CHAPTER 2

Heroic Shakespeare at Lincoln's Inn Fields

Stephen Watkins

MACDUFF From *Duncan's* Grave, methinks, I hear a groan
That call's a loud for justice.
LADY MACDUFF If the Throne
Was by *Macbeth* ill gain'd, Heavens Justice may,
Without your Sword, sufficient vengeance pay.
Usurpers lives have but a short extent,
Nothing lives long in a strange Element.
MACDUFF My Countreys dangers call for my defence
Against the bloudy Tyrants violence.
LADY MACDUFF I am afraid you have some other end,
Than meerly *Scotland's* freedom to defend.
You'd raise your self, whilst you wou'd him dethrone;
And shake his Greatness, to confirm your own.
That purpose will appear, when rightly scan'd,
But usurpation at the second hand.
Good Sir, recall your thoughts.
MACDUFF What if I shou'd
Assume the Scepter for my Countrey's good?
Is that an usurpation? can it be
Ambition to procure the liberty
Of this sad Realm; which does by Treason bleed?
That which provokes, will justifie the deed.[1]

This fraught exchange between Lady Macduff and her husband, coming as it does midway through William Davenant's adaptation of *Macbeth* (1664), neatly combines the aesthetic and political impulses that drive the play to its highly charged but ultimately restorative conclusion. Macduff feels sure he must act to stop the tyrannical Macbeth, newly crowned as

I am grateful to Niall Allsopp, Amanda Eubanks Winkler, Richard Schoch, and Sarah Smyth for their comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.

[1] William Davenant, *Macbeth: A Tragedy*, in *Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare*, ed. Christopher Spencer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), 3.2.9–28.

King of Scotland, from wreaking havoc across the realm; he thus seeks to avenge the murdered Duncan and secure the long-term safety of the nation. Lady Macduff, however, questions her husband's motives for intervening in affairs of state that should not, by rights, concern him. She interrogates his planned course of action and openly challenges his personal motives for proposing it. Macduff, on the one hand, insists that if defending '*Scotland's* freedom' requires him to wrest the reins of power from a usurping monarch, then he is surely justified in doing so. His wife, on the other hand, sees nothing in his response to the crisis but hypocrisy and self-interest: such manoeuvring, to her eyes, would merely constitute 'usurpation at the second hand'.

Davenant adapted *Macbeth* sometime before November 1664, for the Duke of York's Company, his own patent theatre company housed at Lincoln's Inn Fields. The earliest performance we know of occurred on 5 November, when Samuel Pepys mentions seeing it for the first time.[2] Alongside its topical politics, which I will discuss in detail later, this new scene between the Macduffs flaunts another radical departure from its Jacobean parent text. Eschewing Shakespeare's blank verse in favour of the heroic couplet, a poetic form newly fashionable among Restoration playwrights, the Macduffs' dialogue generates a rhetorical energy that animates the ensuing debate about the limits of monarchical authority in ways its contemporary audiences could hardly fail to register. Davenant had been experimenting with the heroic couplet since at least 1656, when he wrote the libretto for his through-composed opera, *The Siege of Rhodes*, first produced privately at Rutland House and later publicly at the Cockpit theatre in Drury Lane.[3] Following the official reopening of London's theatres at the Restoration, Davenant expanded *Rhodes* into two parts, now presenting them as spoken plays rather than as operatic entertainments,

[2] William Van Lennep, Emmett L. Avery, Arthur H. Scouten, George Winchester Stone, Jr., and Charles Beecher Hogan, eds., *The London Stage, 1660–1800*, 5 parts in 11 vols. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960–1968), vol. I, 85. Dating Davenant's adaptation remains problematic; see Arthur H. Scouten, 'The Premiere of Davenant's Adaptation of *Macbeth*', in *Shakespeare and the Dramatic Tradition: Essays in Honor of S. F. Johnson*, ed. W. R. Elton and William B. Long (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1989), 286–93. In what follows, I add weight to Christopher Spencer's argument for a date of late 1663 or early 1664, with the production Pepys saw in November 1664 essentially reflecting Davenant's text as we find it in both the 1674 printed quarto and the Yale manuscript copy. See Christopher Spencer, ed., *Davenant's Macbeth from the Yale Manuscript: An Edition, with a Discussion of the Relation of Davenant's Text to Shakespeare's* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1961), 15–16.

[3] See Andrew R. Walkling, *Masque and Opera in England, 1656–88* (Abington: Routledge, 2017), 143–92; Stephen Watkins, 'The Protectorate Playhouse: William Davenant's Cockpit in the 1650s', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 37.1 (2019): 89–109.

albeit retaining significant amounts of music. Thereafter, the rhymed heroic play – typified by its idealised protagonists, supernatural spectacle and music, exotic settings, and themes of love, honour, sovereignty, and succession – quickly established itself as the dominant genre of the 1660s, pressing writers such as Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery, Robert and Edward Howard, and John Dryden into its service.[4] When it came to adapting *Macbeth* in the winter of 1663/4, the heroic play must have seemed an appealing model for Davenant to follow.

By and large critics have proved reluctant to bring together these two strands of Davenant's Restoration playwriting career – his heroic plays and operas, as epitomised by *Rhodes*, and his Shakespeare adaptations.[5] As a result, I suggest we have failed to meet his *Macbeth* on its own generic terms. As the performance history of *Rhodes* makes clear, the development of Restoration heroic drama is intimately bound up with the development of seventeenth-century English opera, to the point where such clear distinctions between play and opera begin to hinder rather than help critical analysis. Following James A. Winn's call for a revised history of the Restoration stage that more flexibly accounts for the connections between dramatic and musical forms, in this chapter I read Davenant's changes to Shakespeare's text as an attempt to bring the play in line with the operatic heroic dramas produced alongside it in the 1660s at Lincoln's Inn Fields as well as at the rival playhouse, Thomas Killigrew's Theatre Royal in Bridges Street.[6] I show how *Macbeth* draws on the dramatic and musical conventions, generic structures, and thematic preoccupations articulated by *Rhodes* and subsequent heroic plays to reorient its own moral, political, and aesthetic topography on distinctively Carolean lines. In the final section of this chapter, I suggest that *Macbeth*, now understood as part of a wider fashion for heroic/operatic works at Lincoln's Inn Fields, reveals a subtle yet significant shift in Davenant's own dramaturgical praxis at a relatively late stage in his career, a shift previously unnoticed by theatre historians and literary critics alike. By placing the Restoration *Macbeth*

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

[5] In addition to *Macbeth*, Davenant also wrote and produced *The Law Against Lovers* (1662; an adaptation of *Measure for Measure* and *Much Ado About Nothing*), *The Rivals* (1663; *The Two Noble Kinsman*), and, with John Dryden, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* (1667; *The Tempest*).

