarian group around Henrietta-Maria and Jermyn), and Buckingham—all of whom Clarendon severely mistrusted. The hyperbolic and hypocritical demonization served up in the *Visions and Prophecies* were seriously out of step with the reconciliatory tone Clarendon wanted to strike. But, then again, in this respect Clarendon was actually recycling the 1650s rhetoric of Oblivion—in language lifted audaciously from Cowley's supposedly scandalous 1656 *Preface*.¹²⁴ In his first speech to the Convention Parliament, Clarendon praised 'this excellent art of forgetfulness', and called for the names of parties to be abandoned.¹²⁵ It seems Cowley provided a too awkward reminder of how close the

¹²² Waller, ed., *Poems*, p. 384, cited earlier.

¹²³ Cowley, *The Civil War*, ed. by Allan Pritchard (Toronto, 1973), II.457-62; discussed pp. 29-31.

¹²⁴ As we noted earlier, Clarendon remarked on his reading the *Preface* to Ormonde in 1656: Bod. MS Clarendon 51, f. 269^r.

¹²⁵ Quoted in Paulina Kewes, 'Acts of Remembrance, Acts of Oblivion: Rhetoric, Law, and National Memory in Early Restoration England', in Lorna Clymer, ed., *Ritual, Routine, and Regime: Repetition in Early Modern British and European Cultures* (Toronto, 2006), p. 114.

rhetoric of Protectorate and Restoration could be. And perhaps he realized his mistake: when the Restoration ode was re-printed in 1663, the final couplet with its partisan denunciation of the ‘*Rump-Heads*’ had been excised.¹²⁶

Cowley responded to his disappointment by re-staging the Pindaric ode on ‘Destiny’, in which the Muse demands he abandon public life and embrace his true, religious vocation of poetry, in a new poem, ‘The Complaint’ (pp. 435-50).¹²⁷ Cowley’s muse now accuses him of being a ‘Changling’ who has abandoned his sacred art in pursuit of ‘Business! the thing which I of all things hate’. She scolds:

Go, Renegado, cast up thy Account,
 And see to what Amount
 Thy foolish gains by quitting me:
 [...]
 The fruits of thy unlearn’d Apostacy.

As in the ‘Destiny’ ode, Cowley presents himself as fated to isolation—now left behind by his royalist ‘fellow Voyagers’. And he once again constructs his isolating embrace of poetry in the language of religious conversion—he has been a ‘Renegado’ guilty of ‘Apostacy’. But which instance of changing sides did he really regret? ‘The Complaint’ ultimately recapitulates Cowley’s abandoning his vain hopes of an active role in service of the Stuarts, and returns to the stoic fortitude and passive resignation he had adopted in the 1650s.

This was the pose Cowley assumed for the rest of his life. And, if we exclude the exceptional propaganda works of 1660, it looks more like a continuous development that had begun with the 1656 *Preface*. The structure of Sprat’s 1668 posthumous *Works* gives a misleading impression of the *Essays* as a coherent body, Cowley’s final great work. But in fact the materials had accrued gradually, in a befittingly organic manner, over the long decade after 1656. Several of the translations of Horace, Martial, and Virgil appeared in the 1663 collection *Verses, Lately Written Upon Several Occasions*, alongside other poems which we know date

¹²⁶ Waller, ed., *Poems*, p. 461n.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

from the 1650s, such as the Pindaric odes to the Bodleian (1656) and ‘To my Lord Broghill’ (who had become Earl of Orrery in 1660). These poems had circulated in manuscript, sufficiently widely to have reached an unscrupulous printer in Dublin, who pirated them, alongside texts by Broghill and Katherine Philips, in *Poems by Several Persons* (Dublin, 1663). Cowley’s *Verses* were designed to correct and replace the unauthorized volume (for once the conventional modesty *topos* was true). It is avowedly not a comprehensive collection of all Cowley’s new poems—we know of at least one other Cowley poem, the Buckingham epithalamium, which remained in manuscript. For these reasons, I will briefly sketch out some of the stronger thematic continuities between Cowley’s 1656 *Poems* and the *Essays* of the later 1650s and 1660s.

Cowley continued to analyze social disorder psychologically, through the mechanistic, appetitive passions. This appears from the opening essay, ‘Of Liberty’, which returns to another key theme of the *Pindarique Odes*, the virtue of Brutus, whom Cowley still idolizes as ‘the bravest man that ever was born’ (p. 384).¹²⁸ The ‘false Octavius and wild Antony’ of the ‘Brutus’ ode reappear as Brutus’ delinquent foils:

those great Triumviri of the World; the Covetous Man, who is a mean villain, like *Lepidus*; the Ambitious, who is a brave one, like *Octavius*, and the Voluptuous, who is a loose and debauched one, like *Mark Antony*. (p. 385)

Cowley also returns to his preference for simile over allegory, using historical figures not as symbols but as examples of theoretical concepts in operation. The essay introduces Catiline as ‘a general description of all Ambitious men, and which *Machiavel* perhaps would say ought to be the rule of their life and actions’ (p. 379). Cowley distinguishes between his ‘general description’ of psychological disorder, and Machiavelli’s vainglorious use of historical examples to prescribe the emulation of great men. He depicts Catiline as unstable, fundamentally lacking in self-governance, with the art only ‘to bend and turn about his own Nature, and laveer with every wind’. He presumably had in mind Machiavelli’s advice that the prince should ‘have a mind so disposed as to turne and take the advantage of all winds and fortunes’.¹²⁹ Unlike the other turncoat poets, Cowley is unable to present this Machiavellian flexibility as a positive attribute—although

¹²⁸ In Waller, ed., *Essays*.

¹²⁹ *The Prince*, chapter XVIII, pp. 139-40 (trans. Bondanella, p. 61).

he still borrows Davenant's distinctive use of the nautical verb 'laveer', which we encountered in chapter three, to construct the metaphor. The technical term, which had connoted skill and dexterity in Davenant's hands, becomes a marker of Cowley's contempt.

And yet he retains his political relativism: his analysis of the passions cuts across partisan lines, indifferently to particular political forms. The essay 'Of Greatness' uses Cromwell, 'the late Gyant of our Nation', to exemplify the passions of ambition and vainglory, but also criticizes avarice through the pointed example of kings who raise unconstitutional taxes on their subjects (pp. 432-33). In 'The Danger of Procrastination', meanwhile, the passion of vanity is illustrated by a royalist gentleman who 'was taken Prison, and lost his life afterwards, only by staying to put on a Band, and adjust his Periwig' (p. 453). Neither side, then, was free of corrupting passions. Cowley configures political turmoil through a distinctive metaphor of labyrinths: 'Of Agriculture' elevates rural husbandry as a sanctuary from 'the dark and confused Labyrinths of Human Malice' (p. 403). The metaphor implies a general, nonpartisan confusion, in which everyone is lost. Thus, in the 'Ode Upon Liberty', humans are trapped by their passions ('by various Tyrants Captive lead'):

And sometimes Lust, like the Misguiding Light,
Drawes them through all the Labyrinths of Night. (p. 388)

By working in such resolutely psychological—and apolitical—terms, Cowley was able to sustain Hobbes' ultra-negative definition of liberty as 'absence of Opposition'.¹³⁰ The accompanying essay, 'Of Liberty', reaches for a bestial, predatory metaphor to describe people in thrall to their passions as 'Evil wilde Beasts' (p. 385)—reminiscent of Hobbes' formula, '*homo homini lupus*', which we also saw Davenant adapting in *Gondibert*.¹³¹ 'Of Agriculture' contrasts these wild beasts with herd animals, in the now-familiar recurring metaphor for well-governed order under absolutist power:

[Husbandmen] live like Sheep and Kine, by the allowances of Nature, and
others like Wolves and Foxes by the acquisition of Rapine. (p. 402)

¹³⁰ *Leviathan*, chapter XXI, p. 324.

¹³¹ See chapter three: Davenant, *Preface*, pp. 12-13, and Paganini, 'Hobbes, Gassendi, and the Tradition of Political Epicureanism', pp. 15-17.

The historiography offered by the *Essays* does not confer normative authority on either side. Cowley displaces the division between roundheads and royalists, offering instead a distinction between ‘Sheep’ and ‘Wolves’—interpreting the conflict as a civil war in the Hobbesian sense, driven by the delinquent psychology of both sides. This might have been one way of achieving the stated aim of the 1656 *Preface*, of extinguishing the ‘*Titles of Division*’.

Cowley also continues to imagine the possibilities of an Art of Oblivion, a means of interrupting the passions and achieving a state of passive resignation. The *Essays* are constantly self-effacing, even self-erasing: ‘Here wrapt in th’Arms of Quiet let me ly’ (p. 400). Cowley’s voice disappears behind the chorus of others (Martial, Horace, Virgil, Seneca), all offering almost indistinguishable *sententiae* on stoic fortitude. The counter-heroic turn we saw in the *Davideis* also reappears. Cowley moves thematically away from the heroic theme, ‘Liberty’—contained in any case by the very negative definition of ‘liberty’—through ‘Solitude’, and into ‘Obscurity’. The ‘Ode Upon Liberty’ celebrates his abandonment of epic poetry in favour of more rambling, discursive genres:

The more Heroique strain let others take,
 Mine the Pindarique way I’le make.
 [...]
 A thousand Liberties it shall dispense,
 And yet shall manage all without offence; (p. 391)

The Pindaric ode offers ‘Liberties... without offence’ by using flights of fancy to free readers from the constraints of their delinquent, corporeal passions. Cowley often conceptualizes this through metaphors of the innocent, playful behaviour of birds. At the end of this stanza appears an ‘Imperial Eagle’, a symbol of Roman militarism. It seizes its prey and begins to ‘devour’ it—a recurrence of the verb we have previously associated, in Cowley and Davenant, with a Hobbesian sense of restless appetite. But this appetite is unexpectedly displaced by an abrupt resurgence of innocence, when the eagle suddenly abandons its ‘power’, and ‘flies cheerfully away’ (p. 391).

The unorthodox, ambivalent drift of Cowley’s political views did not go unnoticed by contemporary readers. In 1668 the Catholic apologist Roger Palmer, Earl of Castlemaine, invoked Cowley’s memory in response to an accusation by William Lloyd that Catholics had

betrayed the Stuarts by accommodating themselves to the Commonwealth. Castlemaine answered the charge with some provocative plain speaking:

Everybody knows, that some Great men got out of *Decimation* by favour, and that many Gentlemen (it may be out of Prudence, knowing the end of Plots) refused to receive *Letters*, much less *Commissions* from the King... neither failed their a compliance in Poets too, as in *Cowly* and *Cleveland* themselves.¹³²

Castlemaine chose extreme examples of conformity to show how natural and inescapable the defactoist rationale had been: Cowley, whose royalist reputation had been revived that year by Sprat, and the cavalier satirist John Cleveland, whose petition to Cromwell was frequently reprinted with editions of his poetry.¹³³ Martin Dzelzainis has argued that Castlemaine was trying to build bridges with the newly ascendant alliance of Catholics, Nonconformists, and former Cromwellians—led by Buckingham, and supported by Marvell—who sought a return to the 1650s policy of religious toleration, and who the next chapter will consider further.¹³⁴ Cowley's flexible, Hobbesian pragmatism was amenable to tolerationist arguments, and this may have recommended him to Castlemaine here.

A later and less moderate source indicates how the minority perception of Cowley as a turncoat still survived into the following decades. The 1682 pamphlet *Wit and Loyalty Revived* reprinted Cowley's ultra-royalist satire of 1642, *The puritan and the Papist*, alongside pungently anti-puritan cavalier satires by John Berkenhead and Samuel Butler. Cowley had suppressed the poem in his 1656 volume, but the anonymous editor tried to recover it as his greatest work:

when at the same time his Copy upon *Brutus*, and that upon the *Bishop of Lincoln's* enlargement from the *Tower* have met with the good fortune to have place there, although they are in some sort, *Satyrs* upon *himself* and so unworthy his Name, and the good Company they appear in: that considering the *Loyalty* of their *Arguments*, we might, it may be, have expected them in Mr. *Waller's* Works rather than Mr. *Cowley's*; and from there to have been purged by the Wisdom of *later* and more *correct Editions* of his *Book*.¹³⁵

¹³² Roger Palmer, Earl of Castlemaine, *A Reply to the Answer of the Catholique Apology* (London, 1668), pp. 128-29.

¹³³ See John Cleveland, *Cleveland his Petition to His Highnesse the Lord Protector* (London, 1657).

¹³⁴ Martin Dzelzainis, 'Marvell and the Earl of Castlemaine', in Warren Chernaik and Martin Dzelzainis, eds., *Marvell and Liberty* (Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 292-98, 305-7.

¹³⁵ Anon., ed., *Wit and Loyalty Reviv'd*, sig. A1^v.

The editor is as intent as Sprat on resurrecting a royalist Cowley, but is unable to brush aside his turncoat reputation quite so easily. In fact, s/he is considerably more explicit than Sprat that the refashioning of Cowley is an act of selective interpretation: if he is to be included with the cavalier satirists, the poems which do not fit have to be explained away as ‘*Satyrs upon himself*’, worthy only of the arch-turncoat Waller.¹³⁶

The fatuous joke that Cowley’s hard and irregular poems would belong better in an edition of Waller shows how difficult contemporaries found it to know how to read him. His poetry had simply become un-cavalier in style, generically heterogeneous, and politically heterodox. We have seen how Cowley’s 1656 *Poems* abandoned monarchist teleology in favour of a more contingent theory of political obligations as transferrable, according to the Hobbesian categories of a *de facto* protective and coercive power. He replaced the machinery of allegory with a more relativistic mode of dramatization which analyzed political action not in terms of partisan recrimination but through the kinetic psychology of the passions. Although Cowley remained in close contact with Davenant, his interpretation of Hobbism took a markedly different path. Cowley eschewed Machiavellian force and fraud and elevated spiritual reformation and submission—themes which nevertheless resonated in Cromwellian England. His short-lived return to royalist panegyric in 1660 was insufficient to fully erase this memory. In the *Essays* he developed through the late 1650s and 1660s, he retreated to his themes of political relativism, resignation, and psychological amelioration. In the next chapter, we will turn to the turncoats who adapted to the final mid-century revolution more successfully. As it turned out, the Machiavellianism which Cowley could not stomach proved crucial to this effort.

¹³⁶ The attack is presumably also motivated by Waller’s increasingly Whiggish reputation: Warren Chernaik, ‘Edmund Waller’, *ODNB*, www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28556 (accessed 20th October 2015).

Chapter Six

Turncoat Poets at the Restoration

With the Restoration of the Stuarts came the resurrection of older defences of monarchy. These were not always mutually compatible, and often worked to conceal rather than confront the widespread uncertainty over what the Restoration actually meant. The foundation of Charles II's power—whether he ruled by invitation, by inheritance, by divine right, or by conquest—was open to question.¹ Poets of the moment were understandably unwilling to unravel this knot, striving to suggest harmony and synthesis rather than committing to a specific interpretation of the Restoration. Some tried to return to the old Caroline theme of 'halcyon days' which we saw Waller grappling with in chapter two; others presented Charles II as a healer who could reduce the nation's differences to an orderly synthesis, recycling a conceit which had been favoured by Cromwell. Most poets—Cowley included—set about enthusiastically deifying the new king, often via rhetoric recycled from the previous Stuart coronations of 1603 and 1625, but with the crucial addition of Charles's martyred father.² This heady mix of deification and nostalgia did not provide a definitive answer to the major political uncertainties about the Restoration—how did Charles' supposed divine appointment cohere with more mundane questions about the shape of the Church, or the constitutional role of parliament? Nor was it politically neutral—sacralization and nostalgia could be used to mask awkward facts about recent history, or to authenticate a partisan interpretation of the Restoration with an appearance of ancient tradition.

The genre and rhetoric of Restoration panegyric were as unsettled as its underlying ideology. One representative effort bore the indecisive title 'A Mixt Poem Partly Historicall, Partly Panegyricall, upon the Happy Return of his Sacred Majesty'; its author, John Crouch,

¹ Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and his Kingdoms, 1660-1685* (London, 2005), p. 51.

