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“The Last Dear Drop of Blood”: Revenge in Restoration Tragic Drama

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee

Misty Sabrina Krueger
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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents and sister, who have always believed in me and given me their unconditional love and support.

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Abstract

Revenge on the English stage has long been associated with Elizabethan and Renaissance revenge tragedies and has been all but ignored in Restoration theater history. While the shortage of scholarly work on revenge in Restoration drama might seem to indicate that revenge is not a vital part of Restoration drama, I argue that revenge on stage in the Restoration is connected with important late seventeenth-century anxieties about monarchy and political subjecthood in the period. This dissertation examines how Restoration tragic drama staged during Charles II's reign (1660-1685) depicts revenge as a representation of an unrestrained passion that contributes to the 'seditious roaring of a troubled nation' of which Thomas Hobbes writes in *Leviathan*. This dissertation suggests that we need to assess Restoration tragic drama's employment of acts of vengeance in order to better understand how tragic drama of the period narrates crises of kinship, kingship, and political subjecthood.

In chapters addressing blood revenge, rape, female passion, and personal ambition, I examine revenge in a number of Restoration tragic dramas written for the stage between 1660 and 1685. This project shows that characters' claims to redress wrongs committed against the civil notion of justice collapse into private, individual desires that are pathological and destructive of the state. This project on revenge has the potential to shape the way we think about revenge on stage by calling attention to revenge as a sign of self-interest at the end of the seventeenth century, an age in

which a shift in thinking about monarchy and personhood was taking place. Just as Hobbes warns against the "excessive desire of Revenge," this dissertation shows how playwrights stage revenge as a warning about the potentially destructive consequences of revenge: revenge puts not only private bodies in danger but also the public well being of the state.

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Introduction

Revenge / Does feed on Ruine. Ruines are / Its Food and Life.

Elkanah Settle, *Love and Revenge*

In Elkanah Settle's 1674 play, *Love and Revenge*, Chlotilda, who has been raped by the prince Clotair, takes on the guise of a male Moorish slave, Nigrello, in order to murder both her rapist and the queen who murdered her family. Settle's Chlotilda, who literally "blackens" revenge by taking on the form of a Moor and destroying a government, is an example of the interest and urgency with which the Restoration theatre dramatized the problem of revenge. In play after play, revenge is not merely a personal matter of justice, but a political danger that threatens the newly re-established monarchy from the inside. Revenge on the late seventeenth-century stage does both the cultural work of memory and of political pedagogy; it evokes memories of civil war and regicide and, at the same time, plays on fears of future political disorder. The restoration of Charles II to the English throne could not eradicate the trauma of the Civil Wars, the execution of a monarch, and the Interregnum—the final year of which was filled with political strife. After Oliver Cromwell's death in 1659 Englishmen witnessed the rule of England falling into the hands of men ill-suited for leadership and then descending into anarchy; for this very reason Charles II was called out of exile. These events ushered in a new age of political anxiety, in which all regimes, monarchist or republican, were subject to change. Restoration theatre, with its elite audience and royalist affiliations, was a

place to work through some of the historical trauma of the seventeenth century performatively and pedagogically.

In Settle's play, as in a host of other dramas from the Restoration, revenge signals a problem of lawlessness and excess—an overindulgence in emotions of righteousness, grief, rage, jealousy, or pride. While revenge had long been a matter of interest for dramatists, what Michael McKeon calls the "devolution of absolutism" and the rise of a more individualist ideology made the independence of the revenger justified by a previous wrong into a new political concern.[1] Instead of relying on divine vengeance or state law to condemn wrongdoers, revengers take matters into their own hands and plot to punish the men and/or women responsible for a transgression. Violating the Judeo-Christian God's jurisdiction over retribution from Romans 12:19, "Vengeance is mine," revengers also obstruct the state's authority to control violence. As Sir Francis Bacon has noted, "revenge's first wrong is that it doth but offend the law" and then that it "putteth the law out of office" altogether (72). Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* indicates that revenge is one of the "singular Passions" that "are parts of the Seditious roaring of a troubled Nation" (141). Although writing about the English Civil Wars, Hobbes' concern about how individual passions such as revenge negatively impact the political stability of the nation continues to haunt Restoration culture. This dissertation examines how Restoration tragic drama during Charles II's reign (1660-1685) stages revenge as an unrestrained passion that contributes to the 'seditious roaring of a troubled nation' of which Hobbes writes.[2] Restoration tragic drama's employment of acts of vengeance

across a range of representations helps to explain how the Restoration stage narrated crises of kinship, kingship, and political subjecthood.

The relationship between political subjecthood and monarchy had already changed at the start of the Restoration. The exiled Charles Stuart officially became the Charles II of England by the will of the people and the call of parliament, a paradox that brought with it new questions about the nature of governance. In Charles's restoration to the throne, England had been forced to renegotiate the concept of absolutist monarchy as a provisional form of kingship held accountable to the people. As a result of this change, Charles II felt the need to continually publicly affirm his right as king throughout the Restoration. Scholars of Restoration literature, including Paula Backscheider, have discussed this royal attempt at affirmation and have noted the role of theatre in this ongoing presentation of monarchy. At Charles II's insistence in 1660, two theatrical companies were given royal patents to publicly perform drama in the only authorized theaters in London. These plays, written for king and aristocratic countrymen, shared a large part in Charles II's reiteration of monarchy on the stage.

The idea that theatre should be a form of public pedagogy was articulated by seventeenth-century political theorists and dramatists alike. Even before this official reopening of the theaters, Sir William Davenant had envisioned dramatic literature as a method of supporting monarchy and indoctrinating men in the ways of civility. In his 1650 preface to *Gondibert*, which he addressed to Thomas Hobbes, Davenant charges dramatic literature with the "education of the people's minds" (102). John

Dryden's 1668 *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* states a similar position: drama is "a just and lively image of human nature, representing its passions and humours, and the changes of fortune to which it is subject, for the delight and instruction of mankind" (155). Davenant's "education of people's minds" and Dryden's "instruction of mankind" address the overarching ends of tragic drama; Dryden, Davenant, and other playwrights would attempt, over the course of the Restoration, to show audiences how good monarchs depend on civilized subjects through both positive and negative examples on stage. Written primarily for an aristocratic audience, some of whom were loyal to the king and others of whom might be dedicated to advancing their personal interests, Restoration tragic drama shows the king's subjects how to remain obedient and nonviolent, and also vividly warns them about the consequences of dissention—revolution, the usurpation of thrones, torture, and death. Dramatists represent revengers as men and women who operate outside of the law and/or act in their own best interests, the result of which threatens monarchical rights and social order. This drama shows its audiences the violent ways in which men and women could endanger the lives of monarchs and therein the stability of governance, something that Restoration Englishmen were so desperate to maintain.

As Richard Kroll has noted, Restoration plays functioned as "heuristic devices by which their age could deliberate on issues which were for it the profoundest sources of anxiety" (*Circle of Commerce* 3). Among these anxieties are concerns about hierarchies of gender and class, political factionalism, monarchical succession, and the ways in which individuals' passions (including that of the king's) affect the

governance of a nation. Backscheider in *Spectacular Politics* has made a similar argument in terms of the staging of monarchical anxieties. She suggests that Charles II utilized "hegemonic apparatus[es]" such as the theatre to "reinscribe the monarchy on his country" (2, 5). This inscription of royalty contributes to what J. Douglas Canfield has hailed an "aristocratic monarchial ideology"—a creed built on the prestige of aristocratic/royal bloodline, patriarchal sex/gender power relations, and subjects' obedience to their king. In addition to Canfield, scholars of Restoration drama including Derek Hughes and Nancy Klein Maguire have argued that the tragic drama of the period reinforces the objectives of such an ideology and clearly punishes on stage those characters that resist or attempt to annihilate such a code. My inquiry into the specific valences of revenge on the Restoration stage builds on these arguments in order to show how revenge played a substantive role in its royalist pedagogy of monarchy and political subjecthood. These plays staged the national costs of revenge to a nation anxious about the political implications of private passions.

Although my readings of the dramas from this period approach them primarily as literary texts, the project considers the ways in which these plays were staged in dialogue with the historical/cultural events surrounding the productions. This project examines revenge within the political context of the Restoration: a period in transition from an Early Modern paradigm of political subjectivity in which men are subject to absolutist monarchy, to a post-Glorious Revolution/post-Locke Enlightenment conception of personhood in which self-possessing political subjects were confident

in their abilities to control public policy and have an authoritative voice in government. In particular, the project studies revenge in light of the simultaneous push-and-pull of the "devolution of absolutism" that was taking place in the late seventeenth century, as Michael McKeon notes in *The Secret History of Domesticity*, and rise of a kind of autonomous subjecthood that was too alarming for royalists to endorse during the Restoration. On the Restoration stage, this subjecthood reflects a kind of individualism marked by aggression, anarchy, and/or ambition. This project brings to light the ways that playwrights staged versions of individualism as a danger to monarchy and political order.

Revenge in Restoration tragic drama is a catalyst for political upheaval that results from rebellion, revolution, and/or usurpation of a throne upon the murder of monarchs; this imagined turmoil speaks to the tenuous position of monarchy in the period. While Charles II and his court were not inundated by actual revenge plots, the imagined courts and kings on stage perform anxious versions of just how vulnerable kingship could be to the plots of individuals who crave power in the new political climate. A study of revenge in Restoration drama has much to teach us about what Susan Staves has labeled the "changing fictions of authority" that occur in the Restoration. Revenge tales in the tragic drama of the period reify struggles over authority. In the wake of the changed terms of Charles II's authority, however, Restoration dramas point to a royalist fear of treacherous ambition that is both personal and political. If political authority was thought to "originate in the people or in the needs and ends of individuals" (xi) rather than monarchs by divine right, as

Staves has discussed in *Players' Scepters*, revenge plotting opens a door for political change that gives the individual a kind of power to suspend a nation's governance, and potentially to displace inherited monarchy altogether.

Narratives of revenge frequently reflect Restoration anxieties about the future of inherited monarchy. I take up this issue in the dissertation's first chapter, which focuses on blood revenge—a kind of stage revenge that depicts a family member seeking revenge on behalf of a loved one who has been injured or murdered. While archaic tribal clans endorsed blood revenge as a form of retribution, men in the seventeenth century condemn revenge for putting the law out of office and jeopardizing the longevity of a bloodline. This chapter examines how Restoration tragic drama stages issues of bloodline and kinship and explores how revengers' plots to honor their bloodlines eventually lead to spilling royal blood and to their own bloody destruction as well. In this chapter, I analyze blood revenge's relationship to kingship in Sir William Davenant's staging of *Hamlet* (1661) and Elkanah Settle's *Love and Revenge* (1674), and blood revenge's threat to a royal bloodline in *The Female Prelate* (1680).[3] These plays trace blood revenge plots in terms of blood as spectacle, a corporeal substance spilled on stage, and blood as inheritance, in which bloodline is a symbol of the family-state.[4] Despite the embedded sense of honor involved in blood revenge, the plays demand that blood revengers curtail violent impulses because seeking revenge destroys the individual as well as the royal bloodline. In these plays, crowns are lost, and bloodlines end with revengers. The dramatic lesson of blood revenge shows that individuals who cannot control their

emotions and put their faith in God's or the state's justice are sacrificed to their own revenge plots and complicit in the dissolution of their own bloodline.

The second chapter of the dissertation analyzes rape as a catalyst for blood revenge that leads to political factionalism and the overthrow of tyrannical power regimes. This chapter shows how the ravished female body in Edward Ravenscroft's *Titus Andronicus* (1678), Nathaniel Lee's *Lucius Junius Brutus* (1681), and Thomas Otway's *Venice Preserv'd* (1682) symbolizes a corrupted nation that needs purification. However, the chapter also argues that vengeance waged on behalf of rape victims doubles as an excuse for political rebellion. While duty to one's kin functions as a motive for revenge in a play like *Titus Andronicus*, the tragic drama examined in this chapter also associates vengeance with national duty, or the betterment of a nation. This chapter shows how dramas stage revenge as a part of revolutions against oppressive leaders and corrupt political groups. These plays, staged during the years of the Popish Plot and Exclusion Crisis (1678-1682), take revenge beyond the family or kin network to a quasi-national level, where political factionalism and personal ambition threaten to undo the state. Although the revengers in Ravenscroft's, Lee's, and Otway's plays offer up bloodshed as a way of purifying a damaged nation, the dramas reveal that revenge plotting inevitably becomes political, as individuals are tempted to seek gains beyond retribution.

The last two chapters pick up a thread of revenge-as-ambition by examining plays where revenge no longer has anything to do with honoring a family or nation; revenge is personalized in such a way that it benefits women and men who violate the

aristocratic monarchial ideology of which Canfield writes. The third chapter addresses revenge in relation to women's uncontrolled lust, and it investigates specifically how queen-mothers' excessive sexuality and passions for vengeance cause them to appear as abjections of motherhood. Jealous and prideful queen-mothers in Lee's *The Rival Queens* (1677), John Dryden's *Aureng-Zebe* (1675), and Aphra Behn's *Abdelazer* (1676) set out to punish individuals, including their sons, who have offended them and who would stand in the way of the queen's passion. But in these plays women's vindictiveness is not merely a sign of excessive passions; their pursuit of vengeance also points to the dangers of women's involvement in politics—two concerns about women that were prevalent in the mid-1670s. In spite of socially accepted sex/gender hierarchies that consign women to the roles of wives and mothers, the queen-mothers examined in this chapter aggressively pursue revenge to gain political autonomy. In these dramas women's desires to rule nations without their husbands and perform antagonistic, non-normative behavior in women yield a cautionary tale. As a result, the vindictive, politically minded queen-mother threatens to destroy her own bloodline, national succession, and the stability of a country's governance with her plotting. Through the staging of women's unhealthy, excessive revenge, dramatists undercut the idea of woman as devoted mother. As such, playwrights stage vengeful queen-mothers as anathemas to femininity and motherhood; they show that these monstrous women must be managed in order to secure aristocratic sex/gender hierarchies and to return order to a nation.

In using revenge as a method of obtaining power, characters identify authority as an individual locus of power and re-script revenge as a public problem rather than merely a private or family matter. The dissertation's final chapter explicitly addresses how "revenge" becomes a hollow pretext for personal ambitions in Restoration drama, a theatrical revenge in name only. This chapter explores the self-interest of social climbers who manipulate the symbology of vengeance on stage. Statesmen in some of the bloodiest exotic dramas staged in the Restoration utilize a discourse of revenge that capitalizes on men and women's fears about royal succession. In Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery's *Mustapha* (1668), Elkanah Settle's *Cambyses* (1670), and his *The Empress of Morocco* (1673), we find villainous advisors convincing monarchs to wage wars and betray family members in the hopes of removing monarchs from their thrones. As opposed to actually seeking a reprisal originating from an obligation to one's kin, duty to a nation, or pride, statesmen in these plays appropriate the discourse of revenge narratives to secure their political advancement. For example, in *Cambyses*, the court favorite, Prexaspes, narrates a faux tale of blood revenge to both condemn an innocent character to death and exonerate himself of murder. Rather than representing a statesman's revenge as an uncontrolled passion originating from a past injury, these plays show how social climbers stage "revenge" in order to secure a prosperous political future as monarchs. In doing so, these meta-theatrical portrayals of revenge expose the machinations of the criminal mind. They also warn audiences to be wary the advice of statesman who will use any means necessary, including the idea of revenge, to better his position in

the court while thrusting the nation back into a chaotic past from which it had only recently emerged. These dramas, in which revenge is only a dangerous alibi for ambition, demonstrate through torture what happens to characters that attempt to capitalize on revenge, as the final visual plate from the play text of *Empress of Morocco* confirms. The plate shows villains hanging on spikes, visualizing for readers as for playgoers the painful deaths in store for men who attempt to benefit from revenge and advance themselves in a court, even to the status of monarch. Restoration dramatists make violent examples of men who intervene in the rule of nations, staging visual parables intended to warn, as the regicide's heads on pikes did, of the embodied reality of political power.

Revenge, or the exploitation of it, makes for excellent stage spectacle, but mere spectacle does not explain its presence in Restoration drama. Dramatists portray revenge as a symptom of personal and political crises; regardless of motive, revenge is indicative of unsettled desires that infect individual and nation. Revenge must be controlled to prevent private, dangerous desires from moving into the public realm of politics. Through example, revenge tales encourage Englishmen and women to civilize themselves out of a desire for revenge in order to break a cycle of violence that could thrust a nation into disorder. If revenge is the sign of the 'seditious roaring of a troubled nation,' then men and women must learn how to quell outbreaks of passion and violence in order to prevent another civil war.

Ultimately this project studies Restoration drama as a body of writing informed by its historical moment, and reads dramatic portrayals as a part of the

Restoration's cultural history. I agree with a host of scholars who argue that Restoration audiences were largely composed of the elite and that Restoration theatre was a space in which anxieties about political order and social stability went on display. My approach to Restoration tragic drama is informed by the historicized approaches to the genre by Susan Staves, Paula Backscheider, J. Douglas Canfield, Derek Hughes, and Susan J. Owen. Michael McKeon's argument in *The Secret History of Domesticity* about the changing experience of absolutism and subjecthood in seventeenth-century England and Susan Staves' and Jessica Munns' scholarship on drama and monarchy have also influenced the way I understand how the drama of the Restoration staged anxieties about monarchy and personal autonomy.

I see my project contributing to scholarly conversations about Restoration drama particularly in relation to discussions of monarchy, political subjecthood, gender, and empire. Similar to Lisa Freeman's approach to the problems of character staged in eighteenth-century theater, my study of revenge in tragic drama of the Restoration points to perceived problems of a nation's "internal moral degeneracy" (85) and to the theatrical attempts to reveal and correct it on the London stage. Susan Owen's, Bridget Orr's, and Elaine McGirr's studies of heroic tragedy in the period have shaped my conception of Restoration drama's portrayals of English nation-building and empire. Studies of early modern and Restoration women by Derek Hughes, Jean I. Marsden, Deborah Burks, John Richetti, J.M. Margaret Ezell, Peter Stallybrass, Nandini Bhattacharya, Joyce Green MacDonald, and Margo Collins have helped me parse out the ways in which I see revenge relating to images of women in

the period's drama. Srinivas Aravamudan and Margaret Doody's work on tropes in the long eighteenth-century helped me formulate my thoughts on revenge as a tropological device in Restoration drama. Finally, studies by Staves, Canfield, Robert Hume, Hughes, and Nancy Klein Maguire on heroic tragedy have particularly shaped my thinking in terms of genres of Restoration drama, which is reflected in the multiple articulations of revenge and my organization of chapters around those articulations.

Intrigued by the omission of Restoration drama in John Kerrigan's *Revenge Tragedy: Aeschylus to Armageddon* and a lack of research on revenge by scholars of Restoration drama, I began this project by investigating whether or not revenge was a vital part of Restoration drama. Kerrigan's initial claim and sparse mention of revenge in scholarship on the Restoration suggested that revenge was not a mainstay of Restoration drama.[5] Scholars such as Eric Rothstein, Hume, Canfield, and Hughes, among others, focused their attention on heroic tragedies, sex comedies, political tragedies written during the Exclusion Crisis, she-tragedies, and comedies of manners, without much mention of revenge, which is instead associated with the previous generation of Jacobean drama. While Restoration playwrights inherit the dramatic repertoire and traditions of their predecessors at the beginning of the period, this project does not examine revenge in Restoration tragic drama as a holdover from earlier *revenge tragedies*, a subgenre of drama associated with the dramatic literature of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Instead, it argues that Restoration tragic drama positions revenge as a threat to monarchy and political and

social stability, topics of great concern to theatrical audiences during the Restoration. The dramas included in this dissertation were not chosen because they stage the only representations of revenge in the Restoration, and they are not arranged to show a chronological progression of revenge in the period. On the contrary, these dramas are grouped together in such a way that demonstrates how revenge on stage relates to anxieties staged throughout the Restoration about monarchy, subjecthood, passion, and disorder.

This category of action, revenge, shows the permeability of the boundary between private and public, a boundary that the plays attempt to shore up by castigating revenge. In doing so, playwrights reinforce the relationship between private passions and public order: when private passions outweigh public good, a nation might be thrust into anarchy. At the end of the period, Nicholas Stratford's *A Dissuasive from Revenge: A Discourse upon These Words, Recompense to No Man Evil for Evil, Rom. 12.17*, argues the same thing. He states that revenge "breaks the Peace, inverts Order, overturns Government, and should it be generally practiced, would introduce all the mischief's of War, Anarchy, and Confusion" (121). Stratford directly condemns revenge as a violation of national peace and insists that mankind learn how to control a passion for vengeance: "As therefore we desire not to be the Disturbers and Destroyers of the publick Peace, let us give check to all the desires of Revenge; since the more these are indulg'd, so much the more will the peace be broken" (126). This invective against revenge replicates warnings about revenge on stage during the Restoration, which point to its political rather than personal

implications. Dramas demonstrate that a private desire for revenge has the potential to both tear down hierarchical relations, including the great Restoration question of legitimate succession, and destroy the state. Revenge symbolizes corruption at the level of personal passion and undermines the wellbeing of the nation. The plays studied in this dissertation illustrate how revenge itself—whether motivated by honor or manipulated in the name of social climbing—must be managed for the preservation of the individual and the security of monarchy. Such a cautionary tale is riddled with anxieties borne of England's immediate history and as such all the more convincing when staged in the Restoration. Revenge on the Restoration stage is an instrument of the 'seditious roaring of a troubled nation': if revenge is not suppressed, it will stimulate a kind of violence that feeds on self-destruction and the ruin of monarchy altogether.

Chapter 1

Blood Revenge, Kin(g)ship, and the Problem of Justice

I had a Father, Whose Blood, whose Royal Blood is unrevenged.

Elkanah Settle, *The Female Prelate*

On May 29, 1660, diarist John Evelyn described the Restoration of monarchy as taking place "without one drop of bloud, & by that very Army, which rebell'd against him" (182).[6] In his memoirs written after the Restoration, Sir John Reresby also reflected on the Restoration as "a thing never read of in story, that when monarchy was laid aside at the expense of soe much blood it should return again without the shedding of blood" (qtd. in Keeble 35). Evelyn and Reresby's descriptions of the Restoration index the surprising contradiction between a bloodless return to rule by monarchy (a counter-revolution, as Susan Staves has called it[7]) and a bloody Civil War and execution of a king. In its inception the Restoration was founded upon principles of bloodlessness, peace, and 'merry' monarchy in response to the bloody, calamitous 1640s and the shift in the 1650s from rule by absolute monarchy to Oliver Cromwell's republican protectorate. In practice, however, the first few years of the Restoration ironically reveal a discrepancy between intended peace and justice, and that of blood revenge. While the Restoration was inaugurated without civil war, its early years certainly were not absent of bloodshed, though it was read intentionally into imaginative and symbolic discourse.

As historian N.H. Keeble reminds us, in the early 1660s the "security" of Charles II's rule "depended upon the obliteration of the recent past" (54).[8] The monarch's decision in October 1660 to indict and send to trial a number of regicides, ten of whom were executed and whose bodies were subsequently quartered and displayed as symbols of national treachery, showed Charles II's attempt to destroy remnants of the regicide and to warn would-be traitors to be loyal to the crown. One witness to the event, Peter Mundy, offers a startling account when he explains the process of the hangman stripping the executed men's bodies of their clothes, cutting off their genitalia, removing their entrails, and holding their hearts in his hands and offering them to the public as the hearts of traitors (Keeble 55). On October 13, 1660, Samuel Pepys reflects upon this matter in his diary as he writes in response to General Harrison's execution, "It was my chance to see the King beheaded at White Hall and to see the first blood shed in revenge for the blood of the King at Charing Cross" (79). The image Pepys offers in his reflection on the execution of the regicides might be read as a sign of requiting "blood guilt,"[9] with the regicides' public trials and the shedding of their blood representing a sacrifice for their part in the bloodshed of the martyred Charles Stuart. However, Pepys draws attention to a reciprocal image of violence—bloodshed in the Restoration he labels "revenge."

Pepys' invocation of the word, *revenge*, places the 1660 executions of the regicides in the context of retribution. Even if the trials and executions were the product of a public response to blood guilt—a kind of redemption for the blood shed by the regicides upon what royalists considered the innocent blood of the martyred,

King Charles—we might read the spectacle of what Pepys labeled this "bloody week" as a representation of Charles II's private desire for revenge on behalf of his murdered father, rather than simply a display of public justice for the regicides' past crimes.[10] In light of Pepys' association of the regicides' executions with revenge, we could think also of the 1660 mounting of the heads of the regicides on the Tower of London, London Bridge, and city gates as additional retribution for Charles I's execution. The exhumation in January 1661 of Cromwell and the other dead regicides' bones, and the quartering and hanging of these bones for public display—with the bones being dragged to Tyburn and their skulls displayed at Westminster (Keeble 56-7)—is a convincing sign of the monarchy's attempt to vindicate Charles I by barring the regicides from a sacred final resting place. The exhumations read as Charles II's attempt to "obliterate" the Commonwealth and inscribe through bloody spectacle the Stuart monarchy's right to rule England.[11] They are a lasting reminder of the authority of the restored monarchy and a warning to rebels and dissenters not to betray the new king. As Paul Hammond points out, the trials and exhumations of the regicides showed that "it was evidently important that vengeance, or justice, should be carried out upon the bodies of the republicans in order to reassert the control of the king over the body politic" (17). Thus, the material act of desecrating the regicides' remains translates as a symbolic act of vengeance and royal power.

In considering that the Restoration has been branded by its contemporaries as a bloodless return to monarchy and by historians as a period averse to bloodshed, the treatment of the regicides and the exhumations in the first two years of the

Restoration is an ironic reminder that blood—corporeally and associatively—is significant to the very idea of Charles II's acquisition and management of socio-political power. The blood spilled at the beheading of Charles I was always already both material and metaphorical, and its material and metaphorical consequences pervade the Restoration in the opening trials and executions of the regicides. The blood of a king, so recently and dramatically spilled, now had to be restored to the throne tropologically as well as politically, bringing with it questions about what blood will mean, and how it will continue to haunt the conversation about power and justice in the Restoration.[12] While the bloody execution of Charles I and the bloodless restoration of his son call attention to an ideology of blood in the history of the nation, 'blood' also carries an important associative meaning in relation to the bloodline of the Stuart monarchy and its family narrative.[13] In 1649, not only was Charles Stuart's blood shed, but also the heirs to the Stuart bloodline were barred from the throne and driven out of England. With the reinstatement of monarchy and Charles II's Stuart bloodline in 1660 the Restoration begins by drawing attention to genealogy, yet with the retaliation against the regicides—both living and deceased—Stuart monarchy is restored by virtue of its ability to carry out and manage revenge. If the executions of the regicides signified, as Pepys writes, "revenge for the blood of the King at Charing-cross," then the deaths of the regicides signals Stuart "blood revenge."[14]

Blood revenge is a method of retaliation that is derived from a pre-modern code of vengeance that centers on kinship, duty, honor, violence, and justice. Blood

revenge implies, as Ronald Broude notes, a "collective responsibility" in which a "blood group," essentially men and women of the same bloodline, "accepts responsibility for responding to offenses against any of its members" (498). Blood revenge is at once both personal—in that a family member feels individually responsible for enacting revenge—and communal—in that revenge, as Fredson Thayer Bowers explains, "extends to all descendants of the injurer and to all his collateral kindred" (44). As both Broude and Bowers have argued, this conception of revenge originated from archaic tribal societies that were not bound to a centralized form of government, but to allegiance to clans. As this code of vengeance was passed from tribal societies to feudal medieval societies, and from medieval societies to early modern societies with centralized power structures, it impacted the structure of seventeenth-century judicial systems as revenge came to signify a kind of "wild justice," of which Francis Bacon identified in his 1625 essay, "On Revenge" (72). Because revengers operate outside of the law, they enforce a kind of vigilante justice as they physically attempt to right a wrong done to their loved ones when a state's judicial system or a higher power, such as God, is unable or fails to do so. These revengers, who find that justice delayed is justice denied, violate both public and divine law that prohibits men from taking private recourse for injuries or crimes committed against them and/or their families.[15] Blood revengers do not put their trust in judicial law or God's vengeance; instead they put faith in blood—in duty to a bloodline and in bloody recourse. By its very nature, blood revenge involves both an obligation to the bloodline and a darker devotion to the spilling of blood.

While we might understand Charles II's public executions of the regicides as delayed justice for his father's untimely death and a crime against monarchy itself, Pepys' view of the regicides' execution as blood spilled in revenge for Charles I's blood prompts us to consider the nuanced difference between the creation of public trials that would undoubtedly lead to the executions of men responsible for Charles I's death and that of Charles II's own privately motivated revenge for both his father's bloodshed and the implicit assault on the Stuart bloodline. Accordingly, the execution of the regicides represents blood revenge on behalf of Charles I's blood and also for the exclusion of the Stuart monarchy. English subjects, most of whom were obedient to the Commonwealth regardless of political or religious sympathies, surely were fearful of the monarch's revenge against traitors. In John Dryden's *Astraea Redux*, an inaugural poem to Charles II on his coronation, Dryden offers the king a warning against such revenge as he cautions the king, "you find / Revenge less sweet then a forgiving mind" (13).[16] Dryden's verses echo a wish for a peaceful, contented nation, one in which Englishmen and women wanted the restoration of monarchy to be a restoration of order and peace—not of war or bloodshed, and certainly not of vindictiveness.

Such warnings about the harmful effects of revenge begin to play out on the Restoration stage as early as the first years of the theatres' official reopening. A dual focus on blood and bloodline plays out in the political netherworld of the Restoration stage, where the claims of family and the king's Hobbesean control over life and death in the name of the nation collide with notions of legal justice. In light of the

political upheaval of the mid- to late-seventeenth century's bloody and the bloodless revolutions, blood revenge on the Restoration stage makes the personal hopelessly political. Due to censorship, Restoration dramatists could not directly address this narrative of the Stuart bloodline, but a number of serious dramas of the period gesture toward the family-as-state metaphor[17] and highlight in their plotlines the tragic relationship between royal blood and revenge. At the start of the Restoration this link is made explicitly clear in William Davenant's staging of Shakespeare's revenge tragedy, *The Tragedy of Hamlet*, a play that illustrates a fixed connection between bloodline and revenge in its portrayal of blood revenge. Davenant's 1661 play is both a timely representation of a royal son's coming-to-terms with his father's murderer, and a portrayal of the national threats that develop out of revenge plots. Elkanah Settle's plays, which closely resemble Jacobean revenge tragedies and a type of play that Robert Hume refers to as Carolean "blood-and-torture villain tragedy" (202), rehearse anxieties about religion, gender, and race relations in the middle of the period and near the end of Charles II's reign. His 1674 *Love and Revenge* affords a striking example of blood revenge's dangerous repercussions on monarchy and nation while simultaneously reflecting negative portrayals of female aggression and foreigners undermining the supremacy of a royal court, and his 1680 *The Female Prelate* uses blood revenge to show a contested relationship between faltering royal authority and aristocratic stature, and a calculating Catholic Church. These dramas ultimately reveal that although blood revengers attempt to honor kin and punish wrongdoers, they endanger themselves and threaten national stability. The plays

show that blood revenge destabilizes royal autonomy and aristocratic lineage, and the tragedies eventually demonstrate that blood revenge has no legitimate place in Restoration society. While blood revenge is a sign of duty to one's kin, it is also symptomatic of a violation of law, decorum, and civility. Tragic drama of the Restoration implies that men (and women) must civilize themselves out of an archaic, barbaric passion for revenge, which only brings about personal destruction and produces civil unrest.

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Davenant's staging of *Hamlet* relates a narrative of blood revenge and anxieties about sovereignty, aristocratic bloodline, and the ruling of a nation at the beginning of the Restoration.[18] While most scholars studying Davenant's 1661 adaptation (or revival) of Shakespeare's work have analyzed Davenant's emendations of Shakespeare's language, Davenant's introduction of mechanical scenery into the play's staging, and Thomas Betterton's casting of the title role, few critics have observed Davenant's staging of *Hamlet* in light of an early Restoration political context.[19] Because Davenant did not embellish Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as later Restoration playwrights had done to other Shakespearean texts, many critics have focused on the aesthetic changes Davenant made to the pre-war play—most notably his alteration of Shakespeare's language in approximately three hundred cases and his shortening of the play with an excision of over eight hundred lines.[20] While Davenant's linguistic alterations and his elimination of lines (and even entire passages) affect characterization and (marginally) plot, it is precisely the drama's

correlation with contemporary events and politics that warrants further attention.[21] A fuller look at Davenant's *Hamlet* shows that it is a play that parallels a highly charged political and historical moment in the Restoration.[22] The play rehearses the murder of a king, the usurpation a throne, the revenge of a royal son upon his father's murder, and the instability of a nation that cannot secure its domestic leadership. These dramatic events correspond with the mid-century crisis of the Stuart bloodline and its narrative of monarchy, and with Charles II's own contemporary revenge on the regicides. Davenant's *Hamlet* was first staged in August 1661, only months after Charles II's order to exhume Cromwell and other regicides' bones.

Audiences seeing Davenant's version of *Hamlet* in the early 1660s likely would have been attuned to the political and social implications surrounding a play about the murder of a rightful king, the usurpation of his throne, and the denial of a true heir's right to the crown. With the Restoration of monarchy fresh on Englishmen's minds, the early Restoration productions of *Hamlet* in 1661 and 1663 surely would have evoked images of Charles I's execution, Cromwell's appropriation of the throne, and Charles II's denied inherited right to rule England after his father's death.[23] While we should not read *Hamlet* as a strict allegory of the Civil War and Interregnum, we should consider that Davenant's staging of a play at the beginning of the Restoration about bloodline and thwarted kingship would have resonated with contemporary problems of bloodline and monarchial inheritance in the period. The drama's portrayal of blood revenge alongside the recent "blood shed in revenge for the blood of the King" further compounds these problems by introducing the issue of

revenge into the equation, for as the play shows, blood revenge ultimately plays a part in the demise of Danish monarchy and then rule by a foreign power. While the adaptation does not address overtly Charles II or the restoration of monarchy, *Hamlet*'s depiction of blood revenge on the Restoration stage makes for an interesting portrayal of the kind of vengeful behavior that leads to violence and national instability—peculiarly paralleling precisely the kind of behavior Charles II was demonstrating at the start of the period. If we agree with Richard Kroll who argues that Davenant believed that drama had the potential to hold a "special status in culture" as a "precondition of law and civil society" (317), and that drama would become "a political forum for discussing the conditions and limitations of power" (314), then we should consider how at the start of the Restoration Davenant's productions of *Hamlet* might also be connected to his dramatic agenda. In doing so, *Hamlet* stands out not only as a revival of Shakespeare, but also as a part of the genesis of a Restoration forum for broaching the 'conditions and limitations of power' and the role revenge plays in power relations.

There are moments in Davenant's staging of *Hamlet* (retained from Shakespeare's text) that coincide with Dryden's warning in *Astraea Redux* to Charles II to eschew revenge and embrace a "forgiving mind." The most strikingly parallel occurs in Act I when the ghost warns Hamlet about the consequences of vengeance and calls it a "foul design" (I.i.19) that contaminates the mind: to Hamlet the ghost counsels, "howsoever thou pursuest this act, / Taint not thy mind" (I.i.19).[24] The play clearly identifies that revenge, regardless of honorable intention, leads to impurity

and corruption. In demonstrating Hamlet's open description of himself in Act III as "very proud, revengeful, ambitious" (III.i.40), the drama shows the dangers of the internalization of revenge. This self-description shows the sign of a man whose mind been has "tainted" by vengeance as Hamlet's revenge fosters ambition and pride, two qualities that were perceived to be associated with bloodshed in the seventeenth century. Jean Gagen associates revenge in the earlier seventeenth century with the darker attribute of ambition, which was received "with dark suspicion as a sin of excess, a breeder of mischief, sedition, and bloodshed" (209).[25] This understanding of ambition is one that would have resonated with a Restoration audience concerned about revenge injecting "bad blood" into the new plan of political stability. If we compare Charles II to Hamlet as a revenger, Charles' display of bloodshed at the start of the Restoration resonates as a sign of hatred, ambition, and pride—negative qualities for a new king to display, qualities that could instill fear in his subjects.