[6] James A. Winn, 'Heroic Song: A Proposal for a Revised History of English Theatre and Opera, 1656–1711', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 30.2 (Winter, 1996/7): 113–37. More recently, Andrew R. Walkling has termed these hybrid performance texts 'spectacle-tragedies'; see his *English Dramatick Opera, 1661–1706* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019), 82–116.

in dialogue with its surrounding repertory instead of reading it solely, and reductively, through Shakespeare's original text, a more nuanced and intriguing history of the stage in the mid-1660s begins to emerge.

Davenant and the Origins of the Heroic Play

According to Dryden, Davenant was the first exponent of the heroic play in England. In a prefatory essay attached to *The Conquest of Granada* (1672), Dryden traces the genre's origins back to Davenant's operatic experiments in the 1650s:

> For Heroick Plays, (in which onely I have us'd it without the mixture of Prose) the first light we had of them on the *English* Theatre was from the late Sir *William D'Avenant*: It being forbidden him in the Rebellious times to act Tragedies and Comedies, because they contain'd some matter of Scandal to those good people, who could more easily dispossess their lawful Sovereign than endure a wanton jeast; he was forc'd to turn his thoughts another way: and to introduce the examples of moral vertue, writ in verse, and perform'd in Recitative Musique.[7]

Here, Dryden presents the creation of the operatic heroic play as a fortuitous accident of history. Constrained by Puritan killjoys who wrested control of the country following the regicide of Charles I in 1649, Dryden argues that Davenant was forced to experiment with new performance styles to circumvent the prohibition on stage plays that remained in force until 1660. Musical performances were not subject to the same legal restrictions as mimetic drama in Protectorate England (Cromwell himself was an enthusiastic music aficionado), so the argument goes that Davenant compromised by reluctantly setting his dramatic scripts to music.[8] *Rhodes*, Dryden tells us, which introduced the English public to recitative singing and painted moveable scenery as well as to the first professional female performer to grace a public stage, took its cue from 'the *Italian* Opera's [*sic*]' (9) and French plays by the likes of Pierre Corneille. The formal shift from drama to music, from straight play to opera, was accompanied too by a change in dramatic content: these works no longer celebrated the indecorous and ethically dubious characters that so frequently populate pre-Civil War dramas, Dryden tells us, but instead presented audiences with 'examples of moral vertue' (9).

[7] John Dryden, 'Of Heroique Playes: An Essay', in *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. H. T. Swedenberg Jr. et al., 20 vols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1956–2002), vol. IX, 8–18 (9).
[8] Patrick Little, 'Music at the Court of King Oliver', *The Court Historian*, 12 (2007): 173–91.

Dryden's account is broadly accurate in terms of the theatrical innovations Davenant oversaw in the Interregnum but entirely wrongheaded in identifying the elder playwright's motivations for them. His essay assumes that Davenant's experiments with opera during the 1650s was a purely pragmatic concern, a necessary evil thrust upon him by the draconian strictures of an anti-theatrical Puritanism. It was only after Charles II liberated Davenant from this oppressive regime, Dryden claims, that he finally 'review'd his *Siege of Rhodes*, and caus'd it to be acted as a just Drama' (9), that is, as the spoken play it was always intended to be. Dryden's dismissal of Davenant's musical experimentation, however, reflects his own deeply ambivalent feelings about the use of music in theatrical contexts.[9] In reality, Davenant had openly embraced musical drama some twenty years before staging *Rhodes*. During the 1630s, he collaborated with the designer Inigo Jones and composers such as Nicholas Lanier and Henry Lawes on a number of court masques for Charles I and his wife, Henrietta Maria – including the last masque produced before the outbreak of war, *Salmacida Spolia* (1640). Moreover, in 1639, Davenant was granted a licence to construct a new playhouse in which to stage spectacular 'Action[s], musical Presentments, Scenes, Dancing and the like' before a paying public.[10] This project was quickly abandoned, but Davenant's intentions to establish a scenic theatre at least seventeen years before his first Rutland House productions shows the disingenuity of Dryden's claim that his hand was forced into producing operatic entertainments during the Protectorate.[11]

It is clear from Davenant himself that *Rhodes* and its successors – *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* (1658) and *The History of Sir Francis Drake* (1659) – were conceived from the very beginning as operatic, or at least musical, entertainments, brilliantly exploiting continental developments in recitative, instrumental music, and perspective scenography.[12] In his treatise *A Proposition for Advancement of Moralitie, by a New Way of Entertainment of the People*, published anonymously in 1653, Davenant set out his vision for a morally and aesthetically reformed theatre that would

[9] James A. Winn, *'When Beauty Fires the Blood': Love and the Arts in the Age of Dryden* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 162–231.

[10] Thomas Rymer, *Foedera* (London, 1735), xx, 377–8; quoted in Mary Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant: Poet Laureate, Playwright, Civil War General, Restoration Theatre Manager* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 75.

[11] John Freehafer, 'Brome, Suckling, and Davenant's Theatre Project of 1639', *Texas Studies in Language and Literature*, 10 (1968): 367–83.

[12] While *The History of Sir Francis Drake* was, like *Rhodes*, likely through-sung, there is no evidence that this was the case for *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru*; however, *Peru* does call for complex scenography, dance, and acrobatic episodes. See Walkling, *Masque and Opera*, 154–6.

engender positive relations with the Protectorate state. Submitted to the Council of State for review, the *Proposition* argues that the government should work to educate and 'civilise the people', thereby 'procuring much ease to themselves, and benefit to those that are govern'd'.[13] One way to achieve that agreeable outcome, Davenant insisted, would be through 'Heroick Representations at the publick charge' (2). Davenant sets out to show how these '*Heroicall Pictures*' would combine visual and musical spectacle – 'Musick and wholsome discourses' with 'ingenious *Mechanicks*, as *Motion* and *Transposition of Lights*' (14) – in order 'not onely [to] divert the people from disorder, but by degrees enamour them with consideration of the conveniences and protections of Government' (15). Thus, his state-sponsored theatre would serve as 'an *Academy* or *Schoole* of *Morality*' (20), presenting heroic narratives and exemplary characters through which audiences would learn the lessons and virtues required for the smooth running of society. Avoiding the 'softer arguments' of plays from the pre-1642 repertory, which would merely 'make the people effeminate', these heroic operas would instead take full advantage of the new technical possibilities available in England to 'warme and incite [spectators] to Heroicall Attempts, when the State shall command them; and bring into derision the present Vices and Luxury' (21–2).

The *Proposition* succinctly joins together the material and technical aspects of theatrical production that we eventually see in the Protectorate operas and Restoration heroic plays. To do so, it draws freely on what Colin Burrow and Brandon Chua term Davenant's 'heroic idiom'.[14] Embracing the theatre's full range of semiotic systems, Davenant's heroic idiom unites the verbal and thematic ('love and honour' plots) with the visual and musical technologies first developed at Rutland House and later honed at the Cockpit and Lincoln's Inn Fields (operatic spectacle).

While the *Proposition* describes the visual and musical elements used to express Davenant's heroic idiom, the thematic ideas are first articulated in his unfinished epic, *Gondibert: An Heroick Poem*, published in 1651. *Gondibert* follows the adventures of its eponymous hero, who proves his military capabilities against his rival, Prince Oswald, in single combat before retiring to convalesce at the house of the natural philosopher, Astragon.