² See N. H. Keeble, *The Restoration: England in the 1660s* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 38-40, 47-8; Kevin Sharpe, *Rebranding Rule: The Restoration and Revolution Monarchy, 1660-1714* (New Haven, 2013), pp. 5-7, 47-9; Jose, *Ideas of the Restoration*, *passim*.

added much devotional and satirical matter besides.³ This chapter will map out how the formerly royalist writers who had defected to the Commonwealth in the 1650s adapted to these puzzling new circumstances. The previous chapters have argued that the turncoat poets turned to rationalist political theory—an unstable synthesis of Machiavelli and Hobbes—to conceptualize sovereignty as a secular, artificial construct, and political obligations as therefore contingent and transferable. Last chapter we saw how Cowley reacted to the Restoration by attempting to throw off this logic (unsuccessfully); the focus will shift now to Waller, Davenant, and a younger poet who had come under their influence, John Dryden. The first two sections will ask how they negotiated the revival of more traditional discourses of Stuart power (the love between subject and ruler; the mythical ancient church and constitution; the divine right of kings), but also how they retained an awareness of uncertainty which could reinforce the political lessons of the 1650s. The second section will trace the formative influences on Dryden's thinking in *Astraea Redux*. The final section will map out how the poets fared (particularly Dryden and Marvell) once the rapturous excitement of May 1660 had been derailed by the crises of the later 1660s.

1. Dryden and the Reasoning of Restoration Panegyric

The most notable unifying feature of Restoration panegyric is its proud incompatibility with secular political theory—the disenchanted analyses of Machiavelli, Hobbes, and republican propagandists like Nedham. Panegyrists wanted 1660 to designate the restoration of an older, more traditionally Christian, way of thinking. In his 'Mixt Poem', Crouch celebrated the death of Cromwell as the 'proud *Leviathan* hurl'd' out of the world, described the French crown (accused of allying with the Protectorate) as a 'Machivilian cap', and attacked Nedham as a 'malicious Raven' and 'black-mouthed Cerberus'.⁴ Royalists were concerned by a problem we have

³ John Crouch, *A Mixt Poem Partly Historical, Partly Panegyricall, upon the Happy Return of his Sacred Majesty Charles the Second, &c.* (London, 1660).

⁴ Crouch, *A Mixt Poem*, pp. 2-3, 8.

encountered in previous chapters, the way writers following Machiavelli and Hobbes could self-consciously exploit the plasticity of language to wrench the accepted sense of political and ethical terminology.⁵ This could be sneeringly attributed to their lower social class and education. Alexander Brome cited the ‘*Jealousies and Fears*’ of the 1640s, a key slogan of parliamentary rhetoric, calling them ‘Goblins’, fraudulently ‘Devis’d’ by the ‘Rout’.⁶ Similarly, Thomas Pecke:

...when the *Laws*
Were form’d in *Cutlers Shops*, and the GOOD CAUSE
Wanted a *Catechresis* to make out
Her Epithete:⁷

Poets celebrating the revival of right religion with the Church of England and sacred monarchy, like Henry Oxinden, took aim at this new political vocabulary’s disenchanting Otherness:

Ye Epicurean wits, who do surmise
Your selves to be so mystically wise,
Fancying Religion to be like the Law
Meere policy to keep bad men in awe:⁸

Epicurean hedonism was a suspicious, foreign agent interposed against normative English Christianity.⁹ Thomas Mayhew also invoked the ‘novell *Chaos*’ of Epicurean atomism as an analogy for the linguistic duplicity of the puritans, who had misappropriated a language of ‘*Discipline and Doctrine*’ which properly belonged to the ‘harmonious chime’ of the Church of England. It is interesting to find this contrast between republican ‘chaos’ and monarchical ‘chime’—particularly if Mayhew had one eye on Milton’s *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643)—long before the debates over rhyme in the later 1660s. Mayhew, like most royalists, based his argument around the contention that sacred monarchy, guaranteed by Providence,

⁵ See previous discussion in chapters one and two.

⁶ Alexander Brome, *A Congratulatory Poem, on the Miraculous, and Glorious Return of that unparallel’d King Charles the II.* (London, 1660), p. 1. Other royalists who recalled the phrase included Clarendon in his *History* (vol. 5, p. 148), and Samuel Butler in the second couplet of *Hudibras. The First Part.* (London, 1663), p. 1: ‘When hard words, *Jealousies and Fears* | Set Folks together by the ears’. See Achinstein, ‘The Politics of Babel’, p. 16.

⁷ Thomas Pecke, *To the Most High and Mighty Monarch, Charles the II* (London, 1660), p. 2.

⁸ Henry Oxinden, *Charls Triumphant* (London, 1660), p. 5.

⁹ Reid Barbour, *English Epicures and Stoics*, pp. 13-22.

‘exceeds’ the ‘*systema*’ of innovating and xenophile puritans and republicans.¹⁰ To have any ‘*systema*’ at all was at best suspicious and at worst an affront against God.

This self-conscious piety and nostalgia could disguise some ambiguous personal histories. Most of the writers quoted above were in fact refashioning themselves as staunch royalists: Henry Oxinden, Thomas Pecke, Thomas Mayhew, and John Crouch had all acquiesced in Cromwellian rule. Oxinden was a friend of Nedham’s and, Blair Worden suggests, shared Nedham’s analysis of politics ‘in terms of Machiavellian duplicity’.¹¹ Pecke was a panegyrist of Richard Cromwell, and the recipient of a dedicatory ode by Payne Fisher.¹² Mayhew had written an elegy on the death of Oliver Cromwell.¹³ And Crouch was critical of Commonwealth policies, but still advocated peaceful compliance for the sake of ‘security’, in his newsbook *Mercurius Democritus*.¹⁴ Despite his attack on Cromwellian Hobbism and Machiavellianism, the dedicatory epistle to Crouch’s Restoration ode cites Cowley and even Waller’s efforts approvingly, as models to be emulated.¹⁵ Crouch either missed or strategically ignored Waller’s Machiavellianism, but he had presumably noted Cowley’s abandonment of Hobbesian relativism and embrace of the full arsenal of deifying Stuart iconography.

Kevin Sharpe listed in detail the conventional conceits Restoration panegyrists applied to Charles: the nation’s spouse; the nation’s father, often compared to biblical patriarchs like David or Joshua; a Roman emperor, especially Augustus or Constantine; the nation’s physician, alluding to the superstition of touching to cure the King’s Evil (which Charles revived); the sun-kissed dispelling clouds or calming tempestuous seas, punning on the Christological sense of ‘son’; the beginning of spring, or of a new golden age; a phoenix; finally, an earthly God, sanctified by

¹⁰ Thomas Mayhew, *Upon the Joyfull and Welcome Return of His Sacred Majestie, Charles the Second* (London, 1660), pp. 1, 4.

¹¹ Blair Worden, *Literature and Politics*, pp. 16-17.

¹² Ian McLellan, ‘Thomas Pecke’ *ODNB*; www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21741 (accessed 20th October 2015).

¹³ Thomas Mayhew, *Upon the death of his late highness, Oliver lord protector of the Common-Wealth* (London, 1658), discussed by Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, pp. 164-70; possibly the son of Thomas Mayhew, a puritan colonial governor and missionary in Massachusetts.

¹⁴ Jason McElligott, ‘John Crouch’, *ODNB*; www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6814 (accessed 20th October 2015).

¹⁵ Crouch, *A Mixt Poem*, sig. A2^v.

his descent from his martyred father, and deified by analogy with Christ.¹⁶ To this we can now add the demonization of puritans as hypocritical Machiavels. Almost all of these are prominent features of Cowley's Restoration ode.¹⁷ Regardless of his hostile reception by Clarendon and the court, Cowley was the author whom celebratory royalist poets tended to invoke on their side.¹⁸ And one could cite an abundance of almost identical poems, if not always so accomplished.

Perceptions did not necessarily match reality, and Stuart sacralization could mask more cynical positions—occasionally resulting in some anomalous arguments. Giles Fleming's *Stemma Sacrum* is one of many genealogical tracts demonstrating Charles' patrilineal right to rule, but its prefatory poem restates the case in more material terms:

If from your Fathers ye possess
The land you rightly call your own,
By the same law ye must confess
That unto *Charles* belongs the throne.¹⁹

Patrimonial inheritance is an obvious commonplace, but Fleming was unusually frank in pressing its application to the legal titles of the propertied classes. Material pragmatism smoothly displaces constitutional and religious rectitude as the argument's organizing assumption. Martin Lluelyn's Restoration panegyric takes a related pragmatic turn:

What Birth, nor Brains, Treasure, nor Force could do,
Our kind Necessity hath rais'd Thee to.²⁰

As we will see, panegyrists conventionally represented Charles' merits as tokens—subsidiary to and symbolic of his divinely-ordained status. But Lluelyn makes Charles' 'Brains', 'Treasure', and 'Force' (if he indeed possesses these), and even his 'Birth' entirely subordinate to the concept of 'Necessity'. This veers tactlessly into the sort of reason-of-state terminology which had undermined constitutional language and inflamed mutual distrust in the debates of the

¹⁶ Sharpe, *Rebranding Rule*, p. 47.

¹⁷ See comparisons with the sun in stanza 2; conceits of healing, 5; connections with Charles the Martyr, 8-9; deification, 12; comparison with classical heroes, 13.

¹⁸ e.g. Crouch, *A Mixt Poem*, sig. A2^v; Brett, *The Restoration*, p. 3; Samuel Willes, *To the Kings Most Sacred Majesty, upon his Happy and Glorious Return, an Endeavoured Poem* (London, 1660), p. 1.

¹⁹ Giles Fleming, *Stemma Sacrum The Royal Progeny* (London, 1660), sig. A7^v.

²⁰ Martin Lluelyn, *To the Kings Most Excellent Majesty* (London, 1660), p. 5.

1640s.²¹ Again, this was an uncomfortably ambivalent and transferrable language for royalist panegyric.

It is sometimes difficult to tell whether these anomalies were the result of accidental clumsiness. The poets working in the summer of 1660 were relying mostly on guesswork, in the absence of a settled iconography with defined boundaries of tact and decorum: we should not be surprised to find the odd inconsistency. However, I hope to show that similar mismatches are in fact a structural feature of panegyrics by poets who we might assume knew what they were doing: Davenant, Waller, and, above all, Dryden. The overwhelming consensus—albeit serving a diverse range of political agendas, and helping to conceal that diversity—was to fashion the Restoration as the triumphant revival of an older way of thinking about sacred monarchy. The task for Davenant, Waller, and Dryden was to synthesize this with the rather different way their experience of the 1650s had trained them to think.

Davenant's ode, published in around August, seems particularly inconsistent. In the early stages of the poem, he begins to formulate a secular, Hobbesian argument. Charles' restoration is necessary, he implies, to prevent a breakdown into civil war:

No more shall your bold *Subjects* strive to *Reign*;
And *fatal Honour* on each other gain. (23-4)²²

This couplet comes close to the volatile world of *Gondibert*, where Machiavellian strongmen vied for '*fatal Honour*'; competition for glory was, we recall, one of Hobbes' three 'principall causes' of civil war.²³ Davenant then launches into a minor theme we noted briefly in *Gondibert* and the *Davideis*, a Hobbesian critique of the common law:

No more shall any *Antient* of our *Law*,
From *old Records* such *Modern Meaning* draw.
As made even *Lawyers* lawless, and enquire
How justly Kings to *armed Pow'r* aspire. (33-6)

²¹ See chapter two, and Baldwin, 'Reason of State and English Parliaments', pp. 635-6.

²² In Gibbs, ed., *The Shorter Poems*.

²³ *Leviathan*, chapter XIII, p. 192.

The dismissive epithet ‘old Records’ evokes no sympathy for the notion of an ancient constitution. The ironic pun it produces in the legal title ‘Antient’,²⁴ juxtaposed with ‘Modern Meaning’, implies that common-law practice was anachronistic, corrupted by political manipulation and innovation. This made lawyers ‘lawless’ as their enquiries actually infringed the unitary sovereign authority upon which, on a Hobbesian view, law really depended. In the next lines, Davenant characterizes sovereignty as military power comprising of coercive and protective functions:

The *Civil Robe* did *Swords Power* suspect,
 Though onely *Armed Pow’r* can *Law* protect,
 And rescue *Wealth* from *Crowds*, when *Poverty*
 Treads down those *Laws* on which the *Rich* rely. (37-40)

The verb ‘protect’ reappropriates a key term of Cromwellian politics—merely changing the person who wields the ‘Armed Pow’r’—but also inculcates Hobbes’ concept of sovereignty as contingent on the capacity to protect subjects and their property by enforcing law.²⁵ The alternative is civil war, now driven by another of Hobbes’ three causes, ‘Poverty’. This pragmatic argument from property, which looked so anomalous in Fleming’s *Stemma Sacrum*, is perfectly at home in Davenant. His Restoration poem is not so thoroughly relativistic as his earlier Hobbesian writings: in 1660 he insists that only ‘the Regal Office’ could reconcile ‘Justice’ with the ‘Sword’ (61-4). But this ability of monarchs to combine the roles of judge and executioner not only fulfils Hobbes’ prescription that ‘the sword of war, be in the same hands wherein is the sword of justice’, but also his argument that monarchy is structurally superior to other forms of government because of this indivisibility of sovereign powers.²⁶ All this would have been thoroughly alarming to constitutionalists like Davenant’s former roommate, Clarendon.

Thus far Davenant has formulated a characteristically Hobbesian argument for the necessity of obedience to Charles II. But in the final two thirds of the poem, this secular reasoning disappears in favour of intense sacralization. Davenant cycles twice through a list of

²⁴ *OED*, ‘Ancient’, senses A. (adj.) 1 and B. (n.¹), 7.

²⁵ Malcolm, ‘Introduction’, p. 16; *Leviathan*, chapter XVII, p. 260.

²⁶ See *The Elements of Law*, chapter XX, p. 112; *Leviathan*, chapter XIX, pp. 298-300.

Charles' virtues which obviously have some pragmatic relevance to England's problems, but primarily work to deify him. Charles' wit and celerity of mind are configured through the conventional metaphor of the sun:

A Mind so swift, that in a moment's space
Not only flies o're the *Diurnal Race*,
But does *collect* all *objects* of the Sun,
And marks what through the Globe the *Great* have done.
[...]
For *Pow'r* requires an universal Eye:
It should, like yours, *see* all and *suddainly*. (97-104)

We encountered Davenant's conceits of a ruler's power to 'collect' scattered particles together in chapter three—the conceit owes something to the visual metaphor in the frontispiece of *Leviathan*.²⁷ But here, the conceit is assimilated to a metaphor of quasi-divine omniscience (i.e. 'universal Eye'), reinforced by the Christological pun lurking in the metaphor of the 'Sun'. The conceit reappears later with Charles' 'instant thought':

Which in a moment does all compass run;
And then contract all objects into one; (175-6)

The conceit of 'contract' puns on the senses of physical contraction and marital contract, with an added Hobbesian sense of social contract, contracting 'all objects into one' like the sovereign figure on the *Leviathan* frontispiece.²⁸ But, again, this is subordinated to the overarching metaphor of deification, with the Christological pun now acquiring apocalyptic implications: 'And judge all Empires as the Sun might do' (177).²⁹

In *Gondibert*, Davenant had argued that it was specifically the role of poets to shore up sovereign power, using rhetoric to coerce and overwhelm readers' private judgements. A similar typology appears in the Restoration poem, with its Hobbesian, anti-republican attack on 'Orators (the Peoples *Witches*)' who made parliament 'stopless as a running multitude' (183-86). 'Stopless' reinforces the Hobbesian context by implying the orators' unceasing, restless appetites,

²⁷ See chapter three: *Gondibert*, l.v.29; 'To My Lord Broghill', l.260: 'Pow'r does scatter'd strength collect'.