While Hamlet might initially be conceived of as a hero who sets out to requite his father's murder, the play eventually questions the effects of his actions and provides a tale about blood revenge that destabilizes divine right and inherited monarchy. Much depends on how Restoration audiences would have viewed Hamlet's plot to kill Claudius; if Claudius is viewed primarily as a villainous usurper—not a true king—then Hamlet's attempt to kill Claudius and restore the throne to Hamlet, himself, appears as a "Restoration" narrative. However, if an audience were to take into consideration Claudius' status as king, then Hamlet would have to kill a king in order to obtain his revenge. In this case, Hamlet's intended

murder of Claudius represents a kind of regicide. His plotting to kill a king invokes the memory of regicide and of Charles I's execution and such a dramatic plot to kill a monarch would have likely raised a few eyebrows at the start of the Restoration were *Hamlet* not a Shakespearean play relegated to Davenant at the re-opening of the theaters. Taking into consideration that Thomas Betterton played the title role of Hamlet with what Eleanor Prosser has labeled "the admirable determination of a heroic avenger" (243), Hamlet's revenge would most likely have signaled to an audience a heroic attempt at a restoration through retribution, even though the play in the end shows that revenge only produces death and destabilizes national security. Davenant's staging of *Hamlet* is timely not only in its admonition about the negative mental outcomes of revenge on the psyche of a prince, or in Charles II's case a new king, but also in its cautionary tale about the political consequences of such behavior.

The play concludes by pointing to the national effects of revenge plotting. First, revenge is identified as a threat to the state and authority and is likened to treachery as Laertes, stabbed by his own poisoned rapier, confesses, "I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery" (V.i.85). The play reinforces to a Restoration audience a cautionary tale about the threat of revenge: If Dryden's advice to Charles II to forgive rather than revenge is one that was espoused by others at the start of the Restoration, revenge is an endangerment to king, court, and countrymen. Hamlet's decision to kill the king situates revenge as a threat to divine law, secular law, and political order—Hamlet has violated God's vengeance or eventual justice by taking matters into his own hands, he has surpassed the law of the state by seeking out a

private vengeance, and he has jeopardized political order by putting the king and unknowingly his entire bloodline in danger of extinction. As a final blow to stability, the play renders a harsh verdict for its blood revengers as Laertes and Hamlet's revenge plotting sets in motion the downfall of the Danish throne as the spectacular end of the play demonstrates that there is no royal family left to defend Denmark against Fortinbras' invading army. While Hamlet and Laertes set out to honor their kin by punishing their murderers, revenge ultimately leads to the collapse of the royal bloodline and to the overturn of Danish rule. As in Shakespeare's tale, Davenant's production ends by demonstrating that revengers must pay a high price for their pursuits of vengeance—with their own deaths and the turnover of their country. The close of the play reminds the audience that it is necessary to share these revengers' tales so that Englishmen and women can learn about the perils of revenge plotting. Horatio's final words of warning remind an audience that that he must share this tale in order to prevent "mischance / On plots and errors" (V.i.88). In the end, *Hamlet* suggests that the narrator of revenge tales must inform audiences of the consequences of 'men's wild minds' and how revenge 'falls on inventor's heads' (V.i.87).

In a time when the English nation was celebrating the Restoration and hoping for national security, the productions of *Hamlet* on the early 1660s Restoration stage serve as instructive reminders about catastrophic results of greed, ambition, and private vengeance.[26] Yet Hamlet was not only staged in the 1660s as a part of Davenant's inherited repertory.[27] In the context of the productions of *Hamlet* in the mid-1670s, the play's portrayal of plotting and Horatio's final words might be read

alongside concerns about political plotting and the inheritance of the Stuart throne after Charles II's death. Barbara Murray suggests in *Restoration Shakespeare* that the play's performances in the 1670s might be read in tandem with political anxieties about succession (65). Indeed, *Hamlet*'s portrayal of a succession crisis makes the Restoration *Hamlet* ripe for comparison in 1674 with the Stuart monarchy and the nation's growing anxieties about the production of a legitimate male heir to Charles' throne.[28] The play's Danish setting also carries weight in the '70s as the English were in the midst of a second Dutch war—an unpopular war that further set Charles II at odds with his subjects. From Davenant's first staging in 1661 to those in the 1670s, *Hamlet*'s royal plotline coincides with England's re-scripting of its own monarchial narrative, one derivative of blood, bloodline, and civil turmoil. Revenge in the Restoration represents instability for the *ancien regime* and national rule; on the Restoration stage, as initially shown in *Hamlet* in 1661, revenge destroys them.

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Like *Hamlet*, Elkanah Settle's 1680 *The Female Prelate: Being the History of the Life and Death of Pope Joan* shows not only attacks on the *ancien regime*, but also localized rule of a nation. Settle's tragedy shows that revenge on the Restoration stage represents instability for an *ancien regime* and national rule. In Settle's play these threats come from the Roman Catholic Church, the religio-political institution that discredits royal power and promises to "revenge" itself on members of the Saxony aristocracy. *The Female Prelate* is an anti-popish play staged at the height of the Popish Plot. As *The London Stage* indicates, *The Female Prelate* was the only

new play that the King's Company staged in the 1679-1680 season[29]—and it was also, as Susan J. Owen has noted, the only anti-popish play performed in 1680 (*Restoration Theatre and Crisis* 72). The May 1680 staging of *The Female Prelate* cannot be appreciated fully, moreover, unless we consider the relationship between Settle's anti-catholic views and his dramatic plot's allusion to the Popish Plot and Exclusion Crisis.[30] Settle wrote a number of anti-popish pamphlets during this time, including *The Character of a Popish Successor and What England May Expect from Such a One* and *A Vindication of the Character of a Popish Successor*, and *The Female Prelate* was published in 1680 with a dedication to the Earl of Shaftesbury. Due to Settle's reputation for a "mastery of scenic effect and the violence of his Protestantism,"[31] in the same year he was asked to organize the pope-burning procession on Queen Elizabeth's birthday (Warner 19).[32] Settle's *The Female Prelate* is directly connected to the Whigs by its dedication to Shaftesbury, Settle's Protestantism, and the playwright's role and reputation as organizer of the pope-burning processions of 1680.[33] As Sheila Williams points out in her work on the pope-burning processions of 1679-81, we should associate the "Pope-burning processions with symbolic representations of traditional Roman power, cruelty, and corruption and of the current Roman attempt to overthrow the government and liberties of England" (105). Settle's play reinforces the anti-Catholic message behind the pope-burning processions not only in its depiction of Pope Joan as a seductress and plotting fiend, but also in its representation of the Catholic Church's infringements on Saxon (read as English) liberties and its torture of heretics. For the

purpose of this discussion, it is important to consider how Settle stages a clash of aristocratic power versus religious control through the guise of revenge tragedy. While Settle conveys a tale of blood revenge, he also levels a serious attack on the Roman Catholic Church and calls into question the authority of royalty, aristocracy, and the Church. Grounded in the thirteenth-century tale of Pope Joan/John VIII and likely based on the 1675 prose text *A Present for a Papist, or, The Life and Death of Pope Joan*, the play is a criticism of the influence of Catholicism in the English court and an exploration of the limitation of royal power.[34] The play offers its audience both a disparaging portrayal of an uncontrollable yet ignorant Catholic Church, and a protagonist's plea for respect of his birthrights.

The play depicts a crisis of bloodline as it begins with a plaintive, young Duke of Saxony recounting to his wife on their wedding day the wrongful death of his father, the old Duke of Saxony: "I had a Father, Whose Blood, whose Royal Blood is unrevenged" (I.i.2). Here Saxony's invocation of the word *blood* signifies bloodline. From the start of the play, Settle roots his plot in the loss of a father and an attack on ancestry, a charge leveled both against the person of a "thin meagre Eunuch-featur'd" priest who "most basely poysoned" old Saxony and the Catholic Church, itself (I.i.2). As the play progresses, the audience learns that the priest who murdered old Saxony was actually a woman—his mistress, Joanna Angelica, who costumed herself as a priest in order to gain intimate access to the duke and punish him for casting her aside for a new mistress, and the same woman who surreptitiously becomes Pope John through a series of dupes. The name of this mistress, Joanna Angelica, translates

loosely as Joan of England, and her devolvement into Catholicism could be read as an allegory of an English nation that would be polluted by plotting and Catholicism. In his work on *The Female Prelate* Craig Rustici grants that Settle's play is highly allegorical. Not only do the names of Joanna Angelica, and Saxony's wife, Angeline, point to the Anglican Church (i.e., England) but also the conflict between Saxony and the Catholic Church that develops in the play might be read as an allusion to a "Saxon church, untainted by popery," that "flowered in England before Augustine's seventh-century evangelization" (Rustici 287). Rustici suggests that "the duke's Saxon ethnicity" both signifies "historical ties to the 'English Genius'" and "points back to primitive Christian purity as well as forward to a cleansing northern Reformation" (288). Rustici's religio-political allegorical reading also warns that "disaster awaits if the English people, like young Saxony, fail to comprehend fully and learn from their ancestors' deadly and polluting infatuation with popery, the scarlet whore who masquerades in clerical robes" (288). Settle's tragedy not only resonates as anti-popish because of its portrayal of Joan. A handful of scenes that include invectives against the institution of the Roman Catholic Church have little or nothing to do with her directly. Saxony's diatribes against the Catholic Church reflect Whiggish and Protestant sympathies and point to the heated religious and political context of the late 1670s Popish Plot and 1680s Exclusion Crisis. If the name *Saxony* is an allusion to a "proto-Protestant" Church as Rustici claims (287), we should read young Saxony's anti-Catholic sentiments as Protestant attacks on the Catholic Church and align his revenge with a Protestant cause. Associated with Protestantism, Saxony

comes to symbolize both a blood revenger who seeks justice for his father's murder, and a religious avenger who condemns the crimes of the Catholic Church. In addition to revenging on behalf of his bloodline, revenge is then placed at the center of a historical conversation about fears of popery undermining the rule of England and threatening Protestantism.

Saxony's response to Angeline's encouragement that "Heaven's longer Arm" might have already accomplished young Saxony's "imperfect Vengeance" by "Punishing [the murderer's] Crimes" with an "untimely Fate" demonstrates that Saxony's blood revenge conflicts with a notion of heavenly justice as Saxony decides that divine vengeance is "not enough t'appease a Father's Ghost" (I.i.2-3). On the contrary, Saxony's words index a traditional mantra of blood revenge: "Blood requires blood, and vengeance weilds a Sword / That cuts on both sides" (I.i.3). Saxony's reliance upon the power of the sword is emblematic of both a primitive code of vengeance and a heroic attitude toward revenge: vengeance is achieved by man's brute force, not "Heaven's longer Arm." We should read the phrase, "Blood requires blood," as part of a formula of blood revenge—not an actual reference to the spilling of old Saxony's blood (for he was poisoned). The statement hearkens back to a notion of blood revenge that relies upon the transmission of blood, with revenge operating as a reciprocal action that satisfies one's 'bloodshed' with another's. In order to honor one's blood, Saxony must shed blood. *Blood* takes on a multiple meanings here as heritage, bloodshed, and the sign of a ruptured civitas/political sphere that violates both civil law and divine law.

Ultimately, Settle's trinity of revenge, justice, and religion collide as Saxony decides how to best vindicate his father and achieve justice without divine vengeance, but with the legal intervention of the Catholic Church. Unlike traditional blood revenge tales, where a revenger takes the law into his own hands and murders a wrongdoer, the first act of Settle's play undercuts a negative association of lawlessness with blood revenge as its protagonist asks the Catholic Church to punish its own affiliate. Rather than seeking a private revenge, Saxony views public execution as an act of social justice. Revenge in this context moves beyond a private filial obligation to an acceptable form of public duty. Through Saxony, Settle addresses the problem of seeking a wild revenge in, as Saxony puts it, "a Christian World; / The Court of *Rome*, the Head and Spring of Justice" where "A Ponyard and a Sword are Arms too bright" (I.i.5). This passage associates a legitimized form of justice with the Roman Catholic Church, a justice in which "A Scaffold and an Axe shall do [Saxony] right" (I.i.5). Even if retribution can be achieved through a just public execution, this scene, as in the scene in *Hamlet* between the ghost and Hamlet, points to the hazards of private vengeful retribution as Angeline cautions Saxony to "take heed of such a wild revenge / Lest taking of [the prelate's] life should hazard yours" (I.i.4). Angeline's words invoke Francis Bacon's early seventeenth-century warnings about revenge as a form of wild justice, and Saxony's words draw attention to the problematic nature of a wild revenge: "Rashness and Vengeance never were Allies"; "Revenge is witty when it walks, not flies" (I.i.4-5). Here one cannot help

but think of Hamlet's words in Davenant's production in which Hamlet announces that he will fly to his revenge.

Unfortunately, the play illustrates that the Church's scales of justice are imbalanced, for even when Saxony implores the cardinals to "hold the Scale of Justice right" and "Weigh the true value of a Prince's Honour, / […] Blood and Life," the prelate convinces the cardinals that s/he murdered old Saxony "in prevention of a dangerous Heresie, / And to revenge our injured Church" (I.ii.16-17). In acting on behalf of Rome, the prelate argues that s/he murdered the duke out of fear that treason would have gone "undiscovered / And Rome for ever unrevenged" (I.ii.18). Settle clearly pits honor and bloodline against (untrue) accusations of treason and heresy, and eventually shows that the value of aristocracy amounts to very little against charges of heresy. Vengeance takes on a new form in the play as Settle links revenge to the actions of the Catholic Church and Rome. After labeling the old duke a heretic and a traitor, and then ordering his bones to "be taken up, / Removed, and buryed in unhallow'd Ground" (I.ii.19)—a direction that is reminiscent of the exhumation of Oliver Cromwell's bones at the start of the Restoration—the cardinals take their revenge on the deceased duke and then banish Saxony from Rome. Settle associates the Saxony bloodline with Protestantism, and if we read Cromwell's exhumation onto this scene, he also associates the Catholic Church with the royalists, who took "revenge" on Cromwell's bones some twenty years before the staging of this play.

Through Saxony's criticism of the Roman Catholic Church for its tyranny and authority over royal men, Settle lambastes Catholicism. These criticisms index the

hollowness of royal power as Saxony argues that the Church acts like kings, while monarchs and nobility reign in name only. We also should note the inherent problem of bloodline to which Settle calls our attention: Saxony's critique of the Church indicates that aristocratic bloodline has little to no power whatsoever against the Church; because the edicts of the Church outweigh royal allegations, the play suggests that Catholics do not understand how to manage blood symbolically. The play also points out the dangers of leveling allegations against the Catholic Church as Lorenzo, the prelate's henchman, attests that Saxony's "loud-mouth'd Scandals / 'Gainst Rome and Romes Imperial Dignity / Have pulled down vengeance on [his] Blasphemies" and Saxony is sent to prison for being a heretic (II.i.21). Saxony's imprisonment allows Settle to stage "heretic" scenes that expose the Catholic Church for its cruelty to men who betray the Catholic Church. Ironically, because Saxony decides to forgo a private revenge against the prelate and put his faith in the justice of the Catholic Church (not God's ultimate vengeance), blood revenge is thwarted and a religio-political revenge against heretics governs the middle of the play.

In fact, most of the play takes place in the confines of a prison where blood revenge is represented only as a threat of future action. In Saxony's first encounter in the prison with the prelate who has been made pope, Saxony vehemently proclaims that death will not terminate his vengeance as he promises a future of blood revenge and an unrestricted vendetta against the pope.[35] Settle recognizes the loyalty of kinship in this pledged vendetta as Saxony warns the pope that he will leave his dukedom to painters, engravers, and to his descendants to "revenge" him long after he

is gone (III.i.31). Saxony's claims gesture towards a conflation of the symbolic codes of blood and revenge with the real. He assumes that painters and engravers will immortalize his tale in art while his family will vindicate his and his father's murders with bloodshed. Saxony's mentioning of painters and engravers might be correlated with propaganda against the Catholic Church present during the period of the Popish Plot. As Rustici attests, "Settle, the designer of political pageants, must have expected that a propaganda campaign sewn into embroidery, etched into buildings, and recited in daily prayers would erode Rome's prestige long after Joanna's pontificate had ended" (287). Saxony's speech, then, not only signifies his vendetta, but also alludes to propaganda against Catholicism. When Saxony pledges, "vengeance which my fetter'd Arms want power / To give, I will entail upon my Heirs" (III.i.31), he promises that his male descendants will revenge his "Royal murder'd Father's blood" by bringing plagues, famines, and curses upon the pope, while his female descendants

> That have no Weapons above their Needles,
> Shall in revenge of thy detested name,
> Limb that curst Head in their embroidered Toys,
> And execute that Monster in Effigie. (III.i.31)[36]

Saxony binds revenge to bloodline as he promises that his heirs will inherit his unfinished vengeance: his male heirs will wreak havoc of massive proportions on the pope and her descendants while Saxony's female descendants will immortalize revenge in art.

The play complicates Saxony's idealized inherited blood revenge, however, as Joanna and Lorenzo's schemes ensure that Saxony will not have any legitimate heirs. This crisis of bloodline is a direct result of Saxony's initial decision to seek revenge—we should not forget Angeline's warning to Saxony in Act I about the consequences of a wild revenge: "Oh, Sir, take heed of such a wild revenge / Lest taking of his life should hazard yours" (I.i.4). In leveling charges against the prelate, Saxony was separated from his new bride and tricked into bedding Joanna. More than simply identifying the injustices against the Saxony bloodline, the play delves into the personal injustices waged against, what Derek Hughes has labeled, "the just person in the unjust order" (*English Drama* 277). Settle demonstrates that the greatest crime committed against Saxony is not the murder of his father, but the injustices leveled at young Saxony—a "just person" who has become mixed up in an "unjust order." The play demonstrates that material murder pales in comparison to symbolic violence leveled at an aristocratic family. From the slandering of Saxony's father's name and exhumation of his corpse, to the imprisonment of Saxony and the "bedroom trick" prison scene in which Saxony mistakenly has sex with Joanna when he thinks he is consummating his marriage with Angeline, Settle shows that the play is "a tragedy of leaders in the wrong religion, and lovers in the wrong beds" (Hughes 277). The play clearly depicts anti-Catholic sentiments and suggests that the Catholic Church is blind to justice; however, the problem of 'lovers in the wrong beds' has far-reaching consequences that might not at first be as obvious. While Angeline unknowingly has sex with Lorenzo, Saxony mistakenly procreates with Joanna. The

bedroom trick prevents Saxony from legitimate procreation but potentially provides him with an illegitimate heir: as the end of the play divulges, Joanna is pregnant but miscarries this child in the street.[37] Ultimately, the bedroom trick perpetuates a succession crisis as Saxony does not produce any rightful offspring to both carry on the Saxony bloodline and blood revenge. In tandem with Charles II's inability to father a genuine successor, Settle's play depicts a hereditary crisis as both a royal bloodline is polluted with illegitimacy, and the bloodline is extinguished with the impending death of the young duke.

The bedroom trick also engenders a secondary blood revenge quest as Saxony seeks vengeance for Angeline's rape and murder. Here the play incorporates the bond of marriage in blood revenge as Saxony's revenge expands beyond requiting the murder of a father to include the vindication of the rape and poisoning of a wife. In this scene, Saxony's cry for revenge, "Revenge, ye Gods, revenge!" and question, "Is there that word / In all the dear Records of Fate for me?" (V.i.64), align Saxony's call for revenge with paganism as he addresses gods and fate. The play shows that the revenger can neither rely on a Christian divine vengeance or religious system of justice to punish wrongdoers; instead, Act IV shows Saxony rejecting monotheism and embracing the energy of anarchism—a move that eventually costs him his life. When Saxony escapes from prison with Angeline's dead body, he meets a rabble of Romans and promises them a tale that will "afford [their] pity and revenge" (V.ii.67). In his plea to the Romans, Saxony reaches out to the laymen by analogy as he uses the example of Julius Caesar's murder to rouse the men to action. Saxony compares

the rabble to that of the crowd who found Caesar dead and "with noble rage" cried for "Revenge and Justice through the streets" of Rome (V.ii.67); likewise, he compares his and Angeline's story to that of Antony and Caesar's to try to cause a public, communal revenge hunt. In order to achieve blood revenge for Angeline's sexual assault and murder, Saxony relies not only on the historical analogy of Antony and Caesar, but also on a comparison of Angeline's tale with the rabble's female kin's futures as Saxony indicates that inaction will result in the rapes, murders, and dishonor of their female relatives.

Saxony invokes the symbolic currency of blood revenge to aid him in convincing the Romans to help him, but the play suggests that familial duty fails to call a rabble to arms. Saxony's inability to rouse the rabble through his pathetic and cautionary tale is also an important turning point in depicting the powerlessness of blood revenge as a public motivation for action; for the rabble, a duty to one's family and concern for the safety of kin is not as strong a motivator for rioting as their devotion to materialism and localized civic allegiance. The rabble's failure to respond to the symbolic language of blood supports a negative image of the mob as ignoble. Not until Saxony offers the rabble gold as a "reward," in addition to a promise of "justice" for Roman "leaders" (V.ii.68), does the rabble agree to help him—even though the men later take his money and turn him over to the Church.[38] Settle's rabble scenes reify the dangers of leveling charges against the Church and appealing to the mob—a symbol of capriciousness, self-interest, disorder, and anarchy (Canfield "Royalism's Last Stand" 263). Ultimately, Settle's mob is as an

image of bad democracy pitted against the Roman Catholic Church as bad absolutism.

We should notice Settle's anti-popish agenda entwined in Saxony's interactions with the Roman rabble. As one of the rabble vows that the Romans will "roast the Rogue [Pope John/Joan]: and make the Devil a Feast of him" (V.ii.68), we should detect the allusion to the pope-burning processions from 1678-1680 and a mocking of transubstantiation. Settle was one of the few literary men to have been openly associated with the procession.[39] This Roman Catholic jab in *The Female Prelate* underlines a parodic/horrific communion image (feeding upon the devil, who was associated with the pope in the processions), as well as a primitive image of revenge: the entire being of the other (blood and all) is subsumed literally to/in the revenger. This bloody image is reinforced later in the play in Saxony's singular "great revenge" (V.ii.69)—his murder of Lorenzo. In this scene, Settle reminds his audience of the connection between revenge and blood as Saxony is reinvigorated by bloodshed and affirms that in seeking "Justice against Romes Scarlet Whore" (V.ii.69) he will cleanse the Church of its fraudulent pope. Here Saxony's words situate him as a national and religious redeemer who will rid the Church of its contamination. In the framework of blood and bloodline, we can read his effort as an attempt at purification. In its contemporary context, we can associate his plan with a Protestant endeavor to prevent Catholicism from assuming power over the English in the 1680s and with the removal of Catholics (for instance, Charles' mistresses and his brother, James) from powerful positions in the court.

Saxony's public plea to the cardinals at the beginning of the play to bring the prelate to justice and to the rabble at the end of the tragedy to help him punish her illustrates the impossibility of a publicly endorsed blood vengeance. Settle returns to the idea of revenging wrongs and avenging blood in the final moments of the play, but the tragedy confirms that the word of a pope is stronger than the revenge of a nobleman as Saxony is seized and ordered to be put to the stake.[40] Whereas the pope-burning pageants have been labeled as "Whig theater,"[41] in *The Female Prelate*, Settle stages what could be read as Whiggish persecution. Allegorically, Saxony's order to be burned at the stake as a heretic alludes to Catholic persecutions of Protestants.[42] Instead of a pope-burning procession, the play stages a fiery Protestant nightmare. Saxony, the Protestant avenger, is no match for an implacable Catholic Church, and blood revenge is overshadowed by Catholic revenge. *The Female Prelate* connects revenge with crises of aristocratic bloodline and authority as it intimates that tropologically, bloodline has to be reaffirmed, perhaps even redefined, while bloodshed in revenge has to be denounced, even though both are necessary parts of the Restoration. Ultimately the play indicates that the Saxony bloodline (a metonymic representation of Protestantism, Whiggism, aristocracy, and the royal state in Restoration England) is on the brink of bastardization or complete dissolution and that the state is in danger of being subsumed by the Catholic Church. While *The Female Prelate* begins with Saxony's vow to requite his father's "unrevenged" royal blood, unfortunately the play ends with the unrevenged blood of young Saxony.[43]

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Staged approximately four years before *The Female Prelate*, Settle's *Love and Revenge* also depicts a conflict between revenge and authority. Settle's play clearly begins with an oeuvre on blood revenge, but as the spectacular tragedy unfolds the drama moves from exploring blood revenge to a blackened, evil retaliation that spawns partly from blood revenge, but mostly from of an ignominious rape. As in *The Female Prelate*, Settle places blood revenge alongside competing motivations for revenge, yet, unlike *Hamlet* and *The Female Prelate*, *Love and Revenge* clearly demonstrates that blood revenge doubles for personal vengeance that has little to do with honoring a bloodline. Settle's *Love and Revenge* is an adaptation of William Heming's *The Fatal Contract, A French Tragedy*, which was acted by Queen Henrietta's troupe in the 1637-8 season.[44] First staged in November 1674, only one week apart from *Hamlet*, *Love and Revenge* is set in France and initially follows the blood revenge of two families: the royal family and the Dumanes.[45] The play begins with the only two surviving male Dumane brothers providing a verbal account of their family's revenge against Queen Fredigond's son, Clotair, for his rape of their sister, Chlotilda; likewise, the start of the play includes the Queen's description of her vendetta against the Dumanes for their mistaken murder of her brother. The play contrasts the Dumanes' blood revenge with that of Queen Fredigond's unrestricted vendetta against the entire Dumane family. Fredigond's revenge constitutes an unrestricted vendetta because she does not limit her revenge to her brother's murderers. Her desire for revenge signifies a grudge upon the entire Dumane

"race"—a term used throughout the play to describe a family's bloodline—as she insists that she will "be reveng'd on all their Race" (I.i.6). While both the queen and Dumanes retaliate in response to violence against a family member, the queen's revenge is marked by cruelty, excessiveness, and arrogance. In Settle's revision of the play, the queen likens her revenge to a "Pastime for the Gods" (I.i.6), a statement that carries a polytheistic signification and associates her revenge with paganism.[46] In considering Settle's vehemently anti-Catholic views, we also might read Fredigond's words as a sign of a self-aggrandizing sense of royal authority likened to the status of God, which might also correlate her speech with implicit English, Protestant criticism of French absolutism.[47]

Although Don-John Dugas categorizes *Love and Revenge* as "a formulaic exercise in lust, revenge, murder, ghosts and pretended madness" (381), a description which identifies the play as a holdover from the subgenre of Jacobean revenge tragedy, Settle's Restoration tragedy has much to teach us about xenophobic attitudes in mid-1670s England and about domestic perceptions of monarchs ruled by lust.[48] In addition to Queen Fredigond's desire for revenge, she is also defined by her aspiration to supplant her husband from the throne, to rule with her lover, and to debauch her son so that he cannot rule upon her husband's death.[49] In portraying monarchs in *Love and Revenge* as French libertines, Settle presents unfavorable images of monarchy and the dangers of selfish, effeminate rulers. As Gary De Krey has argued in "Between Revolutions," anti-French sentiment was particularly high in 1673-1674 due to not only Charles II's alliance with the French during the second

Dutch War,[50] but also concerns over suggestions that the heir to the English throne would marry a Catholic (754). The mid-1670s were also racked with concern about Charles II's illegitimate children and mistresses. Jessica Munns has argued that "the number of the king's illegitimate children and the unpopularity of his French mistress, Louise de Kerouaille (created Duchess of Portsmouth in 1676), had seriously impaired royal dignity" ("Images of Monarchy" 115). As Munns has noted, dramatists of the 1670s were creating a "new trend that replaced the essentially 'happy' drama of royalty restored with melodramatic depictions of monarchy in disarray" (114). *Love and Revenge* addresses the tenuous nature of absolute monarchy, and Settle depicts French absolutist monarchy as 'monarchy in disarray': a by-product of lust, greed, and revenge.

Above all, *Love and Revenge* associates the spilling of blood with a dark, Othered body in making its primary revenger a French female who takes on the guise of a Moorish male to enact her revenge. While *Love and Revenge* gestures to concerns about the French in the mid-1670s, the drama overtly illustrates the dangers of non-Europeans within a royal court through Setttle's portrayal of a dark-skinned villain, Nigrello. By changing the villain's very name from Castrato (in Hemings' play) to Nigrello, Settle both emends his predecessor's play and draws attention to the character's non-European persona. Particularly noteworthy in Settle's play is a 'blackening' of revenge on stage through the character of Chlotilda/Nigrello.[51] Settle pits royal bloodline against aristocratic bloodline and blood revenge motivated by familial honor against personal revenge motivated by pride in his complicated

portrayal of a second female character's revenge—that of the ravished and presumed dead, Chlotilda, who disguises herself as the queen's male Moorish page, Nigrello, in order to punish the queen and Clotair for their crimes against herself and her family. This disguise serves multiple functions: it allows Chlotilda intimate access to the queen and her son without any speculation that the servant is actually Chlotilda; it highlights anxieties about the body and identity in the portrayal of a female character that perverts her body and persona in order to pursue revenge; and it reflects an ethnic, or racial, stereotype that depicts Moorish servants as evil, unchristian schemers who seek to undermine their European masters.[52] It is only in the darker habit of the Moor that Chlotilda mouths her sinister plans for a vengeance that calls for the spilling of "black and tainted blood" (I.i.10). We should not overlook the connection between the revenger's ethnic persona and that of her goal to shed tarnished blood, and we should associate these sinister words to the sign of her black disguise and see the spilling of "black and tainted blood" as a non-normative activity cast into a provisionally black body. In *Love and Revenge*, not only do bloodied bodies of the slain motivate revenge; assaults on the revenger's body inspire vengeance. Beyond blood revenge, the play prompts its audience to take note of the metaphorical and physiological associations with Chlotilda/Nigrello's 'dark' body and consider the relationship between the tainted, ravished interior of a young woman (i.e., a classical notion of the polluted blood of the raped) who willingly blackens her exterior through disguise to punish the parties responsible for her rape and subsequent murders of her family.

The play also connects its Moorish revenger with the dark powers of Hell, and this association highlights the bond between Chlotilda's disguise and her sinister plans. Settle's image of the revenger in disguise as a Moor reflects stereotypical attitudes about blackness in Christian mythology and in relation to African or Moor characters in English drama of the seventeenth-century as a type of "living devil" and "agent of Satan, a devil in man's shape" (Tokson 136).[53] Elliot Tokson reminds us that blackness was seen in early Christian mythology as "the stigmata for evil" and an association of blackness with Cham from the Bible might have been implicit in English views of darker skin as symbolically associated with hell, heathenism, immorality (43).[54] While Bridget Orr and Jacqueline Pearson warn against reading skin color as a strict ontological category of difference during the Restoration, Settle's play encourages an evaluation of the revenger's skin color as a performance of a blackened physiological character and a sign of Chlotilda's polluted state of mind.[55] The queen's nominalization of Nigrello as her "dull Ethiope" whose "blackness" she will "instruct" (IV.i.48) speaks to Anthony Gerard Barthelemy's suggestion that English conflated Africans and Moors into a single symbolic representation of blackness—both physically referring to skin pigmentation and figuratively pertaining to sinister behavior.[56]

Although Virginia Mason Vaughn has argued that depictions of "black" characters on the English stage in the Restoration showed playwrights turning away from such symbolism and "humanizing" their characters, Nigrello's association of revenge with Hell parallels medieval and early seventeenth-century views of Africans

or Moors as heathens or satanic cohorts.[57] In tying Chlotilda/Nigrello's motives for revenge to damnation and Hell instead of God and divine judgment, the page declares a union with Hell, pleading, "Hell then be kind, and let's joyn force to Night" (II.i.18). Absent from Hemings' play, Settle's focus on this hellish union relegates revenge to the realm of satanic plotting. As Nigrello suggests that "Revenge shall damne" the queen and her lover "if Hell / Be but as just as I" (II.i.18), Settle makes an unusual association of justice with Hell. Nigrello's words draw attention to the irony of linking revenge to justice, for justice generally pertains to a pursuit of a greater good or is associated with God. Here, the concept of justice functions as a perversion as it is tainted by its relationship with Hell; revenge and justice are disassociated from God as Settle's revenger reaches out to the powers of Hell and reinforces a kind of 'stigmata of evil' stereotypically associated with Moors. Ultimately, the character of Nigrello signifies an iconic representation of Othered characters on the seventeenth-century English stage, but more specifically in *Love and Revenge* the Moorish revenger epitomizes scheming and political plotting to destroy the royal family, rather than a strict adherence to blood revenge. Settle's drama is troubling particularly because its central character embraces a mode of savagery that threatens the stability of the court and potentially the entire nation.[58] Although, as Vaughn attests, Hemings' Castrato performs the stereotype of Moorish and African men on the early seventeenth-century stage as representing sexual voraciousness and perversion,[59] *Love and Revenge* "mutes the issue" of "cross-racial liaisons" (138) present in *The Fatal Contract* as Settle does not draw attention to the servant's sexuality

(particularly his being a eunuch and his semi-sexual relationship with the queen or his near rape of Aphelia) but rather his role as a pagan, surreptitious plotter in the court. When Vaughn writes that Settle "recycled a black Moor from a pre-Restoration tragedy" and "fashioned" a character "who embodied the fears and anxieties of a new and deeply conflicted age," she has "racial and sexual taboos" (148) in mind; but it is particularly the Moor's penetration of the royal court and plotting to murder the queen and new king that speak to the 'fears and anxieties' of a 'deeply conflicted age' of rumored plots to murder Charles II.

While the character of Nigrello embodies nefarious infiltration within the court to disparage and murder a king, Settle's play also highlights royal concerns about groups of individuals outside of the court who might enter the court and dismantle the monarchy—namely, that of the mob.[60] *Love and Revenge* ties Restoration fears of mobs to revenge, and Settle brings together a revenger's schemes with the passions of the rabble. Chlotilda/Nigrello's plotting to punish her rapist eventually cultivates a nation's thirst for revenge, and Chlotilda's rage not only fuels the fury of the mob, but also leads to a political crisis.[61] In Hemings' play Clovis (the king's brother, who is named Lewis in Settle's play[62]) actually instigates a rebellion, but in Settle's play this plot originates with the revenger. As the Machiavellian Nigrello remarks, "What could I wish for more, then to engage / The fury of a Kingdom in my Rage?" (III.i.34), Thomas Hobbes' writings on revenge in *Leviathan* rings true: "habituall" revenge "becomes Rage" (140). In the socio-political body of the nation, revenge has the potential to effect system failure. As such, political power

in the hands of a revenger (particularly an ethnically, or racially, charged revenger) and the mob is diffuse and unsettling in contrast to the consolidated power of the monarch. Plays like *Love and Revenge* are left to balance this anarchic revenge energy as "bad politics" without endorsing an absolutism or tyranny. Ultimately, Nigrello's revenge against the king underscores the weakness of monarchy as having authority over its subjects. This is exemplified as Nigrello imprisons Clotair, who has become king after his father's death, and lectures him on a king's limitations, saying, "Kings may be Kings in Pallaces, / But not in Dungeons" (V.i.80). In his adaptation of Hemings' play, Settle undermines an image of the authority of monarchy while highlighting the ability of revengers to permeate power structures. Nigrello's reflection on the status of kings demonstrates that kings *are only* kings when wealth and the court surround them; when these things are stripped away, kings have no more authority than commoners and the rights of the royal bloodline disappear.