[13] [William Davenant], *A Proposition for Advancement of Moralitie, by a New Way of Entertainment of the People* (London, 1654[/3]), 1.

[14] Colin Burrow, *Epic Romance from Homer to Milton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 240; Brandon Chua, *Ravishment of Reason: Governance and the Heroic Idioms of the Late Stuart Stage, 1660–1690* (Lanham, MD: Bucknell University Press, 2014).

Once there, he meets and immediately falls in love with Astragon's only daughter, Birtha. As they begin their courtship, news arrives from the court of King Aribert in Lombardy that Gondibert has been named his heir. The final cantos of the poem turn on the question of whether Gondibert will accept his public duty, which involves succeeding Aribert as king on the latter's death and marrying his daughter, Princess Rhodalind, or whether he will follow his heart and marry his true love, Birtha.

According to the lengthy preface published in 1650 in anticipation of the poem itself, Davenant insists that the characters in *Gondibert* are 'deriv'd from the distempers of Love, and Ambition: for Love and Ambition are too often the raging Feavers of great mindes'.[15] Thus, in Book 2, canto 8, for example, Gondibert privately reveals to Astragon his struggle to reconcile his love for Birtha with his sense of duty towards Aribert and Rhodalind:

> Think not Ambition can my duty sway;
> I look on *Rhodalind* with Subjects Eies,
> Whom he that conquers, must in right obay.
>
> And though I humanly have heretofore
> All beauty lik'd, I never lov'd till now;
> Nor think a Crown can raise his valew more,
> To whom already Heav'n does Love allow. (2.8.26–7)

This kind of plot, in which an ideal protagonist is forced to choose between private love on the one hand and public honour, duty, and ambition on the other, becomes a staple of the Restoration heroic plays and operas that follow.[16] Indeed, Davenant's precedent for *Gondibert* itself seems to have been the fashionable 'love and honour' tragicomedies of the 1630s, to which he himself contributed plays such as *Love and Honour* (1634).[17] Davenant reveals in the *Preface* to *Gondibert* that he had such pre-war dramatic models in mind when composing his poem: 'I cannot discerne by any help from reading or learned men … that any Nation hath in representment of great actions (either by *Heroicks* or *Dramaticks*) digested Story into so pleasant and instructive a method as the English by their *Drama*: and by that regular species (thought narratively and not in *Dialogue*) I have drawn the body of an Heroick Poem' (15–16). The relationship, then, between heroic drama, poetry, and opera is more symbiotic than standard accounts of this period have been prepared to concede.

[15] William Davenant, *Gondibert*, ed. David F. Gladish (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 13.
[16] See Winn, 'Heroic Song', 115.
[17] Martin Butler, *Theatre and Crisis, 1632–1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 55–83; Kevin Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment: The Politics of Literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 54–108.

In the 1656 edition of *Rhodes*, Davenant stresses that the heroic action of the opera is similarly intended 'to advance the characters of virtue in the shapes of valor and conjugal love'.[18] The plot centres on the newly married Italians, Alphonso and Ianthe, who are visiting Rhodes, just as Solyman the Magnificent arrives with his formidable Ottoman armada to besiege the island. Driven by his desire to prove a worthy military hero, Alphonso chooses to stay and fight alongside his Christian hosts, despite their insistence that he should return with Ianthe to safety in Italy. Fearful for her husband's life, Ianthe eventually travels to Solyman's camp to implore him to call off his attack. Stunned by her beauty and virtue, Solyman grants Ianthe and her husband safe passage out of Rhodes, but demurs from calling off his offensive. On hearing of her interference and of Solyman's release of his female prisoner, who 'was his own by right of war' (3.196), Alphonso becomes suspicious of his wife's fidelity, and the opera ends on an ambiguous note as Solyman proves more magnanimous and chivalrous than the Christian Italian, who is left only too aware of how poorly he has treated his wife throughout the siege.

Rhodes was revived sometime between 1659 and 1661, and eventually published in two parts in 1663 with a dedicatory epistle to Davenant's friend, Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, Lord Chancellor of England. This epistle reiterates many of the points set out in the earlier *Preface* and *Proposition* relating to heroic poetry and opera, most notably its intermingling of 'Martial encounters' with 'conjugal vertues' ($A3^{v}$). The expanded scenes added to part 1 in 1663 introduce Solyman's own wife, Roxolana, as a counterpoint to the virtuous Ianthe. Along with *Gondibert*, *Rhodes* quickly established itself as a chief dramaturgical model for the heroic dramas that followed. Orrery's *The Generall* (*c*. 1661–3), Robert Howard and Dryden's *The Indian Queen* (1663) and Dryden's solo sequel *The Indian Emperour* (1665), Dryden's *The Conquest of Granada* (1672), and Edward Howard's *The Usurper* (1669) were all produced at Killigrew's Theatre Royal in the opening decades of the Restoration, while Orrery's *Henry the Fifth* (1664), *Mustapha* (1665), and *Tryphon* (1669) were staged by Davenant and the Duke's Company at Lincoln's Inn Fields. All are variations on the love and honour plots described, while many of them invest inordinate amounts of creative energy in musical and scenic spectacle to produce wonder and admiration in their audiences.

[18] William Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes*, in *Drama of the English Republic, 1640–1660*, ed. Janet Clare (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 193–233 (195).

These heroic plays also share ideological as well as aesthetic commitments pertinent to their moment of production. As Richard Law has observed, the Restoration heroic play became an opportunity to celebrate 'the restoration of legitimate sovereignty in the state', while Maguire claims that, collectively, they 'betray an obsession with figures of monarchy, with usurpation and regicide, and with recuperation of royal power' that reflects contemporary political discourse.[19] All these heroic plays raise questions, to varying degrees, about the nature of sovereignty and political allegiance, questions that Davenant first explored in the 1650s, and which took on a renewed urgency in the wake of the return of the Stuart monarchy in May 1660. Frequently, they engage the psychological language of the philosopher Thomas Hobbes, albeit often without recourse to his controversial political ideas.[20] Time and again, the plays staged in the first years of Charles II's reign confront their audiences with unworthy, overambitious upstarts who are nevertheless ultimately ousted in favour of legitimate rulers. Davenant's *Macbeth* thus reflects the preoccupations of the broader repertory of plays of which it forms a crucial part. Like the 1663 edition of *Rhodes*, *Macbeth* centres on two opposing married couples – the Macduffs now serving as foils for the Macbeths – while characters meditate on how best to reconcile uxorious love with public duty and personal honour. Davenant's adaptation also concerns a corrupt usurper who is ultimately thwarted by the restoration of a rightful heir, in the vein of Orrery's *The Generall* or Howard's *The Usurper*. Finally, *Macbeth* uses the full range of scenic and musical technology available at Lincoln's Inn Fields to create its effects; although, as we shall see, it does so in markedly different ways to Davenant's earlier heroic productions.