²⁸ *OED*, 'contract', v., senses 1, 3, and 7; the conceit borrows from John Donne's poem 'The Sun Rising', l. 26: 'the world's contracted thus', in *The Major Works*, ed. by John Carey (Oxford, 1990), p. 93.

²⁹ 'Might' is used here as an indicative—i.e. defining what Charles is able to do—rather than a subjunctive possibility: cp. *OED*, 'may', v., senses 4 and 7.

in addition to their long-winded lack of punctuation.³⁰ But Davenant contrasts them with the ‘Harmony’ of Charles’ rule, ‘As if *Love* rul’d, and *Laws* were writ in *Verse*’ (199-200)—leaving the Hobbesian foundations of his argument behind, and reinstating himself as the writer of Caroline masques, with their governing theme of Platonic love.³¹ Davenant’s theory of the coercive function of poets might explain these conflicting impulses: a partial Hobbesian argument is there for those who can read it, but for the average reader he supplements this with a wider battery of sacralizing and Platonic imagery.

Most royalist rhetoric attempted to shut down the need for nuanced theoretical arguments by configuring the Restoration as the mysterious benevolence of God. Kevin Sharpe argued that although the writers who ventured into print were content with the rhetoric of sacred monarchy for the time being, the twenty-year hiatus in monarchical rule had killed off the English people’s underlying faith in the old iconography, which enjoyed its final, brief, and ill-fated apogee in the spring of 1660.³² N. H. Keeble has enlisted Dryden on the side of the divine-right enthusiasts, deploying Christological metaphors and drawing connections with Charles the Martyr and King David to authenticate the divinely-sanctioned nature of the new regime.³³ But Dryden can hardly have failed to notice the atmosphere of uncertainty which Keeble takes pains to emphasize elsewhere:

Official and loyalist accounts of the Restoration were in no doubt that events had been divinely impelled to march purposefully on to their proper conclusion, but the experience of the time was of contingency, insecurity, and doubt rather than of Providential inevitability.³⁴

This tension, between normative sacralization on the one hand, and an awareness of contingency and insecurity on the other, is central to what follows. The deliberation between these modes of thinking is a key structuring feature of Waller’s and especially Dryden’s poems.

³⁰ *OED*, ‘stopless’, adj., senses a and c.

³¹ Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment*, pp. 61-5.

³² Sharpe, *Rebranding Rule*, pp. 57, 199-200.

³³ Keeble, *The Restoration*, p. 39.

³⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 47, 50-1.

Historians of the Restoration who have discussed the survival of non-royalist feeling after 1660 have tended to cast this in terms of a ‘radical’ fringe of puritans and former republicans.³⁵ But supporters of the Protectorate were not doctrinaire republicans, and were generally socially conservative and instinctively monarchist; yet they had had their reasons for accepting Cromwellian rule. Royalists who had been alienated by the assertive clericalism of the Stuart Church—most obviously Hobbes—were willing to embrace the limited toleration and more thoroughgoing Erastianism achieved by the Independents.³⁶ For such readers, triumphal encomia on the revival of sacred monarchy and its bishops and prayer book may have been counterproductive. Although they join in the attacks on the hypocrisy and fanaticism of puritan politics, the Church barely seems to feature in Davenant, Waller, and Dryden’s versions of the Restoration. Davenant’s poem, which entertains considerably more religious rhetoric than the others, fashions Charles as the ‘*Rock*’ on which the ‘*firmness*’ of religion will be founded (207-8). The metaphor of a rock would normally allude to St. Peter and the apostolic succession, but Davenant invests these connotations exclusively in the Erastian sovereign, eliding any role for bishops. Beyond ecclesiology, writers like Nedham had developed a secular analysis of politics through the concept of ‘Interest’, to convince conservative readers of the legitimacy of transferring allegiance to the revolutionary regimes. We saw in chapter two how Waller had adopted some of this rhetoric, writing of the ‘joynt Interest of... this Nation’ in his *Panegyrick to my Lord Protector*.³⁷ Those who had found such arguments persuasive would not necessarily have agreed, with the majority of royalist commentators, that the Commonwealth had been *essentially* illegitimate, and that the Restoration was obviously an inevitable act of Providence.

The case of Dryden is clearly different from Waller’s or Davenant’s. Dryden only embarked on his public career in 1657 when young men, often with little or no memory of antebellum Stuart rule, had no choice but to accept the powers that were. Many men in similar positions became loyal servants of the Restoration; Dr Johnson absolved Dryden because, ‘if he

³⁵ cf. Harris, *Restoration*, pp. 48-50.

³⁶ Collins, *Allegiance Hobbes*, passim.

³⁷ Worden, *Literature and Politics*, p. 17; Raylor, ‘Waller’s Machiavellian Cromwell’, p. 395; see also Davenant’s limited uptake of ‘interest’ in chapter three, and Dryden’s below.

changed, he changed with the nation'. Dryden had worked with Milton and Marvell in the Office of Foreign Tongues, and walked alongside them in Cromwell's funeral cortège. And his *Heroique Stanzas* on Cromwell's death appeared in *Three Elegies on the Death of his Highness Oliver Lord Protector* (London, 1659) alongside contributions by Sprat and Marvell—the latter replaced at the last minute with Waller's elegy, as events had rendered Marvell's praise for Richard Cromwell unpublishable.³⁸ We do not know how closely Dryden may have interacted with Marvell, Waller, and Sprat, over this volume. But he seems to have become friends with Sprat and (probably via Sprat) Cowley by 1661, when Dryden and Sprat attended the first night of Cowley's comedy *Cutter of Coleman Street* on Cowley's behalf when he was ill. This way Dryden probably also became acquainted with Cowley's friend Davenant, whose company produced *Cutter of Coleman Street* and in which Davenant had procured Cowley a share.³⁹ Dryden had already borrowed the heroic quatrain of *Gondibert* for his *Heroique Stanzas* on Cromwell; he did so again in *Annus Mirabilis* (1666) and began to collaborate with Davenant on projects like *The Tempest* (1667). There is no clear evidence of personal links between Dryden and Waller, but their obvious similarities of neoclassical style and their later alignment as the leading panegyrists of the new regime's naval wars suggest Dryden was at least intimate with Waller on the page.

Amongst Dryden's first encounters with poets were with those who had grappled extensively with the transferability of allegiance in the 1650s. Furthermore, we have Aubrey's remark about Hobbes, which I quoted in chapter one:

Mr John Dreyden, Poet Laureat, is his great admirer, and oftentimes makes use of his Doctrine in his Playes—from Mr Dreyden himselfe.⁴⁰

It seems a reasonable conjecture that Dryden had learned this approach from his early acquaintance with Cowley and Davenant—especially, perhaps, his close reading of *Gondibert*. The next section will stress the particular proximity between Dryden's practice and Waller's, moving beyond their stylistic similarities into questions of political theory. Both poets'

³⁸ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 299.

³⁹ Nethercot, *The Muse's Hannibal*, pp. 203-6.

⁴⁰ Bod. MS Aubrey 9, f. 46^v.

neoclassical interests, especially the imagery of pagan fatalism, could provide a secular mode for thinking about politics. My starting assumption is that Dryden was familiar with Waller's 1650s poetry, and particularly with the method of adapting Machiavellian and Hobbesian conceits to fashion a rationalist, neoclassical hero.

We can begin by comparing the similar strategies in Waller's and Dryden's elegies on Cromwell, published together with Sprat's in 1659. Anthony Mortimer has highlighted Waller's use of an allusion to Livy in the opening section of *Upon the Late Storm, and of the Death of his Highness Ensuing the Same*, comparing Cromwell with Romulus, whom the Romans 'fell to worshipping' after his death (5-8).⁴¹ According to Mortimer, this foregrounds the role of Proclius Junius, the opportunist responsible for deifying Romulus: 'exploiting a useful superstition to strengthen a threatened government'.⁴² But, as I argued in chapter two, Waller's Livy was often refracted through Machiavelli's *Discourses*, where Machiavelli uses the religious cult sponsored by Romulus' successors to illustrate his instrumental theory of religion as a tool of civic order:

[Numa], finding a very fierce people, and being desirous to reduce them into civill obedience by peaceable wayes, applied himself to Religion, as a thing wholly necessary to preserve civility.⁴³

Jeffrey Collins has identified this instrumental view of religion as one of Hobbes' greatest conceptual debts to Machiavelli; and I suggested in chapter two how it could enable a secular-minded man like Waller to accommodate himself to the more pious discourse of religious reform.⁴⁴ Where Machiavelli had celebrated Romulus as the typical example of how republics can be founded through the *virtù* of one great man, the comparison with a weaker successor who strengthened his authority by fostering a religious cult around Romulus may have seemed to hold particular applications for Richard Cromwell.⁴⁵

⁴¹ In Thorn-Drury, ed., *Poems*.

⁴² Anthony Mortimer, 'Domesticating the Devil: Cromwell and his Elegists', in Kirsten Stirling and Martine de la Rochère, eds., *After Satan: Essays in Honour of Neil Forsyth* (Newcastle, 2010) pp. 49-50; see further Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, pp. 171-2.

⁴³ *Discourses*, Book I, chapter XI, p. 60 (trans. Walker, p. 139).

⁴⁴ Collins, *Allegiance of Hobbes*, pp. 37-40, 177-8; See for instance Waller's letter to Hobbes on the Major-Generals (July 1656; Malcolm, ed., *Correspondence*, vol. 1, p. 297), discussed in chapter two.

⁴⁵ *Discourses*, Book I, chapters ix and xix, pp. 49, 98-9 (trans. Walker, pp. 132, 165-6).

Mortimer argued that the celebration of pagan heroes in Cromwellian elegy was essential to displace the tradition of sacred monarchy which Oliver had broken—and Steven Zwicker has reached a similar conclusion about Dryden's *Heroique Stanzas*, which transform Cromwell not into 'Christian consolation' but merely a 'prodigious exemplar'.⁴⁶ Dryden approaches the constitutional ramifications of Cromwell's death through an allusion to Francesco Guicciardini's account of the siege of Bologna:

Bologna's walls thus mounted in the air
To seat themselves more surely than before. (63-64)

Guicciardini claimed that when the Spanish attempted to blow up the ramparts, a chapel to the Virgin Mary built against the wall miraculously fell back in the same place, filling the breach.⁴⁷ This again implies the political utility of religion—which seems not to lie in any spiritual content, but in its practical capacity to protect subjects. This is the latest in a series of architectural metaphors we have traced in the poems of Waller and Marvell which configure state institutions as works of human artifice. The paradoxical image of a city's walls secured by being razed to their foundations might suggest an instance of Machiavellian *ridurre ai principii*—strengthening the commonwealth by returning to its political foundations.⁴⁸ And the same Machiavellian sense of restoration might lie behind Dryden's use of the word '*Redux*' a year later. Dryden begins his *Heroique Stanzas* with the claim that praising Cromwell is 'our duty and our interest too' (13)—condensing the rationalist argument that political obligation, or 'duty', should be aligned with 'interest'. These small examples indicate how Waller and Dryden had attempted to renovate the genre of elegy to be more appropriate to the circumstances and political theory of the 1650s. Points of contact between Waller and Dryden's poems generally coincide with Tacitean or Machiavellian interpretations of events. I will turn now to a close reading of *Astraea Redux*, to chart how this pattern recurs in Waller and Dryden's Restoration poems.

⁴⁶ Mortimer, 'Domesticating the Devil', pp. 51-8; Steven N. Zwicker, *Politics and Language in Dryden's Poetry: the Arts of Disguise* (Princeton, 1984) p. 73.

⁴⁷ Hammond and Hopkins, ed., *Poems*, vol. 1, p. 23n.

⁴⁸ *Discourses*, Book III, chapter I, pp. 433-41 (trans. Walker, pp. 385-90); see Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, pp. 198-9.

2. *Astraea Redux*

The first thing to note about *Astraea Redux* is that Dryden's Charles II finds himself in an insecure, fatalist world comparable to that of the Cromwell elegies. Dryden's modern editors have detected an echo of Tacitus in the 'dreadful quiet' felt in Britain at the poem's opening (3).⁴⁹ Dryden's hints of Christian hope sit in tension with a more secular, Tacitean instability:

Thus when the bold Typhoeus scaled the sky,
And forced great Jove from his own heaven to fly,
(What king, what crown from treason's reach is free,
If Jove and heaven can violated be?) (37-40)

Dryden may have been thinking about the secularizing tendencies of 1650s Erastianism and republicanism, but this is an extreme image of disenchantment, disrupting any sense of providential continuity—where not even 'Jove and heaven' can be relied on to remain inviolable. This violation unleashes a violent state of licence and contingency:

The rabble now such freedom did enjoy
As winds at sea that use it to destroy:
Blind as the Cyclops, and as wild as he,
They owned a lawless salvage liberty. (43-6)

This state of nature is characterized by a Hobbesian excess of 'freedom' (like the 'too much freedom' the Israelites had enjoyed in Book IV of the *Dauides*), reflecting Hobbes' negative, anti-republican definition of liberty as mere license, or 'absence of Opposition'.⁵⁰

The Cyclops simile is significant because it also appears in Waller's Restoration poem:

Great Britain, like blind Polypheme of late,
In a wild rage, became the scorn and hate
Of her proud neighbours, who began to think
She, with the weight of her own force, would sink.
But you are come, and all their hopes are vain;
This giant isle has got her eye again. (19-24)⁵¹

⁴⁹ Hammond and Hopkins, ed., *Poems*, vol. 1, p. 38n; misprints 'i.45' for 'i.65' and translates 'quies' (whose primary sense is 'dream') as 'quiet'; cp. John Jackson, trans. *Annals in Loeb, Tacitus* vol. III (Cambridge, MA, 1931), p. 355.

⁵⁰ *Leviathan*, chapter XXI, p. 324.

⁵¹ In Thorn-Drury, ed., *Poems*.

Dryden had used the Cyclops to suggest Britain in a state of nature, but Waller uses the same simile to describe the British state itself. His handling is not superficially different to other panegyrists' images of a headless body politic, such as Arthur Brett's extended conceit:

The Head was made with shame to bleed,
Now let the Legs and Feet take heed;
Gods own Anointed is at hand[.]⁵²

But there is a conceptual gap here: Waller's metaphor comparatively diminishes the monarch's importance, represented not by the whole head but only the single (albeit important) faculty of sight. This is diminishing not least as it represses any submerged allusion to the regicide. Waller's body politic is 'wild' but largely intact, undergoing a comparatively minor surgical modification. We will encounter more examples later of Waller and Dryden's taking a relativistic view of the Restoration as a small change between strikingly similar regimes.⁵³ Besides this detail, there is a further Hobbesian implication in the way Waller's conceit of the Cyclops—even with its eye/king restored—still conceptualizes the state as a terrifying monster.

This is the world into which Charles II emerges. Whilst Dryden does fashion Charles using explicitly Christological imagery, this coexists with a competing image, of a hero in the mode of pagan fatalism. Charles first appears, like Aeneas, 'tossed by Fate' (51).⁵⁴ The conceit of Charles lost at sea was ubiquitous in Restoration panegyric, but incidences which work through a specific allusion to the *Aeneid* are comparatively rare. One exception is Thomas Higgons' *A Panegyrick to the King*, closely contemporary with Waller and Dryden's poems, which compares Charles with the 'great Aeneas' who 'on the Floods was tost'.⁵⁵ But Higgons was also a Cromwellian MP, who in 1658, with Waller's patronage, had initiated the naval advice-to-a-painter genre in celebration of Protectoral policy—beginning the well-known sequence of

⁵² Brett, *The Restoration*, p. 7.

⁵³ A perspective supported by modern historians: Keeble, *Restoration*, pp. 77-8.

⁵⁴ Alluding to Virgil, *Aeneid*, 'fato profugus' (l. 2); John Ogilby had translated this as 'driven by fate': *The Works of Publius Virgilius Maro* (London, 1649), p. 1 (sig. B1^r).