Settle shows in Act III, Scene II that monarchs are not safe in palaces as he depicts the subjects' revolt and storming of the royal palace. Nigrello's quip in the dungeon, "'Tis I am Monarch here" (V.i.80), to Clotair reminds the audience that a monarch's power is not absolute and that political power shifts: in the dark recess of the dungeon (a symbol for the dark world of revenge) the revenger reigns. As Vaughn has noted, "underground spaces" are "mirror images of the throne rooms where power is displayed" (147). Here, the dungeon becomes Nigrello's throne and seat of power. Again revenge functions in the play as a political trope that shows the fragility of monarchy, but this anarchic response to monarchy is not a sustainable

political option. Much like Hobbes's articulation of the socio-political demand for a king figure, this scene is an example of the problems surrounding the lawlessness of revenge, the limitation of royal authority, and the will to power that characterizes revengers' behaviors. In seeing 'himself' as monarch of the dungeon, Nigrello enjoys power over the enchained king, and part of this sense of power comes in telling Clotair that he recently has been stripped of his rule and that his brother, Lewis, will be crowned as king (V.i.80); another part comes in exposing the mutilated, dead bodies of his mother and her lover, Clarmount.[63] The psychological becomes political as the king is both mentally defeated and physically stripped of his throne by a revenger.

More so than in Hemings' original, Settle's revenge play narrates not only the arc of a revenger's scheming to achieve personal retribution and blood revenge, but also the feebleness of monarchy and the security of the state in the hands of a revenger who appears to be a foreign slave, even though the plotter's disguise hides the figure of a fragile, young woman who Others herself through an ethnic and a gendered masquerade in order to bolster her resolve for revenge. The end of the play is particularly telling in its psychological breakdown of the revenger as the blackened and gendered façade cracks and the revenge plot falls apart when Chlotilda's genuine motive for revenge surfaces. As the play discloses the revenger's actual motives for revenge, demonstrated when Nigrello instructs Clotair to "Think upon the wrongs / Of the abused Chlotilda" (V.i.80), Settle reveals an identity crisis as Chlotilda/Nigrello reflects on the distinctions between a man's revenge and a

woman's failing, feminine will. Throughout the play, Chlotilda's Moorish, male disguise has given her the confidence to pursue a bloody revenge and act as a transvestite "figure that disrupts" (Garber 70) the court, but the subterfuge breaks down at the end of the play as Settle calls attention to the unsexed, or doubly sexed, persona of his revenger. For instance, as Nigrello progresses to finalize the revenge plan with the revelation of Clotair's sex crime and then his murder, Nigrello calls upon the "infernal Furies" to "Be kind, and heighten my weak gall" (V.i.74)—another reference to paganism that is not present in Hemings' play. The scene illustrates a contest between two gendered personas—one ruled by masculinity and heathenism, and the other guided by femininity and virtue—and addresses skin color as Clotair announces that Nigrello's "blackness hides some noble blood" (V.i.81). Shortly after Chlotilda realizes that after she had been "A Man so long," and that she has "now turn[ed] Woman / In the action of [her] Life," gender intersects with the political as Chlotilda remembers that a sense of "Awe hangs on the brow of Majesty" and cannot murder her king (V.i.81). As she claims that her "relenting," "faint" heart will not allow her to kill Clotair, clearly she "cannot strike" him because she will not kill a *king* (V.i.81).[64] The play brings the audience to the brink of regicide only to return the revenger to a virtuous, heroic female who apologizes for her "wrongs" and asks the king to take a sword and "guide the point directly at [her] heart" (V.i.81). In the end, the drama returns to issues of monarchy and aristocracy, and bloodshed and bloodline, as 'noble blood' is contrasted with evil bloodshed, and the monarchy is saved allegorically by aristocracy as Chlotilda shrugs off her dark disguise to reveal

her noble identity and sacrifices herself in place of the king. Virginia Mason Vaughn elucidates the theatricality of this move: "Like the black paint and male garb she wears," Chlotilda's "vengeful spirit is a theatrical role, an impersonation that belies her inner nature" (128). As Nigrello, Chlotilda has been "working slyly from the margins" (Vaughn 128) throughout the play to plot revenge, but her return to the center, to nobility, eradicates her drive to murder the king. It seems that Settle (momentarily) saves Clotair because his would-be assassin is a woman and, in the end, a monarchist.

In order to skirt the taboo of murdering a monarch, Settle validates Chlotilda's revenge as something other than wickedness. The end of the play returns from whence it came with an account of the Dumane *blood revenge*. As both Chlotilda/Nigrello and the king lie dying (both by Clotair's hand), Chlotilda explains that she "took Revenge" on Fredigond and Clarmount for her parents' "guiltless" blood and that she sought revenge on Clotair on behalf of stolen honor, but that her "fury stopt" when she went to kill the king (V.i.82). To validate this revenge as something other than treason, Chlotilda begs the living not to defame her:

> When elder time shall rip
> This story up, be courteous to my Fame;
> Call not these Ruines Treason, but Revenge;
> A satisfaction due to an Injur'd Lady.
> Call me an honourable Murderer,
> And finish there as I do. (V.i.82)

By calling her plotting "revenge" instead of "treason," she associates revenge with honor instead of sedition and identifies her retribution as the "satisfaction" of personal injury, not an action against monarchy, itself, or France. To legitimate Chlotilda's measures as personal, not political (as revenge, not treason), the revenger must return to the wounded, dishonored form of the female body. The play rehabilitates the image of Chlotilda as revenger, but it seems that this is only possible because the abused *female* revenger reveals her motives for vengeance. If the revenger were actually a male Moor who had no apparently legitimate motive for revenge, then he would have been condemned by the other characters as a foreign villain attempting to foil monarchy and political stability. However, in Chlotilda's casting aside of the male, foreign disguise and returning to her 'true' self, she garners the respect of the court and her family. In the moments preceding her death the king labels her, her "Sexes Champion"; forgives her "cruel part"; suggests that her actions deserve applause from those whom she has destroyed; and even asks the heir to the throne to build Chlotilda a monument (V.i.82). The wounded, ravished revenger is exonerated of her crimes and hailed a heroine, or even a martyr or saint. In the end Settle's *Love and Revenge* portrays a raced/re-gendered revenger who must return to a more vulnerable "true" self (female, raped) to undercut the rebellious force of her revenge.

The play ends with a gesture to the importance of revenge's function in honoring one's family/bloodline with Chlotilda's brother insisting that "This Revenge / Is an Estate to th' Family; 'twill make / The Dumane race immortall" (V.i.82).

Here, the play comes full circle in its focus on bloodline. At the beginning of the drama, the queen sets out to eliminate the Dumane race, but in the end, Chlotilda's revenge helps make the Dumane name immortal in the brother's eyes. This connection between blood revenge and Dumane longevity, however, glosses over the violent revenge plot that propels the majority of the play and leads to Chlotilda and the king's deaths. Rather than acting on behalf of blood revenge, Chlotilda seeks retribution for personal injury (via rape and dishonored virtue). Derek Hughes is absolutely right when he suggests that it is precisely this "individualistic resentment of the injured" that makes Settle's portrayal of revenge problematic (*English Drama* 98). Although the drama begins with a focus on blood revenge, vengeance inspired by personal injury, dishonor, and anger guides most of Nigrello's schemes. Chlotilda/Nigrello's revenge moves away from what psychologist Michele Gelfand calls a "collectivist" approach, and closer to an "individualist" method (qtd. in Price 35). Blood revenge thrives in collectivist cultures where injury to one member is identified as injury to all members; in these kinds of culture obligation to kin and familial shame motivate revengers to take action. However, as Gelfand finds in her study, in an individualist culture anger, personal insult, and the obstruction of individual rights are stronger motivators for revenge (Price 35-6). Chlotilda/ Nigrello's revenge occupies both kinds of approaches at once: she revenges on behalf of her slain family, yet anger drives her to commit spectacular murders (e.g., of Fredigond and Clarmount) and to psychologically torture Clotair. While the play attempts to exonerate Chlotilda at the end of the play by bringing its audience back to

a collectivist revenge approach, Nigrello's crimes signify an individualist revenge that causes serious national consequences. *Love and Revenge* shows that the personal affects the political as the revenger's actions raise a rebellion and threaten to produce regicide. The play complicates the way we understand the revenger as a figure acting on behalf of his/her bloodline as it shows that her rape—a dark act that visibly manifests itself in the blackened appearance of Nigrello—and anger propel vengeance, not simply duty to honor a bloodline. The play makes evident that vengeance derives from motives other than bloodline and that it corrupts individuals, threatens stable identities, and jeopardizes the security of monarchy and the political state.

Chapter 2

The Ravished Nation: Corruption, Revenge, and the State

Revenge the Honor of the Ravish'd Lucrece.

Nathaniel Lee, *Lucius Junius Brutus*

Rape on the Restoration stage signifies sexual desire, embodiment, and violation.[65] But rape also functions as a framing device for revenge and the promulgation of political power. In Edward Ravenscroft's *Titus Andronicus, or The Rape of Lavinia,* Nathaniel Lee's *Lucius Junius Brutus, The Father of His Country*, and Thomas Otway's *Venice Preserv'd*, rape is a catalyst for violent masculinist, national endeavors.[66] Rape in tragic drama becomes a tropological device, in which a female body comes to signify something more than a particular violated woman. As Duane Coltharp writes, "The violation of the woman's body is analogous to the violation of the body politic" (15).[67] In Ravenscroft's, Lee's, and Otway's tragedies, in particular, rape inspires a kind of national revenge wherein male protagonists react to female sexual assault by challenging authority figures (monarchs and other leaders in powerful positions) and effecting a change in leadership and governmental systems (e.g., a turnover from absolute monarchy to a commonwealth or republic). In this sense, the female body transcends its corporeality, and the sign of the ravished body propels righteous male subjects to vow to avenge raped women as a means of securing the integrity of the nation.[68] As such, the female body stands in for the nation, and blood revenge gives way to a national revenge in which the revenger's

actions shed light on a national/political allegory about power in sexual violence that leads to a gendered nation-building. In this allegory, rape and revenge are part of the bone structure of nationalism.

Rape tragedies such as *Titus Andronicus*, *Lucius Junius Brutus*, and *Venice Preserv'd* illustrate not only that nationalist endeavors grow out of revenge plots, but also that these plots encompass individualist agendas.[69] Incidentally, it is the revenger's movement within or from a collectivist to an individualist agenda that allows a plotter to co-opt revenge for political purposes. In these plays, Ravenscroft, Lee, and Otway reposition rape as not only a catalyst for vengeance but also an excuse for violent behavior and political plotting. In doing so, they re-script national, gender, and sexual politics, where revenge elucidates both negative portrayals of royalty/royalists and bad (at times Whiggish) party politics. Through depictions of rape, revenge dramas problematize the stability of monarchy and the state as revengers rely on the symbolic currency of blood revenge to change a political power structure.

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Edward Ravenscroft's *Titus Andronicus, or The Rape of Lavinia*, an adaptation of Shakespeare's sixteenth-century play likely written and meant to be staged in 1678, illustrates a prime example of blood revenge that partly results from rape and eventually produces a transformation in political power.[70] By way of Ravenscroft's protagonist's name and the letters accompanying his play, *Titus Andronicus; or The Rape of Lavinia*, sets revenge in dialogue with contemporary

political issues, particularly in connection with the Popish Plot. Ravenscroft's letters to Arundel and to his readers, included in the first printing of the play in 1687, reveal much about the political climate in which he first altered Shakespeare's text and eventually published the play. Ravenscroft's choice of address to Arundel, one of five Catholic lords who were suspected of treason and imprisoned in 1678, is particularly telling of his political sympathies, and, as Barbara Murray points out, the 1687 printing of this letter during James II's reign shows Ravenscroft's attempt to ingratiate himself with the new Catholic king by including throughout the letter compliments to the Stuart monarchy and James II.

Additionally, Ravenscroft's letter to the readers connects the play to the politics of 1678. Although *The London Stage* shows no record of the play's staging at the end of the 1670s, Ravenscroft's letter to the readers explains that the play was first staged "at the beginning of the pretended Popish Plot, when neither Wit nor Honesty had Encouragement."[71] Of course, we cannot overlook the importance of adaptation (or appropriation), for Jean I. Marsden reminds us that "the repoliticization" of Shakespeare's plays shows a "direct influence of changes in the world outside the theater" (*The Reimagined Text* 16). In the context of the Popish Plot—which Ravenscroft calls "those distracted times"—*Titus Andronicus* alludes to the contemporary political problems of the English state. Although Ravenscroft's adaptation is not a strict allegory of the Popish Plot, per se, audiences surely would have recognized parallels between the protagonist's name and that of Titus Oates (the

principle plotter in the Popish Plot), the play's portrayal of plotting and brutality, and the assassination of a ruler.

While Ravenscroft surely saw in Shakespeare's play an occasion to stage a visually spectacular revenge tragedy, his chiastic reversal of Shakespeare's title opens the discussion of adaptation by dividing his attention between the hyperbolic revenger, Titus Andronicus, and the act of rape that eventually drives Titus to devise his shocking revenge plot.[72] The secondary title displaces the focus onto Lavinia's rape and reinvents the relationship of rape and revenge through the connective title. Perhaps more so than any other tragedy written for the English stage, the plotline of *Titus Andronicus* graphically correlates bloodline, rape, and revenge. In Act III, Tamora describes her sons' future sexual violation of Lavinia as "their pleasure of Revenge" (III.i.23), and one of the sons identifies this attack as blood revenge when Demetrius states, "We have now reveng'd our Brothers blood" (III.i.27). Demetrius and Chiron's ravishment of Lavinia not only signifies their vengeance against the Andronici, but also raises the stakes of blood revenge as they include an innocent female in their reprisal. In focusing on Lavinia's body as a symbol of the Andronici bloodline, the Goths' rape represents what J. Douglas Canfield has called "a literal and a metaphoric weapon in wars between men" in which the female body metonymically represents a kind of "contested land" ("Tupping Your Rival's Women" 118). We see this conception of rape in *Titus Andronicus, or The Rape of Lavinia*. As Deborah G. Burks writes, under English law rape was considered "a crime targeted at propertied men, through a piece of their property, women" and male

relatives were regarded as "victims of a rape" (164, 166).[73] As such, rape represents a "social transgression" against men (Burks 165). Because Lavinia's body is an "extension" (Burks 168) of her male relatives, an assault on her body-as-property reads as an attack on, even a metaphorical castration of, Titus and the Andronici men.[74]

Throughout the play Marcus, Titus' brother, represents a voice that interprets the impact of Lavinia's rape on the male Andronici as he repeatedly points out how her ravished body is a spectacle that affects the Andronici men psychologically and physiologically.[75] The drama reinforces the psychological projection of rape onto men when, after learning of Lavinia's rape, Marcus speaks of a dream he had about snakes crawling over his body, biting him, and stinging his heart. We should interpret this dream as a distorted parallel between the rape of Lavinia and the victimization of the Andronici men. Act V extends an interpretation of rape as a 'social transgression' committed by men against men, but it redirects masculine persecution onto the Goths. We should read Titus' direction to "Seize" Demetrius and Chiron and "bind their hands" and "stop their Mouths" (V.i.50) as a ravishment that mirrors the Goths' rape-as-revenge, yet the gruesome murder of the brothers and the cannibalistic meal Titus serves their mother grossly perverts the symbolic nature of blood revenge. In serving the Goths' body parts and blood to their mother, the drama doubly inscribes blood revenge on the Goths' bodies: Titus both slaughters the Goth sons and contaminates Tamora's blood(line) by infusing retributive punishment with cannibalism. Revenge pollutes blood and bloodline, and the play reveals that

only bodily sacrifice can purify lineage. This is best demonstrated when Titus murders his daughter at the end of the play to cleanse himself of the shame and sorrow inflicted upon him by her rape and mutilation. With Lavinia's death, specifically, her shame will die, and with that Titus' sorrow. In killing both the Goth brothers and Lavinia, Titus gestures to remove the shame and dishonor inflicted upon a father and to restore honor to the entire family.

Although Titus understands his daughter's rape as an attack on himself, the Andronici also recognize the assault as something greater than dishonor of the Andronici bloodline. Titus compares Lavinia's attack to the rape of Lucrece, and Ravenscroft's secondary title, *The Rape of Lavinia*, linguistically and dramatically connects with Shakespeare's poem, *The Rape of Lucrece*. Once Titus asks Lavinia, "What Roman Lord was it durst do the deed? / Or play'd not Saturnine the Tarquin with thee?" (IV.i.35), the play overtly intersects with the Lucrece tale. Titus' question associates the emperor with the notorious rapist, Tarquin, and Marcus equates Lavinia with Lucrece, and Titus with Lucius Junius Brutus, when he urges Titus to "swear with me, with the same awefull fear, / The Father of that Chaste dishonour'd Dame, / Lord Junius Brutus swore for Lucrece Rape" (IV.i.37).[76] The drama superimposes the historical account of Lucius Junius Brutus' vindication of Lucrece onto the Andronici revenge, and Lavinia's rape plays a part in a quest for political change and the downfall of a tyrant. As in *The Rape of Lucrece*, rape in *Titus Andronicus, or The Rape of Lavinia* fuels the overthrow of monarchy and the erection of a new political regime.

Lavinia's body symbolizes not only as an extension of bloodline and an attack on Andronici men, but also the Roman body politic. When Marcus says that the Andronici men "will prosecute / Revenge upon the Trayterous Goths" (IV.i.37) for their rape of Lavinia, he translates rape as an assault on a betrayed political body. Although the play demonstrates that the emperor's alignment with the Goths is a political move to secure power for the kingdom, it also suggests that the Goth heathenism has infiltrated rule of the Roman Empire. In addition to the ravishment of Lavinia and dishonor of the Andronici men, the Goths, and implicitly the emperor, metaphorically have defiled the political body of the Roman Empire. Andronici revenge both redeems their bloodline and cleanses Rome of traitors by purging the Goths from the court and deposing an ineffective Roman ruler—one who was not chosen by the Romans. We should recall that in Act I, the play sets up elective monarchy as a viable option but that Titus deferred to the rights of hereditary monarchy and rejected the crown when the people offered it to him, a move that would at its outset resound as royalist to a Restoration audience. However, in the drama's final act, the measures of the Andronici men and the mob read as anti-royalist. Act V sets up revenge as a pro-democratic reposition of power as

> The old Legions too by Titus late brought home,
> Without the City make their Randevouze;
> Within the People cry Revenge aloud,
> Revenge for the wrong'd Titus and his slaughter'd Sons.
> To them the Army Ecchoes with Loud shouts,

Long live Lucius Emperour of Rome. (V.i.43)

While Demetrius's warning here to the emperor identifies the people's cry for vengeance, addresses a threat to royal rule, and predicts the instatement of new political leadership in Lucius (Titus' son), it does not mention Lavinia's rape—only the wrongs committed against men. The passage conflates the Andronici revenge with the citizens' call to arms, and the play politicizes vengeance when revenge instigates rebellion and the reconfiguration of an imperfect state. Through Titus' speeches in the palace scene, the drama also levels serious attacks on the fallen state of Roman justice—particularly that justice is nowhere to be found in the emperor's court and that only revenge can vindicate the wrongs done to the Andronici.[77] This is a familiar trope, as the revenger figure reacts by securing revenge when formal justice fails, oftentimes as a result of corrupt authority figures.

Ravenscroft's adaptation highlights Titus' reflections on injustices of the state and the necessity of vigilante justice. In thinking about the adaptation as a 'repoliticization' of Shakespeare's play, we should consider how it marks concepts of justice and revenge in the politically transformed culture of the Restoration. Intended for performance in 1678 at the height of the Popish Plot and on the heels of the Exclusion Crisis, the play certainly would have conflicted with Charles II's desire to retain order over his subjects, suppress violence, and guarantee royal succession. The play also stages the social and political stakes of group division: the Goths and Andronici practice revenge as if they are warring factions in a civil war. Even more problematic, the drama displays spectacular violence as a means of producing

political change, and the play proposes elective monarchy as form of government. The string of murders in the final moments of the play—with Titus stabbing Tamora, the emperor stabbing Titus, Lucius stabbing the emperor, and (in alteration of Shakespeare's tale) Tamora stabbing her and Aron's lovechild—not only indicate the bloody effects of revenge, but also an intercession into the tenure of political power.

While Marcus attempts to mediate the Andronici revenge to the public by offering his life and Lucius' as a sacrifice for the bloody revenge in which they have participated alongside Titus, the play ends by highlighting the exchange of power that has resulted from Lucius' murder of the emperor. Ravenscroft adds a significant final detail to Shakespeare's play when Lucius invites the Romans, "Lead me to Empire, Crown me if you please" (V.i.56). His asking for crown and empire in the final lines of the drama underscores the play's political undertones, and the end of the play thus echoes the beginning in an exchange of political power. Although the Romans were ready to hand Titus the crown at the beginning of the play, the dénouement shows that the people's choice for their ruler eventually is enforced as Lucius receives the crown at the Romans' pleasure. Unlike the sacrifice of Lavinia, the offered sacrifice of living Andronici men reads as hollow, however, for the play suggests that the Romans had virtually ratified Lucius as their leader mid-play. Conveniently, Lucius' murder of the emperor (in response to the emperor having stabbed his father) makes possible his receiving the crown and leadership of the Roman Empire. Even though the act of killing an emperor-king on stage would have shown cause for alarm in 1678, the play seems to rectify this problem by suggesting that the emperor is a bad

ruler who did not have the support of the Roman people to begin with; therefore, the Romans are happy to make Lucius their ruler, even though he has literally just killed their king. Lucius is associated with the people, not monarchy, and thus it is presupposed that he will be a better, chosen leader.[78]

Whereas Ronald Broude looks to the final moments of Shakespeare's play as an "obligatory scene" in which "the commonweal both purifies and re-creates itself" (506), Ravenscroft's additional lines that end Lucius' speech do not necessarily herald a commonwealth. Rather than promising that Lucius will build a republic, the play more readily points to elective monarchy. Earlier in the play Marcus compares Titus to Lucius Junius Brutus, but the conclusion hails Lucius Andronicus as the Brutus figure who removes tyranny from the empire. While Lucius' murder of the emperor certainly generates Andronici rule, we should not overlook Lavinia's role in the creation of this new leadership: her rape sets in motion a revenge that eventually regenerates a degraded Roman Empire.

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Nathaniel Lee's *Lucius Junius Brutus, Father of His Country* also addresses political rebirth in Rome in tracing the vengeance of another Lucius, the renowned Lucius Junius Brutus.[79] Like Ravenscroft's *Titus Andronicus, or The Rape of Lavinia* Lee's *Lucius Junius Brutus* depicts a rebellion against monarchy, yet Lee's play overtly depicts a revenge that abolishes monarchy and engenders a republic. *Lucius Junius Brutus* was staged in December 1680 at a time when concerns about the succession of monarchy were high and when fears of a pretended Popish Plot were

combined with the Exclusion Crisis and Protestants' worries over the openly Catholic James II's slated assumption of the throne. Supposedly staged when there would have been Whig MPs in the audience, *Lucius Junius Brutus* was banned after its third performance for being judged "an anti-monarchial play" by the Lord Chamberlain (van Lennep 293).[80] A look at Brutus' rhetoric explains the Lord Chamberlain's judgment, for the protagonist's speeches associate monarchy with tyranny[81] and forecast a kind of "devolution, or downward mobility, of absolutism" that was developing in the Restoration (McKeon 16). In the climate of the Exclusion Crisis, *Lucius Junius Brutus* should be read for its "pertinence to the political crisis" (Hughes "Rape" 230); the tragedy sets up a dichotomy between republicanism and royalism, Whiggism and Toryism, as it depicts a nation and a family divided by conflicting political allegiances in the wake of the dissolution of monarchy. Ultimately, the drama submits the body of Lucrece and the Brutus family as powerful metaphors for the decay of the state.

Although rape appears to propel Brutus' charge to eradicate tyranny and monarchy, as Derek Hughes convincingly argues, we would be "rash to assume that Lee wrote the play *in order* to portray a rape. He did not: he wrote it in order to portray a republican revolution" ("Rape" 230). The rape of Lucrece does not solely induce Brutus' actions. Blood revenge also motivates his cry for revolution. In the play's opening act, we learn from Brutus' own mouth that he has been feigning madness for nearly twenty years in the company of all that knew him (family included).[82] The historical figure, Brutus, pretended to be an idiot out of fear that the

Tarquins, who were responsible for murdering his brother and father and seizing their property, would harm him and his family.[83] After learning in the play that something strange and (potentially harmful to the Tarquins) has occurred at Collatine's home, Brutus utters that an "Occasion seems in view" (I.i.4); in light of Brutus' history, this occasion is a blood vendetta against the Tarquins. Long before Lee reveals the rape of Lucrece, he characterizes Brutus as a plotter. Early in the play, Brutus "discloses[s]" to Fabritius "the weighty secret of [his] soul" (I.i.4), namely that he is sane and in the "business" of leading a "plot upon the court" (I.i.6). Like the blood revenger Saxony in Settle's *The Female Prelate*, Brutus exploits the power of bloodline to convince his cohorts to join him in plotting to undo the Tarquins. Brutus hatches a scheme that purportedly will save the Roman "persons, families, and [their] relations"—including their "wives, mothers, sisters, all kindred" and even their whores—from the Tarquins' oppression (I.i.6). While Brutus eventually situates the rape of Lucrece as the motivator for a revenge ratified as a civic duty, at the heart of his revenge are the memory of his slain family members and the suffering of twenty years of acting a "deformity in thousand shapes" (I.i.4). Blood revenge privately motivates Brutus' actions, but Lucrece's rape publicly allows him to act upon twenty years' rage and desire for retribution.

Even before Brutus publicly vows to seek revenge on Sextus Tarquin for the rape of Lucrece, Brutus commands his son, Titus, "Look on my face, view my eyes flame, and tell me / If ought thou seest but Glory and Revenge, / A blood-shot Anger, and a burst of Fury" (I.i.7). In *Leviathan* Thomas Hobbes identifies rage, a sense of

glory, and a thirst for revenge as unhealthy qualities in man, but Brutus relies on these characteristics to bolster his resolve to stamp out the Tarquins and establish a republic. In this scene Brutus reveals to Titus his altered state of mind; in shrugging off his guise of insanity, he sets the stage for his rebellion against the Tarquins: "[N]ow's the time / To shake the Building of the Tyrant down" (I.i.8). Speaking metaphorically of the Tarquin monarchy as a corrupt structure and of rebellion as a light, Brutus reveals that his plan to use the rape of Lucrece to tear down monarchy is "the midnight Lantern / That lights [his] Genius down to the Foundation" (I.i.9). As Brutus vows, "from this Spark"—the rape of Lucrece—"a Lightning shall arise / That must ere Night purge all the Roman Air, / And then the Thunder of his ruin follows" (I.i.9), his contrast of light and dark, untainted and contaminated, situates rebellion as a fire that will purify an infected Rome.

As in *Titus Andronicus*, *Lucius Junius Brutus* identifies revenge as a means of cleansing a polluted state represented by the female ravished body, and rape channels male aggression and political action. Lucrece narrates to her husband and father rape as pollution of blood and honor, but in her plea to the Romans for vengeance, Lee transitions from blood revenge to a kind of revenge based on citizenship where all Romans are kin to Lucrece's dishonored blood.[84] Lucrece speaks as a daughter of Rome when she asks the Roman men, "All that are kin to this dishonor'd blood, / How will you view me now?" and implores:

> All that I ask you now is to Revenge me;
> Revenge me Father, Husband, Oh revenge me:

> Revenge me, Brutus; you his Sons revenge me;
> Herminius, Mutius, thou Horatius too,
> And thou Valerius; all; revenge me all:
> Revenge the Honor of the Ravish'd Lucrece. […]
> My Soul, my Life and Honour all together:
> Revenge me; Oh Revenge, Revenge, Revenge. (I.i.12)

When Lucrece publicly commits suicide by stabbing herself, she sacrifices herself through a bloody method that mimics rape yet reverses its pollution through a kind of bloodletting that cleanses not only her body and soul, but her family and Rome's honor. Immediately after Lucrece stabs herself, Brutus fashions a synecdochal relationship between her body and that of the Roman state: according to Brutus, Lucrece's body represents the blood of Rome, chastity, and "violated honor" (I.i.13). In a politicization of Lucrece's rape, Brutus appropriates sexual assault to inspire a national thirst for revenge against the Tarquins. By taking the dagger from her fatal wound, Brutus enacts a kind of political transubstantiation as he puts the blade to his lips and symbolically gestures to cleanse Rome of its corruption. In embracing Lucrece's suicidal purification of her own tainted blood, Brutus utilizes this moment to rouse the Romans to "drive proud Tarquin out, / His Wife, th' Imperial Fury, and her Sons, / With all the Race" (I.i.13). Instead of urging his fellow Romans to punish Sextus for the crime of rape, Brutus wages an unrestricted vendetta on the Tarquin family and a mission to devolve monarchy—he asks the Romans to eradicate the

entire Tarquin bloodline and to "Swear from this time never to suffer them, / Nor any other King to Reign in Rome" (I.i.13).

Brutus acts as a mouthpiece for a nation of angry men who cry, "where is the Monster?" and "bring the Destroyer out" (II.i.18), yet, rather than calling for Sextus's death, Brutus asks for the deposition of monarchy altogether. Later in the play when Lucrece's dead body is carried on stage, Brutus suggests that this "perfect mold of Roman Chastity" (II.i.19) has been rifled by Tarquin, the king—not simply his "curs'd off-spring, lustful Bloody Sextus" (II.i.18). In laying blame on the monarch father for the actions of the son, Brutus fuses rapaciousness with the Tarquin bloodline and monarchy. Underlying Brutus' conflation of Lucrece's body with Rome is the concept of the nation as female and vulnerable, thus in need of avenging. In appealing to the people, Brutus refers to the spirit of Lucrece's body hovering over them, calling them to "revenge her" and calling the Romans to arms, asking them to "drive the Tarquins out" (II.i.20). Appropriating Lucrece's plea for retribution, Brutus proclaims himself as the "Inspirer / Of this most just Revenge" and uses Lucrece's charge for revenge to lead the people in forcing the Tarquin family out of Rome (II.i.20). Hailed as "Guardian Genius of the Commonwealth" and "Father and Redeemer of [his] Country," Brutus is perceived as a Christ-like figure who will redeem his country and protect the Romans from the Tarquins—a turnaround for a character that spent twenty years hiding behind the mask of insanity to protect himself and his family from the Tarquins (II.i.21).

Lucrece's martyred body is also an instrumental symbol in Brutus' plan to prevent Tarquin blood from infiltrating his own bloodline through Titus, Brutus' son's marriage to the king's daughter, Teraminta. Here Lee's narrative of blood, revenge, and the state collide at the level of Brutus' own family and represents a conflation of the family-state metaphor. When Titus, tells Brutus in Act I that he has married Teraminta, Brutus explains that there is a "natural contagion" in all of the Tarquin bloodline (I.i.7). Titus' marriage to Teraminta is problematic because it mixes two diametrically opposed bloodlines; according to Brutus, Tarquins are corrupt by their very nature. Brutus sees Titus' decision to marry without his consent as an act of disobedience against him, and when Brutus asks Titus not to consummate his marriage, he asks Titus to kiss Lucrece's suicide dagger as a sign of obedience to his father. Lucrece's dagger represents the ultimate sacrifice of her body for the honor of her husband and father, and for Titus the phallic act of kissing the dagger is a sacrifice of his marital rights to the law of the father.[85] Brutus' direction to Titus to kiss the dagger would bind Titus to his father and disassociate him from his role as husband. In initiating this act, Brutus asks Titus to adhere to the duty of his bloodline because engaging in sexual intercourse with Teraminta would infect Brutus' family with Tarquin blood. In asking Titus to "Swear too, and by the Soul of the Ravish'd Lucrece" (II.i.25) that on his wedding night he will not touch his wife, Brutus' charge echoes Lucrece's warning earlier in the play to her husband and father not to touch her. Lucrece has been polluted by Tarquin blood, and Brutus aims to deny his son/bloodline contamination from Teraminta's blood. Lee ties Brutus' revenge to

succession, a potent issue in 1680, in providing him with another motive for banishing the Tarquins from Rome—to prevent the ravishment of his pure blood. As Lucrece's body represents an existing Tarquin threat to Rome, Brutus' bloodline comes to represent the future of the nation. Brutus' revenge against the Tarquins is doubly tied to bloodline as his quest to rid Rome of the Tarquins is connected both to his slain family members, and the future of his bloodline.

In Brutus' second son, Tiberius, Lee clearly identifies royalism's threat to Brutus' family and the country. Lee paints the play's royalists and Tiberius as villains who encompass the corrupt, evil ways of the Tarquins. For instance, Tiberius admits that he will join the royalists in their plans to murder the senators, quarter their sons, and ravish their daughters (IV.i.46). In this scene Lee overtly connects rape to royalism, a move that implicitly bolsters Brutus' claims about the lustful Tarquins, and the playwright also associates royalism with Catholicism—certainly a poignant image to display in 1680—as two priests crucify a few "commonwealth" men in a scene of ritualistic, pagan sacrifice. The focus on blood and revenge suffuses the scene as the priests suggest that "Rome may blush and traitors bleed" in homage to "the King's Revenge" (IV.i.47). This royalist revenge seeks to punish the senators and their families for their disobedience to the king, and by incorporating rape into this revenge Lee strengthens an image of the Tarquins as bloodthirsty, wicked tyrants, rapists, and murderers whose revenge develops out of iniquity and a desperate attempt to retain political power.

In addition to depicting the cruelty inherent in royalist revenge, Lee problematizes Brutus's nationalistic revenge and political aspirations to eliminate monarchy by placing Brutus in direct conflict with his sons. As the play develops we see in Brutus a shift from individual to national fatherhood. This shift offers another way of thinking about blood in the drama: from the material blood of Lucrece, to the relational blood of family, to the fully symbolic "blood" of the nation, *Lucius Junius Brutus* is a product of a complex ideology that must borrow from the family/ biological inheritance to undo it in its monarchical form. As Brutus informs Tiberius in Act III, Scene I, that he "would have none of Brutus' Blood / Pretend to be a King" and that "by the Majesty of Rome" he would "cast [Tiberius] from [his] blood" (III.i.33), the latter half of the play concentrates on the problem of Brutus' disassociation from his own flesh-and-blood for the greater good of Rome. Brutus makes a transition from a father of sons to the father of a country, for instance, when he charges Tiberius and Titus with treason and sentences them to death.[86] Brutus' speech to Valerius in Act IV explains his judgment:

> First, as I am their Father,
> I pardon both of 'em this black Design;
> But, as I am Rome's Consul, I abhor 'em,
> And cast 'em from my Soul with detestation:
> The nearer to my blood, the deeper grain'd
> The colour of their fault, and they shall bleed.
> Yes, my Valerius, both my Sons shall dye. (IV.i.53)

Like Titus Andronicus, Brutus excises the corrupt, shameful part of himself (identified here through his sons' treason) by sacrificing his child. This speech shows that Brutus understands his sons' executions as a necessary step in leading his nation. According to Brutus, this "display" (the executions) before the gods and the Romans is a "Sacrifice of Justice and Revenge" (IV.i.53) that will, in Titus' words, "fix the Liberty of Rome for ever" (IV.i.58). Brutus embraces Titus' base execution as a significant symbolic act that would regenerate the nation and "heal [Rome's] wounded Freedom with [Titus'] blood," and he implies that the gods and a "horrid vengeance" have doomed Titus to the grave. Titus becomes the play's second Lucrece whose blood must be sacrificed to purify the nation, but unlike Lucrece's self-sacrifice, Brutus argues that a higher power—the gods and the nation's vengeance—require Titus' murder. When Titus says to Brutus, "I now submit to all your threatn'd vengeance," and to the "Executioners of Justice," "whip me like Furies; / And when you have scourg'd me till I foam and fall, / […] Then take my head, and give it his Revenge" (IV.i.60), Lee graphically relates Brutus' revenge to an injured body, that of his son's. Echoing the effect of Lucrece's rape and death earlier in the play, the sign of the mutilated body informs Brutus' revenge.