Macbeth's Heroic Idiom

Returning to the dialogue between the Macduffs quoted at the beginning of this chapter, we can see that the scene contains all the aesthetic and ideological hallmarks that characterise the Restoration heroic play. As well as deploying the trademark couplet, its dissection of political and ideological

[19] Richard Law, 'The Heroic Ethos in John Dryden's Heroic Plays', *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900*, 23.3 (1983): 389–98 (394); Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration*, 5.

[20] Davenant had addressed the *Preface* to *Gondibert* to Hobbes in 1650. On his ambivalent engagement with Hobbes's political philosophy, see Niall Allsopp, *Poetry and Sovereignty in the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 26–56, 139–65; James R. Jacob and Timothy Raylor, 'Opera and Obedience: Thomas Hobbes and *A Proposition for Advancement of Moralitie* by Sir William Davenant', *The Seventeenth Century*, 6.2 (1991): 205–50 (215–33).

perspectives on questions of legitimate power, monarchical authority, and tyranny is typical of the genre as we find it in the early 1660s. *Macbeth* displays both the obsession with usurpation and the anxiety around rightful restoration that Maguire and others ascribe to plays of contemporaries such as Orrery and Howard. It is abundantly clear from the text that Macbeth is an unlawful usurper of the Scottish throne, but what procedures should be undertaken to remove him, and who should replace him, prove much more insoluble questions. When Macduff offers to assume the burden of power himself, his wife suspects an ulterior motive. She worries that he seeks a crown to which he, like Macbeth, has no just claim. It is 'not by your Title due' (3.2.33), she says. To seize power in this way, even in the defence of his fellow subjects, would make Macduff 'at best *unjustly* Good' (3.2.36; my emphasis). Macduff might not yet be as bad as Macbeth; however, his wife worries that her husband is still being dangerously ambitious in his own way: 'You, by your Pitty which for us you plead, / Weave but Ambition of a finer thread' (3.2.37–9).

The word 'ambition' ricochets through *Macbeth* and serves as a key term in Davenant's wider heroic idiom.[21] We have seen how both *Gondibert* and *Rhodes* pit love against ambition in their plots. In his reply to the *Preface* to *Gondibert*, Hobbes observes that 'Ambition … has somewhat Heroique in it, and therefore must have place in an Heroique Poem.'[22] A prime indicator of the heroic, ambition nevertheless proves to be a rather protean term, adjusting its moral tenor as it crosses the 1660 divide. In the *Preface* itself, Davenant defines ambition benignly 'as no more then an extraordinary lifting of the feet in the rough ways of Honor, over the impediments of Fortune' (13). Gondibert is faced with a stark choice between love and ambition, but these are still both positive attributes, connoting commitment to one's true love and duty to one's nation, respectively. As is clear from Lady Macduff's speech in 3.2, however, 'ambition' takes on a much darker, malevolent flavour in *Macbeth*, being equated almost exclusively with tyranny and sin. 'Ambition', she declares 'urg'd [Macbeth] to that bloudy deed' – Duncan's murder – and she urges her husband 'never' to be led by 'Ambition' (3.2.4–5). No longer simply the propulsion required to overleap 'the impediments to Fortune', ambition now leads to the *neglect* of one's duty to one's country in favour of personal glory.

[21] Mongi Raddadi, *Davenant's Adaptations of Shakespeare* (Uppsala: Studia Anglistica Upsaliensis, 1979), 99.

[22] Thomas Hobbes, 'The Answer of Mr Hobbes to Sir Will. D'avenant's *Preface* before *Gondibert*', in Davenant, *Gondibert*, 45–55 (50).

We might reflect that *Macbeth*'s macabre fascination with 'ambition' parallels a general impulse by royalists at the Restoration to diagnose that passion as the overriding cause of the political upheavals of the 1640s and 1650s. For example, in *A Memento Directed to all Those that Truly Reverence the Memory of King Charles the Martyr* (1662), Roger L'Estrange emphasises that 'The true *Cause* of the late War, was *Ambition*', while Thomas Forde observes that 'Though *Charls* was innocent', for those opposing him, 'it was a crime enough that he was *King*, and stood in the place that ambition aimed at.'[23] On the stage, Samuel Tuke's immensely popular *The Adventures of Five Hours* (1663) similarly links rebellion with unchecked ambition. As Geraldo and Ernesto discuss the Dutch motivations for internecine struggle against their Spanish rulers, they hit upon its various causes: the Dutch populace at large are said to have been fomented by religious zealotry but their rulers in the nobility were prompted to the same end by that 'which made the Devil himself Rebel, / Ambition'.[24]

Unlike the *Preface*, then, where ambition is seen as a positive, even necessary, attribute for a public figure, Davenant's *Macbeth* exploits recent royalist assessments of the Civil War to inveigh against ambition as a futile and destructive force that erodes one's sense of honour, duty, and loyalty. Early in the play, for example, Lady Macbeth muses over her husband's letter in which he informs her of his sudden and unexpected elevation as Thane of Cawdor. She immediately looks to the ultimate prize but is concerned that her husband's moral rectitude will preclude him from attaining his true desire. It is not that Macbeth lacks 'ambition', she says,

> but the ill
> Which should attend it: what thou highly covet'st
> Thou covet'st holily! alas, thou art
> Loth to play false; and yet would'st wrongly win! (1.5.54–7)

The changes to Shakespeare's text here are highly significant. In the original, Lady Macbeth simply talks about what her husband *would* have: 'What thou wouldst highly, / That wouldst thou holily'.[25] In Davenant's version,

[23] Roger L'Estrange, *A Memento Directed to all Those that Truly Reverence the Memory of King Charles the Martyr* (London: Printed for Henry Brome, 1662), C1^{v}; Thomas Forde, *Virtus Rediviva; Or, A Panegyrick On the Late K. Charls the I. Second Monarch of Great Britain* (London: Printed by R. and W. Leybourn, for William Grantham, 1660), B8^{r}.

[24] Samuel Tuke, *The Adventures of Five Hours* (London: Printed for Henry Herringman, 1663), 11. The opening scene of Roger Boyle's *Tryphon* similarly identifies ambition as the lead cause of turmoil in the state; see *The Dramatic Works of Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery*, ed. William Smith Clark II, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1937), vol. I, 1.1.1–110.

[25] William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. Sandra Clarke and Pamela Mason (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 1.5.20–1.