⁵⁵ Thomas Higgons, *A Panegyrick to the King* (London, 1660), p. 10.

panegyrics and rejoinders we will encounter again later.⁵⁶ Another poet who compared Charles with Aeneas was Dryden's friend and patron, Sir Robert Howard—a staunch royalist in 1660, but who had engaged closely with the Hobbesian poetics of the 1650s, as we will also find later. The *Aeneid* surely offered Providentialist contexts for reading the Restoration, but these rationalist poets seem to have been interested primarily in its more contingent imagery of pagan fatalism. The allusion's problematic ambivalence is thrown clearly into relief by comparison with another ex-Cromwellian panegyrist, Thomas Mayhew, who scorned the 'weak and poor romances' of 'him, that wandered from the Trojan war'. Mayhew dispelled the pagan *Aeneid* by presenting Charles as a 'Dove', an instrument of Providence identified with Noah.⁵⁷ Cowley also depicts Charles as 'tost at Sea', but in the following stanza tells us that 'A Troop of Angels did him then attend': Charles' misfortunes merely serve to confirm his special, divine protection. For most royalists, fatalistic imagery like the comparison of Charles with Aeneas, tossed by fate, served only as a counterpoint to revelations of his true Providential election.

Royalists preferred to typologize Stuart monarchy as the normative Providential order, from which the Interregnum was, in its etymological sense, an aberrant interruption.⁵⁸ But *Astraea Redux* is remarkable for the extent to which Charles remains in a pagan fatalistic universe, with Christian connotations diminished or suppressed. His life is like a 'pilgrimage', but not in a spiritual sense—only that he is cut off from the 'sweets of youth's desired age' (53-4). Dryden continues:

His manly courage overcame his fate.
His wounds he took like Romans on his breast,
Which by his virtue were with laurels dressed. (56-8)

The word 'virtue' could be intended in a Christian, ethical sense (i.e. of Charles' patience), but, given that Charles is being fashioned as a warlike Roman hero in these lines, it is perhaps easier to interpret virtue in the sense of 'power'. The parallel 'manly courage' might also embolden us

⁵⁶ Higgons, trans., Giovanni Busenello, *A Perspective of the Naval Triumph of the Venetians over the Turk* (London, 1658), with a dedicatory poem by Waller (sig. B2^{r-v}); B. C. Pursell, 'Thomas Higgons', *ODNB*; www.odnb.com/view/article/13242.

⁵⁷ Mayhew, *Upon the Joyfull and Welcome Return of his Majestie*, pp. 6-7.

⁵⁸ e.g. William Chamberlayne, *Englands Jubile, or, A Poem of the Happy Return of His Sacred Majesty Charles the II* (London, 1660), p. 3.

in detecting the Machiavellian sense of *virtù*. Had Dryden been intent on pursuing Christological analogies, an image of Charles' wounded breast could easily have suggested the wounds which the Romans inflicted on Christ; instead, he specifically precludes this possibility by proudly aligning Charles with the Romans.

The image of Charles as Aeneas tossed by fate continues into a metaphor of seamanship:

How easy 'tis when Destiny proves kind
With full-spread sails to run before the wind;
But those that 'gainst stiff gales laveering go
Must be at once resolved and skilful too. (63-6)

Many helmsmen can be found floating grimly through the waters of Restoration panegyric. Brett described the flood of panegyric itself as 'that sea | Which now sustains his Majesty'.⁵⁹ As we saw with Mayhew and Cowley, most panegyrists used the conceit to rehearse Charles' special Providential protection: Rachel Jevon also configured him as Noah, with his dove bearing an olive branch.⁶⁰ But the heroic ethos propounded in Dryden's lines is not quite Christian patience. It is more like the Machiavellian prince's determination to conquer 'Destiny'. The reappearance of the verb 'laveering' is a highly distinctive borrowing from *Gondibert*.⁶¹ It implies using skill and guile to manage the nation's unruliness, as well as being adaptable to the cross-currents of Fortune. In *Gondibert*, Davenant had put it in the mouth of the Machiavellian rebel Hermegild, describing how to coerce the masses with rhetoric. The use of 'laveer' seems to indicate Dryden's studying Davenant for features of style and diction, and Machiavellian conceits for dramatizing political action.⁶²

Dryden's next example of Charles' skill and fortitude is drawn from the Roman histories. Such source material was comparatively unusual in Restoration panegyric, but was not monopolized by any particular party. The royalist Richard Brathwaite compared the English to

⁵⁹ Brett, *The Restoration*, p. 3.

⁶⁰ Rachel Jevon, *Exultationis Carmen to the Kings Most Excellent Majesty upon his Most Desired Return* (London, 1660), pp. 4, 6.

⁶¹ *Gondibert*, II.vi.32. We saw Cowley using it in a negative sense in his *Essays* (not printed until 1668) in chapter five. The only other precedents for its use were by Mildmay Fane in *Otia Sacra Optima Fides* (London, 1648), which only circulated privately; and by Richard Flecknoe in *Enigmaticall Characters* (London, 1658), to whom it is hard to imagine Dryden ascribing much authority.

⁶² See also Holberton, *Poetry and Protectorate*, pp. 201-2.

the Sabines in a thoroughly sacralizing passage on Charles the Martyr.⁶³ By contrast, the ex-Cromwellian Thomas Pecke described in irreverently secular terms how ‘Fate | Lop’d off in *Three years the Decemvirate*’, during which time ‘the *State* remain’d spurious’, before ‘she | Chose *Iulius Caesar PATER PATRIAE*’.⁶⁴ Pecke alludes to the concept of patriarchy, but rather than a normative Providential order, he presents a ‘spurious’ succession of regimes contingent on ‘fate’. Dryden’s use of Roman history offers a fatalist perspective closer to Pecke’s than Brathwaite’s:

He would not like soft Otho hope prevent
But stayed and suffered Fortune to repent:
These virtues Galba in a stranger sought,
And Piso to adopted empire brought. (67-70)

We saw Waller alluding to exactly the same episode from Tacitus in a speech in chapter two, to illustrate that monarchy was an ‘artificial thing’.⁶⁵ Galba, we recall, was childless and chose to adopt Piso rather than the effeminate and impetuous Otho. Piso was not the legitimate successor but was chosen meritocratically for his masculine virtues: a very different logic from the normative claims of hereditary monarchy. Dryden was presumably aware of the story’s applications, as I quoted Henry Savile in chapter two: ‘By Otho [one could learn] that the fortune of a rash man is *Torrenti similis*, which rises at an instant, and falles in a moment’, borrowing the Machiavellian metaphor for fortune from chapter XXV of *The Prince*.⁶⁶ In *Astraea Redux* the implied contrast is with Piso/Charles, whose *virtù* involves discretion and prudence as well as force: Dryden goes on to claim, ‘No rash procedure will his actions stain’ (88). But he also suppresses the not unimportant sequel: Otho eventually got his revenge, killing Galba and Piso and seizing power until he committed suicide after being usurped in turn by Vitellius. For educated readers this would have cast a shadow over the whole allusion, with its suggestive warning about the Restoration’s possible fragility.

⁶³ Richard Brathwaite, *To His Majesty upon his Happy Arrivall in our Late Discomposed Albion* (London, 1660), p. 4.

⁶⁴ Pecke, *To the Most High and Mighty Monarch*, p. 4.

⁶⁵ In D’Ewes’ note of Waller’s speech on 15th July 1642: Snow and Young, eds., *Private Journals*, p. 217 and n.

⁶⁶ Savile, ‘A. B. To the Reader’, in, trans., *The End of Nero and Beginning of Galba*, sig. ¶13^r.

All this leads Dryden to consider the question of Charles' merit more directly:

How shall I then my doubtful thoughts express
That must his sufferings both regret and bless! (71-2)

The following lines attempt to explain this paradox, generating an argument *in utramque partem*. On the one hand, Dryden must 'regret' Charles' 'sufferings' because he had been 'Forced into exile from his rightful throne' (75), drawing a sacralizing comparison with David, unjustly exiled 'When to be God's anointed was his crime' (80). Yet, on the other hand, Dryden must 'bless' the exile because Charles spent it 'viewing monarchs' secret arts of sway' (77). These 'secret arts' imply the *arcana imperii* of reason of state—the mysteries of statecraft to which Charles has been 'ripened by digestive thought' (89). The *OED* cites Dryden's 'digestive' as the only instance of the sense 'that tends to methodize'—in Dryden's next line, 'into method brought' (90). This further suggests the secular craft of distilling political experience into maxims of state.⁶⁷ Dryden attempts to synthesize Charles' competing claims of right and merit as complementary foundations for his rule: 'His right endears it much, his purchase more' (86). The verb suggests a political obligation generated by affection and gratitude (although the syntax is hazy about what is endeared to whom). But it is immediately displaced by the metaphor of 'purchase', transforming the verb 'endear' from its emotional sense to the financial one.⁶⁸ This follows the trend we have previously witnessed in Waller and Davenant of converting obligations into financial metaphors—connoting a more contingent, transactional sense of political relationships. Finally, Dryden was extremely unconventional in confessing himself 'doubtful' about the whole question: most panegyrist were in no doubt whatsoever. Thomas Southland confesses he cannot tell 'which in you to own | Either your Virtues, or Extraction', but he synthesizes these options by concluding that Charles' goodness 'springs from Martyrs, as from Royal Blood'.⁶⁹ That is to say, Charles' virtues were in fact signs of his divine election, even his identification with Christ:

⁶⁷ *OED*, 'digestive', adj., sense 6; see Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 38-40.

⁶⁸ *OED*, 'endear', v., senses 6 and 1.

⁶⁹ Thomas Southland, *To the King, upon his Majesties happy return* (London, 1660), p. 8.

Thomas Edwards declares ‘that Title never more was true, | *Kings are Gods image* than it is in *You*’.⁷⁰

Significantly, Waller and Davenant come much closer to Dryden in their willingness to calculate, rather than simply celebrate, Charles’ merits. Davenant argues:

When (Mighty Monarch) your Three Nations count
To what their gain, by gaining you, will mount,
They justly reckon, that the least you bring
Of Greatness is, that Blood which makes you King:
And casting up what Satisfaction they,
In full return of all your Vertues, *pay*,
The *Product* shews, you bring in value more,
Than those Three Realms, which they do but *restore*. (65-72)

Although Davenant concludes on the corrective verb ‘restore’—a timely reminder of Charles’ rightful title—the preceding lines are governed by a financial metaphor like Dryden’s. In fact, Davenant goes further, pretending Charles has not been exiled but loaned out and returned with interest, a metaphor not of purchase but of usury. This is an even more contingent and transferrable way to fashion Charles’ political capital: ‘Blood’ is apparently ‘the least’ of his merits, whilst God, at least at this stage of the poem, is nowhere in sight. Waller makes a directly parallel argument to Dryden, presenting a similar case *in utramque partem*, finding cause to regret but also to praise the exile:

And though it be our sorrow, and our crime,
To have accepted life so long a time
Without you here, yet does this absence gain
No small advantage to your present reign;
For, having viewed the persons and the things,
The councils, state, and strength of Europe’s kings,
You know your work; (37-43)

From one point of view, Waller and Dryden were merely flattering Charles by recapitulating his own rhetoric—Charles had modestly enumerated his personal qualifications in the Declaration of Breda.⁷¹ But it was one thing for Charles to enter into this matter, and quite another for poets to presume to do the same. Meritocracy was in no sense the central pillar of Charles’ argument. Waller and Dryden came perilously close to revealing how admitting meritocratic arguments

⁷⁰ Thomas Edwards, *To his Sacred Majesty, Charles the Second, on his Happy Return* (London, 1660), p. 2.

⁷¹ Sharpe, *Rebranding Rule*, p. 6.

could raise further, troubling counterfactual questions. Had the English Revolution never happened, and Charles not received these lessons in fortitude and the *arcana imperii*, would he have been less fit to rule? Would his status as God's anointed still have been sufficient?

This ambiguity about the reason for Charles' Restoration is followed in the next section of *Astraea Redux* by an equal ambiguity about the manner in which it was brought about:

Yet as wise artists mix their colours so
That by degrees they from each other go,
Black steals unheeded from the neighbouring white
Without offending the well-cozened sight:
So on us stole our blessed change, while we
Th'effect did feel, but scarce the manner see. (125-30)

Dryden is daring here: other panegyrists preferred to tactfully imply a nation throwing off a madness or enchantment, or a hated imprisonment. In *Astraea Redux* the nation has been 'well-cozened' not by diabolical puritans but by the Restoration itself. The extended simile creates a syntactical ambiguity as to who is actually responsible for this cozening: the person of the 'wise artist' agrees grammatically with the impersonal subject of the main sentence, 'our blessed change'. Indeed, the agency is imperceptible: 'we... scarce the manner see'. The 'wise artist' might be Providence, but there are no obvious clues for a Christian reading—it could equally be pagan Fortune. Alternatively, as Winn notes, if the 'wise artist' is Charles (or perhaps George Monck), this would instead suggest the human arts of politics, and the artificiality of power itself.⁷² Winn has read this painting metaphor with reference to Horatian pictorialism and the motto *ut pictura poesis*, which, he claims, Dryden conceived as a realistic and 'muscular' mode of writing.⁷³ But the metaphor may have another important source, which is specifically relevant to the context of the transferral of allegiance, and implies another kind of self-consciousness about rhetoric. In chapter XVIII of *The Prince*, Machiavelli explains how political obligations can be ignored or dissolved: a Prince 'ought not keep his faith', and will never 'want lawfull occasions to give colour to this breach'. He continues, if the prince must have the nature of a fox,

⁷² See Winn, *Dryden and his World*, p. 111.

⁷³ *ibid.*, pp. 86-8, 112-13.

‘it is necessary to understand how to set a good colour upon this disposition, and to be able to faine and dissemble thoroughly’.⁷⁴ In Machiavelli’s hands, the metaphor of painting describes the rhetorical expedience by which a political operator can extricate himself from political obligations. Dryden appropriates this metaphor to the context of the new transferral of obligations from the Commonwealth to the restored monarchy, a shift fashioned by political artifice rather than a clearly discernible act of Providence. The new settlement is defined and legitimized through rhetoric—and it seems as if this rhetorical legitimation is itself sufficient to effect the change of allegiance.

An implicit assumption in all this is that a transferral has actually taken place. Although he obviously maintains that the event was ‘blessed’, Dryden is unusual amongst royalists in presenting the revolution of 1659-60 as a genuine ‘change’. Keeble has argued that royalists ‘insisted on’ the idea of restoration to suggest the return to a preceding, normative order that had been briefly interrupted; ‘change’, on the other hand, was the preferred term for republicans like Lucy Hutchinson and Edmund Ludlow who wished to preserve a sense of relativism, maintaining that the Republic had been a legitimate regime, and the Restoration merely another in a series of contingent revolutions.⁷⁵ Conceiving the Restoration as a ‘change’ robs it of its special teleological significance. It is ‘blessed’, but, as with Waller’s handling of the Cyclops metaphor, it can sometimes be hard to perceive any essential, normative difference from the previous regime. For the nation now to be ‘white’ it must previously have been ‘black’—but, uncomfortably, the two colours are ‘neighbouring’, and the change is ‘unheeded’.

This contingency continues into Dryden’s next conceit, which configures the Restoration as a rejuvenating spring following a harsh winter (131-2), a metaphor whose cyclicity is not especially reassuring. More conventional panegyrists tried to suppress the worrying possibility that winter might return: many proclaimed the beginning of a ‘perpetual spring’, a new Golden Age, or Platonic year; most emphasized the teleological significance of May, the month of both

⁷⁴ *The Prince*, chapter XVIII, pp. 137-8 (trans. Bondanella, p. 61).

⁷⁵ Keeble, *Restoration*, p. 52.