As in *Titus Andronicus*, *Lucius Junius Brutus* links revenge to the motif of a father sacrificing his child, but Brutus' murder of Titus is certainly more problematic than Titus Andronicus' murder of Lavinia. As Brutus' wife, Sempronia, points out to a handful of women, the sacrifice of Titus reflects "the bloody Justice of a Father" who would trade son's life for the rule of a nation.[87] In the play's opening act—long

before Lucrece's rape had been revealed—Brutus identified himself with "Glory and Revenge" (I.i.7), and as the play closes, Brutus' family and friends see the devastating results of this revenge and vain-glory: by Tiberius Brutus is considered "more Tyrannical than any Tarquin" (V.i.64) and by Valerius his conduct represents "dreadful Justice" (V.i.66). Brutus' decision to execute Titus as a traitor prompts his own wife to call him "Tyrannick Brutus," "cruel Judge," and "pittyless avenger" (V.i.70). In avenging Rome, Brutus considers the execution of his sons—which he calls the "Sacrifycing of my Bowels"— an offering to the "sad revengers of the Publick" (V.i.67). Part of the problem with Brutus' decision to execute Titus is that, as pointed out by Teraminta, "ev'n the madding People, / Cry out at last that Treason is reveng'd, / And ask no more" (V.i.69). The "Publick" do not demand Titus' execution. As Brutus orders Valerius to recall his oath to Rome and "drag [Titus] to the Ax" (V.i.70), he adheres to a rigid, yet romantic, understanding of civic vengeance.

In Titus' final words we should read something more than altruistic national allegiance in Brutus' decision to execute his son, however: Titus suggests that his death will make Brutus' "Justice famous through the World" (IV.i.57). When Valerius stabs Titus so that he will not die a traitor's death, Brutus' response of "Why, my Valerius, did'st thou rob my Justice" (V.i.70) prompts us to question Brutus' outwardly noble motive for sacrificing Titus. Brutus' concern over why *his* justice has been robbed begs the question posed by Derek Hughes in *English Drama 1660-1700*: "Is Brutus' execution of his sons to be termed justice or tyranny?"

(299).[88] Brutus' decision to execute Titus raises concern over whether or not Brutus is still "a man" (V.i.61), or if his role as 'father' of Rome has turned him into a bloodthirsty maniac—a charge leveled by his own wife, who pleads with the Romans before Titus' execution to "See how the Vengeance rains from [Brutus'] own bowels!" and asks, "Is he not mad?" (V.i.63). While Brutus presents his decision to kill his son as a strict observance of justice, the play's secondary characters imply otherwise. In the public's eyes Brutus' actions are seen not necessarily as a sign of justice but of his own unyielding adherence to a passion of righteousness. This righteousness borders on insensitivity, and such egotism shows a potential for tyranny. In making himself father of his country, Brutus has cruelly extricated himself from his own kin, and if this is how Brutus treats his own flesh-and-blood, the play leaves us questioning how he will treat the citizens of Rome—his new family. Should the Romans trust a man who has been acting as a madman for twenty years and living under false pretenses, and then shows his own sons no mercy? The end of the play compels us to reexamine Brutus' motives for vengeance and his distribution of 'justice' and consider Brutus' effectiveness in leading a "representative government" that is "capable of ensuring the welfare and survival of the people" (Houston 245).

By Act V the rape of Lucrece is only a distant memory as Lee focuses on Brutus' endeavor to erect a republic and his verdict to sacrifice his sons for the honor of Rome. The title of the play, *Lucius Junius Brutus, Father of His Country*, shows that Lee truly replaces the original tale of the rape of Lucrece with the saga of Brutus

fathering *his* country. The play demonstrates that eventually Brutus considers loyalty to his country more important duty to his blood kin. Brutus' revision of the idea of the republic as his family, and his placement of himself as the head of that family, strangely moves blood revenge closer to a republican tempering of vengeance. But this vengeance contains elements of ambition and glory. Brutus' nationalistic revenge rescripts where civil authority lies, however, as Brutus alters his relationship to authority by self-consciously casting himself as the father of Rome and by employing any means necessary to secure an alternative future for his country. Using the rape of Lucrece as an excuse for his personal revenge, Brutus projects a national revenge to ensure a shift from monarchy to republicanism. Through blood, rape, and the interplay of symbolic and material bodies *Lucius Junius Brutus* displays one man's individualist, masculinist attempt to reconstruct a feminine, infected nation into a healthy republic.

In considering that *Lucius Junius Brutus* was staged in between the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis, it is not difficult to see why the Lord Chamberlain would have banned a play that stages a revenger's successful drive to depose monarchy and forge a commonwealth. *Lucius Junius Brutus* is reminiscent of England's recent past, with allusion to the execution of a monarch and the erection of a Cromwellian commonwealth; its present, with the Whiggish plotting to prevent James from becoming monarch after Charles II's death; and its possible future, with monarchy destroyed altogether if such a political movement as a bill to forbid James from taking the throne would have been passed.[89] The play is also staged in the same

year that a new edition of Robert Filmer's pre-Civil War doctrine, *Patriarcha*, was published with Charles II's picture on the title page. In direct contrast to Filmer's favorable vision of monarchy and patriarchy, *Lucius Junius Brutus* stages both the eradication of monarchy and bloodline as Brutus, the father of this burgeoning republic, executes monarch fathers and sons and his own sons.[90] Ultimately, *Lucius Junius Brutus* identifies what is at stake in Brutus' politicized revenge and in the contemporary world of Restoration England: the sustainability of monarchy or a change in government. A play like *Lucius Junius Brutus* would have certainly caused alarm among royalists, for it projected a future that Tories feared might become a reality—one where men driven by ambitious political agendas could single-handedly dissolve monarchy and create a new form of tyranny.

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Thomas Otway's *Venice Preserv'd, Or a Plot Discover'd* demonstrates what such "republican" tyranny would look like in the future—rule by greedy and heartless senators. Staged at a time when Charles II dismissed parliament and when royalists banded together to ensure that James II would eventually rule as king, Otway's 1682 *Venice Preserv'd* depicts rebels (read as Tory) plotting against corrupt senators (read as Whig) who have wronged them.[91] The play's prologue positions Otway's tragedy in the context of the backlash to the Popish Plot and current Exclusion Crisis—what Otway calls, "these distracted times" (as did Ravenscroft of the Popish Plot in his letter to the readers) and what Jessica Munns refers to in her introduction to the play as a "time of the Tory revenge" (1689).[92] In placing the play in the context of a

"Tory revenge"—notably, a reprisal against both the plotters who pretended a threat on the life of the king, and the proponents of his brother's exclusion, including the earl of Shaftesbury—we can read the drama as a critique of Whigs and parliament. However, scholars such as Munns have suggested that "the play's political sympathies are notoriously unclear" (1689), predominately because some characters' political allegiances have been read as both Tory and Whig, and because Otway depicts both conspirators and senators as flawed.[93] What is clear is Otway's dark vision of a disordered world where men are ruled by their passions, including a desire for revenge, and the state is overrun with greed, ambition, and strife.[94]

Even though Otway has been considered a royalist supporter, he does not completely paint a favorable picture of royalist conspirators in *Venice Preserv'd*. In a play that seems to harbor Tory sympathies, Otway ironically complicates a positive portrayal of his conspirators by introducing into the play the threat of physical ravishment by the head conspirator, Renault, and later by the entire group of conspirators—a plotline that aligns the conspirators closely with the royalists in *Lucius Junius Brutus* who would have ravished the rebels' female relatives. In fact, the play presents us with an attempted rape, or the threat of rape, but not an actual sexual assault. Rape in the play represents male emotion and nobility rather than actual physical violation. Like *Titus Andronicus*, Otway's tragedy portrays female bodies as signs of male property, honor, and pride; and rape symbolizes a figurative ravishment of men's belongings and principles. As in *Lucius Junius Brutus*, there is also an associative relationship between revenge, rape, and the body politic in *Venice*

Preserv'd, in which revenge is motivated by attempted physical assaults of female bodies and metaphorical rapes of male ideals. While rape in *Venice Preserv'd* gestures toward the material violation of women as well as the threat of a symbolic defilement of men, it also signals the distressingly abstract quality of the nation itself, which has such profound material effects on people's lives.

The play begins with a symbolic rape and retaliation. We could consider senator Priuli's disgust with his daughter, Belvidera, and his son-in-law, Jaffeir, as an emotion tied to a metaphorical rape—a figurative ravishment that is qualified by taking something away by force or depriving one of something.[95] At the outset of Act I, Priuli explains that Jaffeir "stole" Belvidera from his "bosome" when he "Seduc'd the weakness" of Priuli's daughter's young age and married Belvidera without Priuli's permission; in arguing with Jaffeir about the couple's downtrodden financial position, he vows to Jaffeir, "You stole her from me, like a Theif [sic] you stole her, / At dead of night; that cursed hour you chose / To rifle me of all my Heart held dear" and he suggests that Jaffeir's financial woes result from the "Curse of [his] Disobedience" (I.i.2). Priuli refuses to assist Jaffeir because he believes that Jaffeir has "wrong'd" the "Honor of [Priuli's] House" (I.i.1). While Priuli does not directly name his actions as revenge, his decision to turn away Belvidera, Jaffeir, and their child in their time of need reads as a type of warped retribution against the young couple for their dishonor. Even though Jaffeir "stole" Belvidera from Priuli (albeit, with her consent), the senator understands this marriage as a ravishment of his daughter-property and a disgracing of his honor. As Jaffeir's comrade, Pierre,

narrates, “Priuli’s cruel hand hath sign’d” (I.i.7) an order for Jaffeir’s fortune to be seized and his possessions destroyed, but the most striking assault on Jaffeir’s goods is the desecration of his marriage bed—“the very bed which on [Jaffeir’s] wedding night / Receiv’d [him] to the Arms of Belvidera” (I.i.7). Pierre describes the violation of the marriage bed—representative of “the scene of all [Jaffeir’s] Joys” (I.i.8)—as a symbolic rape of Jaffeir and Belvidera. Priuli’s revenge on his daughter and son-in-law represents a figurative rape of the married couple, a symbolic retaliation of rape with rape. This figurative rape also prompts another revenge. As it turns out, Priuli’s poor treatment of his son-in-law and his order to have Jaffeir’s property and home ransacked incites Jaffeir to eventually join the rebels and plot to murder Priuli and the senators. Priuli’s violation of Jaffeir’s possessions and the sight of Belvidera’s tears spark Jaffeir’s desire to seek revenge against Priuli and the senators, which is noted by Jaffeir’s cry to Pierre: “I will revenge my Belvidera’s Tears! / Heark thee my friend—Priuli—is—a senator!” (I.i.9). Like Brutus in *Lucius Junius Brutus*, Pierre takes advantage of another person’s hardships to garner support for his own political agenda: he relies upon the narrative of “Priuli’s Tyranny” (II.i.16), and Priuli’s virtual emasculation of Jaffeir, to provoke Jaffeir’s cry for revenge against “a senator.”

A metaphorical description of rape also underpins Pierre’s hatred of the senators and his personal-turned-political desire for revenge. In addition to Pierre revenging on behalf of high-minded ideals, such as liberty and justice, his loss of his title, estate, and (to invoke Canfield’s term) “contested land”—Aquilina—motivate

his plot to murder the senators. Pierre, once a cavalier soldier, voices well-known royalist complaints about mid-century commonwealth men who bought the properties and titles of royalists during the Interregnum when he bemoans that Antonio is a "Wretched old but itching Senator; / A wealthy Fool, that had bought out [his] Title" (I.i.6).[96] According to Pierre the royalists were not simply stripped of estates and titles; they have been cheated of their mistresses, which the cavalier, Pierre, likens to "his Religion" (6). In addition to the seizing of his physical property, Pierre recalls how Antonio "crept into [his] Nest" and "spoyl[ed] all [his] Brood of noble Pleasure" (I.i.6). Otway situates Pierre's mistress, Aquilina, as a representation of Pierre's treasures, and Antonio's spoiling of his "nest" is a virtual ravishment of his property, pride, and female "Conquest" (as Jaffeir calls Aquilina) (I.i.5). While the drama aligns Pierre and Jaffeir as men whose pleasure and property have been ransacked by senators, the play also offers a parallel between Pierre and Priuli—both men envision women as property or conquests—and Jaffeir and Antonio—who are set up as ravishers who have unjustly entered another man's house and abducted his goods. These examples compel us to understand ravishment in *Venice Preserv'd* as an action leveled at men by men and to recognize vengeance as an emotional response to personal insult rather than purely a devotion to one's bloodline or a dedication to the bettering of the state.

The conspirators' speeches affirm that revenge in *Venice Preserv'd* is tied to both personal emotion and political ambition. While Pierre argues in Jaffeir's presence for revenge as a kind of civic destruction of the inhumane senators, personal

honor stimulates Pierre and Jaffeir's revenge. Pierre's philosophizing of revenge as the "Attributes of the Gods" whom have "stampt it / With their great Images on our Natures" (I.i.9) suggests that the royalists see themselves as gods on earth who must level Venice to the ground in order to rebuild the city-state. Pierre figures supernatural vengeance as a characteristic divinely ingrained in the rebels, and thus he believes that the conspirators are afforded the right to judge and condemn the senators. Like Ravenscroft and Lee, Otway shows the power of a mob's call for revenge as Pierre testifies to Renault and the conspirators that "Ten thousand men are Armed at your Nod" and that "they're resolv'd to / To serve your Glory, and revenge their own!" (III.i.20). We should notice in these words a similarity to Brutus' speech to his son and an association between revenge, glory, and political ambition. As Renault states that they will "Turn out their droning Senate, and possess / That Seat of Empire which [their] Souls were fram'd for" (III.i.20), it becomes clear that the rebels' drive to overthrow the senate pertains to not only a sense of recovery and self-preservation, but also self-promotion. Rather than revenging purely for liberty and political justice, the conspirators' revenge appears to be motivated by self-interest.

Otway problematizes a civic portrayal of revenge when he portrays the conspirators as not only vain-glorious, but also prospective sexual assaulters. He compounds a suspect interpretation of Renault and the conspirators by associating these characters with the literal act of rape—first with the attempted rape of Belvidera, and then with the projected ravishment of the senators' female relatives. When Belvidera narrates Renault's attempted sexual assault on her, she likens herself

to Lucrece and Renault to Tarquin, reminding Jaffeir that he "intrusted" her "Peace and Honor" into the hands of an "old hoary wretch" who "came / (Like Tarquin) gastely with infernal Lust" (III.ii.28). Throughout the play Otway situates Belvidera as an object shuffled between men: from Priuli to Jaffeir, and Jaffeir to Renault, Belvidera's virtue is continually tied to the men who possess control over her at any given moment. In a kind of traffic in women Jaffeir betrayed Belvidera's virtue by first offering up her life as a bargaining chip in his allegiance to the conspirators, and then handing her over to an aged, lustful old man while he plotted with Pierre to murder her father and the senators.

Otway's likening of Belvidera to Lucrece positions her as a figure that has no control over her own honor or retribution. When Belvidera says, "Oh thou Roman Lucrece! thou could'st find friends to vindicate thy Wrong; / I never had but one, and he's prov'd false" (III.ii.28), she points out that Jaffeir is unable to truly defend her because he has proven himself false in abandoning her for personal revenge against the senators. Belvidera's accusation isolates the problem at the heart of the scene—Jaffeir's failure to protect Belvidera's honor. If Belvidera is another Lucrece and Renault another Tarquin, the female body again represents a vulnerable nation made up of men who act only in their best interests. The Belvidera-Lucrece comparison likens Venice to a polluted Rome that must be cleansed to rid it of tyranny and ravenous men. Regardless of political allegiance, however, all-around bad politics and greed rapes the nation in *Venice Preserv'd*. In Otway's dismal world, there is no heroic character that can redeem and cleanse the state; there is only a half-hearted,

effeminate quasi-conspirator who must either remain true to Belvidera/Venice, or betray his rebel friend and prove disloyal to the conspirators. Although Jaffeir's actions eventually preserve the senators and the state of Venice under their rule, his course surely does not purge Venice of its corruption and leave the audience with a positive image of a prospective purified state. In the Lucrece allusion, Jaffeir functions as a poor likeness of a national avenger who will eradicate tyranny in government and erect a system of rule that is supported by the people.

Rape incites Jaffeir eventually to turn his revenge on the senators to that of the conspirators (although unwillingly against Pierre), but what drives his revenge is personal emotion, not political ambition or stoic nation building. Instead of offering a solution to the problem of Venice, Otway offers a criticism of political factions and uncontrolled emotion, of which revenge is a part. While the conspirators' revenge seems to have the most serious political implications for the play, Jaffeir's revenge ultimately proves most dangerous because it not only threatens the political security of the state at the start of the play, but eventually threatens his loyalty to his wife and to his friends. Jaffeir is the worst kind of traitor because he does not remain true to a single faction and cannot control his emotions. Satellite characters function to prop his revenge—on the one hand, Pierre attempts to convince Jaffeir to cast aside his revenge on Renault to stick with the rebels in their plotting; on the other hand, Belvidera attempts to convince him to embrace revenge on Renault, to vindicate her honor (which is really only an extension of his honor), and to discover the rebels' plot to massacre the senators in order to save their lives and ensure the security of Venice.

Yet again Otway complicates a portrayal of revenge and counter-plotting by connecting vengeance with personal glory. Belvidera's attempted rape becomes a scapegoat for a plan to guarantee the senators' protection, punish Renault and the conspirators, and raise Jaffeir to "to eternal Honour" (IV.i.41). Through Belvidera's urging of Jaffeir to revenge her attempted assault and save the senators from harm, she suggests that Jaffeir has the opportunity to immortalize himself. In Belvidera's words, this "deed shall Chronicle [Jaffeir's] name / Among the glorious Legends of those few / That have sav'd sinking Nations" (IV.i.42). Relying not only on the good of this "deed" but also the eternizing of his name in legend, Belvidera calls upon a desire for glory to prop her husband's sense of pride. In revenging to prevent "the Virgins" from sexual violation and to prevent the fall of Venice, Jaffeir is slated for immortality. Such is the case when Belvidera vows that Jaffeir's "Renown" will be "the future Song of all the Virgins, / Who by [his] piety have been preserv'd / From horrid violation" and that "Every Street" will be "adorn'd with Statues to [his] honour / And at [his] feet this great inscription written, 'Remember him that propped the fall of Venice'" (IV.i.42). Through Belvidera's speech, Otway clearly brings the concept of nation-saving back to the idea of the female body and violation and, hence, reaffirms the connection between the pure, virginal female body and that of a preserved, unpolluted state. As the full title of the play implies, the preservation of a feminized Venice is connected to the discovery of the rebel plot, and a rhetoric of purity is at odds with men's political plotting.

If the play were to end with Jaffeir handing over the conspirators, saving Venice from political overthrow, and living happily ever after with Belvidera, then we might be able to deduce that Otway demonstrates an effective use of revenge, a reprisal that ensures the prosperity of a republican-governed state and the sexual security of women. Of course, the play does not include such an ending, and Jaffeir is by no means supportive of the senators. Otway denies a valorization of a glorious, eternizing revenge even though Jaffeir's revelation of the conspirators' names prevents their attack on the senators. Instead, Otway shows Jaffeir as a tortured revenger who progresses from originally desiring revenge against the senators, to pursuing revenge against a would-be rapist, and finally to seeking revenge against his own wife for convincing him to be disloyal to his best friend. The fact that Jaffeir offers to stab Belvidera as a token of his treachery to Pierre situates Jaffeir not as the play's savior but as an attempted murderer. Belvidera's references to Jaffeir's "revengefull lips" (IV.i.56) and his "trembling with revenge" when he embraced her and "dragg'd [her] to the ground" (V.i.60) are signs of a revenger that is a danger to his wife and to Venice. If Belvidera is a symbol of Venice, then Jaffeir offers to slay the state. This is played out in his promise to Pierre that he "will live / […] to see [Pierre's] fall reveng'd" and that "Venice long shall groan for it" (V.i.70). Jaffeir's final speech before dying by suicide sounds like a vendetta vow against the senators and all Venetians:

Now, ye curs'd Rulers,

Thus of the blood y'have shed I make Libation

> And sprinkl't mingling: May it rest upon you,
> And all your Race: Be henceforth Peace a stranger
> Within your Walls; let Plagues and Famine waste
> Your Generations. (V.i.71)

Jaffeir's curse on the senators reads like a final vow of revenge, but the play demonstrates that such a promise is futile and that the conspirators' "Tory revenge" shows no sign of fruition. As the play ends, the conspirators are executed; Jaffeir "nobly" has stabbed Pierre and himself; Belvidera sees Pierre and Jaffeir's "bloody" ghosts, goes crazy as she speaks of revenging herself and mutters about Renault being a bad man, and dies as she suggests that the ghosts drag her to "the bottom"; and Priuli laments being a "cruel father" (V.i.72). If Belvidera is a sign of Venice, then the state crumbles to the ground as no one has tended to its safety.

Through his staging of revenge and a Venetian body politic torn asunder by factionalism and revenge, Otway illustrates the hopelessness of attempts to save the Venetian state from what Munns calls competing "equally morally and politically bankrupt" factions (1689). The play ultimately reveals that both senators and conspirators are to blame for the drama's bloody results. Staged at a precise political moment in which the fate of the nation's political leadership was hanging in the balance, Otway illustrates a state that is wracked with greed, sexual lust, and factionalism, an image that mirrored perceptions of the Restoration at the end of the period. In speaking the prologue in 1682, Elizabeth Barry, who played the role of Belvidera, voiced that once the play had ended, it was time for the audience's

"application" of the text. In the end, the audience should learn that ravishment (in both a literal and metaphorical sense), pride, and high ideals lead men to revenge in the form of erratic individualistic plotting that endangers personal and national security.

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The metaphor of the female body as a sign of the state looms largely in Restoration drama as characters like Lavinia, Lucrece, and Belvidera represent a political body that has been desecrated by self-serving men. Read as an allegory of the state, Ravenscroft's, Lee's, and Otway's plays show that at the height of the Popish Plot and Exclusion Crisis there is something more vulnerable about the nation as it is being configured in the Restoration that makes this feminized and violated association of the state a potent, disturbing dramatic image. Through a series of deaths—that of the Goths, Lavinia, the emperor, and Titus in *Titus Andronicus*; Lucrece and Titus in *Lucius Junius Brutus*; and Pierre, Jaffeir, and Belvidera in *Venice Preserv'd*—the plays suggest that "the state can only be purged through a spectacle of retribution" (Vaughn 143). Ravenscroft's, Lee's, and Otway's plays problematize the political effects of such retribution, however. As revengers defy power structures (e.g., composed of rulers and laws), they re-script a narrative of political authority. For example, in *Titus Andronicus* and *Lucius Junius Brutus*, revengers depose monarchs and seize thrones, the result being a turnover in political leaders and styles of leadership. While in these plays revengers offer to vindicate wrongs done to female bodies, the dramas discover that revengers like Titus

Andronicus, Lucius Junius Brutus, and Jaffeir are motivated by more than sexual assault. The vindication of one's bloodline, male honor/pride, and/or ambition to rule an empire, nation, or state is a powerful factor that compels revengers to act in the name of vengeance. Ultimately, Ravenscroft's, Lee's, and Otway's tragedies reveal an under-noticed conversation in Restoration drama: revenge is a powerful tool employed by characters that factionalists (read as royalist or republican, Tory or Whig) to effect a change in political circumstances. Beginning with a cry for revenge, such characters undertake plots to supplant or threaten to remove leaders of empires, nations, and states; and this plotting is tied up in a sense of political sovereignty as men make themselves leaders of their countries. As such, revenge is pretense for political ambition.

Chapter 3

The Queen-Mother's Revenge: Uncontrolled Passions and an Ambition to Rule

I'le be Reveng'd a thousand killing ways.

Aphra Behn, *Abdelazer*

Jacques Olivier's *A Discourse of Women, Shewing their Imperfections Alphabetically*, translated from French into English in 1662, describes the role females' play in a breakdown of social order by criticizing women for their excessive passions, including jealousy, wrath, and revenge.[97] Olivier specifically associates the passions of hatred and revenge with femininity, and women with devils, as he offers that "the hate of a woman riseth to such a degree, that it equals that of the devil: the least offence, stumbling but at a stone, will cool her affections, will kindle her anger, awaken her contempts, enflame her hatred, encrease her rage, and bring up all the corrosions of a cruel revenge" (105-6).[98] Richard Allestree's *The Ladies Calling*, published in 1673 and 1676, underscores a similar ideology and associates women with vengeance. In his section on wives, Allestree writes, "Jealousy is commonly attended with a black train" including wrath, anger, malice, and revenge, and concludes that women in "all ages" have fallen victim to a "female impotence to govern those Passions" and to the "solemn mischiefs of actual Revenges" (182, 183).[99] The manuals imply that women have primitive passions that need to be civilized, and they suggest that women must be managed, for when women are not

controlled, emotions such as jealousy and revenge lead to a kind of "feminine violence" that can jeopardize a society.[100]

As these manuals suggest, late seventeenth-century men viewed women's uncontrollable emotions as originating from their weak, feminized bodies. Restoration tragedians stage female characters much like those described in conduct manuals as their plays depict women as "dangerous creatures, embodiments of the irrational and the uncontrollable, [and] summaries of human weakness and corruption" (Richetti 66-7). The introduction of the actress to the English stage in the Restoration certainly affected the way dramatists represented women in their plays. Not only were actresses for the first time performing female parts on the public stage, but also the actress herself was "seen as a sexual and amoral being: a seductive conflation of physical beauty and moral baseness" (Hermanson 25). This psychosexual understanding of women both upholds 'woman' as a symbolic concept of femininity and points to a material culture of women's bodies in the late seventeenth century.

Restoration dramas portray women as signs of symbolic economies and political histories, but the symbolic exceeds the material. In Restoration tragedies female bodies are continually imagined as symbolic representations of a nation in crisis. While dramas such as Nathaniel Lee's *Lucius Junius Brutus* stage women's bodies as passive vessels of both virtue and (good or bad) national politics, other Restoration plays including Lee's *The Rival Queens* show an alternate view of women's bodies as vehicles of disorder—conduits of sexuality, bad maternity, and

violence. As foils to virtuous heroines that embody what J. Douglas Canfield hails an "aristocratic monarchal ideology,"[101] Lee's Roxana from *The Rival Queens*, John Dryden's Nourmahal from *Aureng-Zebe*, and Aphra Behn's Isabella from *Abdelazer* personify an excess of passions (including sexual licentiousness and a devotion to vengeance) and epitomize a perversion of motherhood. In these plays, we find that a combination of unrestrained female passion and a desire for revenge ultimately sets in motion rebellious, murderous plots to undo monarchies and reconfigure social hierarchies. As theatrical representatives of the kind of "dangerous creatures" of which John Richetti writes, Lee's, Dryden's, and Behn's vengeful queens represent subversions of femininity and motherhood and typify the dangers of sexualized women and cruel mothers in late seventeenth-century English society.

Lee's, Dryden's, and Behn's tragedies connect women to a dangerous weakness that indexes a historical past that is itself irrational. These playwrights convey that women occupy a tenuous position in a modernizing society in which sexually aggressive and politically ambitious women appear as Enlightenment subjects who embrace free will at the expense of defying gender norms and destroying monarchies. Lee's Roxana particularly resonates as an example of a primitive past where women act upon uninhibited emotions; she resembles an irrational mode of personhood—an example of a failed Enlightenment. While Nourmahal and Isabella encompass elements of archaic, uncivilized, feminized behavior, they also signify menacing, liminal Enlightenment figures. Dryden's Nourmahal and Behn's Isabella, moreover, denote a calculated attempt to secure

personal autonomy, but their striving for autonomy jeopardizes monarchal sovereignty (in that they not only put monarchs' lives in danger, but also rebel and overturn governing structures). Lee's, Dryden's, and Behn's dramas reflect a Hobbesian state of nature where belligerent female revengers remain on the cusp of a "translation" of power in which they stand in for an "absolute, self-justified authority" (McKeon 5). This 'translation' relies upon temporality and movement. Dryden and Behn's queens especially represent a proleptic bridge between the past and future; in their in-betweeness they are at once wild, uncontrolled women driven by their emotions and calculating, rebellious subjects who seek a kind of personal self-government that displaces divine right and royal succession. Nonetheless, the playwrights show that for women this translation of power is negative, for female autonomy leads to chaos instead of order. Part of the problem here is that women are denied the kinds of Lockean rights made available to men: women really serve as bearers of rights, not actual rights-holders. In the end, women's aims of self-governance read as treachery and must be suppressed to control a non-normative feminization of political order that threatens masculine authority.

Lee, Dryden, and Behn chart a clash of symbolic, political, and material bodies, but in their staging of female characters as revengers, the playwrights especially mark women as transgressors. By associating their queens' yearnings for sexual freedom and political autonomy with revenge, moreover, Lee, Dryden, and Behn indicate that a woman's passionate revenge signifies a masculine transition from submissive subjecthood to a politicized individual free will, a movement that

threatens not only gender mores and the institution of marriage, but also the structure of monarchy and the stability of the nation. Their queens violate social standards about women's appropriate behaviors as wives and mothers and breach judicial law and "the Law of the Father" as they plot revenge against their husband-monarchs and sons and attempt to destroy governing hierarchies and even the patrilineal family.[102] As Michael McKeon reminds us in *The Secret History of Domesticity*, in the Restoration the family is a poignant metaphor for the state, and the state a metaphor for the family. Read as such, theatrical depictions in later Stuart England of queen-mothers endangering the family-state through revenge show signs of glaring cracks in the façade of the sovereign family, Stuart monarchy, and absolutist rule. Because Lee's, Dryden's, and Behn's queens are loyal to their passions and personal aspirations—and not to their duties as queens and mothers—they threaten Restoration patrilineality, legitimate succession, and "the very kingdom itself" (Canfield *Heroes and States* 7).

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Thomas Hobbes writes that excessive passions damage the state, and Nathaniel Lee's 1677 *The Rival Queens, or, Alexander the Great* provides an excellent example of a troubled nation torn apart by sexual passion and revenge. Near the beginning of the play Old Clytus, Alexander's master of the horse, sets up the emperor's private intrigues as a threat to the court: Alexander's love for two women, Roxana and Statira, has caused turmoil as "Two Wives he takes" and "two Rival Queens disturb / The Court" (I.i.3).[103] Alongside conspirators who plot to kill

Alexander, Lee portrays Alexander's first wife, Roxana, as a sexual vixen who plots revenge against her husband, including the killing of his second wife.[104] Like other writers of his day, Lee adapted his tale from French romances, but as Felicity Nussbaum points out, he made a significant change to Calprenède's romance: whereas Statira and Roxana in the original "become friends, in spite of their shared love for Oroondates, the prince of Scythia," in Lee's play the queens enter "into a feverish competition for the emperor Alexander" (142). As the title of the play suggests, the rivalry between Lee's queens is at the forefront of the play, rather than an examination of Alexander the Great. Lee builds his tragedy upon female conflict, and in his rival queens he creates contrary versions of femaleness. Statira represents the aristocratic monarchal ideology of which Canfield writes—she is virtuous and passive—but Roxana symbolizes her polar opposite: she is a representation of excessive sexuality, rage, and vengefulness.[105] In situating Roxana and Statira as foils to one another, Lee calls to mind a "queen/victim" paradigm in which women are "represented as either unique and all-powerful or without individual agency and powerless" (Ezell 338). However, Lee gives new meaning to the binary of powerful "queen" and powerless "victim" in his association of vengeance—a terrifying kind of power—with queen Roxana.

Although Lee sets his tragedy in Alexander's ancient court, *The Rival Queens* bears a considerable likeness to Charles II's court, for both kings engage in illicit sexual relationships and are believed to be ruled by their passions rather than effectively ruling their kingdoms. The parallel does not end with Alexander's

likeness to the English ruler's reputation for a profligate sexuality, however. The very issue of female rivals disturbing Charles' royal court was pervasive throughout the 1670s, and particularly when Lee first staged his play. If we compare Alexander's relationship with his two queens (in addition to another absent mistress who supposedly had his child) with that of Charles II's affairs with mistresses (and with his relationship with Queen Catherine), we can see a correspondence between the threat of rival queens in Alexander's court, and that of rival mistresses in Charles's court—including Barbara Villiers and Louise de Keroualle, the latter of whom reputedly plotted to push Villiers out of Charles's court. (Villiers had departed for Paris by 1677, so perhaps Keroualle's scheme was a success.)[106] Felicity Nussbaum indicates that Lee's original audience also may have seen in the rival queens' meeting a parallel to that of Charles II's introduction of Villiers to Queen Catherine, the king's barren wife who would have likely met the mistress when she was pregnant with one of Charles' many illegitimate children (149).[107] Susan J. Owen reminds us that the play's rival queens ultimately reflect concerns about Charles II's "perceived enslavement to his unpopular French mistresses at a time when there was widespread concern about the growing power of France, and widespread suspicion about Charles's relationship with the French king, Louis XIV" (*Perspectives on Restoration Drama* 86).

Of course, *The Rival Queens* does not simply allude to sexualized images of women in Charles' court. It also makes use of actresses' bodies in its portrayal of female jealousy and sexuality—after all, Rebecca Marshall, the actress who played

Roxana in 1677 (and Nourmahal in 1676), was rumored to have had rivalries with other actresses, including the king's mistress Nell Gwynn.[108] In witnessing actresses like Rebecca Marshall, and later Elizabeth Barry, perform villainous female parts such as Roxana, audiences were confronted with a "mimetic representation of female evil on stage" as they came "face to face with the creature herself—in all her potential sexuality and wickedness" (Hermanson 25). *The London Stage* records indicate that *The Rival Queens*, first staged in March 1677, was one of the most performed plays in the long eighteenth century with performances staged through 1799, and the play's longevity has much to do with its powerful female roles—that of the rival queens, Roxana, Alexander's first wife and the bloodthirsty daughter of a nobleman, and Statira, the virtuous daughter of a king and Alexander's new wife.[109] Critics such as Nussbaum, Laura Brown, and Jean I. Marsden have examined *The Rival Queens* as an early example of she-tragedy that set a precedent for successive pathetic dramas, for instance, with Brown arguing that Statira and Roxana qualify "as passive victims whose dramatic significance is defined by their pathetic situation" (432). Nevertheless, an examination of queen Roxana as a revenger shows that she is anything but passive. Roxana differs from a pathetic female figure that emerged on stage in the last decade of the seventeenth century—a "new female prototype" that Brown describes as "passive, defenseless, and impotent" (442). On the contrary, Roxana represents a popular character type indicative of 1670s heroic tragedy that Jessica Munns refers to as a "bloodthirsty, lustful and ambitious female ruler" ("Images of Monarchy" 114).

Early in the play, the conspirators portray Roxana as such a character type. Cassander, the play's central plotter, describes her as "proud" (I.i.9) and distinguishes her as a "jealous, bloody, and ambitious" queen (II.i.15). Phillip, another conspirator, suggests that she instills fear in her subjects who, "dreading Roxana's rage," have fled Babylon for Susa (II.i.15). When Roxana enters the play in Act III, Lee introduces her as a revenger, as noted by one of the conspirators: "See where the jealous proud *Roxana* comes, / A haughty vengeance gathers up her brow" (II.i.26).[110] Roxana epitomizes the kind of female figures described in Restoration conduct manuals, and she fits the bill of Olivier's vengeful woman who appears as "a Furnace and violent Fire, that all the Water in the World cannot quench" and who in response to rage, "lets fly all the Arrows of her revenge" (III.i.31-2). Roxana's first rant against Alexander reinforces such an image. After identifying herself as a "whirlwind" that "will blow you up like dust," she announces:

> Fury, revenge, disdain, and indignation
> Tear my swoln breast, make way for fire and tempest.
> My brain is burst, debate and reason quench'd,
> The storm is up, and my hot bleeding heart
> Splits with the rack, while passions like the winds
> Rise up to Heavn and put out all the Stars. (III.i.26)

Her speech draws attention to characteristics—including volatile emotions and a blistering body—that isolate Roxana as the dangerous one of two rival queens.[111] Because of her sexuality—she has lured Alexander away from Statira before and back

to her bed—Alexander compares her to Circe (for her ability to charm men); due to her hot temper, the conspirators see in her likenesses of other classical figures. Cassander speaks of her in terms of the Furies and Medusa, suggesting that she should take action against Alexander by fashioning

> a face of so much horrour,
> That gaping Furies may run frighted back;
> That Envy may devour her self for madness,
> And sad Medusa's head be turn'd to Stone. (III.i.27)

Alongside a comparison to Medusa, Lee characterizes Roxana as a Medea figure that instills fear and hatred in men. Polypercon associates her with an evil greater than Medea, nonetheless, as he plays upon her injured pride and begs her:

> Put us to act, and with a violence,
> That fits the Spirit of a most wrong'd woman:
> Let not Medea's dreadfull vengeance stand
> A pattern more, but draw your own so fierce,
> It may for ever be Original. (III.i.27)

This association plays into fears of Medea-like women such as those indicated in *The Ladies Calling* when Allestree writes, "I hope not all Women are Medea's" (262).[112] After the conspirators encourage Roxana to seek vengeance, and she replies, "Yes, we will have revenge, my Instruments," Lee validates the conspirators' classical accolades as Roxana confirms: "there is nothing you have said of me, / But comes far short, wanting of what I am" (III.i.27). In Roxana, Lee fashions an image of female

monstrosity: she is envy, fury, and revenge—Circe, Medusa, and Medea—all in one wicked woman. Through mythical allusion Lee not only takes part in a literary tradition of depicting belligerent women as precarious figures, but also associates Roxana with a primitive past in which vengeful women, like Medea, connote dreadful femaleness as jealous wives and murderous mothers.