Macbeth *covets*. It would appear that here Lady Macbeth is invoking the psychological vocabulary of Thomas Hobbes. In chapter 6 of *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes explicitly equates covetousness with ambition, writing that these two passions represent the very same 'appetite' merely applied to different objects: 'AMBITION' is the '*Desire* of Office, or precedence' while 'COVETOUSNESSE' is the '*Desire* of Riches'.[26] According to his wife, that Macbeth *covets* suggests that he desires both power and wealth even as he lacks the 'ill' necessary to achieve his aims. Davenant appears to be attracted to Hobbes's language of insatiable appetite here, as he foregrounds what Hobbes terms the 'generall inclination of all mankind', that is, 'a perpetuall and restlesse desire of Power after power, that ceaseth only in Death'.[27] Lady Macbeth signals that her husband is hungry for power, while failing to acknowledge his (and her) obligation in natural law not to resist the current sovereign, which forms the central tenet of Hobbes's political philosophy.[28]

This sense of restless agitation in opposition to obligation permeates the play throughout. Immediately before carrying out the murder, Macbeth briefly discusses the events of the last few days with Banquo. Duncan has shown himself to be a generous and benevolent ruler, even offering Macbeth's servants rewards and his wife a diamond ring for being a 'most kind Hostess' (2.1.14), elaborating the language of hospitality and reciprocity already present in Shakespeare's text. To kill such a man, we infer from Banquo's comments, would be a gross injustice. It would necessitate Macbeth breaking his covenant with his king. Macbeth, however, prompted by Banquo to think on the witches' prophecies, attempts subtly to determine where his friend's loyalties truly lie. Can Banquo be relied upon to support Macbeth's claim to the throne when the time comes? Banquo's response is slippery: 'still keeping my bosom free, / And my Allegiances dear, I shall be councell'd' (2.1.26–7), he says. In chapter 21 of *Leviathan*, Hobbes had offered a series of scenarios in which a subject may be required to transfer their allegiance to a new sovereign, such as when taken prisoner and 'his means of life be within the Guards of the enemy'. Likewise, if the sovereign 'dye without known Kindred, and without declaration of his Heyre … no Subjection is due'.[29] Duncan has recently

[26] Thomas Hobbes, *The Clarendon Edition of the Works of Thomas Hobbes*, vol. 4: *Leviathan: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, ed. Noel Malcolm (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2012), 85.

[27] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, xi, 150. Allsopp (*Poetry and Sovereignty*, 47) explores a similar idea in *Gondibert* concerning Davenant's use of the word 'gnaw'.

[28] Allsopp, *Poetry and Sovereignty*, 16–17.

[29] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 344.

announced his heir, of course, but Macbeth's plans are founded on the supposition that he will reach the throne unimpeded by framing Malcolm and his brother as the murdering conspirators themselves. However, Banquo's suggestion that he will 'keep his bosom free' is a problem for Macbeth: it goes against Hobbes's idea that we must yield up our free will to the sovereign in return for protection. He is keeping his cards close to his chest, and Macbeth cannot necessarily rely on his support. Banquo's murder is a direct result of Macbeth's inability to guarantee his loyalty.

These scenes establish Macbeth as a potential traitor, but they also show him to be a prospective sovereign. In another departure from Shakespeare, when Macbeth hears the bell that signals the moment to carry out the murder, he implores Duncan not to hear it, 'for 'tis a bell / That rings my Coronation, and thy Knell' (2.1.50). The line clearly foregrounds the theme of usurpation that runs throughout the play, and which is such an important trope of Restoration heroic drama. Macbeth's rise to power and the satisfaction of his ambition are predicated on his merciless treatment of Duncan, who must die for him to attain the crown.

Once Macbeth accedes to the throne, things quickly descend into darkness and despair, as he sets about consolidating his hard-fought but fragile hold on power. The central scenes establish Macduff as a potential heroic foil and threat to the 'bloudy Tyrants violence' (3.2.16), but, like Alphonso in *Rhodes*, he is not entirely without flaws himself. Macduff's claim that he wants 'not to Govern, but Protect' (3.2.40) Scotland would have raised images in the minds of Restoration audiences of the late Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell, whose position was established by the Instrument of Government in 1653. In the closing moments of the play, the restored Malcolm orders that Macbeth's corpse be hung on 'A Pinnacle in *Dunsinane*, to shew / To future Ages what to those is due / Who others Right, by Lawless Power pursue' (5.9.32–4), just as Charles II had the bodies of Cromwell, Henry Ireton, and John Bradshaw exhumed and hung up at the Tower of London in 1660.[30] In the earlier scene, then, Macduff represents a character running the risk of following in the footsteps of unlawful usurpers like Macbeth and Cromwell. Macduff does appear, to his wife's distress, to harbour political ambitions of his own.

Macduff's political naivety is compounded by his irrational (and unmanly) fear of the witches in 2.5, and when he underestimates the extent of Macbeth's cruelty towards his wife and children in 3.6. Macbeth,

[30] On these contemporary parallels, see Richard Kroll, 'Emblem and Empiricism in Davenant's *Macbeth*', *English Literary History*, 57.3 (Winter 1990): 835–64.

he unconvincingly reassures his wife, 'cannot be / Possest with such unmanly cruelty' (3.6.11–12) as to harm innocent women and children. Lady Macduff, however, is more cynical. She recognises the brutal reality of Macbeth's tyranny: 'When Birds of stronger Wing are fled away, / The Ravenous *Kite* do's on the weaker Prey' (3.6.9–10).[31] Her death at the hands of Macbeth's henchmen only vindicates her reading of the political situation.[32] Like other characters in heroic poetry and drama, here Macduff is faced with a choice between private love (protecting his family) or public duty (protecting his nation). For example, in the fifth entry of *Rhodes*, Alphonso is forced to choose between saving Ianthe, who has disguised herself as a solider and joined the English forces fighting Solyman's army, and assisting his friend and comrade, Villerius: 'By staying here, you must Ianthe lose, / Who ventured life and fame for you, / Or your great master quite forsake' (5.103–8). Pitting martial honour against marital love, Alphonso eventually elects to go to his wife, sending the Admiral in his stead to support Villerius, but not before expressing doubts about the choice he has made. In the end, Alphonso is vindicated while Macduff, who makes the contrary choice – leaving his wife and children at the mercy of the tyrant to travel to Malcolm in England – is not. Macduff might be the closest the play has to an idealised hero, but he must pay a significant penalty to claim that role.

As a counterpoint, Macbeth too is presented with the stark choice between his public duty and his private obligations to his wife. In 4.4, as the English army approaches Dunsinane, Macbeth is caught between a desire to engage the enemy and to offer his support to Lady Macbeth, who has fallen into madness:

MACBETH *Seyton*, go bid the Army March.
SEYTON The posture of Affairs requires your Presence.
MACBETH But the Indisposition of my Wife
Detains me here. (4.4.1–4)

Seyton insists that the enemy is fast approaching and that '*Scotland's* in danger' (4.4.5), but his commander-in-chief has more than external threats to worry about: 'So is my Wife, and I am doubly so. / I am sick in her, and in my Kingdom too' (4.4.6–7). Macbeth cannot decide what course of

[31] Cf. Davenant, *Gondibert*, 1.2.41: 'We blush to see our politicks in Beasts.'
[32] See Ted H. Miller, 'The Two Deaths of Lady Macduff: Antimetaphysics, Violence, and William Davenant's Restoration Revision of *Macbeth*', *Political Theory*, 36.6 (2008): 856–82; Anne Greenfield, 'D'Avenant's Lady Macduff: Ideal Feminism and Subversive Politics', *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660–1700*, 37.1 (2013): 39–60.

action to take, what fire he should fight first. Under pressure, he distractedly wrestles with his conscience:

> The Spur of my Ambition prompts me to go
> And make my Kingdom safe, but Love which softens
> Me to pity her in her distress,
> Curbs my Resolves. (4.4.9–12)

Earlier critics have dismissed this moment as 'superficial', even 'ludicrous', but, as I have suggested, this inner struggle is fully consonant with Davenant's heroic pattern elsewhere.[33] Consumed with self-doubt and paranoia, Macbeth prevaricates just like Macduff and Alphonso.