Charles' birth and Restoration.⁷⁶ Dryden's spring lacks this eternizing context. Its serenity is also broken by the observation that frosts 'seldom' melt, 'But raging floods pursue their hasty thaw' (133-4). This again seems to suggest the fragility of the Restoration, and, once again, there is an analogue in Machiavelli's metaphor for the violent destruction wrought by fortune in chapter XXV of *The Prince*. A similar metaphor surfaces in Waller's Restoration poem, when the people 'break forth' to greet the king's return:

So the injured sea, which from her wonted course,
To gain some acres, avarice did force,
If the new banks, neglected once, decay,
No longer will from her old channel stay;
Raging, the late got land she overflows,
And all that's built upon't to ruin goes. (67-72)

I have already noted Waller's fondness for Machiavellian metaphors of inundation in chapter two.⁷⁷ Here the waters bursting their channels, the neglect of flood defences, and the ruination of the engulfed land directly replicate features of Machiavelli's description. Both Waller and Dryden also use the word 'raging', the word Edward Dacres had adopted to translate Machiavelli's '*adirano*'.⁷⁸ In *Astraea Redux*, Dryden takes pains to qualify his image of raging floods, which had not occurred in May 1660: 'Our thaw was mild' (135). But why even mention the possibility? Metaphors of inundation tended to invoke a fatalistic and Machiavellian world of destructive revolutions.

These anxieties seem to be swept away in the following lines, with a return to Providential rhetoric:

⁷⁶ S[amuel] W[oodford], *Epinicia Carolina, or An Essay upon the Return of His Sacred Majesty, Charles the Second* (London, 1660), p. 7; Abiel Borfett, *Postliminia Caroli II. The Palingensy, or, Second-Birth, of Charles the Second to his Kingly Life; Upon the day of his First, May 29* (London, 1660), pp. 2-3.

⁷⁷ In his speech to the Short Parliament in June 1640, *A Worthy Speech Made in the House of Commons*, p. 5, and to the Long Parliament, 11th June 1641, BL Sloane MS 1467, f. 101^{r-v}.

⁷⁸ *The Prince*, chapter XXV, p. 203 (trans. Bondanella, pp. 84-5); Giorgio Inglese, ed., *Niccolò Machiavelli: Il Principe* (Turin, 1995), p. 163.

'Twas Monck, whom Providence designed to loose
 Those real bonds false freedom did impose.
 The blessed saints that watched this turning scene
 Did from their stars with joyful wonder lean
 To see small clues draw vastest weights along,
 Not in their bulk but in their order strong. (151-56)

Some critics, including Winn, have assumed the Providential 'order strong' of this passage displaces the secular and fatalistic impulses seen earlier in the poem; but we should not necessarily share their confidence.⁷⁹ A strong Providential reading of the Restoration might have cast the angels in a central, active role—as in Cowley's *Visions and Prophecies*—but Dryden reduces them to spectators, who 'watched this turning scene'. This alludes to the mechanical scenery of antebellum masques—propaganda devices which had conferred the totalizing, all-seeing perspective on the king. But Dryden's handling of the metaphor once more highlights the role of artifice, implying the secular arts of politics. He flaunts his artifice by using the ropes which operated masque scenery to introduce the *sententia*, 'small clues draw vastest weights along'. Although Dryden here grafts it into a Christian context, the *sententia*'s origins were in classical fatalism, in Virgil and Lucan. We saw it in chapter two at the end of Waller's poem on Santander, glossed by David Norbrook as an 'assertion of fragility', associated with the 'precariousness of the cosmic machine' in Lucan's *Pharsalia*.⁸⁰ Waller made a similar assertion of fragility at the end of his Restoration poem:

The next experience of your mighty mind
 Is how you combat fortune, now she's kind.
 And this way, too, you are victorious found;
 She flatters with the same success she frowned. (99-102)

Even when Charles is 'victorious', Waller retains a cautionary note: fortune 'flatters', and remains untrustworthy. The necessity of combating fortune 'now she's kind' paraphrases the advice in chapter XXV of *The Prince*—which we previously encountered in chapter four—where Machiavelli deplores the political failings in Italy:

⁷⁹ Winn, *Dryden and his World*, pp. 111-13.

⁸⁰ Norbrook, *English Republic*, p. 74.

you shall see it to be a plaine field, without any trench or banck; which had it been fenc'd with convenient vertue... this inundation would never have caus'd these great alterations.⁸¹

Waller carries these Machiavellian connotations further than Dryden—but I remarked above on how Dryden also depicts Charles fighting to master and prevent fortune.

The Providential rhetoric in *Astraea Redux* does not unfold smoothly: England is also the ‘scene’ of a nation ‘turning’ away from its previous allegiance—something more akin to Dryden’s earlier use of the word ‘change’. As I have noted, the verb ‘turning’ is heavily implicated in the vocabulary of political changes (‘revolution’, ‘turncoat’, ‘tergiversation’). The poem’s next couplet recapitulates and extends the metaphor of politics as visual art:

Thus pencils can by one slight touch restore
Smiles to that changèd face that wept before. (157-8)

The word ‘restore’ does make a rare appearance here, but coupled with a repetition of the word ‘change’. Dryden tactfully adopts the convention of presenting the Commonwealth as weeping and the Restoration as smiling.⁸² But, like the previous fine distinction between ‘black’ and ‘neighbouring white’, the difference between weeping and smiling is only ‘one slight touch’. As Waller had implied both regimes were different versions of the same Cyclops, Dryden’s ‘one slight touch’ implies only a minor modification, rather than a categorical, normative difference. Dryden develops a metaphor which imagines Monck’s intervention as a bodily function:

Our healthful food the stomach labours thus,
At first embracing what it straight doth crush. (173-74)

This rather violently literalizes the traditional image of the body politic—perhaps with a parallel in Hobbes’ discussion of ‘the nutrition, and procreation of a commonwealth’ in *Leviathan*.⁸³ But Dryden is also recapitulating the image of ‘digestive thought’ we saw earlier—Monck is displaying his fluency in the secular craft of politics, biding his time before acting decisively. Of

⁸¹ *The Prince*, chapter XXV, p. 204 (trans. Bondanella, p. 85).

⁸² cp. Edwards, *To His Sacred Majesty*, p. 1; Edmund Elys, *Anglia Rediviva. Or, the Miraculous Return of the Breath of our Nostrils. A Poem*. (London, 1660), p. 1; Thomas Fuller, *A Panegyrick to his Majesty, on his Happy Return* (London, 1660), p. 3.

⁸³ *Leviathan*, chapter XXIV, p. 386; in chapter three we noted Davenant adapting the analogy Hobbes drew in this section between currency and the circulation of blood.

course, the engineering of the Restoration by an Army officer was itself an act of side-changing, and Dryden concedes the necessary role of dissimulation:

Nor could his acts too close a vizard wear
To scape their eyes whom guilt had taught to fear (179-80)

Just as Monck begins to show his Machiavellian qualities, a religious framework returns. The Rump parliamentarians Monck has deceived are, continuing the previous sentence, demonized: the ‘once sacred house’ has become a ‘polluted nest’ (181-4). Dryden repeats the conventional attacks on puritans as hypocritical Machiavels: ‘Religion’s name against itself was made’ (191), echoing the suspicion of linguistic duplicity I described at the outset, that puritans twisted the meanings of received ethical terminology. This is the most explicit normative judgement the poem offers on the illegitimacy of the Commonwealth, in contradistinction to the ‘sacred’ institutions of Stuart monarchy. But the following passage shifts again, from attacking these vices in themselves, to their political consequences. First, an allusion to Jove’s punishment of the blasphemer Salmeoneus (via book VI of the *Aeneid*):

’Twas hence at length just Vengeance thought it fit
To speed their ruin by their impious wit. (199-200)

The preceding passage attacked the puritans’ impiety *per se*, whereas here Dryden shifts focus onto Salmeoneus’ ‘impious wit’, which is not quite the same. We might ask why Dryden chose a pagan, Roman example, rather than the plentiful Biblical examples of divine retribution. The movement towards the secular is accomplished unambiguously in the next couplet:

Thus Sforza, cursed with a too fertile brain,
Lost by his wiles the power his wit did gain. (201-2)

Ludovico Sforza, the usurping Duke of Milan, brings us firmly back into a world of Italianate political reasoning—and Dryden’s editors cite Guicciardini as his probable source.⁸⁴ Machiavelli also comments on Sforza in *The Prince*, in a manner which a modern translator describes as ‘contempt’.⁸⁵ According to Machiavelli, Sforza’s petty, uncontrolled deviousness caused the

⁸⁴ Hammond and Hopkins, ed., *Poems*, vol. 1, p. 48n.

⁸⁵ Bondanella, trans., *The Prince*, p. 94n.

downfall of the Italian city-states at the hands of the French.⁸⁶ This is what Dryden means by Sforza's 'too fertile brain', providing another example of rash importunity to complement that of Otho earlier in the poem. Salmoneus, Sforza, and Otho have all fallen into vainglory—that defining Hobbesian failure of self-governance we traced through Davenant and Cowley's epics. Dryden's allusion to Sforza aligns Monck's military solution with the French invasion of Italy, putting the little Ludovicos out of their misery.

In contrast to that rash impiety, Dryden praises Charles' 'forgiving mind' (261). Panegyrists unanimously praised Charles' clemency for securing the Restoration—with the striking exception of Cowley, who, given his tepid reception at court, may have decided discretion was the better part of valour. The theme of clemency could produce some awkward moments: Winn believes that Waller 'trivializes' the matter, flattering Charles by presumptuously begging him not to forgive *too* easily.⁸⁷ As I quoted earlier, he reduces the nation's 'crime' to merely having 'accepted life so long a time | Without you' (38-9), conveniently forgetting the regicide. Later in the poem, he balances the language of Christian atonement, 'strive for grace, and expiate their sin' (79), against a metaphor which seems to press the material benefits of reconciliation: 'Your vipers treacle yield, and scorpions oil' (76). There is a similar ambiguity in *Astraea Redux*, where Dryden reads clemency as a sign of Charles' 'heavenly parentage' (257), but also as a politically advantageous policy:

By that same mildness which your fathers crown
Before did ravish, shall secure your own. (258-9)

These lines condense an ambivalence about forgiveness with parallels in Machiavelli's deliberation *in utramque partem* between 'cruelty and clemency' in chapter XVII of *The Prince*. Machiavelli criticizes princes who 'through their too much pitty, suffer disorders to follow', but also maintains that 'every prince should desire to be held pittifull, and not cruell' lest 'too much distrust' make him 'intolerable'.⁸⁸ The same relativism underlies Dryden's unwillingness to valorize clemency as an ethical value *per se*, but to distinguish between the 'mildness' which 'did

⁸⁶ *The Prince*, chapters III and XXIV, pp. 6-7, 200 (trans. Bondanella, pp. 9, 83).

⁸⁷ Winn, *Dryden and his World*, p. 107.

⁸⁸ *The Prince*, chapter XVII, pp. 128-30 (trans. Bondanella, p. 57).

ravish' Charles I's crown, and the more expedient balance struck by Charles II. This nuance is surprisingly absent from Davenant's poem: he praises Charles' 'God-like pitty' and strenuously denies that he 'from Interest did this *Vertue* learn', in contradistinction to the pagan '*Julius*' who 'in disguise might *act* that *part*' of a clement king (8-12). But Davenant's whitewashing, sacralizing rhetoric here stands in tension with the metaphor we saw earlier which configured Charles' exile as merely being out on loan. Whereas Davenant's poem is sharply contradictory, Dryden and Waller oscillate between secular and sacralizing perspectives in a more organized, deliberative manner, implying the divergent ways of interpreting normative values.

This is precisely how Dryden concludes *Astraea Redux*, balancing a sense of Charles' religious destiny against an emphatically secular reference to the concept of interest. He makes the entirely conventional allusion—noted earlier—to the teleological significance of May: the star, which 'shone out so bright' at Charles' birth,

Did once again its potent fires renew,
Guiding our eyes to find and worship you. (290-1)

Where most panegyrists mistily imply a Providential pattern at work, Dryden actually goes further, engineering specifically Christological connotations with the allusion to the star in Matthew 2.2. But Dryden also tells Charles that May 'owns an interest in your name' (286). Although 'interest' was occasionally used in spiritual contexts, the secular sense of self-interest nevertheless predominates, and also the sense of financial 'interest' we encountered earlier in Davenant's metaphor of usury. The verb 'own' contributes to this ambiguity, with a benign sense of 'acknowledge' and the worldlier sense of 'possess', as if the month could own a financial stake in and generate interest from Charles' title.⁸⁹ In the following lines, Dryden is careful to emphasize that this is identical with the nation's 'united interest' (296). But this was the secular concept which both Dryden and Waller had previously deployed in their poems on Cromwell—as we saw in the subtitle of Waller's *Panegyrick to my Lord Protector*, 'of the present Greatness and

⁸⁹ *OED*, 'interest' n., senses 1, a. fig. and b., and 10; 'own', v., senses 1 and 3.

joynt Interest of His highness, and this Nation'.⁹⁰ The implication, for both Dryden and Waller, seems to be that it was economic interests, rather than religion, that would really unite the nation.

Persuasion and justification may have been unacknowledged necessities of all Restoration panegyric, but Dryden is unusual, both in the explicitness with which he undertakes this task, and the degree of contingency and uncertainty he concedes in performing it. We should not exaggerate: Dryden's Restoration is still an accomplished, *de facto* settlement. Yet he does not consistently set it in a normative teleology of the Restoration of divine order following a diabolical hiatus, and he sometimes acts precisely to preclude such an interpretation. The Restoration's special status is destabilized by conceits which configure it more simply as a 'change' or 'turning', whose distinction from the previous revolution is not always easy to perceive. This sort of rhetoric enabled former Cromwellians like Dryden and Waller to fashion the Restoration as a transferral of obligations, which did not implicitly delegitimize their previous allegiances. Dryden cites conventional deifications of Charles, but modifies them by applying pragmatic contexts, and metaphors which foreground political artifice. Despite cursory references to Christian providence and Biblical heroes, Dryden's Charles II finds himself in a neoclassical world of pagan fatalism, drawing on Virgil, Tacitus, Guicciardini, Hobbes, and especially Machiavelli. The parallels in Waller and Davenant suggest from whom Dryden learnt such practices.

These writers were united by their self-justifying need to configure the Restoration as a transferral of allegiance rather than a national redemption. This was supported by the secularizing, relativist mode of reasoning which had gained new force in the 1650s—not least in the hands of Waller and Davenant themselves. As a result, Davenant's poem seems inconsistent, submerging his initial Hobbesian argument with an overwhelming surge of sacralizing iconography. Waller and Dryden's poems more successfully organize the tension into a

⁹⁰ Waller, *A Panegyrick to my Lord Protector*; Raylor, 'Waller's Machiavellian Cromwell', p. 395.

deliberation *in utramque partem*, negotiating between secular and sacred ways of thinking about obligation and legitimacy. But, as I argued in chapter four, this sort of relativistic deliberation encourages an awareness of artifice, revealing how both sides, even normatively sacred concepts, are rhetorically constructed.⁹¹ The very existence of alternative parts prompts the question: surely an argument from divine right must be valid absolutely? One is either God's anointed or one is not. Cowley, who temporarily abandoned his Hobbesian thinking for more orthodox rhetoric, presented Charles' merits as blessings, tokens of his status as God's anointed. But Dryden made them into *qualifications*, essential to the argument, stressing the primary importance of the monarch's 'purchase'. The outcome is the same—acceptance of the Restoration—but the rhetoric used, and the sort of reasoning it encourages the reader to undertake, is importantly different. Amidst the resurgence of sacralizing Stuart iconography, *Astraea Redux* provides a corrective view of how writers who had developed a rationalist understanding of politics in the 1650s were unwilling to fully relinquish it. To do so would have been to invalidate their choices of the previous decade, but also to ignore their forebodings about the Restoration's fragility, and the possibility they would have to re-adapt once more in the future.