In addition to mythical allusions, Lee utilizes dramatic foils to characterize Roxana as a vengeful woman. Through Statira, Lee offers a counter-image of virtue and reason. Echoing the edicts of many Restoration conduct manuals, Statira chastises Roxana's jealousy and rage as she correlates Roxana's wild behavior with women's weaknesses. She questions, "How frail, how cowardly is woman's mind?" and describes women's dichotomous frailties:

> We shriek at Thunder, dread the rustling wind,
> And glitt'ring Swords the brightest eyes will blind.
> Yet when strong Jealousie enflames the Soul,
> The weak will roar, and Calms to Tempests roul. (III.i.31)

The final lines of Statira's speech remind us of Allestree's allegation that a woman's "impotence to govern" her passions produces "solemn mischiefs of actual Revenges" (182, 183) and Olivier's claim that jealousy "will kindle her anger, awaken her contempts, enflame her hatred, encrease her rage, and bring up all the corrosions of a cruel revenge" (105-6). Yet Lee indicates that jealousy is not the only emotion rousing Roxana's revenge: rejection is a powerful motivator for vengeance. As a *locus classicus* of a wronged woman, Roxana avenges on behalf of her injured pride.

In response to Alexander's order for Roxana to go where he will never see her again—and his claim that he would rather give up his empire than bed Roxana again—Roxana questions, "Am I rejected then?" and assures Alexander that "the memory of Roxana's wrongs" will be "for ever printed in your mind" (IV.i.39). Roxana threatens to pyrotechnically consume the couple, saying:[113]

> do not trust me, no, for if you do,
> By all the Furies, and the flames of Love,
> By Love, which is the hottest burning Hell,
> I'le set you both on fire to blaze for ever. (III.i.33)

Roxana vows to make Alexander suffer for slighting her, and rather than kill him, she plans to prevent him from sexually enjoying Statira. Roxana's revenge is a sign of her hot-tempered body, and in her revenge orations, she speaks of destroying others' bodies.

When Roxana finally enacts her revenge upon Statira by abducting and then repeatedly stabbing her, the queen's vengeful rhetoric returns to addressing the female body as she demands of Statira, "put forth these Royal Breasts, / […] That I may change their milkie Innocence / To bloud, and die me in a deep Revenge" (V.i.55). Lee identifies a pure Statira with milk and the corrupt Roxana with blood, and he attributes Roxana's passion for revenge with both blood and bloodline. In doing so, we are reminded that Roxana signifies an appalling, primitive past that includes bad blood. In the context of blood, Cassander's insistence that Roxana "take the life / Of Queen Statira as a Sacrifice" (IV.i.42) reads as a kind of barbaric

ritual (Statira calls Roxana a "barb'rous woman" [V.i.55]) or even transubstantiation (perhaps another link to Charles II's Catholic French mistresses). When Statira tells Roxana, "wreak all thy lust of Vengeance on me, / Wash in my bloud, and steep thee in my gore; / Feed like a Vulture, tear my bleeding heart" (V.i.56), Lee uses cannibalistic language to describe the process of Roxana's revenge. On more than one occasion, Lee points out that while Statira descends from royal blood, Roxana married into royalty; Roxana's sexualized body seduced Alexander. When the rival queens first share the stage, Statira scoffs that Roxana is "not a Princess born" (III.i.30), and Roxana's comment earlier in the play about being "nurs'd in bloud" while Statira "cry'd for milk" (III.i.28) suggests that Roxana's inability to control her emotions is derivative of not only adulterated womanhood, but also non-royal bloodline. Statira's scoff implies that proper feminine fluid is milky, pure, and merciful while Roxana's blood is horrific, impure, and amalgamated with personal advancement.

Lee ties revenge not only to Roxana's corrupted blood/line, but also to royal bloodline. Earlier in the play, Roxana creates in her unborn child an accomplice to her revenge. In urging "the Illustrious bloud that fills my womb, / And ripens to be perfect Godhead born, / Come forth a Fury" (III.i.28), she spurs her unborn child to enter the world in a fit of rage and rule the empire. Later in the play Roxana's unborn child appears not as a partner in her vengeance, but an obstacle. In one of the few moments that Roxana appears sympathetic in the play, she argues that her unborn

child "strikes compassion" in her (IV.i.41) forcing her to question of Cassander whether or not she can consent to Alexander's murder:

> Do I not bear his Image in my womb?
> Which while I meditate, and roul revenge,
> Starts in my body like a fatal pulse,
> And strikes compassion through my bleeding bowels. (IV.i.40-41)

Lee brings into focus again a link between the female body and vengeance—except that in this instance Lee shifts from studying the sexually charged, "irrational and uncontrollable" female body to associate revenge with the maternal body. Here Lee engenders a relationship between revenge and pregnancy as he positions Alexander's unborn child as a pawn in both Roxana and the conspirators' vengeance. In Act IV, the conspirators suggest that Roxana should kill Alexander so that her unborn son (and theoretically not a child of Statira) will rule the empire. Although the plotters only manipulate Roxana's emotions to advance their own plans to kill Alexander, the conspirators assure the queen that "sure destruction waits" Roxana and her son if she does not help them (IV.i.41). Polypercon argues that Roxana should seek retribution on behalf of her child's right to the throne, saying: "How will the glorious Infant in your womb, / When time shall teach his tongue, be bound to curse you, / If now you strike not for his Coronation!" (IV.i.41). Cassander appeals not only to Roxana's eagerness for her unborn child to rule, but also for her own opportunity to reign alongside her son, noting: "If Alexander lives, you cannot reign, / Nor shall your Child" (IV.i.41). Lee draws a parallel between revenge and bloodline with the

plotters' argument that Roxana must seek vengeance in order to secure her son's royal succession; yet when Cassander directs his comment about rule of the empire at Roxana, Lee incorporates into Roxana's vengeance a kind of perverted reprisal based on kinship and political aspirations.

While Roxana's vengeance ultimately leads to Statira's death, her revenge also signifies a larger political threat: it affects the future reign of the kingdom. In the scene where Alexander finds Statira murdered at the hands of Roxana, at first he plans to kill the murderess, but before dying Statira begs Alexander to "spare Roxana's life" because, as Roxana puts it, a "furious Love" has driven her to revenge (V.i.58). One problem with Alexander's plan to avenge Statira's death with Roxana's life is that this murder would lead to infanticide and bar the succession of his bloodline. Roxana addresses this when she implores, "your words are bolts / That strike me dead; the little wretch I bear, / Leaps frighted at your wrath, and dyes within me" (V.i.59). Kneeling, she petitions him to think upon "the dear Babe, the burden of my womb, / That weighs me down," and Alexander complies because of the child and commands her, "Rise, cruel woman, rise, and have a care, / O do not hurt that unborn Innocence, / For whose dear sake I now forgive thee all" (V.i.59).[114] Roxana's revenge leads to her banishment, but her role as mother saves her from certain death. Earlier in the scene, Alexander cries that he will "give an Empire / To save [Statira]" (V.i.57); however, in banishing Roxana he gives up an heir to his empire. Between Roxana's and the conspirators' revenge, the empire is left without an emperor and a successor to the throne. As J. Douglas Canfield has pointed out, Lee's drama ends

with a fragmented empire (*Heroes and States* 66). When Lysimachus asks the dying Alexander, "To whom does your dread Majesty bequeath / The Empire of the World?" and he answers, "To him that is most worthy" (V.i.64), Lee ends the play by focusing on the problem of succession, as Alexander has no legitimate heir to take the throne.[115]

In this final scene Roxana comes closest to appearing as a pathetic, she-tragic character that pleads for her life and that of her unborn child, but Roxana's closing speech affirms that she does not repent of her sins. Although Felicity Nussbaum reads Roxana's "escaping with her life" as "an occasion to reflect on her victimization as the pregnant and deserted second wife" (148), she by no means sounds like a victim when she strikes out, cursing Alexander:

> If there be any Majesty above,
> That has Revenge in store for perjur'd Love,
> Send Heav'n the swiftest ruine on his head,
> Strike the Destroyer, lay the Victor dead;
> Kill the Triumpher, and avenge my wrong
> In height of Pomp, while he is warm and young,
> Bolted with Thunder let him rush along.
> And when in the last pangs of life he lyes,
> Grant I may stand to dart him with my eyes;
> Nay after death
> Persue his spotted Ghost, and shoot him as he flies. (V.i.59-60)

Even though curses play an important part in Lee's play, serving as omens of Alexander's death, Roxana's curse has no effect on the emperor—he has already drunk the conspirators' poison and dies. Although most scholarship on Lee's tragedy examines Alexander's struggle to manage his passion for two women and effectively rule his kingdom—what Jessica Munns calls "the hero-ruler in decline" ("Images of Monarchy" 119)—a closer look at Roxana shows that the play also locates the primitive passions of jealousy and revenge as sources of political disorder.[116] Roxana serves as a pedagogical example of an "irrational and uncontrollable" woman. Her hostile emotions compel her to seek revenge and join forces with conspirators, and this revenge triggers her and her unborn child's banishment from Alexander's court, in effect leaving the kingdom without a legitimate heir to the throne upon Alexander's imminent death. In *The Rival Queens* we see that Lee not only explores the "tension between the ruler's desires and political necessity" (Owen *Perspectives* 86), but also anxieties about female desire, politics, and succession mirrored in Charles II's real-life dramatic tale of mistresses, illegitimate children, and unsuccessful hereditary succession.[117] In keeping in mind that Lee's play was staged seventeen years after Charles II took the throne and failed to produce any legitimate offspring upon whom to bequeath his kingdom, we can imagine that the end of the play would have struck a chord with audiences. Even if Lee's rival queens do not function as strict allusions to Charles' mistresses, the tragedy certainly warns its audience about the public dangers of private affairs with women who are driven by fury and jealousy to seek revenge. In the end, women come to stand in for the idea of

competition at court as Lee points to the problems female rivalry within a royal court and the political and material consequences of vengeful women's actions. From plotting murder to (albeit unintentionally) depriving an empire of its legitimate heir, Roxana represents the ways in which wrathful, violent women can put an empire in jeopardy of a succession crisis.

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John Dryden's prologue to *The Rival Queens* declares that "States, and Kings themselves are not secure," and while this line refers to Alexander the Great and his empire, the warning also resonates with Dryden's depiction of the Indian empire depicted in his final heroic tragedy, *Aureng-Zebe*, first staged in November 1675.[118] Set in 1660, *Aureng-Zebe* portrays an empire teetering on the brink of dissolution as an Indian emperor's four sons vie for control of the throne, an emperor rejects his only loyal son (because they love the same woman) to make another rebellious son heir to the throne, and a lustful queen usurps the throne as part of an incestuous plan to rule with her stepson.[119] As James Winn, Bridget Orr, and Shaun Lisa Maurer have observed, Dryden took some liberties in adapting the tale of the legendary Aurangzeb from François Bernier's *The History of the Late Revolution of the Empire of the Great Mogol* (1671).[120] Dryden's appropriation of the original tale certainly draws attention to the symbolic function of women in Restoration drama and makes use of the acting talent of Rebecca Marshall, who would also play Roxana approximately a year later. Maurer is right to point out that "Dryden's misrepresentation of Aureng-Zebe's marital situation allows the playwright to create a complex scenario in which the

competition over women serves as a surrogate for, and correlative of, the struggle for political power" (151). Dryden's "fabricated sexual subplot" not only "brings to center stage the familiar trope of sexual contention among men" (Maurer 151). It also makes possible sexual strife between *women* and men—particularly between Dryden's empress, Nourmahal, and the emperor, and Nourmahal and her stepson, Aureng-Zebe. Dryden's changes to the original tale "potentially redirects […] the political right to rule" (Maurer 152) in two ways: it promotes sexual competition between the emperor, Aureng-Zebe, and Morat over Indamora, and it creates a rupture in the empress and the emperor's marriage—a schism that results in the empress' desire for Aureng-Zebe and eventually her quest for revenge against the emperor, Morat, and Aureng-Zebe.

From the start of *Aureng-Zebe*, Dryden identifies political ambition, revenge, and jealousy as problems in the Indian empire of Agra, but as the play develops we see that Dryden links these problems not only to male succession, but also female sexuality and a queen's aspiration to rule the throne without her husband-monarch.[121] Before Dryden's queen enters the play, other characters portray her as a contemptuous, resentful woman.[122] A statesman characterizes Nourmahal as "th' ambitious Empress" (I.i.4), and Arimant, the governor of Agra, describes her as a "jealous Empress" who has grown "too haughty to endure neglected Charms" (I.i.9) from the emperor, who has incidentally fallen in love with Indamora, a captive queen, whom he promised to Aureng-Zebe. Indamora labels Nourmahal the emperor's "fury of a Wife" who is "not content to be reveng'd" on him for his romantic trespasses

(II.i.19)—an unflattering description that evokes warnings from Restoration conduct manuals. Until the middle of Act II, Nourmahal exists as a mere compilation of negative descriptions; however, when she enters the play her heated verbal exchange with the emperor reveals not only an enraged, jealous wife who cannot understand why her husband no longer loves her, but also a vituperative empress who exposes the emperor for his treachery.[123] In revealing the emperor's method for dealing with an unwanted wife, she further reveals a stereotype about women's passions: "You wrong me first, and urge my rage to rise, / Then I must pass for mad; you, meek and wise" (II.i.22). Although a handful of scholars correlate this scene with anti-feminine satires or with aging wives from Restoration comedies, Nourmahal represents something more than a comedic stereotype.[124] Indamora's early description of Nourmahal intimates that she endangers patriarchy not only in her critique of the emperor, but also in her threat of vengeance.

In the interchange between Nourmahal and the emperor we find evidence for her role as a revenger as the scene implicitly includes her first vow of revenge. In assuming the rhetoric of a ghost that will haunt the king, she warns him: "Your days, I will alarm, I'll haunt your nights: / And, worse than Age, disable your delights" (II.i.24). At first, her accusation parallels Roxana's charges to ruin a husband's ability to engage in sexual activities with another woman. When Nourmahal warns the emperor that she will defame his imperial image in his subjects' eyes, however, Dryden moves her threats into the realm of treason. The emperor subsequently treats Nourmahal like a rebellious subject and orders his guards to seize her so that "she

shall know this hour, / What is a Husband's and a Monarch's pow'r" (II.i.24). This exchange elucidates what David R. Evans refers to as the danger of "characters who refuse to abide by the word, refuse to fit into their roles in the hierarchy" (6).[125] While Nourmahal speaks out against marital double standards, a speech that induces the emperor to inform her that her "unquietness" has driven him to hate her (23), her seditious accusation eventually prompts the emperor to silence a voluble wife/subject. Nourmahal threatens the emperor's control over her as both husband and monarch, a jurisdiction that depends implicitly on the difference between public and private spaces guaranteed by her silence in public matters. When women speak, as Catherine Belsey argues in *The Subject of Tragedy*, they "threaten the system of differences which gives meaning to patriarchy" (191). The emperor's order to imprison an "unquiet" wife, then, becomes a symbolic power play to silence and disenfranchise an unruly female subject for the sake of patriarchal order. As J. Douglas Canfield reminds us, Nourmahal signifies the "rebellious aspects of England" when she should behave as "the submissive bride of her king" (*Heroes and States* 7). In failing to uphold her duties as wife and/or mother, Nourmahal disobeys an English sex/gender hierarchy and "represent[s] the potential chaos to be unleashed by resisting integration into a society constituted along idealized 'heroic' rules" (Evans 6).

While some scholars have evaluated Nourmahal as nothing more than a "wild spirit" or an "aberrational," "over-egotistical" villain who represents "absolute evil" and "moral and permanent" weakness, the queen functions as a figure more ideologically dangerous than simply an 'evil' woman.[126] Dryden portrays Nourmahal

as a woman who breaks out of feminine subservience and into a world of reckless desire. For one thing, Nourmahal threatens socio-cultural conventions when she solicits an incestuous romance with Aureng-Zebe.[127] If disregarding the taboo of incest is a sign of the collapse of order, then Nourmahal's lust for Aureng-Zebe also reads as an anarchic desire. Initially this forbidden desire engenders Nourmahal's revenge. For instance, Dryden characterizes Nourmahal as an archetypical 'woman scorned' after Aureng-Zebe refuses her love and she immediately moves to kill him. However, Dryden shows that the queen's vengeance is not only a product of jealousy and *romantic* rejection. Nourmahal's vengeance also extends to her own flesh-and-blood son, Morat. Morat's public slandering of his mother as a "pleasurable" and "slothful" woman (IV.i.53) and, as a sign of his newly gained power, his rescinding of the writ for Aureng-Zebe's execution-by-poison further motivates her vengefulness. Nourmahal's private desires ultimately evoke serious public consequences, nevertheless, as noted in the queen's aside: "Rage choaks my words: 'tis Womanly to weep: / In my swoll'n breast my close revenge I'll keep; / I'll watch his tender'st part, and there strike deep" (IV.i.54). In this moment, Nourmahal reads like a phallic mother who threatens to figuratively castrate both of her 'sons': she will sever Aureng-Zebe's romance with Indamora, and she will stage a political takeover that will 'strike deep' at Morat's "Arbitrary pow'r" (IV.i.53).

Whereas *Aureng-Zebe* deviates from the historical account upon which it is based—one in which Bernier depicted Aurangzeb as cunning—Dryden does not deprive his play of a "Machiavellian manipulator" altogether (Winn 273).[128] He

converts this conniving figure into an implacable queen-mother who seizes the Indian throne through an act of revenge. Nourmahal's "overreaching for power," as Nandini Bhattacharya notes, reflects "an intrinsically masculine prerogative in the fictional politics" of the play (165). In disregarding "a system which denies them political opportunity" (Evans 6), characters like Nourmahal reveal how aggressive, autonomous women jeopardize the conventions of a society that promotes women's passive, dutiful obedience to men.[129] As a mark of "alien femininity," Nourmahal represents something of "an 'amazon,' the uncontained, renegade female, the prototype of vicious femininity whose supposed aberrations bring her ideologically closer to the masculine world" (Bhattacharya 155, 165-6).[130] Her uncontrolled passions link her with a monstrous form of femininity, but her aggressive, politically-minded actions suggest a movement into forbidden masculine territory. In addition to Nourmahal's aberrant, incestuous desires, then, her vengeful will to power situates her as a dangerous liminal figure.

Whereas critics have examined the emperor and his sons' association with the "sinking State" (I.i.4), we should not overlook Nourmahal's important role in the potential downfall of the kingdom.[131] In the victim/queen paradigm, revenge allows Nourmahal to shift from being a powerless victim of a husband who casts aside his wife for a younger woman, a lover who rejects her romantic advances, and a son who publicly rebukes his mother to that of a powerful queen who authorizes herself by seizing the throne. In her speeches in Act V she links revenge to the control of the empire and to her existence as an autonomous individual; these passages suggest that

revenge somehow authorizes her actions. We see this in moments where she claims to Abas, the Indian lord who assisted her usurping of the throne, that he has helped her secure her "Life and Empire, too, / And, what's yet dearer, [her] Revenge" (V.i.72). Her revenge is a sign of a woman's victory over the male monarchs who have slighted her and political conquest: "[N]o Sex confines the Soul: / I for my self, th'Imperial Seat will gain" (V.i.73). Although Dryden first casts Nourmahal as a "powerless wife" (Staulman 41), he quickly shows that she empowers herself through vengeance. While in Act I the Indian lords worry about the rabble "reveng[ing] the state" (I.i.3), Act V shows that men should be more concerned about women like Nourmahal who appropriate political sovereignty for personal retribution. Acts I and II situate her as an unmanageable wife, but by the end of Act II, we begin to see that she threatens the wellbeing of the family-state in two ways: her sexuality violates social decorum, and her revenge imperils male royal succession. In the end, Nourmahal's insurgency intervenes in the future of the royal family's reign as her revenge puts Aureng-Zebe at risk of death and actually leads to Morat's murder.[132]

Ultimately, Dryden supports a royalist agenda in demonstrating that rebels must be suppressed in order to ensure the rightful rule of a kingdom. To restore the status quo, Dryden levels a severe punishment on both Morat and Nourmahal—both die as a result of their rebellious actions—however, Dryden contrasts the characters' demises. First, Dryden reforms the rebellious son into a pathetic victim of a mother's revenge: Morat triumphantly saves Indamora from his mother's revenge in his final living moments and then dies as a result of wounds received from Nourmahal's

soldiers. Dryden does not, on the other hand, allow Nourmahal a final moment of repentance as he does with other of his female queens (cf. Almeria's repentance in *The Indian Emperour*). Dryden characterizes his queen as a villain until the bitter end. In setting things aright and restoring the throne to Aureng-Zebe, Nourmahal concedes that "'Tis vain to fight," but she refuses to allow her enemies to execute her. She fulsomely offers to "mock the Triumphs which [her] Foes intend" and to "make a glorious end" by taking her life in a final moment of agency, in which she expresses that in "pois'nous draughts [her] liberty [she]'ll find: / And from the nauseous World set free [her] mind" (V.i.78).[133] After she has taken the poison, Nourmahal indicates that she would like to "pour […] upon [her] Foes" the heat from the poison that burns her body (V.i.85). In the final scene of the play, Nourmahal screams of burning and being "all fire" (V.i.85) and utters that she inhabits a living Hell, but even in the throes of death she neither repents, nor gives up thoughts of revenge.[134] Even though earlier in the play (before Nourmahal exits to poison herself) the queen encourages her slain son, Morat, to "Look up, and live" and promises him, "an Empire shall be thine" (V.i.77), in her final lament Dryden offers his audience a dismal image of a queen-mother who not only loses her mind as a result of poisoning herself, but also has destroyed her own son. As Nourmahal questions, "have I lost Morat for this?" (V.i.86), her final words to her son show signs of regret for her failed maternal relationship with her son, but as Jennifer Brady has noted, Nourmahal's "own wish-fulfillment fantasy of destruction as she is dying of poison […] complicates any peaceable resolution" (56).

On the whole, *Aureng-Zebe* represents a male-dominated family-state on the brink of destruction as a result of an uncontrolled female subject who translates a powerless position as a discarded wife, rejected lover, and offended mother into a power-play as a political rebel. Unlike Lee, Dryden cannot allow his queen to escape with her life because she immediately and intentionally threatens the monarchical hierarchy. Dryden cannot pardon Nourmahal because her motives for revenge exceed a kind of 'feminine' revenge and violence ascribed to characters like Roxana and the types of women described in Olivier and Allestree's conduct manuals. Roxana's vengeance inadvertently denies an heir his rights to the throne; but Nourmahal's revenge purposefully attempts to prevent two heirs from ruling and eventually contributes to the death of a royal heir. Nourmahal represents a threat to the nation because, out of her personal passions, she violates its social and judicial laws, first by helping her son seize the throne and then attempting to seduce her stepson, plotting to murder, and usurping the throne from her son so that she can rule with her prospective lover. Ultimately, Nourmahal's sexuality threatens social decorum and the very structure of the family, and her revenge plot and ambition to rule violates the structure of royal succession and endangers national welfare.

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Aphra Behn's *Abedelazer, or The Moor's Revenge* reinforces this problem in its portrayal of a sexual, vengeful queen who is involved in the murdering of monarchs and intervenes in the reign of a nation. Staged in July 1676 and then again in 1695, Behn's tragedy is an adaptation of *Lust's Dominion, or, The Lascivious*

Queen, a play that Francis Kirkman published in 1657 under the supposed authorship of Christopher Marlowe.[135] Behn's changes to *Lust's Dominion* reflect significant alteration to the original queen's character. Although the Restoration play's subtitle suggests a shift from lust and lasciviousness to a *moor's* revenge, Behn heightens *Lust's Dominion*'s focus on the queen's wantonness and edits the original play's depiction of the queen by inserting a mother's virulent revenge against her son.[136] In the original, Behn's queen is not a revenger. While *Lust's Dominion*'s queen functions as a pawn in Eleazar's (Abdelazer's counterpart in the original) revenge against the Spaniards for their seizing of his father's throne and their ill-treatment of him based on his race and ethnicity, in Behn's play, Isabella appears as an adulteress, a murderess, an accomplice to Abdelazer's retribution, and an *agent* of her own revenge.[137] Isabella, Behn's moniker for her queen-mother, stands out as both an excellent example of Restoration fears of women as uncontainable, dangerous persons, and a female revenger motivated by sexual desire, pride, and a lust for power.[138]

From the outset of the play, passion is a source of private and public concern in the court. At the start of *Abdelazer*, we learn that Isabella has been having a long-standing affair with the Moor, Abdelazer, who has lived in the Spanish court for most of his life since the king usurped his father's throne. We are told that Isabella has "neglected all [her marriage] vows" (I.i.3), "Exhausted Treasures that wou'd purchase Crowns, / To buy [Abdelazer's] smiles" (I.i.3), and "laid aside the bus'ness of her State, / To wanton in the kinder joys of Love" (I.i.2). Behn traces a personal/political

divide that contrasts Isabella's obedience to sexual trysts with both loyalty to her husband-monarch and responsibility to her political subjects. In depriving a husband of sexual intercourse and affection, Isabella shirks her duties as a wife; in violating a monarch's bed and a kingdom's trust, she rejects her queenly responsibilities. Isabella's adultery calls attention to a breakdown in a Restoration aristocratic monarchal ideology that depends on a "concept of *constancy*" (Canfield 7). If, as David Evans argues, "a wife's constancy is a close analogue to a subject's loyalty" in the Restoration (4), the queen's infidelity symbolizes a subject's rebellion. As the play wears on, however, we see that inconstancy is only the first sign of the queen's seditious nature.

Isabella's murder of a husband-monarch and her plotting to remove two sons from the crown show that adultery is the queen's least shocking of sins as her licentiousness leads to regicide and the murder of her son. For instance, she is complicit in allowing Abdelazer to murder her eldest son, the newly crowned king, Ferdinand. Behn casts Isabella's non-maternal behavior as unnatural, and the queen voices such a concern: "Nature be gone, I chase thee from my soul / […] No rigid Virtue shall my soul possess" (II.i.18). Behn offers us a queen who fits the bill of the kind of awful mother that Richard Allestree describes in his conduct manual, printed in the same year that Behn's play was staged: "Women who immoderately love their own Plesures, do less regard their Children" (202).[139] Joyce Green MacDonald is absolutely right to direct us to consider "the ideological weight and resonance the play attaches to the figures of women, particularly of mothers" (68-69). We should

recognize Behn's portrayal of the queen's perverted motherhood as both an abjection of womanhood and the key to royal collapse. Through Isabella, Behn confirms that "the conduct of motherhood, and not of fatherhood, is what holds the fate of Spain in the balance" in *Abdelazer* (MacDonald 69). The queen's reaction to Abdelazer's plan to remove Ferdinand from the throne is very telling of both her disregard for her son's well being and also her goals to govern the nation without a Spanish monarch at her side. Isabella's response of "when the King [Ferdinand] you urge me to remove, / It may be from Ambition, not from Love" (II.i.17) suggests that her penchant for murder derives not only from lust for Abdelazer, but also from a self-determined autonomy. This autonomy is only possible, of course, if the queen prevents all of the Spanish heirs from inheriting the crown.

After Abdelazer and Isabella have disposed of one heir, they must deal with the remaining prince. In response to Philip's diatribe against his mother for her well-known affair with her "sooty" lover—in which he accuses the queen of dishonoring his father, his family, and all of Spain—the queen announces in private to Adelazer that Philip has dishonored her with his "insolence" and that she hopes for a "blest Revenge" to redeem this wrong (III.i.27). In this scene Behn makes an important change to *Lust's Dominion* with her addition of the queen's revenge. Unlike the original play, Behn writes Isabella as a vengeful queen-mother who initially seeks retribution against her son on behalf of her injured pride. Behn's queen begs Abdelazer, "Instruct me how t' undoe that Boy I hate; / The publick Infamy I have receiv'd, / I will Revenge, with nothing less than death" (II.i.18), and moments later

claims that she already has "resolv'd [Philip's] death" and has "waiting in [her] Cabinet / Engines to carry on this mighty work of [her] Revenge" (II.i.18).[140] While in *Lust's Dominion* the Queen Mother informs Eleazar that she wishes Philip harm, she does not name this aspiration as *revenge*. Isabella's vows of vengeance serve as evidence of a change in the queen's character as Behn introduces the queen's motive to seek vengeance on her own behalf, not simply as a partner in Abdelazer's plan. Rather than merely looking to Isabella's sexuality as a sign of evil, we should recognize that her vengefulness serves as tremendous evidence for Susie Thomas's claim that "Behn takes the lascivious Queen and turns her into a full blooded villain" (22).[141]

As Anne Hermanson notes, Isabella reflects a "much more calculating, intelligent, and independent Queen-mother than the prototype" (27). Much rests on Isabella's ability to deny Philip his rights to the throne, and through revenge she temporarily succeeds in doing just that. Indeed, her vengeance plot includes a plan to bastardize, exile, and later imprison her son by feigning that he is the child of the cardinal, not an heir to the throne. While critics, including Hermanson, have isolated Isabella's "uncontrollable passion for Abdelazer" (27-8) as the source for the royal family's ruin, its destruction results from a mother's 'uncontrollable passion' for vengeance and an ambition to rule Spain with her lover. Isabella's revenge eventually punishes a son for his rebukes, denies his birthrights, and doubles as clever device for her advancement.[142]

Behn has written for the Restoration stage a version of the queen-mother that symbolizes a female Hobbesian power-seeker.[143] Behn's queen personifies for a Restoration audience a frightening liminal figure that moves beyond a primitive devotion to passion to embrace libertinism and an Enlightenment sense of personhood based upon free will. In Restoration tragedies like *Abdelazer*, this notion of personhood and free will, however, relies upon the ability to rule oneself *and* a nation. In order for Isabella to obtain the power to rule, though, much rests on her capability to discredit absolute monarchy. To do this, the queen attempts to convince the public that the Spanish lords have the right to "chuse a new King" (III.iii.38)—even though royal succession dictates that Philip should take the throne. As neither Abdelazer nor Isabella hold official rights to the Spanish throne, their suggestion that the public can choose its own leader reads as both a cunning manipulation of latent seventeenth-century fears of tyranny and criticisms of inherited monarchy.[144] In Isabella and Abdelazer's proposition that the Spaniards make Abdelazer the "protector" of Spain, they attempt to dissolve the institution of hereditary monarchy. Behn invites a comparison between Abdelazer and Isabella and Cromwellian regicides and Restoration-era Whigs like Algernon Sidney, who claimed in *Discourses Concerning Government* at the end of the 1670s that subjects who "have a right of chusing a King, have the right of making a King" and that "the right of chusing and making those that are to govern them, must wholly depend upon their will" (108, 112).[145] Because we know that Behn was not a Whig sympathizer, we should *not* read her villains' presentation of choice as an endorsement of elective

monarchy. Instead, we should understand her staging of a shift from absolute monarchy to a protectorate to offer what MacDonald calls "a fascinating case study for inquiry into what happens to royal families in a moment of political crisis" (68). Although the title of Behn's play would suggest that the drama centers on Abdelazer and his revenge, in fact it devotes much, perhaps even more, attention to the ways in which Abdelazer and Isabella's revenge and ambition produce a family-state in crisis.

Abdelazer's narrative of the family-state recalls recent problems of the English state and foretells contemporary problems for the Stuart monarchy. It approaches both the issue of civil war, as Philip wages war in response to his mother's vengeance and ambition to rule Spain with Abdelazer, and elective leadership with Abdelazer's protectorateship. The play also moves toward a succession crisis that parallels the Exclusion Crisis of the late 1670s and early 1680s. For instance, the play openly addresses the issue of denied birthrights and bastardization, which relates a character like Philip to Charles II, James II, and even Charles II's bastard, the Duke of Monmouth. It also uncannily predicts a rumor that would abound at the end of the decade concerning Queen Catherine, who was accused of plotting with her doctor to poison Charles II in order to pave the way for the Catholic James II to assume the throne. As *Abdelazer* draws to a close, Behn focuses on the issue of restoration and monarchical rights in a way that *Lust's Dominion* does not because, like *Lust's Dominion*, *Abdelazer* is a product of its age: the former play concentrates on innately problematic bodies—i.e., focusing on skin color, women's excessive bodies, the humors, etc., as *loci* of corruption—while the

latter expands its scope to put forward political consequences of individuals' decisions, including attempts at self-determination and vengeance.

Even though Janet Todd attests that in her adaptation "Behn [is] more interested in the psychological than the political side of the story" (188), a close examination of the queen's revenge demonstrates that her sexual licentiousness, fury, and revenge plotting have a direct impact on the politics and governing of a kingdom. Behn's decision to murder Isabella at the end of *Abdelazer* shows that she uses Isabella as a scapegoat to speak to concerns of excessive women, rebellious subjecthood, and emergent forms of personhood near the end of Charles II's reign. Unlike Queen Mother who in *Lust's Dominion* repents of her sins against her family, reconciles with Philip, and sets out to retire to a life in exile, Isabella never regrets her harmful actions. *Lust's Dominion* allows the queen a happy ending of contrition and self-imposed solitary confinement, but *Abdelazer* presents a vastly different ending for Behn's queen when Abdelazer orders his ally, Roderigo,[146] to dress as a priest, enter Isabella's apartment, and murder her. Behn dispenses a cruel death to her queen, who is stabbed repeatedly and knows that Abdelazer has ordered her murder. Like Dryden, Behn demonstrates that violent, ambitious queen-mothers must pay a high price for their schemes—a painful death. To stamp out threats to hereditary monarchy and national security, playwrights use their queens as pedagogical examples. As Margo Collins notes, Restoration tragedies demonstrate in their punishment of aggressive females that "women were considered both less capable of committing violent acts on their own and somehow more culpable when they did so"

(2). Unlike *Lust's Dominion*, which suggests that the repenting of one's sins exonerates crimes, Restoration dramas like *Aureng-Zebe* and *Abdelazer* that place their queens at the center of a national crisis cannot permit their queens such a convenient exile. As Virginia Mason Vaughn reminds us, the queen's spectacular death shows us that through murder she could be "expunged from the body politic," but that "the anxieties she embodied, however, were less easily assuaged" (145). As an embodiment of uncontrolled sexual passion and female emotion, Isabella threatens an aristocratic monarchal ideology founded upon virtue, constancy, and trust; as a revenger she directly jeopardizes monarchs' lives, royal succession, and the well being of the nation.