During the final battle, Lennox reports to Fleance and Donalbain that 'Some say he's Mad' (5.2.15) and that

> there is a Civil War
> Within his Bosom; which will hinder him
> From waging this successfully. None can
> Resist a forreign foe, who alwayes has
> An enemy within him. For each murder
> He weares a dagger in his Breast. (5.2.17–22)

Civil war rages within Macbeth's soul, as well as within the Scottish nation, and as so much early modern political philosophy stressed, a sovereign who brings about civil war immediately forfeits their right to rule because they are no longer protecting their subjects. In 5.3, Seyton betrays Macbeth, leaving his service just before the final battle. In an aside to the audience, he informs us that 'I am gone. / Not to Obey your [Macbeth's] Orders, but the Call of Justice' (5.3.42–3). Paralysed and paranoid, Macbeth can no longer guarantee the safety of his subjects and so irreparably breaks his covenant with his people. Seyton's rejection of Macbeth's authority presses home that, from this moment on, Macbeth is no longer sovereign.

This loss of power is anticipated in the earlier scene, also added by Davenant, in which Macbeth and his wife exchange their final words together. Here, Lady Macbeth explicitly blames her husband for Duncan's murder. Troubled and repentant, she begins to see the old king's 'fatal Ghost … Where e're I go' (4.4.28–9), in a parallel to Macbeth's visions of Banquo at the feast. Desperate, she accuses her husband of causing her mental disturbance:

[33] Raddadi, *Davenant's Adaptations*, 104; Hazelton Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved: The Restoration Versions in Quarto and on the Stage* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927), 163.

> the strange error of my Eyes
> Proceeds from the strange Action of your Hands
> Distraction does by fits possess my head,
> Because a Crown *unjustly* covers it. (4.4.37–40; my emphasis)

That word 'unjustly' echoes Lady Macduff's earlier admonition to her husband, offering Lady Macbeth a (partial) moral redemption. It would seem, *pace* Hobbes, that there is an external standard of moral justice outside of the sovereign in the world of the play.

Macbeth himself emphatically protests, insisting that his wife first planted the idea of regicide in his head: 'had not your breath / Blown my Ambition up into a Flame / *Duncan* had yet been living' (4.4.51–3). Lady Macbeth retorts that his failure properly to govern the state as a 'just' monarch is a direct result of his failure properly to govern her as a husband, and therefore implies his masculinity is somehow compromised:

> You were a Man.
> And by the Charter of your Sex you shou'd
> Have govern'd me, there was more crime in you
> When you obey'd my Councels, then I contracted
> By my giving it. (4.4.53–7)

Finally, she begs him to give up his kingdom and 'with your Crown putt off your guilt' (4.4.58). His refusal to do so leads to his eventual downfall at the hands of Macduff – a man who has learned that he should have heeded his wife's advice when he had the chance. As Macduff deals the fatal blow, Macbeth finally comes to recognise his mistakes, bidding farewell to this 'vain World, and what's most vain in it, Ambition' (5.8.41).

While the many deaths witnessed in the play establish its tragic tone, Davenant does flirt with the tragicomic structures more usually associated with operatic heroic dramas.[34] *Macbeth* tempers the demise of its chief protagonist with an acknowledgement that better days are still to come for the newly restored Scottish monarch and his subjects. As Macduff states in the final scene: 'Now *Scotland*, thou shalt see bright Day again, / That Cloud's remov'd that did Ecclipse thy Sun' (5.9.17–18). We might compare this moment with Howard and Dryden's *The Indian Queen*, which culminates in the suicide of the usurping Zempoalla, but which nevertheless rejoices in its denouement as the true monarch is finally restored: 'Our clearest Sun-shine shou'd be mixt with rain', the hero, Montezuma, observes.[35]

[34] See Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration*, 151–62; Derek Hughes, 'Heroic Drama and Tragicomedy', in *A Companion to Restoration Drama*, ed. Susan J. Owen (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 195–210 (202–6).
[35] John Dryden, *The Indian Queen*, in *Works*, vol. VIII, 5.1.306.

The meteorological metaphor in both plays casts the usurpation of the villain as a terrible but momentary interruption, temporarily obscuring the eternal radiance of monarchy.

Moreover, in the closing lines added by Davenant, Macduff hopes that fortune will bless Malcolm's reign and the Scottish people, insisting that the darkness of Macbeth's tyranny will, in the end, serve only to highlight more strongly the new king's virtue:

> So may kind Fortune Crown your Raign with Peace,
> As it has Crown'd your Armies with Success;
> And may the Peoples Prayers still wait on you,
> As all their Curses did *Macbeth* pursue:
> His Vice shall make your Virtue shine more Bright,
> As a Fair Day succeeds a Stormy Night. (5.9.37–42)

In their earlier conversation in England, Malcolm alluded to his own moral deficiencies, disingenuously warning Macduff that he was 'so inclin'd / To Vice, that foul *Macbeth* when I shall rule, / Will seem as white as Snow' (4.3.36–8). Macduff now hopes that Malcolm will break the cycle of vice and oppression of the last eighteen years and rule successfully. In Orrery's *Henry the Fifth* (also 1664), Prince Hal, a loose-living heir who experiences a damascene conversation on his accession, represents a veiled reference to Charles II.[36] In Malcolm, *Macbeth* similarly gestures outwards to England's current political situation. By 1664, Charles was notorious for his sexual proclivities, much like Hal and Malcolm. Amidst the sincere jubilation of restoration, then, heroic plays like *Henry the Fifth* and *Macbeth* register royalists' genuine, if unspoken, concerns about the effectiveness and moral probity of their new monarch and what his reign will bring for the nation following a traumatic period of political, social, and religious upheaval.[37]

Supernatural Rivals: Theatrical Competition in 1663–1664

While I have suggested that Davenant's *Macbeth* incontrovertibly owes its allegiance to the heroic play, I do not mean that he sought simply to replicate the tried-and-tested idioms of *Rhodes*. As we have seen, his adaptation builds on the work of others like Orrery, Howard, and Dryden to develop a heroic dramaturgy that more properly suits its Restoration context, focusing more explicitly on questions of legitimate sovereignty and

[36] Boyle, *Henry the Fifth*, in *Dramatic Works*, vol. I, 165–224.
[37] See also Nicholas Jose, *Ideas of the Restoration in English Literature, 1660–71* (London: Macmillan, 1984), 44–66.

rightful rule that preoccupied contemporary audiences. As such, *Macbeth* represents a significant shift at a crucial moment in his company's history. We can see a concomitant shift too in the play's relationship to theatrical spectacle and the presentation of supernaturalism on the stage.