3. Later Developments

That view proved overly pessimistic. The regime survived, and with the election of the staunchly loyal 'Cavalier Parliament' in 1661, further revolution no longer seemed imminent.⁹² But I will end this thesis by asking whether, and in what forms, the ideas of the turncoat poets survived in the 1660s. Both Marvell and Waller were elected as MPs, and Marvell entered diplomatic service as secretary to the Earl of Carlisle on his embassy to Russia in 1663-65.⁹³ Waller became a leading propaganda poet for the regime, his *Instructions to a Painter* (1665)

⁹¹ See chapter four, and Kahn, *Machiavellian Rhetoric*, p. 19.

⁹² Keeble, *The Restoration*, pp. 77-85.

⁹³ Smith, *Marvell*, pp. 170-81.

celebrating early English successes in the Second Dutch War. But his pro-tolerationist views led him to side with the attacks on Clarendon in 1667.⁹⁴ Marvell took a more active role in the assaults on Clarendon with his ‘Advice to a Painter’ poems satirizing the corruption of Clarendon’s regime along with Waller’s panegyrics thereon. Davenant and Dryden, on the other hand, swung enthusiastically behind the assertive Anglicanism and belligerent foreign policy for which Clarendon and the Duke of York had become figureheads.⁹⁵ The pattern we discerned in Davenant’s Restoration ode continued in his 1660s drama, displacing his Hobbesian reasoning with heroic and sacralizing panegyrics to divinely-appointed kings. For example, a newly expanded version of his Cromwellian opera *The Siege of Rhodes* transformed the role of the virtuous, exiled princess Ianthe to suggest flattering analogies with the career of Henrietta-Maria.⁹⁶ Dryden’s developments in the 1660s were complex, but he seemed a natural choice to inherit the poet laureateship after Davenant’s death in 1668. Contemporaries perceived enough similarities that Buckingham was able to cleanly transfer the satirical target of the character Mr. Bayes in his play *The Rehearsal* from Davenant to Dryden.⁹⁷ Cowley, meanwhile, having been rebuffed by Clarendon, had been living in retirement under Buckingham’s protection—and, it has been suggested, was amongst the group, along with Sprat, who helped write *The Rehearsal*.⁹⁸ Marvell evidently had some connection with that group too, as he extended Buckingham’s satire to the reactionary pomposity of the Anglican divine Samuel Parker in *The Rehearsal Transpros’d* in 1672.⁹⁹ Waller sympathized with attacks on bishops, although he was cautious about engaging publically in this role: Aubrey records that he refused to write a panegyric on Hobbes because he was ‘afraid of the churchmen’.¹⁰⁰ It was in the debates around religious toleration, and the integrity and hegemony of the Church of England, that the sceptical rationalism practised by the turncoat poets maintained its closest relevance to Restoration politics.

⁹⁴ Sharpe, *Rebranding Rule*, p. 51.

⁹⁵ Winn, *Dryden and his World*, pp. 169-71.

⁹⁶ Ann-Mari Hebbäck, ed., *The Siege of Rhodes: A Critical Edition* (Uppsala, 1973).

⁹⁷ See Dzelzainis and Patterson, eds., *Prose Works of Andrew Marvell*, vol. I, p. 284n.

⁹⁸ Nethercot, *Cowley*, p. 230.

⁹⁹ Smith, *Marvell*, pp. 246-78.

¹⁰⁰ MS Aubrey 9, f. 54^v; see Warren Chernaik, ‘Edmund Waller’, *ODNB*, www.oxforddnb.com/view/Article/28556 (accessed 20th October 2015).

1667 is a key year not least because it saw Cowley's death, followed a few months later in 1668 by Davenant's. As we saw in chapter five, Sprat's posthumous edition of Cowley's *Works* attempted to airbrush over his heterodox, Hobbist views; Cowley's elegists grappled with this problem too. The young poet Richard Peers conceded that Cowley:

His Hopes discarded, and his Honour stain'd,
For a too quick Surrender of his Cause.¹⁰¹

It may be significant that Peers employed the heroic quatrain of *Gondibert*, as Dryden had for his elegy on Cromwell; apparently the stanza lent itself to writing deliberative elegies on controversial figures. Peers also makes the same allusion to Livy which we saw earlier in Waller's Cromwell elegy, comparing Cowley's burial in Westminster Abbey with the religious cult which grew up around Romulus after his death. Peers focuses on the irony that the cult was sponsored by statesmen who were rumoured to have murdered Romulus themselves.¹⁰² By analogy, this implicitly criticizes the Clarendonian establishment for memorializing a poet they had rejected in life. But it also smuggles in an allusion to regicide—the very act which Cowley had been ostracized for seeming to praise. Peers tidies away these connotations with a version of the exculpatory secret history which Sprat offered the following year: rereading Cowley's defection as a 'feign'd Compliance', and his *Davideis* as a proxy epic of devotion to a sacred prince.¹⁰³ In this way, Sprat and Peers began the long, selective reinvention of Cowley as a poet of Stuart and later Jacobite destiny.¹⁰⁴ Other poets of the moment were unable or unwilling to make such interpretative leaps with Cowley's recent memory. Roger Boyle, formerly Lord Broghill and now Earl of Orrery, who we saw exchanging poems with Cowley in the 1650s, now published an elegy of his own. He dealt tactfully with Cowley's awkward reputation by presenting him as an innovator, who had surpassed his Greek and Roman models as the

¹⁰¹ Richard Peers, 'To the Memory of the Incomparable Mr. Abraham Cowley, lately Deceased', in *Four Small Copies of Verses upon Sundry Occasions* (London, 1667), p. 15.

¹⁰² Quoting Livy, *History*, I.xvi: 'Fuisse credo tum quoque aliquos qui discerptum regem', ('There were some, I believe, even then who secretly asserted that the king had been rent in pieces by the hands of the senators'), trans. B. O. Foster (Cambridge MA, 1976), pp. 58-9; Peers, *Four Small Copies*, p. 15.

¹⁰³ Peers, *Four Small Copies*, pp. 16-17.

¹⁰⁴ On Jacobite uses of Cowley see Murray Pittcock, *The Invention of Scotland: The Stuart Myth and the Scottish Identity, 1638 to the Present* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 12; Arthur H. Nethercot, 'The Reputation of Abraham Cowley (1660-1800)', *PMLA*, 38 (1923) 588-641.

Spaniards had surpassed Christopher Columbus in discovering and possessing new lands. This alluded gently to the language of Cowley's ode 'To Mr. Hobs'—in which Hobbes had been the governor of new continents—without raising his awkward Hobbism head-on.¹⁰⁵ The need to fashion Cowley as geographically distant, alien, and new further suggests how readers found his politics and poetics hard to reconcile with contemporary orthodoxies.

They also seem to have struggled with Davenant's death the following spring—although in this case evidenced by the yawning absence of any sustained comment. The sole, anonymous elegy, printed on a single broadsheet, expresses horror that Davenant 'should ly | Twelve days, or more, without an *Elegie*'.¹⁰⁶ The elegist briefly lists his greatest theatrical successes—ignoring *Gondibert* altogether—but claims that his laurels 'For ever wither'd must neglected ly'. If this is a cause for regret, it also opens up a more irreverently satirical tone, dwelling on how Davenant had reinterpreted Sidney's didactic theory of poetry—to show 'Virtues sweet looks, Vices deformity'—by grounding it in his own experience of a chequered moral life. The distinctly lukewarm epithet 'Experience'd *Davenant*' suggests how he literalized 'Vices deformity' in his own disfigured body, 'wither'd' like his laurels. As Davenant takes his final bow, a bathetic pun veers decisively into satire: 'A *clap* did usher *Davenant* to his Grave'. Richard Flecknoe piled in with a more uncomplimentary pamphlet in which Davenant is accosted in Elysium by 'his old Antagonist Jack Donn, who mock'd him with an hundred passages out of *Gondibert*'.¹⁰⁷ Flecknoe revives the spirit of Denham and Donne's anti-*Gondibert* satires of the 1650s, recycling the jokes about Davenant's monomaniacal ambitions, mercenary motives, hyperbolic style, and missing nose. Denham, too, was inspired to reclaim his earlier satirical works and transcribe them onto the blank pages of his copy of his collected *Poems and Translations*.¹⁰⁸ He also added a new 'Elegy on Sir William D'Avenant', like Flecknoe imagining Davenant's arrival in Elysium:

¹⁰⁵ Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery, *Several Copies of Verses on the death of Mr. Abraham Cowley and his burial in Westminster Abbey* (London, 1667), pp. 1-2.

¹⁰⁶ Anon., *An Elegy Upon the Death of Sr. William Davenant* (London, 1668) single page.

¹⁰⁷ Richard Flecknoe, *Sr William D'avenant's Voyage to the Other World With His Adventures in the Poets Elizium: a Poetical Fiction* (London, 1668), p. 9.

¹⁰⁸ Denham, *Poems and Translations, with the Sophy* (London, 1668), Yale University, Beinecke Library, shelfmark: Osborn pb53, pp. 2-28. Allsopp, 'An Annotated Copy', p. 33 and n.

Cowley a Fayre apartment keeps;
 Receiving him with joy he weeps.
 Into his bed Sir William creepes
 And now in Abrahams bosome sleeps.¹⁰⁹

This pun on the Biblical epithet for heaven opens up a salacious slur about Davenant's relationships with his friends, a reminder of the effeminized, sexually compromised figure in whom the earlier satires had embodied the wayward, Hobbesian appetites of Davenant's poetry. But this is the worst Denham can muster in an otherwise affectionate poem. He deals with Davenant's heterodoxy with a light touch, joking delicately about the 'Scisme' caused by 'Davenantisme'.

The anti-*Gondibert* satires were alive and well in another body of verse satires, the 'Advice to a Painter' poems spearheaded by Marvell, albeit the satirical target here was no longer Davenant, but Waller.¹¹⁰ 'The Second Advice to a Painter' (ca. 1666) alludes to Waller's appearance in the anti-*Gondibert* satires:

Now may historians argue con and pro.
 Denham saith thus; though Waller always so. (336-7)

The attribution to Denham is slightly inaccurate—the allusion actually points to the anonymous response to the Denham satires, *The Incomparable Poem Gondibert, Vindicated*:

The Wits they grant, though one turnes Coat,
 And writes now *Contra*, that *Pro* wrote.¹¹¹

The 'Second Advice to a Painter' borrows the earlier satirists' strategy of explaining poets' side-changing through their self-serving enthusiasm for writing propaganda. Thus, in *The Incomparable Poem*, 'The man [i.e. Davenant] was pardoned for the Poet', and in the 'Second Advice', Waller 'this penance did for Cromwell's epitaph' (338).¹¹² Several of the 'Advice to a Painter' poems were surreptitiously published under Denham's name—a misattribution Nigel Smith interprets 'as a literary joke, but also as a false trail'.¹¹³ But if, as Smith argues, the 'Advices' were written collaboratively by a group around Marvell, we might detect another

¹⁰⁹ Denham, 'Elegy on Sir William D'Avenant', in Banks, ed., *Poetical Works*, p. 325.

¹¹⁰ Annabel Patterson, *Marvell: The Writer in Public Life* (Harlow, 2000), pp. 75-82.

¹¹¹ *The Incomparable Poem*, p. 6.

¹¹² *ibid.*, p. 13.

¹¹³ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 324.

reason for associating themselves with Denham—recognizing a tradition of communal skewering of pompous and politically amphibious poets by a convivial circle of like-minded wits.¹¹⁴ Marvell gave Waller a second, very similar cameo in his ‘Last Instructions to a Painter’ (1667):

Old Waller, trumpet-general, swore he’d write
This combat truer than the naval fight. (263-4)

In previous chapters we have seen both Marvell and Cowley reflecting on the difficulties of writing truthfully—but here, he depicts Waller glibly swearing to do so as a matter of social obligation. This is belied by Waller’s status as ‘trumpet-general’—his real job is to whip up the vainglorious overconfidence that fuelled the political and military catastrophes of 1667.

The ‘Painter’ poems are fascinated by problematic histories of political flexibility. A polyvalent line at the beginning of the ‘Second Advice’ introduces this chameleon-like quality of shifting allegiances: ‘Enough to make thy colours change like theirs’ (5). The changing ‘colours’ allude to the painter’s palette, to the naval standards flown by the ships, and, conversely, to the sailors’ whitening complexions as they ‘trembled’ (4) pusillanimously at the Dutch onslaught. But ‘colours’ could also mean specious reasons or excuses, or rhetorical figures—as in Machiavelli’s painting metaphor which we saw earlier in *Astrea Redux*, a prince will never lack ‘lawfull occasions to give colour’ to breaches of his word.¹¹⁵ A more ironic version of this colour conceit appears a few lines later, when Sir William Coventry is described as ‘cerulean’ and ‘ultramarinish blue’ (25, 30). This suitably nautical hue offered connotations of loyalty and faithfulness, forming an ironic contrast with Coventry’s patchy reputation—and perhaps, more provocatively, with suspicions of Scottish Presbyterianism.¹¹⁶ According to Smith, ‘Marvell’s Commonwealth and Protectorate sympathies are not far from the surface’, in the heroes who are ‘by and large, men who had prospered in the Commonwealth navy’.¹¹⁷ We find a diverse spectrum of men who had accepted, actively served, or supported the Cromwellian regimes—

¹¹⁴ Smith concludes that ‘The Last Instructions to the Painter’ is wholly Marvell’s, but that the foregoing ‘Advice’ poems were written collaboratively: ed., *Poems*, p. 324. On communal satire, see further Allsopp, ‘An Annotated Copy’, pp. 46-50.

¹¹⁵ *OED*, ‘colour’, n.¹, senses 2, 6, 9, 14, 15, 20; *The Prince*, chapter XVIII, p. 137 (trans. Bondanella, p. 61).

¹¹⁶ *OED*, ‘blue’, adj. and n., sense 6; and ‘true blue’, adj. and n., senses 1 and 2.a; on Coventry’s ambivalent status, Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 333.

¹¹⁷ Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 331.

some of whom, like Sir John Lawson (174-79), had helped secure the Restoration with a timely defection; whilst others are far from exemplary heroes, like the sympathetic Earl of Sandwich who ‘shut both his eyes’, giving the Dutch the advantage (264). A similar array of men with variously compromising histories appears in the ‘Last Instructions’—not least Monck himself, on whom the Restoration settlement depended, but on whom the courtiers cast their scorn:

As heav’n in storms, they call, in gusts of state,
On Monck and Parliament, yet both do hate. (517-18)

The phrase ‘Monck and Parliament’ quietly overturns the orthodox constitutional formula ‘King and Parliament’—as if the old kingless polity of parliament and its Army were still lurking beneath the courtiers’ contemptuous gaze.

Dryden, meanwhile, was carving out a very different career in the theatre, and it is worth returning to Aubrey’s remark that Dryden ‘oftentimes makes use of [Hobbes’] Doctrine in his Playes’.¹¹⁸ A useful example is *The Indian Queen*, a heroic tragedy first performed in 1664, which Dryden wrote in collaboration with his brother-in-law and patron (whom we encountered earlier), Sir Robert Howard. Similarly to the move we have already seen in Cowley, and in Orrery’s elegy—and, perhaps more to the point, in Davenant’s Cromwellian play *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru*—Howard and Dryden framed their Hobbesian material by turning away from classical Europe, and towards the New World.¹¹⁹ The play’s central tension appears in the friendship between the two heroes, who embody contrasting models of what uncivilized savagery might look like: Alcacis, the Prince of Mexico, is devoted to a pure, archaic code of honour; Montezuma, the Incan general, is driven by his wayward passions and appetites. They are forced into conflict as both aspire to marry the Incan princess Orazia. Not without some symbolism, Acacis’ code of honour leads him to commit suicide, whilst Montezuma gets the girl and inherits both the Mexican and Incan empires. Montezuma constantly emphasizes how violent and restless his passions are:

¹¹⁸ See further Derek Hughes, *English Drama, 1660-1700* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 12-17, 42.

¹¹⁹ See Winn, *Dryden and his World*, p. 152.

...what tempests roul
 About my thoughts, and toss my troubled soul!
 [...]