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Peter Stallybrass has described early seventeenth-century women as "dangerous terrain that had to be colonized" (133), and Earla Wilputte has noted in her study of female characters in early eighteenth-century amatory fiction that "something serious and profound rests on female self-control: the family, society, civilization" (28).[147] Lee, Dryden, and Behn show that such statements are true of the Restoration. The playwrights make examples of belligerent queen-mothers in staging them as archaic or phallic mothers, like those described by Julia Kristeva: they are who "synonymous with a radical evil, that is to be suppressed" (70). The plays demonstrate that these radically "evil" women must be "suppressed" in order to contain women's bodies and to ensure the security of the aristocratic status quo and the future of royal succession. Restoration playwrights exemplify through their

depictions of villainous queen-mothers latent fears about women who obey their passions rather than adhere to their duties as wives to kings and mothers to sons who might one day become monarchs. Thus, these female characters embody late seventeenth-century cultural anxieties about women's sexual practices and their roles as obedient wives and loving mothers. But more so, they come to represent a translation of passions, including revenge, into a politicized version of personal power that reads as a kind of masculinized, 'self-justified authority.' Whether or not Lee's, Dryden's, and Behn's queens were associated with real-life counterparts, such as Charles II's mistresses or his queen, they function as symbols, or ideologies, of a violent femininity that approaches masculine assertions of individual will that these women are not permitted to obtain.[148] Margaret J.M. Ezell writes that such "representations of transgressive women's activities," which were "written and published […] for the horror and delectation of their readers, male and female, are valuable cultural documents. These types of narratives have helped to shape how we understand early modern women's participation in practices or discourses which define a society" (338). In staging female revenge not only as a sign of excessive emotion, but also political self-determination, playwrights demonstrate the dangers of women who violate the hierarchy of the family, laws of the state, and accepted gender codes in the late seventeenth century—i.e., who define a society concerned about a primitive past, a troublesome present, and an unchartered future.

Chapter 4

Self-Interest, Politics, and the Collapse of Revenge

Happy occasion. Now I may pursue / Both my Revenge, and my Ambition too.

Elkanah Settle, *Camybses*

John Dryden notes in his 1673 preface to *Marriage a la Mode* that the upwardly mobile aspirations of the "middling sort" threaten men in the highest of social and literary ranks.[149] In many tragic dramas, playwrights typecast the threatening figures Dryden imagines as viziers, statesmen, and court favorites whose drives for personal advancement are catalysts for political plotting. Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery's 1665 *The Tragedy of Mustapha, Son of Solyman the Magnificent*; Elkanah Settle's 1670 *Cambyses King of Persia*; and Settle's 1673 *The Empress of Morocco* characterize these individuals as deceitful, status-conscious social climbers who attempt to raise themselves to the highest of ranks, monarchy. For the most part scholars, including Eric Rothstein, have glossed these characters' actions as theatrical representations of mere wickedness.[150] However, something more complex than sheer malice drives these characters' actions. Ambition to attain a level of status beyond their birthright motivates statesmen and court favorites to plot murder and usurpation, and their actions leave thrones vulnerable to seizure in the wake of their destructive ambition. In pursuit of socio-political advancement, Rustan and Pyrrhus in *Mustapha*, Prexaspes and "Smerdis" in *Cambyses*, and Crimalhaz in *Empress of*

Morocco conspire to promote their positions in a royal court by convincing monarchs to murder their sons, brothers, and husbands, calling it revenge.

A close examination of these characters' machinations for personal gain shows that statesmen use rather than commit revenge. For them, vengeance is personally useful rather than an obligation. These characters' plotting reflects self-interest and not revenge in a conventional sense, which reverses the fundamental temporality of revenge. Revenge has a backward-looking temporality. An event, oftentimes a murder or an insult, prompts the revenger to respond with what is usually a spectacular plot that involves murder. Orrery's *Mustapha* and Settle's *Cambyses* and *Empress of Morocco* invoke revenge without reference to a past event; rather, their particular discourse of revenge reaches the future goal personal advancement. By inverting the temporality of revenge, these characters perform Settle's and Orrery's theatrical critique of revenge by evacuating its meaning and turning it loose as a threat to political stability in a world of people who plot to seize power. Rustan, Pyrrhus, Prexaspes, "Smerdis," and Crimalhaz use the idea of revenge as a political tool to craft an ambitious future as opposed to a traditional remedy of a past wrong. Through portrayals of ambition masked as revenge the Restoration stage represents this forward-looking belief in change as dangerous and backward-looking plotting that could return England to civil war and political upheaval.

These Machiavellian characters redefine revenge in terms of utility, rendering it something other than revenge itself. This emerging instrumental notion of revenge

expresses a belief in the possibility of changing the world over and against a static model of fixed knowledge, which cuts against a customary meaning of revenge. The rhetoric of revenge in Orrery's and Settle's plays figures as a modern and political gateway to an ambitious future as opposed to a traditional remedy of a past wrong. Through portrayals of ambition masked as revenge the Restoration stage represents this forward-looking opportunism as dangerous. These depictions evoke recent cultural memories of regicide and rebellion instead of a stable and prosperous future. The term *revenge* in these plays marks what J. Douglas Canfield would call a "shifting trope of ideology" in Restoration tragic drama. These plays dramatize villains' management of revenge as pure performance, and thus no longer "revenge" as such. The utilitarian politics of statesmen and viziers like Rustan and Pyrrus performs a crisis in the volatile revision of political subjecthood that followed upon Parliament's recall of Charles II, a decision that instigated decades of uneasy negotiations between monarchical and parliamentary power. Against this backdrop, Orrery and Settle's social climbers are rogue subjects who draw attention to the cracks in a royalist façade of monarchical security. Their successful negotiations for power point to the fissures in hegemonic absolutist monarchy and the onset of a kind of political mobility that could make monarchs out of middling men. These characters' manipulations of vengeance narratives in their attempts at class-climbing present them as a threat to a royalist ideology founded on inherited social and political hierarchies.

The staged shift from an honor-based revenge to a self-interested manipulation of vengeance a nuanced representation of "revenge," one that calls attention to dramatic portrayals of illicit ambitions and a villainous form of individualism. In Restoration tragic drama, this portrayal of revenge that is not revenge, so to speak, performs a highly theatrical valence of vengeance that relies upon spectacle and multiple forms of revenge on stage, particularly the adaptation of narratives of blood revenge. The plays in this chapter draw upon the dramatic imagination and meta-theatrical moments to stage a kind of political agency dangerous to both absolute monarchy and social order. The three dramas addressed in this chapter eventually offer up these iniquitous climbers as representatives for all that is wrong with a given court and condemn these villains to punishment/death by torture in the plotlines of dramas. Revenge, which turns out to be a dangerous alibi that destroys good government, is repudiated for public good in visual, theatrical terms that are some of the most bloody on the Restoration boards. This mere "stage revenge" can be exposed, seen as a plot of self-interest, and then punished through the public pedagogy of the stage, which reproduces the visual, graphic signifiers of the punishment of the regicides first "staged" at the beginning of the Restoration. The castigation of the plotters Rustan, Prexaspes, and Crimalhaz show Orrery and Settle in their early years as dramatists declaring their loyalty to the crown. In due course, Orrery and Settle put an end to the violence perpetuated by these kinds of figures and restore order to a nation in their dramas.

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Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery's 1665 heroic tragedy, *The Tragedy of Mustapha, The Son of Solyman The Magnificent*, includes an early Restoration dramatic example of what Elaine McGirr refers to in her work on tragedy as "the evil counselor trope" (44), which depicts monarchs falling victim to the corrupting advice of counselors. *Mustapha* was one of the most popular plays staged during the early part of the Restoration, and it was performed by the Duke's Men and for the king at court many times throughout the latter years of the 1660s.[151] Set in the Ottoman Empire, the play depicts the cruelty of Turkish law (which mandates that a sultan's younger sons must die upon their brother's ascension to the throne), the bonds of love and friendship, and a scheme to alter monarchical succession.[152] Orrery's drama is likely an adaptation of a part of Richard Knolles' 1603 *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*, but in Knolles' account, the greedy sultaness, Roxolana, conspires with her son-in-law, Rustan, to remove the sultan's loyal son, Mustapha, from the court and to bar his succession. In Orrery's play, Rustan is not identified as being of any relation to the sultaness, but only formerly one of her court favorites.[153] Like Knolles, most twentieth-century critics of the play have examined Roxolana as the source of Mustapha's expulsion, but this menacing plot does not originate with the sultaness, even though she is instrumental in setting the plan in motion. Elaine McGirr, for instance, writes, "Solyman's bad counsel comes primarily from his wife" (44); "Orrery makes it clear that no good can come of Roxolana's power within the camp and over her husband" (45). Bridget Orr suggests that Roxolana "initiates the action to prevent her own son being killed when his brother ascends the throne" (44). I

argue in this chapter that the viziers initiate the plot, while Roxolana enacts it. Orrery condemns Roxolana's actions, but he does not characterize her as materialistic or self-interested. He saves those portrayals for the viziers, Rustan and Pyrrhus. Orrery transfers a great deal of the blame for the plot to exile and murder Mustapha from Roxolana to that of the king's advisors, who concoct the plan in order to ingratiate themselves with the sultaness. In focusing on Rustan and Pyrrhus' roles in the interruption of rightful succession, Orrery exposes the counselors' detrimental influence over the rights of monarchy.

Read as a drama about bad advisors, *Mustapha* touches upon anxieties about corrupt advice and the ways in which individuals could radically affect a monarch's rule.[154] The word, *counsel*, or some variation of it, shows up numerous times in the play because the dissemination of advice is one of the play's key subjects. The play offers us three sets of counselors: the sultan's viziers, the sultaness' eunuchs, and the queen of Buda's advisors, and Orrery starkly contrasts the Muslim viziers with both the generous eunuchs and the Christian advisors. Orrery shows that selfish counselors prey on monarchs' faults (e.g., fear, jealousy, and vengefulness) instead of their strengths, and in the end, that bad counsel leads monarchs to wage war against enemies and sons. From the start, Orrery positions his antagonistic vizier, Rustan, as a clever rhetorician attuned to other characters' insecurities and desires. For instance, in his opening speech he goads the sultan to wage war against the Christians by accusing the monarch of indecision and cowardice, saying, "You seem doubtful what you are to do, / And turn from Triumphs when they follow you" (I.i.55).[155] In

Mustapha, the vizier embodies a "middling sort" who will do anything to gain influence in the court, and through Rustan, Orrery demonstrates how political power corrupts individuals. The sultaness, Roxolana, contextualizes this in her explanation of Rustan's transition from being her court favorite to the sultan's top advisor. She explains in Act I that she originally "rais'd him first" to his stature but that she "poyson'd him with power to make him burst" (I.i.61), and later in the act Solyman confers that Rustan's "pow'r should advers Nations terrifie" (I.i.64).[156] Throughout the play Orrery's description of Rustan distinguishes the impact of power's negative facets.[157] Roxolana and the sultan's descriptions of Rustan foreshadow the vizier's wicked designs, which include advising the sultaness to order the execution of the infant Hungarian king and convincing the sultan to banish his eldest, loyal son, Mustapha, so that his and Roxolana's younger son, Zanger, can escape murder and ascend the throne one day.

Through characters' negative descriptions of the advisors, Orrery voices concerns about viziers, who are oftentimes referred to in the play as "States-men." Roxolana's reply to Rustan and Pyrrhus' advice, for instance, reveals the ways in which statesmen (referred to in this example as the divan) shamefully handle affairs of state:

> The grave Divan in ruining their Foes,
> Are not concern'd when they may honour lose;
> Because it most reflects on future fame,
> But they seek present safety though with shame. (I.i.61)

This accusation provides key insight into Orrery's depiction of his statesmen, for Roxolana explains in the above passage that statesmen will sacrifice honor for fame and will destroy an opponent to ensure their own safety. An additional criticism of Rustan and Pyrrhus ties statesmen's oratory skills to their manipulation of people's emotions. Roxolana scoffs that Rustan in particular employs religious rhetoric to control others: "You States-men in your own resemblance draw / [Religion's] shape, by which you keep the world in awe" (I.i.62).[158] This passage refers back to Rustan's earlier claim in the play that conquest is a part of his religion, but here Roxolana indicates that conquest reflects the statesman's personal aims. Religion is only a mask, a shape through which Rustan advances himself in the empire.[159] In this example, Orrery portrays statesmen as slick-tongued rhetoricians and duplicitous social climbers who grasp at power. He continually brings the discussion back to class, or social status, in Roxolana's criticism of the viziers. *Mustapha* highlights the excessive means by which statesmen maintain self-preservation, one of which concerns dissembling. After Roxolana refuses to kill the infant king and orders for her mutes to strangle Rustan instead of the child, she reminds the viziers of their inferior rank and notes:

> I'le not dissemble as you *Viziers* do.
> A *Viziers* power is but subordinate,
> He's but the chief dissembler of the State;
> And oft for publick int'rest lies. (I.i.62-3)[160]

Although the statesman oftentimes acts on behalf of the public's interests, Roxolana insinuates that he most often is motivated by self-interest. This passage also points out a statesman's paradox: he believes that he has more power in matters of the state than he actually does. Roxolana affirms that the statesman is not a leader of state, but rather a "chief" manipulator of leaders of states. Orrery's point affirms the traditional order of inherited right to rule over the machinations and inferior power of the statesman.

Time and time again the drama demonstrates that the vizier's advice to Roxolana *appears* to benefit the state, but it in fact reflects the statesman's duty to his personal goals. In the scene that follows, Orrery establishes a correlation between the statesman's self-preservation and his use of revenge. It is worth pausing to trace how events that take place early in the play between Roxolana and Rustan illustrate this relationship. In the moments that Rustan advises the sultaness to commit an act that would benefit the state, he sets into motion a series of events that lead to the actual "tragedy of Mustapha"—namely, Solyman's execution of a loyal, innocent son. From the start of the play, Rustan clearly desires military dominance over the Hungarian empire, and this ambition causes him to advise Roxolana to murder the Hungarian infant king. Rustan's drive for domination both conflicts with Roxolana's motherly instinct to protect a child, and encroaches upon the sultaness' royal authority to make her own decision. As a result of this clash of power, Roxolana orders Rustan put to death for overstepping bounds. Although not apparent at first, Roxolana's gesture to have Rustan strangled bears a great deal of weight on later

events in the play. Although the sultaness decides to rescind the execution of the counselor, the original death sentence instills fear in the vizier. For instance, Rustan says to Roxolana with some dark humor, "To me your anger, worse then death appears" (I.i.63). At this moment Orrery connects the vizier's concern for his life with a possible motive for retaliation.

Roxolana's eunuch, Haly, suggests that Rustan's fear of Roxolana could function as an offense that might lead to revenge. When Haly proposes that a bitter Rustan has "gone to study what revenge can do" (I.i.63), Orrery indicates that wounded pride could lead to a vengeance plot directed at the sultaness. Contrary to Haly's suggestion, Rustan's "revenge" does not consist of a plan to punish Roxolana. Rather, he devises a plan to redeem himself and to recuperate his reputation in order to deflect her anger.[161] Instead of plotting against her, Rustan sets out to appease her by offering to save her son, Zanger, from certain death and by convincing the sultan that his eldest son is vying for an untimely takeover of the throne. Rustan's "study" of "what revenge can do" does not read like a conventional narrative of vengeance that focuses on a prior injury; quite the opposite, it reflects a shifting dramatic trope of revenge in which characters claim "vengeance" as a device for advancement rather than redemption. Although *Mustapha* recognizes revenge as a sign of pride, the play also addresses revenge as a form of political power. Early in the play, Pyrrhus vocalizes the relationship between the two when he explains that the aggrieved sultaness might seek retribution against the viziers. To Rustan alone Pyrrhus warns, "Revenge shows not their anger, but their pride; / She'l be reveng'd that you her

power may see" (II.i.67-8). Thus, Pyrrhus estimates that Roxolana will "be reveng'd" on Rustan so that he "may see" that her power is greater than his, which is a utilitarian rather than traditional reading of revenge (II.i.68). While both Haly and Pyrrhus predict potential revenge plots, "revenge" in these examples read as an empty signifier appropriated to name a political action. Clearly, Roxolana's anticipated vengeance does not materialize into a real threat; earlier in the act the sultaness has pardoned Rustan by the time the two characters appear on stage again. Orrery's portrayal of Roxolana and Rustan's reactions to one another's machinations is political rather than vengeful; neither character vows or actually seeks revenge against one another because their interactions represent forward-looking politics, rather than backward-looking revenge.

Unlike dramatic revengers who seek retribution for some crime, Rustan neither threatens to stab, hang, or murder any character in the play, nor does he directly offer physical harm to another character. Rustan's use of "revenge" manifests in the realm of language, and it functions at the level of speech to produce a turnover in political power. Rustan is not a revenger, but a plotter who capitalizes on others' vengeance in order to advance his interests. Rustan's plotting eventually shows, moreover, a careful study of how rousing another character's vengefulness can both restore his relationship with the sultaness and expand his influence in the court. In preying upon the sultan's fears of aging and a son's overthrow, Rustan eventually convinces Solyman to seek revenge against Mustapha. After Mustapha has been slain, Solyman is left to bemoan, "Behold then the revenge which I did take

/ On him who kept me many Months awake" (V.i.113). Ultimately, *Mustapha* presents a careful depiction of a rational, non-violent, Machiavellian statesman who cleverly comprehends how to control others' emotions and coerce them into committing crimes that will unknowingly benefit him. Through an examination of the statesman, we encounter the *utility* of vengeance as a means of self-preservation and social mobility, rather than a sign of vindictiveness or even retributive justice. Orrery presents his audience with a theatricalized discourse of vengeance that is merely a performance rather than a personal retaliation or honoring one's kin or nation.

This discourse of revenge connects to a calculated method of bettering oneself, a method that plays out in the scene where the viziers counsel Solyman to control vengeful subjects. As with the viziers' counseling of Roxolana to murder the infant, they advise the sultan to take action that would seem to protect royal interests. For instance, after Solyman hears shouts from Mustapha's supporters outside his palace, the viziers manipulate Solyman's fear of the mob's revenge and advise him to appease unruly subjects. Rustan recognizes the impact of a rabble's revenge on the sultan (and on the statesmen) when he warns Solyman, "Revenge, which to the injur'd does belong, / Can be successful only to the strong" (IV.i.98). Rustan's musings on the mob's revenge both recall a traditional conception of revenge associated with injury, and then couple it with the threat of political rebellion to suggest that the sultan must find a way to mediate the rabble's fury. Rustan's analysis both denies the mob the right to claim revenge (which belongs to the

"injur'd") while invoking revenge to suggest that their sense of injury might be in a political past, which will now unseat Solyman. The viziers caution the king to use calm words to allay his subjects' anger as a political strategy: with words, not physical force, a monarch can prevent rebellion. Of course, Rustan's counsel to coerce political subjects through words is highly ironic given that the mob's threatened violence results from his rhetorical manipulation of the Ottoman monarchs. By connecting the statesmen's ambitions to the potential for revenging mobs and political mutiny, Orrery turns the tables on the viziers with a plot where their utilitarian revenge threatens to completely undo their aims.

Although J. Douglas Canfield argues that Rustan's "villainy merely abets the ambition of the deceitful Roxolana" (*Heroes and States* 29), Orrery clearly points out that the statesmen's ambitions have put them in danger. When the viziers appeal to Roxolana to help preserve them, she affirms, "What you design'd, Ambition made you do," and practically exonerates herself of any crime by telling the viziers, "You did the Plot contrive to kill his Son; / At which I but conniv'd to save my own" (IV.i.104).[162] Achmat's reminder that "ambitious Rustan" devised "the design / (In hope to gain her favour)" reinforces that Rustan plotted Mustapha's death in order to advance his position in the court (V.i.119).[163] The play demonstrates that the viziers, not Roxolana, must be sacrificed to right the wrongs they have caused. In the end, the viziers' evil designs bring about their torturous deaths, and Orrery clearly relates this fall to corrupt ambitions. After Rustan and Pyrrhus urge the sultan to quickly execute Mustapha before the mob might overthrow the sultan's guards and free

Mustapha, the viziers exit and never grace the stage again. Orrery leaves the explication of their demise to Roxolana's eunuchs, who state that the villains have been put to death. Through discourse the viziers rose to power, and through language the audience finally learns of their fatal downfall.

Even after the viziers' deaths, Orrery continues to condemn their plotting, and he isolates the high stakes of their ambitions: filicide and civil war. Rustan and Pyrrhus' plotting encourages the sultan's imprisonment and execution of Mustapha, which in turn leads to mutiny and civil war. Achmat points out the heartbreak of an insurrection that is first waged on behalf of a murdered monarch, and then develops into a national tragedy about fathers who murder sons:

> Some, who had kill'd their Sons, more tears did shed
> For their own guilt, then that their Sons were dead;
> Guilt wrought by Fate, which had their valour mov'd
> Against that Prince whom they for valour lov'd. (V.i.119)

Achmat's narration of the war and Solyman's description of the sixty thousand troops killed on "this bloody day" (V.i.120) reveal how civil war can result from individualistic ambition. This is one of the play's core lessons: if monarchs are to prevent the kinds of violence displayed in *Mustapha*, they must recognize the corrupt advice of counselors.

Ultimately, the play exposes that Rustan's 'study of what revenge can do' has nothing to do with exacting a revenge plot that would punish a wrongdoer for a crime or injury, but reads as a clever attempt at self-preservation followed by self-

promotion. The viziers' rhetorical manipulation of the revenge trope, in which they prey upon a monarch's fears, eventually effects a very tangible example of a bloody revenge that results in filicide, civil war, and the potential overthrow of monarchy altogether. If *Mustapha* was meant was to assuage concerns in the mid-1660s about monarchy by suggesting to "audiences that all will be well if no one meddles" in affairs of the state as Elaine McGirr argues (43), then we should read Orrrey's punishment of the viziers as a warning about the deadly consequences of men who meddle in monarchs' lives and intervene in the succession.[164]

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Like *Mustapha*, Elkanah Settle's *Cambyses King of Persia* (1671) stages the intersection of statesmen's ambitions and denied monarchical rights: it portrays the seizure of a tyrant's empire first by a man posing as his dead brother, and then by a court favorite who murders the tyrant and usurps an empire from both monarch and imposter-usurper. The play has a complicated production history that casts doubt on its theatrical run. The Duke's Men likely staged *Cambyses* in January 1671 at Lincoln's Inn Fields and then in July 1671 at Oxford.[165] The play might also have been revived in the 1674-5 and 1692 seasons when the play was reprinted. The editors of *The London Stage* find John Downes' record of *Cambyses'* first staging to be problematic. Downes suggests that *Cambyses* was the first play acted in 1666, before James Shirley's *The Grateful Servant*, and that it was popular enough to hold a six-day run with a full audience. However, *London Stage* editor, William Van Lennep, indicates that the play was staged first in the 1670/1 season, and he doubts

that the play ran for six days, given the record of other staged plays during the week.[166] Either *Cambyses* was not staged on January 10, 1671, or it was not as popular as Downes' records detail.

While Derek Hughes labels *Cambyses* a success, he casts Settle as "an author whose incompetence in every sphere of dramatic construction and linguistic expression was no bar to a serious and radical interest in problems of authority, though it sometimes makes deliberate complexity hard to distinguish from inadvertent confusion" (*English Drama* 85). Although the play is named after Cambyses, it focuses on schemes engineered by Prexaspes, a duplicitous court favorite who climbs his way to the top of the Persian Empire.[167] Settle's first foray into drama offers an image of a statesman who performs the part of loyal subject but truly acts in his own best interest in a plot that is as confusing and complex as Hughes observes. Settle's Prexaspes makes his complex assault on authority as a murderer, liar, and trickster; and he believes that he deserves to rule an empire, contrary to the customs of royal inheritance that would bar him from legitimately acquiring a throne.

Settle's characterization of Prexaspes speaks to the cultural politics of dramatic revision. In altering Herodotus' sympathetic portrayal in *The Histories* of the faithful Prexaspes, Settle breaks with literary tradition and creates a character that epitomizes the evil counselor trope on the Restoration stage. In contrast to a cruel, insane Cambyses, Herodotus' Prexaspes is an eminent countryman who is devoted to Cambyses even after the tyrant has murdered his son; one sign of this loyalty consists of fulfilling the king's order to murder his brother.[168] In the Herodotean tale

Prexaspes has his country's best interest at heart when he exposes the imposter-ruler who has ascended the throne. According to Herodotus, Prexaspes remorsefully reveals to the Persians that he has murdered the real Smerdis, asks the Persians to recover their kingdom from the Magi and imposter-usurper, and then hurls himself to his death from a tower as a sacrifice for his sins.[169]

While we do not know the exact source from which Settle draws his tale of Cambyses, Smerdis, and Prexaspes, Settle would have been familiar with Herodotus' well-known narration of the tale. In 1654, Samuel Clarke mentions Cambyses' drunkenness and murder of Prexaspes' son in *A Mirrour or Looking-Glasse both for Saints and Sinners*, but he says little more. According to Bridget Orr, Clarke also wrote in 1664 a history of Cyrus, Cambyses' father, entitled *The Life and Death of Cyrus the Great*. Settle suggests in his drama's postscript that he did not read Thomas Preston's 1570 tragicomedy, *Cambises, King of Percia*. A translation of Herodotus' *Histories* in 1584 might have inspired Settle's tale, as Herodotus' account offers the closest evidence for a source. In the postscript printed with the play in 1671 Settle indicates that he had help in writing the beginning of the play but that he did not take his story "out of an obsolete Tragi-Comedy, called, *Cambyses, King of Persia;* a Play which [he] had never heard till this had been Acted" (88).[170]

Settle adapts what Mabel L. Lang terms, the "Herodotean Janus-agent" tale, which depicts an individual who "is ordered to do something and ends by doing the opposite" (202).[171] Settle's portrayal transforms a former image of the faithful servant into an aggressively deceitful rebel; he rewrites the Herodotean narrative to

highlight Prexaspes' role as a mastermind who uses revenge to advance a complicated plan that would dethrone monarchs and place an illegitimate ruler on the throne. In purposefully vilifying Prexaspes, Settle alters Herodotus' ancient Greek characterization of the court favorite to emphasize a problematic late seventeenth-century English image of subjecthood in the power-hungry figure of the statesman. *Cambyses* reflects the kinds of concerns about monarchy that the playwright will continue to address in his tragic drama of the 1670s and '80s, but here Settle focuses his attention on the rise and fall of dangerous statesmen.

At the heart of the play is the statesman's ambition to rule, which is first manifested in Prexaspes' scheme to raise an imposter to the throne and eventually brings about the deaths of both rulers so that he can seize the throne for himself. In the early moments of the play, Settle offers telling insight into Prexaspes' motives for his plots. Act I provides evidence for what could develop into a conventional dramatic revenge plot: Cambyses offers to kill Prexaspes for failing to murder his brother, Smerdis, and this threat appears at first to supply the villain with a motive for revenge (pride and self-preservation). Prexaspes' response in aside to Cambyses' threat, however, reveals that while the monarch's words anger him, they do not intimidate him:

> How, not believ'd! Have I so oft, for this,
> Obey'd his rage, and bloody Cruelties?
> When Rapes and Murders were but common sin;
> Such heats of blood have but my pastime bin.

> And, in requital, I'm thus far arriv'd,
> I find a Tyrants Favourite's short-liv'd.
> My Death he threatens; Since he does distrust
> My faith and Loyalty, it were but just,
> That he should find me false who thinks me so:
> Nor am I bred so tame, or born so low,
> To be out-brav'd by Kings. (I.i.4-5)

Prexaspes' complaint speaks to the drastic measures that court favorites take to ingratiate themselves with royalty and also of the shifting tides of favor in a court. It also addresses a desire for upward mobility as it shows the pride of a man who believes that he deserves more than his position in the court allows him and will not be "out-brav'd by Kings." Consequently, the protest insinuates that the middle-manager statesman has become corrupt: here Prexaspes justifies future destructive behavior by arguing that another person's lack of trust in him authorizes deceptiveness.

The scene further directs us to one of the play's defining revelations about the statesman's self-interest—"revenge" reads as a specious excuse for ambition. This is best exemplified at the end of Act I, Scene i, when Prexaspes proclaims: "Happy occasion. Now I may pursue / Both my Revenge, and my Ambition too" (I.i.5). Spoken as he reads a letter from the imposter, these two lines clarify Prexaspes' premeditated scheme, in which ambition and utilitarian revenge are partnered if not identical plots. At this moment Prexaspes formulates his design to punish Cambyses

in terms of vengeance, but Prexaspes set in motion the conspiracy to dethrone the emperor long before Cambyses slighted him. Here the play first appropriates the concept of revenge. Settle has taken a slain son out of the equation, therefore removing any possibility that Prexaspes' vow could qualify as blood revenge.[172] Instead, Prexaspes' invocation of "revenge" speaks to his anger and arrogance as motives for future harmful measures against Cambyses. Rather than a prideful revenge, in fact, we find that his ambition to control the Persian Empire motivates his actions; vengeance veils Prexaspes' reasons for causing Cambyses' fall from power. In these terms, Prexaspes' *post factum* summons of revenge props his intentions to usurp the Persian throne. Settle revises a dramatic depiction of revenge as he empties the signifier of its honorific potency. In this example, revenge has been strategically evacuated of its conventional meaning as it comes to function as a trope of criminal ambition. Settle redefines the function of the very term, *revenge*, as Prexaspes' puts revenge in conversation with a determination to usurp the throne.[173]

A closer examination of the language of the play shows that the invocation of *revenge* and *justice* carries unorthodox meaning for criminals.[174] As in *Mustapha*, *Cambyses* shows villains utilizing the symbology of revenge tales to antagonize and/or coerce monarchs and noblemen into making bad decisions. Like Rustan, Prexaspes preys on an emperor's fears to encourage him to take action against an opponent. In employing a rhetoric of revenge, Prexaspes advises the king to remember his "Empires safety" and urges him to wage war against the imposter because "Conquest, and revenge invites [his] Sword" (IV.i.50). According to

Prexaspes' logic, the imposter has injured Cambyses by stealing his crown, so the king must seek revenge against the imposter. Embedded in this advice, however, is the promise of political gain related to the statesman's own appropriation of revenge. According to Prexaspes, Cambyses' revenge against "Smerdis" will both punish him and allow the monarch to regain his throne. Directing Cambyses to retaliate against the alleged perpetrator shows that Prexaspes publicly claims vengeance as a political tool that emboldens royalty; however, in due course the play reveals that it actually paves the way for the statesman's advancement to the throne. The drama calls attention to the manner in which villainous appropriations of *revenge* and/or *justice* anticipate criminal plans, and in these instances Settle's villains rework a discourse of retribution to suit their sinister purposes.

Cambyses' death scene presents an audience with another opportunity to examine the correlation between ambition and political crisis. While Herodotus' tale notes that Cambyses died of natural causes, Settle crafts a more spectacular death for his tyrant-king: Prexaspes stabs Cambyses to death. The death scene addresses the symbiotic relationship between monarchs and subjects, particularly court favorites, as Cambyses questions, "Did I for this my favours thus dispense, / And give thee being by my influence?" (IV.i.54). Similar to Roxolana's regret for giving Rustan any power in *Mustapha*, Cambyses addresses a key Restoration concern about the ways in which monarchs bestow power, or influence, onto duplicitous right-hand men. Prexaspes' reply evokes the emperor's order to kill his own brother and informs Cambyses that his death reflects his own tyranny: "Ay, Sir, and 'twas from you I

understood / This dextrous way of letting Monarch's Blood" (IV.i.54). As in Act I, Prexaspes suggests that his horrific actions in some way originate from the emperor; but, on the whole, the play ultimately suggests that Prexaspes derives his murderous inclinations from his own desires. If Prexaspes had murdered Cambyses to remove a tyrant from power, this murder would ideally cure a polluted body politic plagued by a tyrant's metaphorically diseased blood. This reading would align with the Herodotean version of Prexaspes. However, Settle's villain does not kill the king in order to purify the Persian Empire. Quite the opposite, the empire repeatedly suffers a kind of tyranny from the turnover of rule from despot to imposter to mercenary statesman. Ultimately, Cambyses' death scene visualizes the results of the statesman's instrumental, utilitarian revenge, which leads to bloodshed/the loss of royal blood. Through Cambyses' final words, Settle proffers a valuable lesson about the power monarchs grant to trusted men: "Oh, that I could but so much pow'r recall, / As but to rise, and crush thee in my fall"; "I would revenge my wrongs" (IV.i.54).[175] Cambyses' hypothetical invocation of revenge echoes the dramatic trope wherein a character cries for vengeance in the hopes of 'righting' a wrong done to him, but the play shows that the dying king has no means of avenging himself. Cambyses speaks of a desire for revenge, but he cannot seek it.

Characters in *Cambyses* either do not or cannot commit revenge in the customary sense of the term, yet the play repeatedly situates "revenge" as a viable form of discourse used by the statesman to achieve political advantage. We find another example of this issue when after Cambyses' murder shrewd Prexaspes sees

the captive princess, Mandana, with her dagger pointed at her breast and constructs a blood revenge tale to frame her for Cambyses' murder. In this scene the play offers a meta-theatrical portrayal of revenge: Prexaspes concocts a revenge narrative for his audience—Darius, Otanes, and other nobleman—because he understands all too well that Mandana's *revenge* would be a powerful motive for the murder of the king. After all, in the recent past Cambyses ordered her father's murder and seized her empire. Prexaspes "Welcome[s] this happy opportunity" to steal her dagger, stab Cambyses with it, and then offer up *his* assassination as a product of *her* revenge (54). In the following passage, Prexaspes specifically pontificates upon Cambyses' murder as the product of Mandana's blood revenge:

> What caus'd her rage is plainly understood;
> The deep resentments of her Father's blood,
> Her Slavery, and her lost Crown, and more,
> The hate she to Cambyses's Passion bore. (IV.i.57)

In staging Prexaspes' fabrication of Mandana's blood revenge, Settle isolates another victim of Prexaspes' crimes. Again we see a statesman capitalizing on the trope of revenge. Prexaspes' displacement of blame onto Mandana excuses him of regicide; additionally, he "kills" the princess when he sets her up as the murderer because anyone who kills a king will be executed. Settle's use of revenge in this scene is twofold: Prexaspes secures the throne by eliminating a rival and punishes Mandana for denying him affection. Before accusing her of murder, he calls her the "just Revenger of [his] injurd Love" and proclaims "my Revenge I'le end" as he attempts

to stab her when she refuses to kill herself (IV.i.55). While this latter example of vindication reflects a performance of revenge waged at the level of pride, Prexaspes' invention of a blood revenge tale benefits him more than this passionate response to his scorned affection. It affords him the "happy opportunity" to advance himself in the Persian court; and more than that, Prexaspes' "revenge" against Mandana facilitates the double-agent's masquerade as a model subject. When he is caught attempting to murder Mandana, he feigns an image of himself as the king's avenger. He claims that he was "Righting [Cambyses'] wrongs upon his Murd'rers heart" (IV.i.57). Of course, this statement is highly ironic; he murdered Cambyses. Prexaspes' use of revenge reads like a subversive form of self-fashioning in which the statesman capitalizes on the honorific image of avenger to both absolve himself of wrongdoing and to trick the Persian nobles into seeing him as a venerated countryman.

Settle extends a utilization of revenge to also act as alibi. An audience knows that Prexaspes has murdered Smerdis, but when Darius and Otanes confront him about Cambyses' claim that Prexaspes murdered his brother, the court favorite *again* relies upon the power of a revenge tale to exonerate himself of any crime. According to Prexaspes a dying Cambyses manufactured the story of Smerdis' death so that the nobleman would "revenge pursue, / Which now Death will not give him leave to do" (IV.i.59). In other words, Prexaspes claims that Cambyses wanted to seek revenge against Smerdis for usurping his throne, but could not do so in death; therefore, the tyrant fabricated a lie about the 'real' Smerdis' murder in the hope that the noblemen

would punish Prexaspes and the imposter. This scene provides yet another theatrical example of Prexaspes' redeployment of revenge. Prexaspes' revenge rhetoric, rather than revenge plotting, allows him to cast himself as victim and hero simultaneously. Prexaspes plays into the noblemen's fears of tyrant's revenge while performing the part of an honorable subject. In this re-scripting of revenge, Prexaspes carves out another method for gaining favor in a court. Settle's statesmen, then, is dangerous not only because he murders monarchs and illegitimately gains power, but also because he manages to trick honest men into deeming him trustworthy and loyal to the nation. This issue of duplicity is ripe for illustration on the early Restoration stage because it addresses the growing struggles both between courtiers in Charles II's court and among members of parliament vying for increased political power, literally at the expense of the king.