Davenant's adaptation makes extensive use of visual and musical spectacle. The 1674 quarto of the text notoriously closes the first scene with the witches exiting on wires, '*flying*' (1.1.10SD), and they enjoy substantial musical interludes, in which they sing and dance, in 2.5, 3.8, and 4.1. While it is difficult to establish from the surviving texts what actually occurred on stage in 1664 – the 1674 quarto likely reflects a later production at the Dorset Garden Theatre in 1673, and the Yale manuscript's relationship to any stage production is impossible to establish adequately – the witches seem to have sung and danced, if not quite taken off, at Lincoln's Inn Fields.[38] We have records attesting that the famed dancing master Luke Channel joined the Duke's Company in the 1664/5 season, and that he worked directly on *Macbeth*, but recent research by Tim Keenan and Andrew R. Walkling has convincingly demonstrated that Lincoln's Inn Fields did not have the technology to fly in the witches, as Dorset Garden could have done.[39] Instead, Davenant appears to have stuck to the basic wing-and-shutter configuration he had perfected in the 1650s to create his scenic spectacles.

How do these scenes of stage supernaturalism – singing and dancing, if not quite flying, witches – alter Davenant's heroic idiom as established in his Protectorate treatises and the various productions of *Rhodes*? Prior to *Macbeth*, Davenant strenuously argued against introducing supernatural elements into heroic poetry and drama. In the *Preface* to *Gondibert*, he criticises Virgil for leading his readers into 'conversation with Gods and Ghosts', which only 'deprives us of those naturall probabilities in Story, which are instructive to humane life'. Tasso, he writes, may have 'reviv'd the Heroick flame' with *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581), but he erred in including 'his Councell assembled in Heaven, his Witches Expeditions through the Aire, and enchanted Woods inhabited with Ghosts'. Such episodes do not serve Christian poets, Davenant stresses, but rather 'make

[38] The Yale manuscript copy of the play, dated to 1663 or 1664, contains all the songs and music cues found in Q1674, as well as the opening 'flying' direction and signals for machine effects at 3.8.21SD and 4.1.19SD. See Spencer, ed., *Davenant's Macbeth from the Yale Manuscript*, 38–54.

[39] On Channel, see John Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, ed. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1987), 71. On the technological capacities of the respective theatres, see Tim Keenan, *Restoration Staging, 1660–74* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 78–93; Walkling, *English Dramatick Opera*, 38–81.

a resemblance of Hell, out of the Dreames of frighted Women; by which they continue and increase the melancholy mistakes of the People' (4–6). Such statements need to be read in the context of the puritan 1650s, when suspicion of the supernatural was especially high; we should remember too that the *Preface* was addressed to the rationalist Hobbes. That said, none of the heroic works staged at Lincoln's Inn Fields prior to *Macbeth* contain magical characters or supernatural events, though all of Davenant's plays and adaptations make extensive use of scenery, music, and dance in non-supernatural contexts. Something appears to have happened over the winter of 1663/4 to prompt Davenant to reflect on his aversion to supernatural spectacle, and to alter his dramaturgical practice thereafter. But what?

I suggest that the answer essentially boils down to money and commercial competition. On 7 May 1663, Thomas Killigrew opened his new playhouse, the Theatre Royal in Bridges Street, with a production of John Fletcher's *The Humorous Lieutenant*.[40] Before this date, the King's Company had played in a converted tennis court in Vere Street, which did not have scenic technology of any kind. Plays were performed there largely in the same way they had been performed before 1642. Suddenly at Bridges Street Killigrew's company at last had at their disposal a fully functioning scenic theatre to rival Davenant's, which must have caused sincere alarm within the ranks of the Duke's Company; from now on, Davenant no longer enjoyed his monopoly on scenic spectacle, which had proved so popular with patrons like Samuel Pepys. According to Walkling, Bridges Street not only 'sported impressive changeable scenery on a par with that at Lincoln's Inn Fields', but it went even further: it 'incorporated the kind of advanced machine technology' used to create special stage effects 'that was not in evidence at the other house'.[41] Like Tasso's witches, Killigrew's actors could easily perform 'Expeditions through the Aire' using specialist machines, to the delight of spectators. For once, Davenant was trailing behind his rival.

The King's Company sought to demonstrate their new technological capabilities with the highly anticipated premiere of Howard and Dryden's *The Indian Queen*, staged in January 1664. This was an elaborately decorated production that presented audiences with stunning scenic effects, music, and costumes. John Evelyn saw it in February, describing it as 'a Tragedie well written, but so beautified with rich Scenes as the like had never ben seene here as happly (except rarely anywhere else) on a

[40] Van Lennep et al., eds., *London Stage*, vol. I, 64.
[41] Walkling, *English Dramatick Opera*, 61.

mercenarie Theater'.[42] Winn notes that with *The Indian Queen*, Howard and Dryden 'catered to the public taste for spectacle, which the new theatre was finally able to satisfy'.[43] Representing Dryden's first foray into the operatic heroic play, *The Indian Queen* was striking for its extensive use of machine and musical spectacle to present scenes of supernaturalism. This new dramaturgical convention bears most strikingly on Davenant's adaptation of *Macbeth*.

In 3.2, for example, Zempoalla, the Indian queen of the title, visits the 'dismal Cell' (3.2.2) of the prophet Ismeron after having a dream which she suspects relates to her recent usurpation of the throne. Zempoalla wants the prophet to call on the God of Sleep to '*tell* / *Great* Zempoalla *what strange Fate* / *Must on her dismal Vision wait*' (3.2.64–71). Ismeron proceeds to summon the God of Dreams with an incantation:

> *By the croaking of the Toad,*
> *In their Caves that make aboad,*
> *Earthy* Dun *that pants for breath,*
> *With her well'd sides full of death;*
> *By the Crested Adders Pride*
> *That along the Clifts do glide;*
> *By thy visage fierce and black;*
> *By the Deaths-head on thy back;*
> *By the twisted Serpents place'd*
> *For a Girdle round thy Waste;*
> *By the Hearts of Gold that deck*
> *Thy Brest, thy Shoulders, and thy Neck:*
> *From thy sleepy Mansion rise,*
> *And open thy unwilling Eyes,*
> *While bubling Springs their Musick keep,*
> *That use to lull thee in thy sleep.* (3.2.79–94)

At this point, the stage direction states that the '*God of Dreams rises*' (3.2.94SD) from under the stage.

Zempoalla's visit to Ismeron's cell is reminiscent of Macbeth's nocturnal sojourn to the witches' cave in Shakespeare's text (4.1), from where they conjure up their leader, Hecate, and the apparitions who will reveal the prophecies that eventually lead to Macbeth's downfall. Indeed, Shakespeare's play appears to serve as a direct source for Howard and Dryden's scene:[44]

[42] Quoted in Van Lennep et al., eds., *London Stage*, vol. I, 75.