 So when windes turn, the wandering waves obey,
 And all the Tempest rouls another way (II.iii.46-7, 66-7)¹²⁰

But other characters—particularly the usurping Mexican queen Zempoalla and her lover Traxalla—are consumed by similarly tempestuous sexual lust, envy, and ambition. Much of the play's action turns on the rights due to victors in war—as Montezuma protests, falling into a cross-rhymed heroic stanza:¹²¹

Stay your bold hands from reaching at what's mine,
 If any title springs from victory;
 You safer may attempt to rob a shrine,
 And hope forgiveness from the Deity (II.i.61-4)

The characters jealously assert their *de facto* rights of conquest—and yet, despite reaching for a legalistic vocabulary of 'dues' and 'titles', they consistently configure these rights through a recurring metaphor of 'prey'.¹²² There was, of course, no common law in ancient Mexico. Both 'title' and 'prey' are English metaphors for cultural obligations which can only be enforced—as the latter implies—through brute force. As Montezuma's metaphor of turning winds implies, allegiances in this world are abruptly transferrable. When the Inca refuses to allow him to marry Orazia, Montezuma immediately changes sides and wins the war for the Mexicans; likewise, Traxalla, on seeing that Zempoalla has become infatuated with Montezuma, is consumed with envy and turns traitor. Here, then, is a world of restless violence and passion, and accordingly changeable allegiances.

But in the end, the usurper Zempoalla's power ebbs away from her; the rightful Queen Amexia returns from exile, is reinstated by popular acclamation, and unexpectedly reveals Montezuma to be her son. This conclusion attempts to shoehorn the play's violence into an honourable hereditary and Providential structure, which, with its popular returning monarch, has clear parallels with propagandist accounts of the Restoration. And yet it is strikingly arbitrary:

¹²⁰ John Dryden and Robert Howard, *The Indian Queen*, in John Harrington Smith and Dougal MacMillan, eds., *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. viii (20 vols.; Berkeley, 1967).

¹²¹ On the play's quatrains, see Winn, *Dryden and his World*, p. 151.

¹²² see II.i.9, 59, 91, 100.

Queen Amexia has barely been mentioned in the preceding four acts—and, by the time she shows up, Montezuma seems more than capable of seizing power by force in any case. It may be significant that the play's modern editors believe the reversals in Act V were scripted by Dryden rather than Howard.¹²³ The need to reach this legitimizing conclusion renders Montezuma increasingly tame as *The Indian Queen* goes on. In its sequel *The Indian Emperour*, which Dryden wrote in 1665 without Howard's involvement, he has become an elder statesman, fighting for his nation's liberty rather than his violent appetite:

If either Death or Bondage I must chuse,
I'll keep my Freedom, though my life I lose. (IV.ii.21-2)¹²⁴

This conventional heroic formula is the diametric opposite of Hobbes' view of the correct response to military defeat, which was to preserve one's life by submitting to one's conqueror.¹²⁵ This latter Montezuma pales by comparison with Almanzor, the brutal—and unsympathetic—Hobbesian juggernaut in Dryden's next heroic drama, *The Conquest of Granada* (1670).¹²⁶ The only major aspect of Hobbes' thinking that Dryden continued to embrace was his anti-clerical scepticism. In the climactic scene of *The Indian Emperour*, Montezuma is tortured on the rack by a Catholic priest, but rebuffs the forced conversion with dignity, using his natural reason to defend religious scepticism and toleration:

Howe're, 'tis better in the midst to stay,
Then wander farther in uncertain way. (V.ii.79-80)

Winn concludes that Montezuma 'sounds as if he has been reading Hobbes'.¹²⁷ Dryden's drama retains an Erastian slant, tending to satirize priests and invest religious significance in temporal sovereigns. Yet the delicate balance between rationalist and sacralizing rhetoric we saw in

¹²³ Winn, *Dryden and his World*, p. 283.

¹²⁴ Dryden, *The Indian Emperour*, in John Loftis, ed., *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. ix (Berkeley, 1966), V.ii.15-105.

¹²⁵ *Leviathan*, chapter XX and 'Review and Conclusion', pp. 312, 1133-5.

¹²⁶ see Winn, *Dryden and his World*, p. 213, on the play's 'witty exaggeration and ironic questioning of Hobbist theories'.

¹²⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 153-5.

Astraea Redux was now decisively tipped in favour of the heroic monarchy idealized in *The Indian Emperour*.¹²⁸

Whatever his misgivings about clerical power, in the difficult year of 1666 Dryden staunchly defended both the Catholic Duke of York and the Anglican regime in *Annus Mirabilis*.¹²⁹ As we saw in chapter one, the ‘Account’ of the poem (an epistle addressed to Howard), displays a clear conceptual debt to Hobbes’ theory of imagination, quoting his metaphor of ‘a nimble spaniel’ which ‘beats over and ranges through the field of memory’ (p. 44). Dryden follows Davenant in seeking to ground poetic imagery in experience, which included adopting the use of accurate naval terminology, like the ‘laveering’ we saw in *Astraea Redux*. He complains about writing in isolated Wiltshire, ‘where I have not so much as the converse of any seaman’, presumably thinking of his seafaring friend Davenant (p. 42).¹³⁰ He also cites Davenant in justification of his decision to use cross-rhymed heroic quatrains, ‘because I have ever judged them more noble, and of greater dignity’ (pp. 40-1). If Dryden shared Davenant’s aspiration of coercing readers into obedience, he chooses to dissemble, voicing his intention merely to ‘beget admiration’ (p. 48). His primary aim in *Annus Mirabilis* was to dignify the inconclusive war and disastrous fire of 1666 by suggesting a Providential pattern at work, pointing towards a triumphal future of English imperialism.¹³¹ He achieves a fervent sacralization of Charles’ piety and his subjects’ loyalty following the Great Fire of London:

The father of the people opened wide
His stores, and all the poor with plenty fed:
Thus God’s Anointed God’s own place supplied,
And filled the empty with his daily bread. (1141-5)

Dryden subtly amends the more familiar wording of the Lord’s Prayer—‘our daily bread’—to ‘his daily bread’. The ‘his’ refers ambiguously back, possibly to God, but possibly also attributing religious significance to the presence of Charles’ person. This presses beyond the

¹²⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 210-11.

¹²⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 170-71.

¹³⁰ He also earned Pope’s censure of ‘the Tarpawlin-Phrase’ in a letter to Henry Cromwell, 28th October, 1710, in *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, ed. by George Sherburn (5 vols.; Oxford, 1956), vol. 1, p. 101.

¹³¹ Annabel Patterson, ‘Howard, Marvell, and Dryden in the Theatre of Politics’, *SEL*, 25 (1985), 491-509, p. 495.

general Hobbesian obligation to guarantee the subjects' satisfaction of their appetite, showing how far Dryden was now willing to deify Charles' body, through the conceit of a Christ-like healer.

In 1667, the aftermath of the Great Fire, the Dutch invasion of the Medway, and an emboldened parliamentary opposition better organized under Buckingham's leadership combined to force Clarendon from power.¹³² Marvell celebrated Clarendon's fall in the 'Last Instructions to the Painter', amused to find former supporters of the court suddenly converted to swashbuckling opposition MPs—first Waller the 'trumpet-general' (quoted above), and in the following lines, Robert Howard:

Of birth, state, wit, strength, courage, Howard presumes
And in his breast wears many Montezumes. (265-6)

Marvell's bristling distrust of Howard—harking back to the violence of Montezuma in *The Indian Queen*—betrays the fact that 1667 could seem more like a coup by one court faction against another than a parliamentary victory.¹³³ Liberated from Clarendon's constitutionalism, Charles was emboldened to exercise his prerogative powers—proroguing parliament and appointing a new, socially elite group of ministers known by the acronym 'Cabal'. The leaders of this new regime included ex-Cromwellians with nonconformist sympathies, like Buckingham and Sir Anthony Ashley-Cooper (the future Earl of Shaftesbury), and the authoritarian Catholic Sir Thomas Clifford. Their main unifying principle was their shared interest in bypassing the predominantly Anglican parliament in the name of religious toleration.¹³⁴ Jon Parkin has argued that the Cabal needed to effect a theoretical shift away from the Anglican constitutionalism sponsored by Clarendon:

The breaking of the Anglican monopoly on power... opened up possibilities for pro-toleration arguments which emphasized natural right, prudence, and self-interest. These arguments magnified the prerogative power increasingly fostered by Charles and his Cabal advisers.¹³⁵

¹³² Keeble, *Restoration*, pp. 87-9.

¹³³ Allsopp, 'Sir Robert Howard', pp. 76-7.

¹³⁴ Dzelzainis, 'Marvell and the Earl of Castlemaine', p. 291.

¹³⁵ Parkin, 'Liberty Transpros'd', pp. 275-6.

This proved a turning-point for Howard. At the time, he was embarking on his controversy with Dryden, nominally over the role of rhyme in drama, but also inflamed by their taking opposite sides in the battle over Clarendon.¹³⁶ In 1668, Howard moved this dispute onto more ideological territory with a new poem, *The Duell of the Stags*, which shows what could be achieved by a poet who remained thoroughly invested in the more radically relativist and defactoist Hobbism of the 1650s.¹³⁷ Two rival stags struggle for control over the herd; after an initial defeat, the rebel stag recuperates and returns to kill and usurp the monarch. The poem depicts the overthrow of a monarchy on the second attempt, and the herd happily accept the *de facto* outcome, with a telling verb: ‘With Love and Duty to crown Victory’ (p. 5).¹³⁸ Howard had evidently consulted *Gondibert*, developing several distinctive conceits of Davenant’s into his own poem—most obviously the use of the herd as a metaphor for authoritarian government. He also dramatizes a similar kinetic psychology of restless appetite:

(For Envy always is importunate;)

And in the Mind perpetually does move,

A fit Companion for unquiet Love (p. 8)¹³⁹

As in *Gondibert*, the primary passion motivating the noble protagonists is ‘unquiet’ love—which tends to stimulate other ‘perpetually’ moving appetites of envy and vainglory. In this appetitive world, sovereignty consists only in *de facto* coercive power, as the monarch discovers to his cost:

Yet then he rais’d his Head, on which there Grew

Once, all his Power, and all his Title too;

Unable now to rise, and less to fight,

He rais’d those Scepters to demand his Right:

But such weak Arguments prevail with none,

To plead their Titles, when their Power is gone (p. 13)

The conceit of antlers makes the stag’s weapons and his ‘Scepters’ literally one and the same; but Howard deflates the language of ‘Titles’ as he had in *The Indian Queen*, showing them to be empty symbols, ‘when their Power is gone’. The poem revives the 1650s defactoist understanding of sovereignty as contingent upon military supremacy. As his friend Buckingham took office, Howard issued a stark reminder of the fragility and contingency of power, offering a

¹³⁶ Winn, *Dryden and his World*, pp. 179-81.

¹³⁷ Allsopp, ‘Sir Robert Howard’, pp. 75-8, 88-90.

¹³⁸ Robert Howard, *The Duell of the Stags* (London, 1668).

¹³⁹ Allsopp, ‘Sir Robert Howard’, pp. 82-6.

perspective on the fall of Clarendon as a moment of regime change, and maintaining the necessity of a centralized, absolute, and competent military force.¹⁴⁰ This argument relied on returning to a body of theory which, in the 1650s, had been used to argue the transferability of allegiance.

Like Howard, Marvell was also exercised by the perceived need to break what Parkin called ‘the Anglican monopoly on power’—that is, to show that allegiance was contingent on *de facto* sovereignty, and not the *jure divino* power of the Church of England.¹⁴¹ Although, as we saw in chapter three, Marvell had major reservations about *Gondibert*-style poetics, he also supported the project of toleration in his two major satires of the Cabal period. ‘The Loyal Scot’ was written piecemeal between 1667 and 1673, and depicts the poet John Cleveland in Elysium launching an extended attack on Anglican bigotry.¹⁴² Cleveland was a notorious cavalier polemicist—albeit one who, as we saw in chapter five, was cited at the time for having eventually submitted to Cromwellian rule, and hence a paradoxical figure of both vituperative partisanship and pragmatic side-changing.¹⁴³ The theme of a poet’s ghost decrying the prostitution of literature to partisan ends is familiar from Marvell’s earlier poem ‘Tom May’s Death’; he now echoes the earlier ghost of Jonson’s memorable language about ‘single’ fighting:

I single did against a nation write,
Against a nation thou didst fight.
My diff’ring crime does more thy virtue raise;
And such my rashness best thy valour praise. (294-7)

The ideal of singularity is now redefined as delinquent ‘diff’ring’, a reactionary ‘rashness’ which threatens political order.¹⁴⁴ *The Rehearsal Transpros’d* (1672) makes another allusion which recalls language from ‘Tom May’s Death’, comparing the Anglicans and Nonconformists with

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 87-90.

¹⁴¹ Parkin, ‘Liberty Transpros’d’, p. 275.

¹⁴² Smith, ed., *Poems*, p. 399.

¹⁴³ Castlemaine, *A Reply to the Answer of the Catholique Apology*, p. 129.

¹⁴⁴ *OED*, ‘differing’, adj., 2 and 3.

‘the Guelphs and Ghiblines’ (p. 81).¹⁴⁵ The metaphor erodes the hegemonic authority which Parker claimed for the Church by configuring it as a Popish faction warring against the secular power of the Emperor. Again, the point is the futility of partisan rancour, accusing both parties of being ‘*schismatical*’ and ‘*nonconformable... to one another*’. Marvell claims the Civil War itself was caused by the Laudian bishops’ sectional recrimination, ‘the better to *dis-Ghibeline* themselves from the Puritans’ (p. 190). He mocks Parker’s ‘Arrogance and Dictature’ (p. 94)—as we saw in chapter three, comparing it with Davenant’s authoritarian poetics—by implying that the zealous pursuit of conformity serves only to exacerbate antagonism and division.

This returns us to Hobbes’ warnings, which we first encountered in chapter one, that the plasticity and diversity of language can generate discord:

For though the nature of that we conceive, be the same; yet the diversity of our reception of it, in respect of different constitutions of body, and prejudices of opinion, gives every thing a tincture of our different passions.¹⁴⁶

The diversity of names fuelled civil war between humans—as we have seen, Hobbes classified it under the third cause of war, cultural value or ‘Glory’.¹⁴⁷ ‘The Loyal Scot’ distils this pithily:

In paradise names only Nature showed,
At Babel names from pride and discord flowed;
And ever since men with a female spite
First call each other names, and then they fight. (264-67)

Both Cleveland and Hobbes had identified Babel as a symbol of this damaging linguistic diversity.¹⁴⁸ One solution to the problem was to hope, as Cowley had, for an ‘art of forgetfulness’ which could ‘extinguish the names of party’: in ‘The Loyal Scot’, the ghost of Cleveland begs for a similar reprieve: ‘My former satire for this verse forget’ (292).¹⁴⁹ *The Rehearsal Transpros’d* alludes to the 1660 Act of Oblivion which was supposed to have secured the Restoration by enshrining this principle of forgetfulness in law:

if I have raked farther into things than I would have done, the Author’s Indiscretion will, I hope, excuse me, and gather all the blame for reviving those things which were to be buried in oblivion (p. 195).

¹⁴⁵ See ‘Tom May’s Death’, ll. 61-2: ‘...must we | As for the basket, *Guelphs* and *Ghib’lines* be’.

¹⁴⁶ *Leviathan*, chapter IV, p. 62.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*, chapter XIII, p. 192.

¹⁴⁸ Achinstein, ‘The Politics of Babel’, pp. 33-5; *Leviathan*, chapter IV, p. 50.

¹⁴⁹ Waller, ed., *Poems*, p. 455n.