In keeping with early Restoration tragic drama's aims of valorizing royalty, the play reminds its audience that subjects should respect the institution of hereditary monarchy. Although Cambyses represents an image of fallen kingship, Mandana's response to Cambyses' murder shows respect for monarchy, even though the monarch was a tyrant: "Though thou wert wicked, yet thou wert a King" (IV.i.55). Contrary to Mandana's valorization of monarchy, Prexaspes' monologues on his personal worth blatantly undercut the conventions of inherited rule. Prexaspes consciously privileges treason as a positive form of self-advancement: "well, by Treasons thou didst grow, / They made thee great, and shall preserve thee so" (IV.i.60). In moments like these,

the play traces the problematic connection between negative actions, such as treason, and positive outcomes for the villain.

Settle's positions his villain's utilization of treason and vengeance as something politically worse than revenge plotting itself. For this reason, the villain who manipulates vengeance—a form of retaliation that the Restoration stage has already shown to be a problem—must be penalized to ensure that good leadership will return to restore order to an empire. But first, the end of the play reveals what power in the wrong hands truly looks like as Prexaspes finds a way to trick noblemen Darius, Otanes, and Artaban into giving over their armies to him and making him the protector of the Persian Empire. Reminiscent of Cromwell, Prexaspes endangers the lives of royalty and orders their executions. But Settle rewrites an alternative to an Interregnum as Thermnes, wearing the disguise of an executioner, saves the noblemen from their deaths and seizes Prexaspes. The end of the play sets out to restore power to rightful royal hands, and Settle contrasts the villainous statesmen's eternal thirst for fame and power with the newly bestowed monarch, Darius' principled model of rule. Darius' narrative of justice trumps Prexaspes' self-interested utilization of vengeance, and Settle reiterates the play's cautionary tale about the pitfalls of power and personal ambition. In a final critique of this kind of ambition and the means by which men raise themselves to positions of power, Darius contextualizes how a throne should be attained: "Others rise by Ambition, I by Love" (V.iii.86). In this one line, Settle situates a hero at the center of a prosperous system of governance, while relegating an ambitious statesman to the status of Other.

In Act I, Prexaspes complains that "a Tyrants Favourite's short-lived," but in the play's final act we learn that an unlawful attainment of authority is fleeting, as well. When Settle finally hands down official judgment for the villain's crimes, he depicts a demented man who schemes to achieve fame even after death. After Prexaspes has been ordered to death, Settle reinforces the destructive consequences of ambitions at the level of the individual psyche. Stabbing himself in a final act of rebellion, Prexaspes vows that his death will engender an apocalypse: "I'le mount into the Sky, / And hang a blazing Comet in the Air: / That thus the World Me when I'm dead may eat," he promises, picturing himself as a natural disaster with lasting consequences (V.iii.84). Like a comet or earthquake, "[O]'re the Earth new horrours I contract," Prexaspes declares: "Still threatening, what I cannot live to act" (V.iii.84). The schemer's final words remind us of the rhetoric of Milton's vengeful Satan or the remnants of rambling, prophetic puritans' doomsday predictions, but more than that, Prexaspes reads as a loquacious villain who lived by manipulating men and murdering monarchs—indeed through capitalizing on both their trusts and fears. The play's final lesson about this ambitious statesman directs an audience to criticize his ambitions as a negative example of individualism and to avoid his illegitimate aggrandizement of power.

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Settle's *The Empress of Morocco* is one of the Restoration's most spectacular tragedies that depict rulers' misplaced trust in advisors. First staged in July 1673 by the Duke's Men at Dorset Garden and then at court, the production included an

extravagant set design, a song and dance around a real palm tree, a masque, and a final torture scene with villains in a prison hanging on spikes.[176] The drama illustrates how two plotters, Laula, the empress of Morocco, and Crimalhaz, her lover, murder monarchs (including two kings) and momentarily turn over rule of Morocco to a criminal.[177] After the play was successfully staged in 1673, John Dryden, Thomas Shadwell, and John Crowne in the 1674 *Notes and Observations on The Empress of Morocco* called Settle's play a "Rapsody of non-sense" and accused Settle of being a poetaster who simply created wicked characters.[178] The invective criticizes everything from Settle's set designs to his writing style, and Settle replied to the harangue in his own *Notes and Observations on The Empress of Morocco Revised*, which not only defended his work, but also criticized the work of Dryden and other heroic tragedians. While these playwrights disliked Settle's writing, he garnered the support of renowned aristocrats in Charles II's court. The Earl of Rochester wrote a prologue for the play's performance at court spoken by Lady Elizabeth Howard; the invitation to give a court performance was itself a significant endorsement. The play inspired Thomas Duffet and the King's Men to stage a farce, also entitled, *The Empress of Morocco*, mocking the play five months after its premier. Maximillian Novak offers a possible class-based reason for Settle's contemporaries' disdain. Novak remarks, "What was unforgivable was [Settle's] descent from a family of barbers" (xii). If Settle's birthright had anything to do with the dramatists' derision of him, it would appear that Settle might be one of the "midling sort" which Dryden refers to in his 1673 *Marriage a la Mode* dedication to

Rochester about malicious wits looking to inveigle their way into a prestigious society of poets.

In his *Notes and Observations Revised* Settle specifically relates that none of his characters are merely wicked.[179] He qualifies that "all the Murders, and Treasons [Laula] commits through the Play, are either for her *own safety*, or her favourite *Crimalhaz his advancement* to the Crown" (66). In explaining Crimalhaz's behavior he explains, "*Gold* or *Ambition* […] animated *Crimalhaz* to be a *Rebel*" (49). From this description we can infer that Settle associates ambition, not mere wickedness, with rebellion and characters' plotting to murder monarchs in *The Empress of Morocco*.[180] Although *The Empress of Morocco* calls attention to the dangers that develop out of the title character's sexual passions, we should not overlook the devastating results of a statesman's treasonous ascension to the throne. Rather than simply studying the play for its portrayal of female villainy, as many twentieth-century critics have done, we should examine Settle's representation of political ambitions and the ways in which they lead to regicide and revolution.

A number of scholars have imagined why Settle stages this Moroccan drama in 1673. Derek Hughes relates the play's staging to a "national mood […] associated with a growing mistrust of the King's aims in the Third Dutch War," among other things (95). Hughes also suggests that English concerns about James' religion and marriage to a Catholic queen would have affected playwrights' depictions of this "watershed" year "in Charles's reign, in which designs to establish popery and arbitrary government first became apparent" (95). Settle might have also associated

characters' drives for conquest and usurpation with contemporary politics and economic ambitions concerning Tangier, a port under the control of the English in the Restoration. In considering England's anxieties about its economic relations in Tangier in the 1670s, it is easy to see why Settle chose to locate his drama in Morocco.[181] Settle's letter to the Earl of Norwich states that he presents this play to him as a response to his "honourable Embassy into Africa." Orr attributes the timeliness of the staging to Narborough's campaign, and she offers a detailed description of England's relationship with Tangier and the Moroccan ambassador's visits to England. Whether or not the ambassador saw the drama, it is plausible that English colonization affected Settle's decision to set his play in Morocco. In the very least, Settle's Moroccan setting allows him to stage with greater freedom Restoration concerns about a contradiction between men's birthrights, including the inheritance of thrones, and their personal worth.

Like *Cambyses*, *The Empress of Morocco* situates court favorites as malcontents who are unsatisfied with anything less than being kings because they believe that they deserve the opportunity to rule. Crimalhaz, a name that will later carry significant allegorical weight in the play as a sign of criminality, offers a critique of royalty that privileges ambition as a sign of strength. Alone, Crimalhaz disparages the ease with which royalty "advance" to a throne:

> Let Cowards to their Fathers Thrones advance,
> Be Great and Powerful by Inheritance.
> No Laurels by descent my Brow adorn;

But what gains Crowns. I am to Courage born,
Ambition is the rise of Souls, like mine.
Those Wreaths my Birth does want, my Brain shall win.
They in advance to Greatness glorious prove,
Who out of the dull track of Birth-right move.
Birth-right, the Prop of an unpurchas'd Name,
A weak Alliance to an elder Fame.
No Glory by Descent is never worn;
Men are to Worth and Honour Rais'd, not Born. (II.i.12-13)

This passage contrasts an effortless inheritance of a crown with an individual's aggressive striving to raise himself to a throne. Crimalhaz's words express an anti-royalist view of authority, one that suggests that men should ascend a throne because of courage, strength, and intelligence, as opposed to tradition, bloodline, and inheritance. Based on experience instead of heredity, this notion of kingship denies the divine right of monarchy, such as those imposed upon subjects by the Stuarts for most of the seventeenth century, and proposes instead a discourse of rights that allows men of heritage lower than royal blood to gain a crown if they show leadership.

Whereas Crimalhaz's theory of rule espouses a paradigm of elective leadership, Settle clarifies why an audience should not valorize the statesman's advancement to a throne. Crimalhaz's henchman, Hametalhaz, explains:

To him, who Climbs by Blood, no track seems Hard:
The Sence of Crimes is lost in the Reward:

Aspirers neither Guilt nor Danger Dread:

No path so rough Ambition dares not Tread. (III.ii.33)

Monarchs ascend a throne via bloodline, but the statesman climbs by bloodshed. When private desire outweighs public good, and rewards outweigh crimes, men are left to fight for their lives in what sounds like a Hobbesian state of nature. Crimalhaz validates his own political ambitions by manipulating such a state: "Nature first made Man wild, savage, strong, / And his Blood hot, then when the world was Young"; "If Infant-times such Rising-valours bore, / Why should not Riper Ages now do more?" (III.ii.33). In this conception of a Hobbesian society, man can gain leadership through competition and bloody conquest. Once Crimalhaz has become a *de facto* monarch near the end of the play, his monologue, in which he enters dressed "as King," reinforces this claim: "Though on the Blood of Kings my Throne I've built, / The World my Glory sees, but not my Guilt. / Mysterious Majesty best fits a Throne" (V.i.56). Hametalhaz and Crimalhaz's method of obtaining political power foreshadows perilous consequences for the monarchical state in the play, showing that *The Empress of Morocco* is a tragedy of monarchy-in-crisis that results from characters' ambition.

Staged in 1673, the play reads as a sign of its turbulent own times: as Restoration historian John Spurr has noted, Charles II's "court was in disarray" and "crisis seemed to be engulfing the government" in 1673 (49, 47).[182] Tragic dramas of the 1670s take up these issues in their portrayals of disordered courts and images of "monarchy in disarray" along with it, as Jessica Munns has argued. In Act IV, Scene

i, the play carefully demonstrates how plotters' strengths and monarchs' weaknesses lead to such a state. The scene puts into conversation Crimalhaz's duplicity and Muly Labas' misguided trust. In this scene, Muly Labas and two lords suggest that a monarch's misplaced power has opened the door for treason. In a passage that sounds very similar to other play's laments about the ways in which monarchs give statesmen power, a Moroccan lord tells his king that Crimalhaz "does pursue / That Treason which you lent him Pow'r to do" (IV.i.34). He also explicates this corruption of power in showing how one man's treason has the potential to erect an entire army of rebels:

> he by your Gold
> Has Rais'd new Forces, and Confirm'd the Old.
> With that he Bribes your Army to his Cause;
> And after him new Trains of Rebells draws. (IV.i.34)[183]

Settle pinpoints the essential problem with statesmen's ambitions as a second lord confirms, "I am afraid [Crimalhaz's] Thoughts fly High; his Dreams / Have little less than Empires for their Theams" (IV.i.34). Here we should recall Settle's assertion in *Notes and Observations of the Empress of Morocco Revised* about Crimalhaz's desire for wealth and his ambitions to advance to the crown. We can connect this abuse of power with Charles II's own trouble with his ministers in 1673. As Spurr explains, "many of them were as concerned with their own interests" as that of the king's (49). Unlike Muly Hamet, the example of the loyal general in the play who protects the king's interests and his empire, Crimalhaz is a self-interested minister who strives to

steal a king's empire. Settle could not make this point about Crimalhaz's power any clearer when the king explains that Crimalhaz will "use [his] Pow'r / Not to Promote, but to Usurp [his] Crown. / Pow'r swoln too High destroys" (IV.i.35). When monarchs place power in the wrong hands, that same power hinders those whom it is supposed to benefit. As Muly Labas laments, mislaid power engenders monsters and gives rise to treason. The king recognizes this as he asks his lords, "On what Ill subjects I my Favours cast?" and bemoans:

> Him high in Pow'r, and Honours I have plac' d.
> Kings Bounties act like the Suns Courteous smiles,
> Whose rayes produce kind Flowers on fruitful Soyles:
> But cast on barren Sands, and baser Earth,
> Only breed Poysons, and give Monsters Birth. (IV.i.34)

In this scene the drama addresses the serious consequences of placing disloyal subjects in powerful positions. Only through proper advisement such as that from good counselors like the lords can a monarch become a better reader of political power plays—and plays *about* power.

The play's inclusion of "revenge" further reveals the ways in which statesmen use newly, albeit illegitimately, gained power to manipulate others. On the one hand, the play identifies the invocation of a revenge vow as a gesture of friendship and honor to one's king in Act III; but it also shows how characters use revenge against one another. Whereas Muly Hamet vows revenge on behalf of Laula's injured honor and the king's wrath, he is quickly forced to critique the king's mislaid vengeance.

After Muly Labas condemns Muly Hamet for rape (a story fabricated by Laula and Crimalhaz), Muly Hamet identifies his imprisonment as a sign of the king's "pointless Vengeance" (III.i.22). Eventually, Muly Labas' vengeance causes him to put his trust in false Crimalhaz, who convinces the king to give him control of Muly Hamet's army after the king jails the general. This vengeance implicitly plays some part in both Muly Labas' loss of his empire and his death. First, he incorrectly interprets Laula and Crimalhaz's evidence against Muly Hamet as truth, and then he heeds his mother's advice to participate in a masque that costs him both life and crown. In this moment, Muly Labas' misreading of other characters' motives seems to be his greatest weakness.

The Empress of Morocco is a study in monarchs' catastrophic misreading of social climbers' passions and ambitions, which Settle attempts to correct for his audience through theatrical strategies. Act IV truly illuminates this problem in its staging of disguised characters and disguised motives for "revenge." The masque, a theatrical trope so often employed in earlier seventeenth-century tragedies to stage revenge, affords Laula an opportunity to appropriate age-old visual iconography of vengeance. The empress convinces Morena to participate in the masque but warns her that the actor playing Orpheus will be Crimalhaz, who intends to steal her away and ravish her. Likewise, Muly Labas is informed that Crimalhaz will abduct his queen and that he must protect her from Crimalhaz by playing in the masque and carrying Morena away before Crimalhaz can abduct her. The results of the scheme are fatal. Morena kills her husband instead of Crimalhaz. No character seeks

revenge in the masque; rather his villainous empress, a smart reader of its theatrical productions, uses the masque to deceptively pave the way for Crimalhaz's unopposed ascension to the throne. The masque becomes a tropological device in which Laula tricks Muly Labas' wife, Morena, into murdering him and then allows her to protect Crimalhaz and herself from accusations of regicide. Instead of including a masque as a device to bolster a character's vengeance, Settle alters it as a way for Laula to write a revenge narrative, so to speak, that exploits fears of divine vengeance. The empress understands all too well that people dread Heaven's vengeance: "Let those, whom pious Conscience awes, forbear, / And stop at crimes because they Vengeance fear" (IV.iii.45). She intends to use this fear to her advantage when she orders her physicians to poison Morena, which would assumedly change her skin from white to black. To make Morena appear guilty of the sin of regicide, the empress plans to point to Morena's blackened skin as the "mark of Vengeance" from "the hand of Heaven" (IV.iii.52). Here Laula caters to a fiction that suggests that a guilty person will wear a black mark of vengeance, invoking the idea God's vengeance; Romans 12:19 states that vengeance belongs to God, not man: "Vengeance is mine." Laula's scheme attempts to make "revenge" readable on the body and thus justified as part of a natural or divine plan, but her plot does not originate from what we would conventionally understand as a revenge plot. The empress' actions do not reflect redress for a past crime; her use of "vengeance" sets out to frame a new one by abusing the rights of divine power.

Acts IV and V concentrate on "revenge" as an excuse for criminal ambition, showing that "revenge" actually has nothing to do with a genuine desire for redemption. Crimalhaz's discussions of revenge offer the best example of this point. While Laula pretends to rely on Heaven's vengeance to bring about Morena's death, Crimalhaz offers a phony vow of revenge to persuade her to marry him. He argues:

> to revenge a Murder'd King I'le sound
> This Treason, till the utmost Depth be found:
> And to such pains the Authors I'le condemne,
> That to the World I'le your lost Fame redeem. (IV.iii.53)

This speech *sounds* like an honorable gesture of revenge—Crimalhaz offers to seek revenge against the person responsible for the king's murder, and he claims that he will redeem Morena's reputation—but Crimalhaz's presentation of "revenge" is nothing but a selfish act. Crimalhaz convincingly plays the part of avenger, as Morena's response shows: "A Kings Revenge so brave an act will be, / That you'l at once Oblige both Heaven and Me" (IV.iii.53). However, the scene quickly reveals that Crimalhaz uses revenge as a bargaining chip for romantic obligation. His hollow declaration of vengeance signifies duplicity, for the gallant-turned-monarch neither seeks retribution on behalf of a slain king, nor a widowed queen. Crimalhaz reminds Morena, "I must have more than Thanks for a reward" (IV.iii.53). This explicit qualification of his "revenge" offers Morena ample ground for resistance and offers an alternative:

> Why can't your Arm revenge

A King, without my Heart paid in exchange?
Know though you basely trade with Loyalty,
My Love my Kings revenge does over-buy.
Go, Mercenary man, I will resigne
His Vengeance to the hand of Heaven, not thine. (IV.iii.54)[184]

Morena's reply not only exposes Crimalhaz's motives for vowing revenge, but also exposes the utilitarian logic of transaction that subtends his dark offer. She implies that the only acceptable form of retribution is Heaven's eventual vengeance. Crimalhaz's seemingly heroic offer of revenge is merely an excuse for violence and personal advancement at Morena's expense. Morena's objection to hearts "paid in exchange" gives voice to seventeenth-century attitudes about the perils of revenge as a course of endless and destructive transactions.

Crimalhaz's vows of revenge clearly are spoken in performance of his power play to gain a virtuous woman and the respect of Moroccans. Crimalhaz proposes "revenge" as an equal exchange for Morena's affection; but he also intends it to represent a display of his newfound royal power:

First to Revenge I'le fly,[185]
With Traytours Blood Ile entertain your Eye.
E're you're my Queen, and wear a second Crown,
I'le build a Scaffold first, and then a Throne. (IV.iii.55)

This speech describes revenge in terms of spectacle and entertainment, yet this formulation of revenge is a sign that Crimalhaz's revenge is staged rather than real.

In speaking of a traitor's blood, he refers to Laula even though he clearly is a conspirator, too.[186] Crimalhaz's betrayal of Laula illustrates yet another moment in the play where the criminal ruler uses revenge as an excuse for advancing his goals—here to eliminate an unwanted lover and obtain a new one. In his move from statesman to monarch, Crimalhaz evokes duty to one's nation as a reason for violence. In Act IV Crimalhaz's discourse of vengeance includes all the usual motives for revenge: blood revenge, national revenge, personal injury, and passion. In the following examples, a rhetoric of a nationally required revenge affords him the chance to justify Laula's execution. He proclaims, "My Subjects call for Veng'ance, and I must / To the dead King before my Love be Just" (V.i.57); "A Vengeance hangs o're Nations where they Fall" (V.i.58); and

> Who wears his Crown can best defend his Cause.
> I'le on his Murderer Execute such Laws,
> The Rigour of my Justice shall declare,
> How high I rate that Majesty I weare. (V.i.58)

In these examples, Crimalhaz uses "revenge" to create an image of himself as a good ruler. This impersonation of honor illustrates another dangerous aspect of the statesman's duplicity. The statesman has learned how to construct narratives of honor and revenge that cast him in a positive light, essentially duping everyone around him; in Act III Crimalhaz relied upon creating a false rape narrative that framed Muly Hamet to protect himself from execution, and in Act V he repeatedly uses the trope of revenge to fool members of the court and military into believing him

a hero. But he is not an avenger; he only relies upon the dramatic power of revenge to accomplish his own ends.

Crimalhaz manages to deceive monarchs and then successfully play their parts. Crimalhaz's first acts as monarch clarify what this meta-theatrical performance sounds and looks like. In his first act as monarch Crimalhaz positions himself as a national avenger and pretends to render justice to win both Morena's and his new subjects' approval. He orders his guards to seize Laula and then poison her. In staging this "revenge" Crimalhaz warns the queen-mother, "No Arguments shall save a Traytours Head. / All his Revenge demanded, I have done" (V.i.59). Settle illustrates that Crimalhaz's counterfeit profession of vengeance exacts a real rendering of revenge on stage. An early Restoration image of a passionate, vindictive queen-mother, Laula stabs "Rival" Morena, threatens to stab Crimalhaz the "Traytour," and then stabs herself (V.i.59).[187] The play reinforces the dangers of the queen-mother's revenge popularly critiqued in other Restoration plays, but it undercuts the force of this violence by visually punishing the revenger with a bloody death. In language, the play portends an even bloodier revenge promised in Crimalhaz's second act as monarch. The usurper threatens a gruesome display of vengeance when he Crimalhaz orders Hametalhaz to draw up his forces against Muly Hamet, who has returned from banishment and threatens Crimalhaz's newly acquired throne. Through physical force, Crimalhaz swears to settle "Who's the succesful Rebel" and "write [his] Vengeance in whole streams of Blood" (V.i.62). Crimalhaz's use of vengeance reflects another attempt at solidifying political control, but it also

represents a genuine passion for revenge. This time Crimalhaz's vow of revenge shows genuine vindictiveness; it is a real threat of violence against Muly Hamet, a prince of the blood, for mounting an army against him.

In powerful language and visual spectacle, the end of *Empress of Morocco* identifies revenge as an important element of staging of violence. In addition to the statesman's manipulation of the trope of "revenge," we find characters actually seeking retribution. In Act V, Laula stabs Morena and takes her own life in a moment of revenge, Crimalhaz desires vengeance against Muly Hamet for threatening his rule, and Muly Hamet vows to seek revenge against Crimalhaz on behalf of the slain king and his sister, Mariamne, who Crimalhaz has captured and threatens to ravish.[188] Hametalhaz, a villain converted by love, betrays Crimalhaz "To punish Treason and preserve a Throne" for princess Mariamne who was "Design'd for [Crimalhaz's] ambitions Sacrifice" (V.i.68). This betrayal echoes Crimalhaz's disloyalty to Laula, but the play distinguishes between a betrayal that would restore a crown and the treason that has already jeopardized it. Settle shows that the villain's betrayal is a necessary step in restoring order to the court and exacting justice, even though this process includes the spilling of more blood. The spectacular quality of the play's end represents an urge to make visible the truth about villains' surreptitious designs—both the effects of bad "revenge" and the materiality of it (the body in pain/death).

The end of the play also distinguishes between verbal promises of revenge, including Crimalhaz's pseudo-revenge threats, and the physical consequences of vengeance. Although Crimalhaz argues that "Tortures and Wracks will prove a vain

design" in convincing him to turn over Mariamne without assurance that he can keep the crown (V.i.66), the play demonstrates that Muly Hamet's threat of vengeance is not merely a "vain design." Settle best illustrates the material reality of Muly Hamet's vengeance in the play's final image of violence—Muly Hamet's sensational punishment of Crimalhaz for his crimes. After Muly Hamet seizes Crimalhaz, he orders him "Convey'd to Execution straight" and swears, "[A]s he rose in Blood in Blood shall set" (V.i.68). As the stage directions and the visual images attached to the published play text illustrate, Settle opens his final scene with Crimalhaz's body being "cast down on the Gaunches, being hung on a Wall set with spikes of Iron," as the stage directions note (V.i.70).[189] Settle stages Crimalhaz's torture as a condemnation of a criminal's rise to power through bloodshed. The criminal's blood is shed to account for his corruption of the court and for the blood shed in the play. In Crimalhaz's final appearance in the final moments of the play, Settle reveals that the shedding of blood requires the spilling of more blood, and Crimalhaz's body is offered up as a sign of blood guilt. Crimalhaz's death symbolizes a bloodletting of a poisoned society that needs purification not as revenge but as a clear political statement that revenge itself is suspect in the new order.[190] This point relates well to Crimalhaz's exit speech stated moments prior to his execution. Crimalhaz's final words link personal corruption to a plague:

> may my body rot when I am Dead,
> Till my rank dust has such Contagions bred:
> My Grave may dart forth Plagues, as may strike death

Through the infected Air where thou draw'st breath. (V.i.68)

Like Prexaspes' in *Cambyses*, he vows to carry out in death what he cannot perform in life: "think when dead I yet can Death Convey, / And what my Arm can't act my Ashes may" (V.i.68). Crimalhaz hopes to spread contagion to the Moroccan people after death, a Cromwellian ghost of England's recent political past that still haunted the newly established monarchy. Settle, by making clear the utter hollowness of Crimalhaz's claims to revenge, uses his death to offer Moroccans delivery from the political destruction at hand in a world of ambitious politicians who attempt to undo the claims of monarchy.

The Empress of Morocco ends with a shocking corporeal sacrifice of the villain's body that reads as a testimony of treachery and its consequences. Settle's play both represents another/Other culture in Morocco, and also allegorizes English concerns about monarchy and citizenship. Bridget Orr reminds us that *The Empress of Morocco* and other plays located in the Levant, allow dramatists to furnish "a contemporary mirror, not simply a historical imaginary, in which local political problems, whether those of succession or the relation between the Crown and private citizens, could be re-imagined, explored and resolved" (61). As Ayanna Thompson has noted in *Performing Race and Torture on the Early Modern Stage*, Crimalhaz's torture "serves to stabilize the significance of the material" culture of the play and world it represents off the stage as "the audience is allowed to witness the usurper's physical abjection" (40).[191] This abjection has strong political purchase for theater-going Londoners with fresh memories of civil war. The end of the play depicts this

torture as a positive form of violence that allows an audience to literally view the fatal "reward" of a criminal's "Treason," as Abdelacador, Muly Hamet's friend, explains. Abdelacador's purpose in the final moments of the play is to teach Muly Hamet and the audience how the spectacle of Crimalhaz's torture punishes treason, murder, and usurpation; it also visually sets the villain's broken body in contrast to the honor of kingship:

> See the reward of Treason; Death's the thing
> Distinguishes th'Usurper from the King.
> Kings are immortal, and from Life remove,
> From their Low'r Thrones to wear new Crowns above:
> But Heav'n for him has scarce that bliss in store:
> When an Usurper dies he raigns no more. (V.i.70)

In this scene Crimalhaz's body hanging on spikes is reminiscent of what Susan B. Iwanisziw calls "the bloody scaffold and dismembered corpse" and "the Stuart insignia of power" that the monarchy dramatically stamped on the people at the beginning of the Restoration (136). As the final scene of the play visually illustrates, a traitor's tortured body reflects the power of royal authority over the criminal's sins. Verbally and visually *The Empress of Morocco* is one of Restoration drama's most threatening examples of personal ambition and functions as an excellent example of the kind of punishment plotters are in for if they do not keep their criminal desires in check. Like Orrery, Settle shows how vulnerable the new political order can be to the rhetoric of revenge. Both playwrights paint revenge as a theatrical device that masks

the ambitious plots of those who have no real loyalty to traditional power, only ambitious and selfish futures that could throw the nation into chaos.

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Even though by the mid-1670s Englishmen had politically curtailed monarchical absolutism, they still hailed inherited monarchy as a viable system of rule. Restoration tragic drama ratifies monarchs' birthrights and censures illegitimate intrusion into this closed system of rule. Plays such as *Mustapha*, *Cambyses*, and *Empress of Morocco* stage a conflict between royal birthrights and an unwelcome sign of political subjectivity, in which men move themselves out of subjecthood by making monarchy a means to an end of personal and political advancement. This desire for advancement reflects the pressure between the competing ideologies of monarchy on the one hand and national self-rule on the other that were uneasily married in the restoration of Charles II. That pressure comes out through characters that find themselves in the middle, the middle-management positions of the new political order. Orrery and Settle dramatize both the unbearableness of this sense of being in the middle and its manifold temptations, as well as the ideologically unbearableness of this middle way, the compromise of parliamentary and monarchical authority that had become the "new normal." In connecting social climbers' ambitions to a discourse of revenge, dramatists depict *revenge* as a tropological device that shows a movement from traditional networks of kinship and obligation to the modern and political possibilities of "stage revenge" to justify one's political aspirations. Primarily, these pseudo-revengers do not seek "revenge" in a

traditional sense of the term, but understand how to use “revenge” to their advantage. This collapse of stage revenge jeopardizes a nation as it both endangers monarchs’ lives and puts a nation or empire at risk of descending into disorder.

Conclusion: Epilogue

First to Revenge I'le fly, / With Traytours Blood I'le entertain your Eye.

Elkanah Settle, *The Empress of Morocco*

Elkanah Settle's body of work exemplifies that revenge, whether served hot or cold, makes for some fine entertainment. Settle's spectacular *Empress of Morocco* speaks to the most visual function of revenge on stage: plays containing vengeance dazzle an audience with a magnificent condemnation of plotters who sometimes appear in the guises of heroes, but mostly materialize as villains. Revenge in Restoration drama does not merely represent visual spectacle; it symbolizes the "spectacular politics" of the period, to refer to Paula Backscheider's précis of the relationship between literature and the construction of power in the long eighteenth century. It traces the anxieties of an age that was witnessing both changes in the time-honored traditions of absolutist monarchy, and the rise of a kind of political factionalism that would affect the ways in which England's leaders would be chosen in the future.

While the dissertation's arc might suggest that dramatic portrayals of vengeance in the Restoration move from blood revenge popularly staged in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century to a kind of vengeance-as-ambition prevalent at the end of the seventeenth century, the overarching narrative of revenge on the Restoration stage is much more complicated than a simple linear formulation. Instead, this project concludes that revenge does not neatly reflect a causal

relationship wherein vengeance in English drama transitions exclusively from one manifestation to another, but reflects an ongoing negotiation of vengeance framed by historical context and changing social conditions in the Restoration. In an attempt to demonstrate this affiliation, this project charts revenge as it relates to concepts relevant to Restoration culture and drama throughout the period, including notions of kin(g)ship, attitudes about women's bodies and sexuality, and fears about social climbers. The project examines anxieties concerning the privileges of aristocratic and royal bloodlines against that of men and women, who question their subject(ed) positions and utilize revenge to rise up through rebellion and usurpation of a throne. Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* delineates in prose how seditious passions could lead to warfare, and Restoration drama theatricalizes how these passions, in this case revenge, have the ability to produce revolution and anarchy.

Restoration drama reflects not only the "spectacular politics" of its age, but also the "changing fictions of authority" that develop over the duration of the period, as Susan Staves has noted. Vengeance puts monarchy at risk of overthrow and oftentimes threatens to place unwelcome rulers—subjects who illegitimately become sovereigns—on the throne. When men ascend a throne and/or head a nation as a result of seeking revenge—even figures hailed for greatness such as Lucius in Ravenscroft's *Titus Andronicus* or Lucius Junius Brutus in Lee's play of the same name—we have to question their paths to leadership. More importantly, Restoration drama shows us audiences the schemes of Janus-faced plotting men and women who dwell close to monarchs, sometimes even in their own beds, and have access to the

king's body and crown. If Restoration theatre warns playgoers not to seek revenge because of its repercussions for person and state, it surely warns a monarch to take a closer look at the men and women who affect his decision-making.

While drama, according to Davenant and Dryden's conception, should teach men and women how to be good citizens, it also must show them examples of bad subjects who must be penalized for their rebellious behaviors. Whether or not revengers are cast as "dispossessed" heroes compelled by honorable motives or villains spurred by ambitious intentions to commit violence, Restoration tragic drama ultimately castigates vengeful men and women for violating social decorum and disrupting the governing status quo. Ultimately, a study of revenge in Restoration tragic drama brings us back to what J. Douglas Canfield has discussed in *Heroes and States* about the impact of the theatre:

> The cultural work that Restoration tragedy performs is primarily to legitimate aristocracy's natural right to rule states through the heroes that its genealogy guarantees. To preserve both hierarchy and the genealogy that produces it, subjects, friends, wives, and even mistresses must remain loyal, constant—a system of affiance cemented by oaths and sanctioned by a divine enforcer. Transgressors are portrayed within the system as troth-breakers, traitors. (199)

As Restoration tragic dramas situate characters that take up or manipulate revenge as transgressors and traitors, they reveal the ways in which these figures set out to break down hierarchies of law, order, and aristocratic power structures. Restoration drama

shows men and women what might happen to them and their nation if revenge is not subjugated in the real world of Restoration England.

In a revision of his initial thesis in *Revenge Tragedy*, which omits mention of Restoration drama, John Kerrigan argues that the English stage saw its "last great efflorescence of revenge tragedy" in the late 1670s and early 1680s ("Revenge Tragedy Revisited" 238).[192] By this, Kerrigan implies that the politics surrounding the Exclusion Crisis shape Restoration productions of revenge and that the English stage will never see such a staging of revenge again. Kerrigan is right to address politics and to point out that we do not find an 'efflorescence of revenge' staged alongside discussions of monarchy, succession, or subjecthood in the dramas of the eighteenth century or thereafter. Tragic drama of the 1660s through the early 1680s had much to say about personal sovereignty and political subjecthood in the period; but heroic tragedy fell out of favor in the 1670s and political dramas diminish in the 1680s in favor of the popularity of "she-tragedies" and pathetic dramas focused on sentiment in the 1690s and early eighteenth century. After the early 1680s revenge on stage is renegotiated alongside generic changes and theatrical taste, which included a turn away from allegorizing monarchical affairs and focus on staging concerns about trade and bourgeoisie sentimentality. Staves affirms that a shift was already taking place in the 1680s as she notes that the tragic dramatists "who dominated the stage during the eighties—Banks, Lee, and Otway—each began with a play in heroics and then moved toward a drama increasingly domestic and pathetic" (303).[193]

Nonetheless, a look at late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century drama shows us that revenge does not simply disappear from the English stage. Plays at the end of the 1690s by the (de)famed 'Female Wits,' Mary Pix, Catherine Trotter, and Delariviere Manley incorporate revenge into their spectacular performances. However, these plays were criticized for being throwbacks to earlier bombastic heroic tragedies focused on passion and excess. A case in point is Manley's *The Royal Mischief*, whose unrequited lovers seek revenge against one another.[194] A few plays from the late 1690s and early eighteenth century include *revenge* in their titles, such as Charles Gildon's 1697 *The Roman Bride's Revenge*, which might not have been staged at all, and Edward Young's 1721 *The Revenge*, which in many respects seems to be an adaptation of Behn's *Abdelazer* and was popular well into the end of the eighteenth century.[195] Like Manley's 1707 *Almyna Or, The Arabian Vow* and Young's *Revenge*, John Brown's 1755 *Barbarossa* is set in an exotic locale and relies on Heavenly vengeance to bring about order; unlike the Restoration dramas addressed in this dissertation, these plays' revengers repent of their sins. This marks an alteration of a Restoration model in which revengers rarely repented their acts, even in the throes of death.

The ways in which vengeance is staged in the eighteenth century has much to do with the aesthetic changes in theatrical writing and with a movement from dramas written on behalf of monarchs and aimed at the aristocracy to those that targeted a broadening class of theatergoers. Revenge reads differently on the eighteenth-century English stage because it lacks the political overtones and brilliant *tour de force* of its

Restoration predecessors. We find a shift from a Restoration aesthetic for violence, spectacle, and a privileging of royalist agenda to the post-Glorious Revolution portrayals of sentimentality and English republicanism (particularly staged in Joseph Addison's *Cato*).[196] While dramatists in the closing decade of the seventeenth and first few decades of the eighteenth century offer us rakes reformed and repentant villains, Restoration dramatists stage vengeful heroes and villains as forces to be reckoned with, and feared. To reform is to minimize one's ability to produce disorder, and in the Restoration, dramatists were not willing to take this leap with their revengers. Restoration drama ultimately punishes the violent impulses of revenge in order to restore order and extend social and political stability.