[43] James A. Winn, *John Dryden and His World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 145.

[44] John Loftis explicitly draws out Howard and Dryden's indebtedness to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in his commentary for the California edition; see Dryden, *Works*, vol. VIII, 303.

Round about the cauldron go;
In the poisoned entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty-one,
Sweltered venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i'th' charmed pot …
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble. (4.1.4–19)

The Scottish witches' recipe is more elaborate, but the essential ingredients are there in both plays: both incantations refer to toads, adders and serpents, bubbles and sleep; both are in a distinctive trochaic tetrameter, isolated from the plays' more familiar iambic pentameter rhythms; and both Dryden's God of Sleep and Shakespeare's apparitions partially satisfy their visitor's enquiries before descending below the stage only to be forcefully called back.[45] Finally, both Zempoalla and Macbeth are presented with a dramatic spectacle in which their respective fates are cryptically revealed: Zempoalla listens to a song 'suppos'd sung by Aerial-Spirits' (3.2.118SD), while Macbeth watches the procession of eight kings. Neither is calmed or reassured by these experiences; instead, their respective levels of fear, anxiety, and paranoia substantially increase from this moment on.

While it is impossible to determine whether Davenant began his adaptation before he became aware of Howard and Dryden's play or not, I suggest that Davenant turned to *Macbeth* in the winter of 1663/4 in an effort to counter the anticipated success of the King's Company's latest hit. If the scene in Ismeron's cell could delight and enthral audiences by so closely echoing Shakespeare's text, then Davenant surely intended to go one better by staging *Macbeth* itself, in heroic (i.e. operatic) form. With *Macbeth* among the nine Shakespeare plays allocated to the Duke's Company, Davenant could take advantage of the vogue for heroic drama by enhancing the Macduffs' scenes *and* expanding on the fascination with

[45] Intriguingly, Davenant adjusts the witches' incantations in his adaptation to iambic tetrameter ('Then round about the *Cauldron* go' (4.1.7)), possibly to distinguish prosodically the witches' speeches from their songs, which are trochaic.

supernatural spectacular in *The Indian Queen*, elaborating on the witches' songs that were already associated with Shakespeare's text.[46]

The success of *The Indian Queen* may thus have caused Davenant to reconsider his commitment to a musical theatre in which human characters combine 'Musick and wholsome discourses' for the moral edification of audiences. Dramatic fashions and conventions evidently had changed since the Interregnum. In his theatrical miscellany *Playhouse to be Let*, produced in the summer vacation in 1663, Davenant has a musician propose to stage an 'Heroique Story / in *Stilo Recitativo*' in the vacant theatre. The playhouse manager quickly raises a concern:

> But do you think
> That natural? …
> Suppose
> I should not ask, but sing, you now a question,
> And you should instantly sing me an answer;
> Would you not think it strange?[47]

We might want to read this moment ironically, given that what follows in Act 3 of *Playhouse* is essentially a wholesale revival of *The History of Sir Francis Drake* in recitative. Nevertheless, whereas in the 1650s Drake, along with Alphonso and Ianthe in *Rhodes*, is free to sing without such self-conscious meta-theatrical qualification, by 1663 the idea of mortal characters singing for no good reason seems 'strange' to some, including the *Playhouse* theatre manager looking to secure a healthy return at the box office. By the Restoration, scenes of musical spectacle were once again being restricted to dramatic scenarios usually considered outside the normal parameters of verisimilitude, including scenes of supernaturalism.[48] Such musical conventions are reminiscent of theatrical practice in the Jacobean and Caroline periods and anticipate the way music is often deployed in the Dorset Garden dramatick operas of the 1670s.

[46] The songs 'Come away, Hecate' and 'Black spirits and white', found interpolated into 3.5 and 4.1 respectively of the folio edition of Shakespeare's text, derive from Thomas Middleton's *The Witch* (*c.* 1613–1616); Davenant kept and developed this material for his own adaptation. See Amanda Eubanks Winkler, '"Let's Have a Dance": Staging Shakespeare in Restoration London', in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Music*, ed. Christopher R. Wilson and Mervyn Cooke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 387–408 (391–2).

[47] William Davenant, *Playhouse to be Let*, in *The Works of Sr William D'avenant* (London: Printed by T.N. for Henry Herringman, 1673), 67–119 (72); second pagination.

[48] Steven E. Plank, '"And Now About the Cauldron Sing": Music and the Supernatural on the Restoration Stage', *Early Music*, 28.3 (1990): 393–407; Amanda Eubanks Winkler, *O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note: Music for Witches, the Melancholic, and the Mad on the Seventeenth-Century English Stage* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).

When he sees *Macbeth* again in January 1667, Pepys tellingly describes its elaborate musical elements as 'strange'. Unlike the *Playhouse* manager, however, Pepys does not see this strangeness as in any way frustrating an overarching commitment to verisimilitude; on the contrary, the singing of the weird sisters was 'a *strange perfection* … being most proper here, and suitable'.[49] The musical episodes in *Macbeth* are deemed 'proper' and 'suitable', we must suppose, because the witches are among that limited group of characters in Restoration theatre – the magical, the mad, and the melancholic – who are now permitted by convention to sing and dance onstage in a way that the heroic but mortal Sir Francis Drake and his comrades simply cannot without a meta-theatrical qualification.

Conclusion

Placing Davenant's adaptation of *Macbeth* in the wider context of its surrounding repertory allows us to appreciate its vitality as a piece of theatre more fully. The alterations made to the play bring it closely in line with the most popular genre of the period – the operatic heroic play or, in Walkling's formulation, spectacle-tragedy – while engaging directly in debates concerning contemporary politics and theatrical aesthetics. Moreover, such an approach reveals how the increasingly vigorous competition between the two theatre companies prompted Davenant to adjust his dramaturgical praxis in the 1663/4 season in ways previously unacknowledged by scholars who have only read his adaptation through its relationship to Shakespeare's text. With Killigrew's company benefiting materially from their investment in the new scenic theatre at Bridges Street, and thus from the fascination for theatrical supernaturalism in plays like *The Indian Queen*, Davenant abandoned the heroic aesthetic he had developed during the 1650s to present audiences with what they evidently wanted – which included singing and dancing witches. *Macbeth* thus represents a profound change in Davenant's thinking in 1664, both as a playwright and as a theatre manager. Further evidence of this sea-change comes when three years later, in 1667, Davenant collaborated directly with the mastermind behind *The Indian Queen*, John Dryden, on another Shakespeare adaptation, one equally obsessed with ambitious usurpers, magical conjurors, supernatural charms, and elaborate musical spectacle: *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island*.

[49] Samuel Pepys, *Diary*, ed. Robert Latham and William Matthews, 11 vols. (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1970–1983), vol. VIII, 7 (emphasis added).