This oblivion could only be achieved by the secular sovereign—and, as Parkin has argued, *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* covertly formulates a Hobbesian absolutist case for the sovereign's power to curb the clergy.¹⁵⁰ Thus, in 'The Loyal Scot': 'only kings can bishops exorcise' (153). But Marvell's tolerationism stopped short of the violent secular absolutism of Davenant or Howard:

it had been a melancholy Empire to have been only Supreme Grasiere and Sovereign Shepherds. And therefore, though the laziness of that brutal magistracy might have been more secure, yet the difficulty of this does make it more honourable. (p. 166)

This invokes the recurring metaphor we have traced through Davenant and Cowley, of the herd as a model for authoritarian government—with which Marvell had previously implied his reservations in 'Upon Appleton House' (as we saw in chapter four). He now dismisses absolutism as 'brutal magistracy', with a word Davenant had used, 'laziness', to criticize a form of government which closed down the civic sphere altogether. Marvell instead praises the 'difficulty' of tolerant government as 'more honourable'—coming closer to Machiavelli's argument that the dynamic tension in a republic increased liberty.¹⁵¹

Marvell's conception of 'honourable' liberty was, like Machiavelli's, predicated on a fundamental flexibility of allegiances:

What so obdurate pagan-heretic
But will transform for an archbishopric? (168-9)

Whilst critiquing the bishops' mercenary motives, Marvell's rhetoric works to normalize political flexibilities—presenting the bishops as 'piebald lordships' (186), returning to that metaphor of mixed or changing colours. Similarly, in *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, Marvell cites Parker's own history of defecting from his youthful Presbyterianism to the Church of England, to suggest how peace and stability are threatened not by nonconformity, but by the zeal of the convert:

For though a man may be allowed once in his life to change his Party, and the whole Scene of his Affairs, either for his Safety or Preferment; nay, though every man be obliged to change an hundred times backward and forward, if his Judgement be so weak & variable; there are some drudgeries that no man of

¹⁵⁰ Parkin, 'Liberty Transpros'd', pp. 277-82.

¹⁵¹ *Discourses*, Book I, chapter IV, pp. 19-22 (trans. Walker, pp. 113-15).

Honour would put himself upon... As suppose one had thought fit to pass over from one Perswasion of the Christian Religion unto another, he would not chuse to spit thrice at every Article that he relinquished, to curse solemnly his Father and Mother for having educated him in those Opinions, to animate his new Acquaintances to the massacring of his former Camarades... (p. 89)

Marvell's flippant tone works to confer normative acceptability on a potentially inflammatory assertion, that it was permissible to change sides not just for the purpose of 'Safety' but also for 'Preferment', the pursuit of one's self interest. He also inculcates the Hobbesian assessment of human 'Judgement' as 'weak & variable'.¹⁵² A true 'man of Honour' accepts this fact, whereas acts of bloody-minded partisanship are 'drudgeries', a sort of slavery. Parker's demands for conformity now appear cruel and perverse—breaking the commandment to honour 'his Father and Mother', and making him a man of blood, advocating the 'massacring of his former Camarades'. Davenant had reached for the same word in *Gondibert*, to describe humans' compulsion to 'Act but continu'd Massacres for pow'r'.¹⁵³ But Marvell ironically inverted the classic Hobbesian account of restless violence and cruelty. Whereas Hobbes had introduced political obligations to escape the state of nature, Marvell presents excessively zealous political attachments as a serious risk to peace.

¹⁵² See *Leviathan*, chapter XXIX, p. 502.

¹⁵³ Davenant, *Gondibert*, II.viii.36.

Conclusion

This thesis has sought to understand the poets who found it necessary to detach themselves from the defeated royalist cause following the English Revolution. It has asked whether they shared any distinctive intellectual resources which enabled them to frame allegiance as contingent and transferable. It has also aimed to build a detailed account of how they fashioned these resources in their writing. Where previous historiography on allegiance has generally focussed narrowly on high politics in the years of the Civil War itself, I have contended that the turncoat poets were interested in deeper conceptual questions about the nature of sovereignty and political obligation, and how these can be expressed in language. I have also shifted focus onto the aftermath of the Revolution in the 1650s, when finding an answer to these questions was most urgent. Previous literary criticism, when it has approached the problem of side-changing, has tended to do so by reframing it in terms of a separate concept or principle which can minimize the poet's inconstancy. That approach has offered helpful insights, but I have placed a corrective focus on the poets' confrontation of the issues of sovereignty and obligation themselves.

The evidence in this thesis suggests the poets did draw upon a distinctive set of intellectual resources, which can be summarized schematically as follows. Sovereignty, they repeatedly emphasized, consisted of the power to protect subjects from attack and enforce law. I have described adherents of this view as politically relativist, allowing no form of government any special or exclusive claim to wield such a power; and as defactoist, holding that legitimacy belonged to the government in *de facto* possession of that power. There was a marked contrast between this defactoist position and traditional discourses which conceived of political obligations as matters of personal affection, friendship, gratitude, or loyalty; of religious devotion and teleological symbolism; or of ancient custom. The poets—particularly Marvell and Dryden—seem to have been aware of this contrast, and I have suggested they deployed the humanist technique of arguing *in utramque partem* to negotiate between competing discourses' claims on

political legitimacy, and to test their limitations. It is in this narrow sense that I have described the poets' position as secularizing: they were sceptical of the sacred claims of both Stuart monarchy and puritan Commonwealth. They used architectural metaphors to fashion religious institutions as works of human, civic engineering. We saw Waller compare the church with a 'platforme':

saying y^t it was not the best way to take downe ye wodden causeway, before it was seconded by another of earth or stone, [or] here the waters would overflow all the groundes, & hinder even y^t better proiect...¹

This metaphor implied an instrumental view of religion, obliged to contribute towards the goal of securing stability. But as with all early-modern political discourses, this position required theological underpinning, and the poets—especially Cowley—gave careful consideration to how political obligations which seemed apparent from natural law could be reconciled with the will of God.

A central claim of this thesis is that the above was predicated on a deterministic theory of human psychology.² The poets challenged the traditional account of the passions as external, demonic forces acting upon the individual soul and reinterpreted them as the result of the ceaseless motion of atoms in the mind. The simplest motions were stimulated by bodily appetites, but interaction with fellow humans gave rise to more complex passions of fear, envy, vainglory, and, overwhelmingly, the ambition for power. Because these higher-order passions were conditioned by social and cultural (as opposed to economic) forces, they were susceptible to the power of language—to provoke, direct, or possibly assuage them. Hence Davenant's determination to foster the 'appetite to Greatnesse' in his noble readers:

such active motion of Empire is as necessary as the motion of the Sea; where all things would putrifie, and infect one an other, if the Element were quiet; so it is with mens minds on shore... the Mindes of Men are more monstrous, and require more space for agitation and the hunting of others, then the Bodies of Whales.³

¹ Waller's speech of 11th June 1641 recorded in BL Sloane MS 1467, f. 101.

² Following insights by Christopher Tilmouth (*Passion's Triumph Over Reason*).

³ Davenant, *Preface to Gondibert*, pp. 13, 31.

These passions were understood to be restless and unceasing. They were also the normative condition for all action, neither good nor bad in themselves, and capable of being harnessed to productive or destructive ends.

The poets were sceptical as to whether any natural political attachments could exist in this state of restless motion: Marvell imagined the state of nature as a ‘new and empty face of things’.⁴ Yet, as both Marvell and Cowley pointed out, nature ‘hateth emptiness’.⁵ It was necessary, they concluded, for humans to live under sovereign power, an artificial institution—in Davenant’s phrase, ‘a Creature form’d by Art’—which could contain their otherwise destructive passions.⁶ And, because sovereignty was artificial, it followed that the political obligations it generated were too. Obligations could be transferred to a new sovereign if the need ever arose: they were assumed to be forged tacitly in the moment when a subject accepted a sovereign’s protection. This obligation would remain intact only so long as the sovereign maintained their absolute, unitary power—their ‘Force’, in Cowley’s view, ‘which only can maintain | the *Power* that *Fortune* gives, or *worth* does gain’.⁷ Given the different institutions which could constitute a commonwealth, differences of language, and, most of all, humans’ restless desire for power, there remained a risk that sovereign order could be torn apart—as Englishmen had discovered to their horror in the 1640s. This reinforced the sovereign’s responsibility to seize control over the church and prevent the clergy from preaching sedition. But it also seemed to hold out a special role for poets, who could command the vagaries of language in order to persuade, mollify, or coerce subjects into acquiescence. As Waller declared:

Then let the Muses, with such notes as these,
Instruct us what belongs unto our peace. (173-4)⁸

This is to schematize what was in practice a mode of thinking, and this thesis has also engaged with the question of how concepts from political theory can be perceived in poetry.

⁴ Marvell, ‘Upon Appleton House’, l. 442.

⁵ Marvell, ‘An Horatian Ode’, l. 41, Cowley, ‘To Mr Hobs’, p. 188.

⁶ Davenant, ‘To Mr. Benlowes, on his Divine Poem’, l. 19.

⁷ Cowley, *Davideis*, p. 382.

⁸ Waller, *A Panegyrick to my Lord Protector*, ll. 173-4.

Shared terminology and verbal echoes have played a central role in my analysis, but I have tried to retain a cautionary awareness of their limitations, especially regarding poets for whom the plasticity of language was an abiding concern. I have contextualized the study of vocabulary within a wider set of assumptions and sources—in sum, intellectual resources—placing some emphasis on the ways in which concepts can be appropriated and structured through metaphors. And, particularly with Waller and Marvell, I have emphasized how intellectual resources had to be adapted dynamically to different contexts of rhetorical performance, different genres, subjects, regimes, and readers. I have advanced a further argument about methods of reading: that these poets are distinctive in eschewing the totalizing symbolic system of allegory, instead tailoring their analysis to individual, partial cases. Obligations could not exist abstractly from or externally to the particular political circumstances that generated them. We saw how Cowley ironically distanced himself from allegorical superstructures, and how Davenant developed an analogy with experimentalist philosophy; both implied that their poetry was dramatizing and observing real psychological forces in action—indeed, that poetry was a natural medium for doing so.

This thesis has also intervened in debates about the literary reception of Hobbes. *Leviathan* was the seminal contemporary statement of several of the turncoat poets' key themes: the kinetic psychology of the passions, the artificiality of sovereignty, and Erastian anti-clericalism. I have tried to offer new and concrete literary-critical detail on how the poets adapted and fashioned these influences in their works, using narrative and metaphor to dramatize theoretical arguments. I have also suggested how Hobbes shaped the poets' thinking about language: his concern that linguistic diversity could be a cause of civil war; the necessity that poetic imagery should be derived from sensory experience; the extent to which rhetoric could coerce subjects into obedience. Of central importance to these questions was the possibility—denied in Hobbes' earlier writings, but conceded in his *Answer* to Davenant's *Preface*, and covertly practised in several places in his works—that a striking metaphor could condense an axiomatic truth. Following Davenant's exchange with Hobbes in *Gondibert* the poets

experimented with the iambic pentameter quatrain as an elevated but self-contained form in which these extended conceptual conceits could be unpacked. Hobbes' psychology also influenced the poets' thinking about genre. His disparaging of romance opened up new possibilities for Davenant and Cowley to use the genre to explore a world of delinquent vainglory, and the more unstable political obligations it entailed. With contrasting results: Davenant was interested in harnessing violent appetites to martial *virtù*, Cowley in reconciling them with a theological resolution. Whilst intellectual histories (particularly those offered by literary scholars) have often tied him away with absolutist royalism, this thesis has fleshed out an alternative context for reading Hobbes as a theorist of the transferability of allegiances.⁹ After the Restoration, it was Hobbes' theory of the contingency of obligations which made important contributions to formative proto-Whig arguments about the shape of the state and religious toleration. Contrary to stereotype, Hobbism provided only limited comfort to Stuart monarchs.

As Marvell insisted, nature abhors a vacuum. Another major contention of this thesis is that a helpful framework for reading Hobbes—one more obviously grounded in the familiar traditions of Renaissance humanism—could be found in the earlier writings of Machiavelli. Where Hobbes' physical determinism could seem arbitrary, Machiavelli's metaphors for Fortune—a raging flood, or a capricious mistress—provided congenial ways to describe the role of contingency in political events, as Waller and Dryden found in their poems on the Restoration. Hobbes' anatomy of a commonwealth could seem abstract and ahistorical, and was sometimes unclear about the extent of individuals' agency. An obvious example was the seeming mismatch we encountered in chapter three between the sovereign's supposedly absolute control over the militia, and the independent Machiavellian qualities of valour and popularity required in military commanders. The *Discourses* offered a historicized model for the dynamic tensions which existed between individual agency and institutions of state, as in Marvell's Horatian Ode:

⁹ Following major contributions to Hobbes studies by Jon Parkin (*Taming the Leviathan*) and Jeffrey Collins (*The Allegiance of Thomas Hobbes*).

Though Justice against Fate complain,
 And plead the ancient rights in vain;
 But those do hold or break,
 As men are strong or weak.¹⁰

Machiavelli's concept of *virtù* could account for individuals' ability to seize control of events, renovate states, and channel violent appetites into military expansion. This structured Davenant's discussion in the *Preface to Gondibert*, but also Marvell's depiction of 'restless Cromwell'. Conversely, Hobbes provided a more prescriptive theory of power-relations within a state for readers who had struggled to find class-conflicts as heroic as Machiavelli had in the *Discourses*: I have argued that *Gondibert* shows at length why inter-factional tension was in fact a sign of fatal vainglory. Thus, we can see ways in which Hobbes' more systematic approach could provide the missing piece for puzzles in Machiavelli. Hobbes gave a powerful psychological explanation for the brutal duplicity of human nature which Machiavelli had taken for granted: hence Cowley's careful attention to Saul's deteriorating psychological state in the *Davideis*, but hence also his optimism that such delinquency could one day be resolved. The poets' attempts to argue for the transferability of allegiance were built upon this productive and unstable synthesis between the two theorists.

Finally, this thesis has asked whether the turncoat poets made any difference to contemporary discussions of political allegiance. The most immediate responses were often harshly satirical. Yet it must be emphasized that the English Revolution had shown the traditional discourses of political obligation to be seriously inadequate. If it had been possible to believe that someone other than Charles Stuart could wield sovereign power in England—a view not widely expressed in public—the revolution put precisely that hypothesis into practice. Waller, Davenant, Marvell, and Cowley were the major active poets in Cromwellian England. They articulated, often very publically, a mindset which could enable the political nation to acquiesce with the revolutionary regimes, and as such were always likely to provoke hostility amongst those regimes' opponents. Those opponents were not solely amongst the royalists: I have aimed to complicate our sense of the landscape of 1650s political writing by showing the vitality of a set of

¹⁰ Marvell, 'Horatian Ode', ll. 36-40.

intellectual resources from outside of (or, in Machiavelli's case, extracted from) the republican canon. We saw in chapter four how writers could mark striking convergences between rationalist absolutist positions and those of classical republicanism; yet, elsewhere, other writers perceived the relationship as starkly contradictory. When the crisis of obligations seemed to have been settled by the Restoration, this controversial body of theory was no longer such an urgent matter of debate. Yet writers like Dryden and Howard still found the earlier poets' works a fertile source of political and poetic ideas. Changes in the nation's political structure in later decades—most obviously the entrenchment of parliament as a governing institution, and the emergence of party—correspondingly changed the ways in which disputes over sovereignty and allegiance could be shaped and contained. Further studies would be needed to establish how far the intellectual resources of mid-century rationalism inflected later debates about political obligations—but this thesis shows it is a context which needs to be taken into account. Such a study could throw light on the intellectual ramifications of publishing decisions taken in the 1680s: the reissue of Dryden's *Heroique Stanzas* on Cromwell, or, conversely, the excision of Marvell's Horatian Ode from the canon of his *Miscellaneous Poems*.¹¹ These later anxieties about the poets' canons suggest the continuing relevance of the conclusion of this thesis: the turncoats possessed a political conservatism, but a conceptual radicalism which presented a serious challenge to the Anglican and constitutionalist discourses of Stuart monarchy. The revelation of the contingency and changeability of political allegiances was a crucial but uncomfortable intellectual legacy of the English Revolution. What made the turncoat poets controversial was their success in expressing a complex and imaginative response.

¹¹ See also the reappropriation of Cowley's satire *The Puritan and the Papist* in chapter five.

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