Notes

[1] McKeon examines the subordination of absolutist monarch at the end of the seventeenth century and the rise of a kind of autonomous political subjectivity. As McKeon notes, Englishmen renegotiated the terms of monarchy in 1660 by making "explicit" a "tacit" knowledge of royal authority. In other words, Englishmen defined the limits royal authority after calling Charles out of exile; as opposed to former monarchs who automatically inherited a throne, subjects have chosen him as a ruler and hold him to new standards of governance.

[2] In this project I employ the term, *tragic drama*, to refer to dramas that were staged and published as tragedies. I refrain from using the term, *tragedy*, because some scholars, such as Nancy Klein Maguire, have argued that many of the plays that were labeled tragedies should be considered tragic-comedic because their endings point to a restoration or resolution that the term, *tragedy*, traditionally does not comprise. Some scholars, including Geoffrey Marshall and Jean I. Marsden, have applied the label, *serious drama*, as a catchall to avoid such a problem with this terminology; however, I use the term *tragic drama* because it closely resembles the original generic category of tragedy applied to most of the plays from the period by playwrights and printers—even if some of the plays included in this study might be thought of as tragicomedic works.

[3] These dates refer to the first staging of the plays. Other references in this dissertation are of the original production dates.

[4] Scholars, including Michael McKeon and Su Fang Ng, have drawn parallels between the English state and the family. In this paradigm, the father rules over his family as the monarch rules over the state, thus the monarch is like a father ruling over his family-state.

[5] Kerrigan discusses how revenge surfaced in Greek drama, developed into an early modern dramatic subgenre in the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras, and then virtually disappeared as a dramatic trope until it resurfaced in Romantic literature. In an essay subsequent to the book, Kerrigan concedes in "Revenge Tragedy Revisited" that revenge was popular in Restoration drama during the Exclusion Crisis (1679-83), and he addresses a handful of tragedies during these years, noting: "It was 1678-83 which saw, however, the last great efflorescence of revenge tragedy on the English stage" (238).

[6] See N.H. Keeble's *The Restoration: England in the 1660s*.

[7] See Staves' *Players Scepters*.

[8] This "obliteration" relied upon contemporary disdain for the regicides and Commonwealth, and the signs of such contempt were present at the start of the Restoration. For instance, as Charles II returned to London in 1660, effigies of Cromwell were reportedly hanged and burned, and a mock funeral procession was held for a figure called "The Commonwealth" (Keeble 55). According to Keeble, the May 21-28, 1660, issue of the *The Parliamentary Intelligence*, said "The Commonwealth" resembled "an ugly misshapen body without an Head, but with an huge insatiable belly, and a prodigious Rump" (55).

[9] Charles I's death in 1649 resulted from the king's unstable relationship with his subjects and the English people's dissatisfaction with absolute monarchy. Patricia Crawford has suggested that Charles was virtually *dethroned* before his execution as the Army and members of parliament removed the "sacredness of his person" by humanizing and vilifying him as a "man of blood"—namely, a man who

shed innocent blood and angered God, and whose blood must be spilled to ensure future peace for England (41). Charles later embraced this image of "blood guilt" and of himself as a martyr for his people—both those slain in the Civil Wars and those who would live to see England atoned for its sins though expiation (41). Blair Worden's work on secularization suggests that this concept of blood guilt still held some currency in the Restoration, even in a state of perceived religious decline. Even though Worden suggests that what was actually taking place was "not a decline of religion but as a change in its character" (28), Worden argues that in the Restoration "a sense of religious decline […] had a particular sharpness" partly in response to "the burden of memory […] that the civil wars had been an affront to God, that society bore the guilt of it, [and] that men's sinfulness had diverted Christian history from its proper course, [and] crossed the boundaries of political and religious party" (27).

[10] Pepys spoke of the display of the "limbs of some of our new Traytors set upon Aldersgate" as "a sad sight to see" and the mark of a "bloody week" (qtd. in Keeble 56).

[11] As Paul Hammond reiterates in "The King's Two Bodies," "The reinvention of the Stuart monarchy entailed a rewriting of the past. The trial and execution of Charles I were restaged with different actors when the bodies of Bradshaw, Cromwell and Ireton were exhumed and hanged at Tyburn, and their heads impaled above Westminster hall for the duration of Charles II's reign" (17).

[12] Paula Backscheider has read Charles II's coronation ceremonies as a theatrical presentation of power wherein "Charles needed to inscribe his authority. Not only would that establish his own position, but, more essentially, the ancient authority of the monarchy, the Right of Kings and the rightness of his family's reign" (11). Like Charles' visually spectacular coronation, his ordered executions and exhumations of the regicides might also be read as a visual presentation of his authority over law, life, and death and a warning to possible dissention against monarchy.

[13] As Michael McKeon points out, the "family crisis of the seventeenth-century English state increasingly evoked reflections on the state of the English family itself" (120).

[14] This term has been used by scholars, such as Fredson Thayer Bowers and Ronald Broude, in describing revenge based on kinship.

[15] Catherine Belsey reflects on this issue when she writes that "revenge exists in the margin between justice and crime" and labels revenge "an act of injustice on behalf of justice" (115). As Stevie Simkin points out, a revenger's "decision to circumvent the law" has repercussions—namely, lawlessness and a threat to authority (2). Revenge's unsettling relationship with the law echoes Sir Francis Bacon's sentiment on revenge in his essay, "On Revenge," where he argues that "revenge is a kind of wild justice; which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out" (72). Bacon identifies that "revenge's first wrong is that it doth but offend the law" and then that it "putteth the law out of office" altogether (72).

[16] I am quoting the page number here from a facsimile of the original poem, located on *Early English Books Online*.

[17] A number of scholars have noted this connection, including McKeon in *Secret History*.

[18] Because the plot of *Hamlet* is well known, and because Davenant did not make significant enough changes to warrant a close analysis of changes to the structure of the play, my examination of Davenant's production and play text will focus largely on the socio-political implications of the play's

staging in the 1660s and '70s, while also pointing to examples of blood revenge in the play that are most salient for this discussion.

[19] For more on the terms, *adaptation* and *revival*, see Michael Dobson's work on Restoration adaptations and revivals of Shakespeare; also see Jean I. Marsden's introduction to *The Appropriation of Shakespeare* for a discussion of Shakespearean "appropriations." For more information on Davenant's adaptation, see the work of scholars such as Jean I. Marsden, Gary Taylor, Barbara Murray, and Sandra Clark who have written largely about Davenant's aesthetic changes to Shakespeare's texts. Sandra Clark, for instance, offers that *Hamlet* was "often regarded as one of the few Shakespeare plays able to succeed with only minimal alterations" (278); mentions Pepys' comments on the August 1661 staging as having been "done with scenes" and "adorned and embellished with curious dances between the acts" (278); and points to the success of Hamlet throughout the 17th century in large part due to Betterton's performances of the title role (282). While Taylor suggests that Davenant's "aesthetic motives were reinforced by political ones," he spends no more than two sentences suggesting *Hamlet*'s "parallels with English politics" (48). Michael Dobson also draws a parallel between Davenant's character, Macbeth, and Oliver Cromwell, suggesting that "Macbeth is an Oliver Cromwell doomed to exemplary punishment" (49), but does not detail how so.

[20] It is important to note that while Davenant received credit in his day for his staging of *Hamlet*, the Restoration *Hamlet* was not attributed to Davenant as author, but to Shakespeare. Davenant was known for his alleged relationship with Shakespeare and Shakespearean actors who played parts, such as the title character of Hamlet, before the Restoration. For more on this relationship, see Gary Taylor's *Reinventing Shakespeare*. See Mongi Radaddi's *Davenant's Adaptations of Shakespeare*, Gary Taylor's *Reinventing Shakespeare*, and Barbara Murray's *Restoration Shakespeare* for more specific details about Davenant's linguistic and structural emendations. Radaddi and Taylor indicate that the Elizabethan version of the play was considered too long to be staged on the Restoration stage. Radaddi suggests that some of Davenant's cuts were made not simply to shorten the play, but to eliminate "oaths and passages that could have been understood as obscene, indecent, or offensive to the ruling class" (69), and Taylor also offers that some of these cuts may have been made to appease the 1660 stage patent that mandated that plays not include "objectionable" material, including certain oaths and profanities (47). Murray suggests that Davenant's omissions and linguistic changes also produce "metaphoric alterations" of Shakespeare's play (67).

[21] I am not suggesting that Davenant explicitly chose *Hamlet* for this reason, but that an undeniable parallel exists between the plot of the play and the first two years of the Restoration.

[22] The earliest surviving play text, a quarto that was printed in 1676 and has been identified as the "player's text," contains not only the entirety of Shakespeare's play, but also notations signified by an opening quotation mark that designate which lines players acted in the Restoration and which lines Davenant omitted from his productions. Hazelton Spencer argues that this quarto is based on the Q6 edition of Shakespeare's play, likely from 1637 and the most recent play text used until the early 1660s. Because the published text in 1676 is the first surviving text of the Restoration *Hamlet* and because Davenant died in 1668, in *Restoration Shakespeare*, Barbara Murray discusses potential problems with attributing the 1676 quarto to staged performances of *Hamlet* from the early 1660s. Gary Taylor, however, believes that the 1676 quarto likely reflects the changes Davenant made in the early 1660s. Even if the changes reflect the hands of men other than Davenant (possibly even actor, Thomas Betterton, who also wrote plays), such changes certainly reflect Davenant's company's performances and especially Betterton's performances of the title character of Hamlet throughout the Restoration.

[23] Nancy Klein Maguire, for instance, has noted in *Regicide and Restoration* that "the ghost of Hamlet's father resonated with the 'ghost' of Charles I" (121).

[24] Rather than citing line numbers for these unnumbered lines, I will cite the page numbers of quoted material throughout the dissertation. These page numbers correspond with facsimiles of the original play texts located on *Early English Books Online*.

[25] Gagen confirms that in the Renaissance, ambition was defined as "'an insatiable greediness of glorie,' or 'an unreasonable desire to enjoy honors, estates, and great places.' As such, ambition was an 'infinite evill and companion of pride'" (209-210).

[26] I read Horatio's words at the end of the play as misguided. When he states to Fortinbras and his army that the characters' deaths were put on for no cause, Horatio, in the very least, seems to misunderstand the motivations for murder and revenge: Claudius was motivated by ambition and greed, and Hamlet and Laertes by filial obligation and rage.

[27] Betterton performed the title role throughout his lifetime career and received praise for his portrayal—even as he performed the part of the young prince when Betterton himself was an aged man.

[28] Even if Davenant's cuts reflect an anxious awareness of the theater's relationship to both "political and private affairs" (64), as Murray suggests, he did not skirt the issue of succession looming at the end of the play. Mongi Radaddi points out that Davenant cut passages that might have elaborated on political issues related to the king's two bodies (as in Hamlet's answer of where he has buried Polonius's body) or foreign invasion (particularly the scene between Hamlet and Fortinbras) perhaps in an attempt to mediate potential discomforting parallel to the Stuart monarchy or to comply with censorship.

[29] The play was staged for three consecutive evenings (May 31-June 2).

[30] Around 1683 Settle recanted his Whiggish, anti-Popish loyalties and supported Toryism (Brown 24). J. Christopher Warner suggests that Settle "is better known for having been a political opportunist who wrote propaganda for both Whig and Tory causes during his lifetime" rather than being one of the most prolific playwrights of the 1670s-1710s (19). See Sheila Williams' essay, "The Pope-Burning Processions of 1679, 1680, 1681," for a detailed overview of the Popish Plot and the Restoration pope-burning processions.

[31] These words come from a written description from the Restoration about Settle and are cited in Christopher Warner's essay on Settle.

[32] For more information, see also Frank C. Brown's 1922 biography of Settle.

[33] Reprinted and possibly restaged in 1689, Settle's play resurfaced at yet another pro-Protestant/anti-Catholic moment, the assumption of the throne by William and Mary and the outing of James II. According to Warner, 1689 was also "the second year of the 'warming-pan scandal,' when the Whigs were accusing James of having arranged for a miller's son to be smuggled into Queen Mary's bed in a warming pan after she had suffered a miscarriage" (30). Warner offers that the play might have been restaged for its "specific detail of Pope Joan's miscarriage" (30).

[34] Warner argues that the play is probably based on the 1675 text, but Settle's play might also have been written in response to a play staged at a Latin School on Canon Street in December of 1679, called *A History of Pope Joan*, according to *The London Stage*'s records, which is unpublished.

[35] See Ronald Broude's work on *Titus Andronicus* and vengeance for more information on unrestricted vendettas. In an unrestricted vendetta, "no restraint is set upon kind or degree of the vengeance that is taken" (Broude 498). In waging an unrestricted vendetta, families publicly demonstrate implacability as they are willing to wage war against an entire population of people, including innocent members of another family.

[36] As powerful as Saxony's speech to the pope is, his words do not elicit fear in the pope. On the contrary, his passionate invective excites Joanna Angelica to fall in love with Saxony.

[37] This pregnancy and miscarriage is a detail that connects Settle's play to the 1675 frontispiece of *A Present for a Papist*.

[38] When Saxony speaks to the rabble, he presses too hard as he labels the pope a usurper, reveals the pope's identity, and suggests that the rabble turn against the Church.

[39] Sheila Williams includes a note on this in her essay on the pope-burning processions of 1679-81.

[40] The scene shuts with an order for Saxony to be burned at the stake and the young duke being hauled offstage. No stage notes indicate whether or not the actor is actually put on a stake on stage.

[41] See Odai Johnson's book, *Rehearsing the Revolution*, 14.

[42] We could read the scene in the context of persecutions in the sixteenth century by Mary Tudor, the accounts in John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, and the St. Bartholemew's Day massacre of the Huguenots in France.

[43] Although Pope Joan dies in miscarriage, Saxony's original quest for blood revenge fails—he finds no redemption in revealing her identity to the Romans, and he does not kill her unless by impregnation of a child that is not carried to term. We might want to read Joan's death as some kind of ironic justice, but her death is really only the product of her own scheming—not Saxony's revenge or the Consistory's execution for her crimes against the Saxony bloodline.

[44] See Virginia Mason Vaughn's *Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800* for more information about Hemings' production. In the post-script appended to Settle's published play in 1675, he assures his readers that his play is "founded" on William Hemings' *The Fatal Contract* (published in 1653 under this name and later in 1687 as *The Eunuch*) but that the final three acts are of his own design and that he has written an entirely new ending. Indeed, Settle has removed and altered characters and scenes from Hemings' original, and he has focused his play on Nigrello's scheming more so than Hemings does with his page, named Castrato. Settle draws attention to the page's identity and plotting in added asides.

[45] Don-John Dugas also notes in his biographical work on Settle that "recorded performances both in November 1674 and on 9 December of the same year suggest that its initial run was somewhat successful" (381).

[46] In Hemings' play, the queen's eunuch, Castrato (who in Settle's play is named Nigrello), utters these words.

[47] In the mid-1670s Charles II was urged to cut ties with his (Catholic) French alliance—not only because Englishmen feared French involvement in domestic affairs, but also because Englishmen rejected absolutism in favor of a more relational/social model of power in which the king could no longer act as an all-powerful sovereign, as Louis XIV did in France. Steven Pincus suggests that pamphleteers and some parliamentary speakers some viewed France as a "real threat to the English national interest, the most serious aspirant to universal monarchy" and Louis XIV as seeking "through his mercantilist policies to monopolize the world's trade, and thereby establish the universal monarchy" (291). Fears of absolutist France exceeded concerns about monarchy and private French involvement in Charles II's domestic political affairs. Englishmen were fearful of French dominance in trade and world commerce, and Charles II was encouraged to distance himself, both literally and figuratively from the French.

[48] The currency of Settle's play also expands beyond a parallel to Jacobean conventions of revenge tragedy. In the context of the play's premiere in the 1674-5 theatrical season, a season in which *The London Stage* suggests that drama began to reflect a "growing taste for spectacle" (219), Settle's play can be linked to a growing interest in dramatic spectacle on the Restoration stage, as is evidenced by the popularity of his 1673 *The Empress of Morocco*, for instance.

[49] Some four years after the staging of this play Titus Oates would accuse Charles II's queen of conspiring to murder him; it is worth noting here a parallel between the two female "popish" plots to kill a king—in the play, a plot that is not pretended but real in that the French king in *Love and Revenge* is murdered by the queen and her lover.

[50] Of course, this alliance had much to do with the Dutch threats to English and French commerce and trade. Like the French, the Dutch were also, according to Pincus, "on the brink of monopolizing the world's commerce" and "on the brink of establishing a universal monarchy of trade" (288).

[51] In Hemings' play, the female character is named Chrotilda (with an 'r'), and she assumes the pseudo-identity of a eunuch named Castrato.

[52] The disguise also allows the actress, presumably Mary Lee, to perform a breeches role and expose her legs. Many critics have noted the assignation of evilness with blackness of skin. Notable studies on race and ethnicity in early modern and Restoration literature include Elliot H. Tokson's *The Popular Image of the Black Man in English Drama*, Anthony Gerard Barthelemy's *Black Face, Maligned Race*, Catherine Gallagher's *Nobody's Story*, Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker's collection of essays *Women, "Race," and Writing in The Early Modern Period*, Kim F. Hall's *Things of Darkness*, Bridget Orr's *Empire on the English Stage*, Sujata Iyengar's *Shades of Difference*, and Virginia Mason Vaughn's *Performing Blackness on English Stages*. Orr and Iyengar particularly challenge earlier critics like Barthelemy's "static" notions of race as a category, and Hendricks and Parker caution us about the use of race, suggesting that the term *race* be put in scare-quotes because of its problematic role in critical discussion of skin color and ethnicity in studies of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature. Virginia Mason Vaughn writes at length about how blackface performances on the English stage beginning with the medieval mystery plays and spanning well into the eighteenth century had "taken on multiple meanings, participating in several readily recognized codes at once" (2). Nonetheless, Barthelemy and Tokson remind us of early modern perceptions of the Moor as a figure who is not only Othered by his/her darker skin, but also by perceptions of his/her

unchristian beliefs. As Vaughn points out, "the actor's blackened skin [was] a particularly powerful signifier of otherness to English audiences" (3).

[53] The connection of darker skin to evil indexes a historical English iconographical perception of blackness as "an emblem of sin and evil" (Barthelemy 4). Scholars such as Anthony Gerard Barthelemy have written about how this "association of blackness with evil has a long history of the English stage" extending back to medieval drama (3).

[54] Likewise, Sujata Iyengar reminds us that the word "ethnick" was associated in the Renaissance with "a heathen … or Pagan, one that knoweth not God" (14). Iyengar also attests that this attitude was present during the Restoration, for instance evidenced with Margaret Cavendish's 1668 *Observations* suggesting that "blackmoors" are not descendants of Adam (220). Iyengar argues that Cavendish's writings about Moors in *Observations* engages "the newest pseudoscientific theories connecting race, skin color, and species origin, theories that contradicted earlier beliefs that accounted blackness a mystery but did not consider black skin to be a sign of species difference" (222). These theories hail from Robert Boyle, John Hooke, and Isaac Newton.

[55] See Bridget Orr's book, *Empire on the English Stage* and Jacqueline Pearson's "Blacker Than Hell Creates" in the book collection, *Broken Boundaries*. Orr and Pearson suggest that seventeenth-century Englishmen and women rather looked to ethnic differences as signs of cultural differences. In her treatment of race in the eighteenth century, Roxann Wheeler also argues that "older conceptions of Christianity, civility, and rank were *more explicitly* important to Briton's assessment of themselves and other people" in the eighteenth century as opposed to "physical attributes" (7).

[56] Vaughn also writes about this conflation in her book.

[57] Vaughn argues that "by the Restoration, [the actor's blackface] denoted slave status" (9) rather than heathenism, but Settle's play appears to reinforce earlier images of Moors onstage as evil, hellish figures.

[58] Some of Settle's own critics—including Dryden—argued that his spectacular incorporation of stage violence even threatened the decorum of heroic drama, too.

[59] One sexual image of Moors or Africans, according to Vaughn, is that of the "myth of the black rapist" (123).

[60] Elliot Visconsi notes that in the writings of Robert L'Estrange, Charles II's Licenser of the Press, he "consistently links the 'mob rule' and savagery of opposition politics to English barbarism" (159). According to Alan Houston and Steven Pincus in their introduction to *A Nation Restored*, the term "the mob" "was coined in the 1680s to describe those who participated in political rallies and demonstrations" (17). We could read in Settle's depiction of the mob a kind of political relevance Houston and Pincus ascribe to the term and also an association with barbarism, as pointed out by Visconsi.

[61] Jessica Munns writes of the significance of the mob in the 1670s and '80s and suggests that the opinions of the mob mattered greatly, so much that they could not be overlooked (122). After the king learns that "the City's up in Arms" and that his "Subjects in Rebellion, and their fury / Seems by Revenge inspired: Revenge they cry" (40), Nigrello's plot to undo the king promises success as Clotair's subjects riot and threaten his life.

[62] Settle's name change from Clovis to Lewis, as Vaughn has pointed out, might allude to Louis XIV's name.

[63] Earlier in the play Nigrello tricks the queen and her lover into meeting in a secret grotto where they will be attacked by Nigrello's henchmen. Settle's stage directions indicate that Nigrello stamps his/her foot after which "immediately a Company of Villains rush in with drawn Swords, and massacre the Queen and Clarmount" (74). The massacre of the queen and her lover in the throes of lust points to a critique of licentious behavior and confession. In Hemings' play, the encounter is much different. Castrato poisons Fredigond and Landrey (the name of her lover in the earlier play) and stabs the lover. Settle introduces the ambush to his spectacular execution scene. The enactment of revenge reads as brutality in *Love and Revenge*.

[64] Vaughn reads Castrato's inability to kill Clotair as love (127), but in Settle's play I read it as a commentary on monarchy.

[65] Jean I. Marsden has argued that portrayals of rape on the Restoration stage cannot be separated from the "spectacle" of the female body represented by the body of the actress, herself. In reading rape scenes alongside "gender-related dichotomies," Marsden indicates that in Restoration dramas females are situated within a subject/object binary that reinforces phallocentrism and the commodification of the female body ("Rape, Voyeurism, and the Restoration Stage" 187). She suggests that the actress's body, "the focus of desire," is the object of scopophilia and voyeurism and associates the staging of rape, or attempted rape, with "the physical manifestation of the desire perpetrated by the rapist but implicit in the audience's gaze" (186).

[66] Derek Hughes has argued in "Rape on the Restoration Stage" that rape "is part of an initially enlightened testing of received systems of sexual morality and sexual power, in which the concern may be as much with the woman's subjection to male versions of history, as to male force" (228). Hughes takes issue with Marsden and Elizabeth Howe's readings of rape as "erotic spectacle"—to use Marsden's words in "Rape, Voyeurism, and the Restoration Stage" (225-226). In spite of their disagreements, both Marsden and Hughes point to the importance of the female body and sexuality in constructions of or the testing of attitudes about gender and sexuality contemporary to the Restoration, and both critics see the function of women in a subject/object dichotomy; however, Hughes' linking of rape to masculinist versions of history urges us to understand the force of rape beyond literal sexual violence or the implications of the audience's sexualized gaze. Hughes sees the "theatrical value of rape" (229) in Restoration drama not solely as a result of actresses' scopophilic bodies or only as a "complex exploration of sexual behaviour" (228), but also as a means of illustrating "the anomalies of power" (234) and "crises of authority" (235).

[67] See Coltharp's essay, "'Pleasing Rape': The Politics of Libertinism in *The Conquest of Granada*."

[68] Even though the female body is symbolic, it is not completely immaterial: the body must reproduce in order to populate the nation, and as a result of rape it can give birth to illegitimate offspring. The ravished body is the sign of a corrupted, tainted blood that has been infected in the horrific, black act of rape which could lead to the production of illegitimate offspring and corrupted monarchy. As Judith Butler has argued, bodies matter, especially if they represent the future of the Stuart monarchy. Because Queen Catherine was barren and Charles II could not leave the throne to his illegitimate heirs, anxieties about the (literal and figurative) reproduction of monarchy were prevalent throughout the Restoration.

[69] In a collectivist culture, protagonists seek revenge out of duty to a family or community; however, in an individualist agenda, characters seek revenge for egotistical reasons, including pride and/or self-promotion.

[70] Although the first printed text of Ravenscroft's play is that of a 1687 edition, scholars have attributed the writing of the play to the late 1670s, perhaps even as early as 1678, and they have looked to Ravenscroft's letters for evidence of his earliest attempt to stage the play.

[71] Ravenscroft argues that his decision to stage the play "at so unlucky a conjuncture" was unfortunate, and Murray reminds us that Ravenscroft's play was censored in 1678 because of its depiction of "treachery, perjury, and deception" (Murray xxxi).

[72] In addition to revising the title of Shakespeare's play, Ravenscroft's adaptation calls attention to the relationship between these concepts: he added, rearranged, and cut scenes; altered characters; and revised the language of Shakespeare's play.

[73] Burks describes how rape statues were "designed to redress a wrong committed against a woman's male relatives" (166).

[74] Rape also might represent a perversion of Gayle Rubin's idea of a male "traffic in women," a tug-of-war over the body of the woman as a piece of property bandied between men.

[75] Because the very sight of Lavinia supposedly blinds her father's eyes and continually brings the Andronici to tears, she is kept veiled throughout most of the remainder of the play to spare the Andronici men the anguish of witnessing this spectacle.

[76] Ravenscroft's decision to alter character names in his adaptation also links the drama to the Lucrece tale as the character of Young Lucius in Shakespeare's play is named Junius in the adaptation: hence, we have characters named Lucius and Junius and direct references to Brutus in the play.

[77] In this scene Ravenscroft's alterations definitely affect how we evaluate Titus' state of mind. Whereas in Shakespeare's play, Tamora and her sons *in disguise* meet Titus in the palace as he searches for Justice and Revenge, no such direction exists in Ravenscroft's play to suggest that they are costumed. (I capitalize Justice and Revenge here because Titus clearly personifies these concepts as actual figures.) On the contrary, while Titus speaks with the Goths and the emperor, it is Tamora who pretends to embody the figure of Revenge. As in Shakespeare's play, Ravenscroft makes a verbal connection between revenge, murder, and rape, yet Ravenscroft's scene differs in that it places doubt in the audience's mind as to whether or not Titus is utterly insane. In portending to flee the palace to search for Revenge, and then leaving young Junius with the Goths, Titus is believed by the Goths to be mad. But Titus' private interaction with Junius in the palace—where Titus instructs him to "remember thy Lesson" (47)—before his departure suggests that Titus might be feigning madness in order to trick the Goth sons to follow Junius to a cave wherein they will meet their tortuous deaths at the hands of the Andronici. While it might seem that only a madman could commit the actions that take place in Act V, Scene II, Ravenscroft's adaptation suggests that Titus' plotting is the result of a conscious, calculated conception.

[78] As revised for the Restoration stage, the play's association of the emperor with the sun alludes to the Sun King, Louis XIV of France, links the Roman emperor with the Catholic French monarch, and paints a picture of the emperor as absolutist.

[79] Although *Lucius Junius Brutus* is not an adaptation of an earlier play, Lee adapted his tale from a handful of sources, including Livy and Madame de Scudéry, according to J.M. Armistead in his essay "The Tragicomic Design of *Lucius Junius Brutus*: Madness as Providential Therapy" (40-41). Armistead also provides a handy list of alterations that Lee makes from his sources.

[80] Susan Owen suggests in *Perspectives on Restoration Drama* that Lee might have been catering to a Whig Exclusion Parliament and a Whig audience in staging this play in December 1680. In her book, Owen devotes an entire chapter to *Lucius Junius Brutus*.

[81] This is a common republican association. According to historian, Alan Houston, "To many, republicanism was the sole – hence necessary – alternative to [tyranny]" (244).

[82] Lee does not reveal in Brutus' initial speech, nonetheless, why he has been "aping madness" (4).

[83] Susan Owen reminds us of this important point in *Perspectives on Restoration Drama*. J.M. Armistead encourages a reading of Brutus' feigned madness as a cover for being a "political malcontent" ("Tragicomic Design" 39).

[84] While the first act of the play does not call upon Collatine's distant familial connection with the Tarquins, the incestuous implications of Sextus Tarquin's rape of Lucrece surely linger in the background of this historical tale.

[85] I also agree with Joyce G. MacDonald who argues that the masculine appropriation of the bloody dagger in the play "has removed women from the course of Roman history and politics" and has "fetishized" the female body "for its power to unite men in common purpose. This supremely histrionic act initiates the play's concern with dramatizing politics through bodily means" ("Public Wounds" 233).

[86] Brutus labels Tiberius a traitor because he has aligned himself with the king, but Titus is also charge with treason because he will not politically align himself with Brutus and revoke his marriage to Teraminta. While Titus rejects Teraminta's designs to convert him to support the royalist cause, and while he has abandoned his brother's cause to follow the Tarquins, Titus is condemned because of his association with the Tarquin blood and cause. It is worth noting that no Tarquins are killed in the play, but that Titus and Tiberius stand in as their representatives.

[87] Or, as J.M. Armistead puts it, "Brutus' patriotism is strengthened into an obsession" in Lee's play—an obsession that conflicts with his "fatherly affection" (40).

[88] In his essay, "Psychological Myth as Tragedy: Nathaniel Lee's *Lucius Junius Brutus*," David M. Vieth addresses a similar concern—that Brutus "behaves like a tyrant to his own sons" (59).

[89] There are moments in the play where Lee implicitly sets up a debate between Tory and Whig ideals as he contrasts Brutus' revenge (hailed as civic duty) and the Romans' decision to follow Brutus in overthrowing monarchy, with Tiberius (Brutus' son) and Fabritius's pro-monarchical stance. While the start of Act II focuses on Brutus' drive to form a republic, the play also introduces serious discussions about the best way to rule a country.

[90] See also Joyce G. MacDonald's essay, "Public Wounds" for a discussion of the 1680 publication of Filmer's *Patriarcha*.

[91] As Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume describe in *Producible Interpretation*, scholars have disagreed on reading the conspirators as Tories or the senators as Whigs. Although there are differing interpretations of individual characters as politically representative of the Tory or Whig cause, I read the rebels in *Venice Preserv'd* as royalist/Tory and the senators as republican/Whig. We could read in Otway's play a claim about the rightful rule of nobility and of royalty (i.e., James II) and the unlawful rule of parliament. After all, Otway's epilogue alludes to James II's return from exile so that he can be "restore[d]" to his rightful position.

[92] In the prologue, Otway transitions from fictional Tory plotting to the contemporary Whig plotting in the early 1680s to prevent James from taking the throne after Charles' death, which would come some three years after the staging of this play. While the play does not illustrate the triumph of a Tory revenge or a Whiggish state, Otway's prologue looks forward to rule by monarchy and the discovering of alternative, Whiggish conspiracies. See Jessica Munn's introduction to the play in the *Broadview Anthology of Restoration and Early Eighteenth-Century Drama*.

[93] See also Milhous and Hume's chapter in *Producible Interpretation* where they trace a number of political allusions in the tragedy.

[94] In her essay, "Masculine and Feminine Values in Restoration Drama," Katharine M. Rogers reads the play similarly as she argues *Venice Preserv'd* projects that "the established order is corrupt and oppressive" and that "any attempt to overthrow it is apt to produce even greater injustice and suffering"; likewise, she attests, "Otway offers no assurance that their replacement would be any improvement. Political ideals are all too easily twisted into rationalizations for selfish ends" (397).

[95] See the *OED* definition of *rape*, v.2, and of *ravish*, v.a.

[96] We could read Antonio as an allegorical representation of the earl of Shaftesbury due to similarities in occupation, age, and name; such a reading asks us to conceive of the play in the context of the Tory/Whig factionalism of the early 1680s. Jessica Munns suggests that this reading of Antonio, and Milhous and Hume also mention it as a possibility, even though they also suggest that the earl of Shaftesbury has also been compared to the conspirator, Renault.

[97] Olivier warns that a wrathful woman "is such a Furnace and violent Fire, that all the Water in the World cannot quench" and that in response to her rage, "she lets fly all the Arrows of her revenge" (31-2). Oliver labels revenge as an "injustice," calling it a passion that is "very wicked and unjust, as by poisons, witchcrafts, treasons, and other pernicious and deadly artifices, against the life and honor both of his neighbour and himself" (101-2). While Oliver uses the masculine pronoun to refer to the revenger, for the most part, he clearly identifies the passions of hatred and revenge as feminine. For example, he writes, "hatred and revenge […] agree not only as mother and daughter, to vex, tyranize, and martyrize the hated, but secretly to rack and tear the hater and revengeful himself" (100).

[98] The devil has nothing on hateful women, though, for Oliver explains that "the hatred of the Devil is not so much to be feared as that of a wicked woman," for "woman is aided with that evil spirit, and seconded by him, to the wreaking of her bloody revenge, while she, wretched creature, considers not that the wrath of God brandishes over her head, and that for ever she must abide in his dis-favour without any means of recovery" (108). Ultimately, Olivier advises women to learn "how to obey the laws and ordinances of women"—namely, the aristocratic monarchal ideology of which Canfield writes (Olivier 146).

[99] In writing about mothers, Allestree attests that "a Mother is a title of so much Tenderness" but concedes that "we find this (as other Instincts of Nature) is sometimes violated, and oftner perverted and applied to mistaken purposes" (201). Allestree polarizes two kinds of mothers—those who put their duty as mother first, and "those Women who immoderately love their own Plesures, [who] do less regard their Children" (202).

[100] As Margo Collins has noted in an essay on Mary Pix, Olivier and Allestree's manuals insinuate that, "'willful' women are unreasonable and must somehow be restrained" (5), for if they are not they "may become violent" (4). Collins writes specifically of "feminine violence" in her essay.

[101] This Restoration ideology is based on what Katherine M. Rogers refers to as "feminine values" such as "sensitivity, tenderness, love, family ties, and the worth of every human life" (390).

[102] In his essay, "Mother as Other," J. Douglas Canfield reminds us that one of the central issues surrounding "the phallic mother" is that she "assumes power outside the Law of the Father" (213).

[103] Clytus is the play's voice of reason and an interpreter of events. Later in the play, Clytus interprets Alexander's problem for us: "This comes of Love, and Women, 'tis all madness" (25). He calls Alexander a "rash Fool" (25), and tells him that his father, "*Philip* fought men, but *Alexander* women" (49)—a charge that contributes to Alexander's rage and his eventual murder of Clytus.

[104] Rather than addressing Alexander's polygamy, the play seems to address what Jean I. Marsden calls "moral bankruptcy" ("Tragedy and Varieties of Serious Drama" 233)—particularly that of Roxana. As Derek Hughes argues, Roxana does not "have any claim through priority of nuptials, for the wife with the better claim is the wife with the better character; discrete individuals are the criteria of value, not universal principles" (*English Drama* 246).

[105] Through Roxana's accounts of her youth and other characters' description of her ability to charm men, Lee ascribes Roxana's sinfulness to excessive sexual desire and roots her destructiveness in cunning femininity. In Act III, for instance, Roxana fondly recounts her youth when she reigned over her "She-companions" and used the "little arts / Of coining looks, and laying snares for Lovers" in order "to Master men" (27). Her portrayal of her first sexual encounter, in which he "clasp'd [her] yielding body in his arms" and "with his fiery lips devouring [hers] / And moulding with his hand [her] throbbing breast" (28) made love to her, also aligns the queen with what James Grantham Turner has termed a "pyrotechnics of sexuality" in which Roxana is consumed by a fiery sexual passion. Turner, in his essay "Thy Lovers were all untrue" on John Dryden's work, writes of a pyrotechnic trope as a "literal and metaphorical burning thematized throughout [a] play" (327).

[106] See Derek Wilson's *All the King's Women* for more information on Keroualle, Villiers, and Charles mistresses. Critics such as Felicity Nussbaum and Susan J. Owen attest that during the Restoration Roxana and Statira's confrontation might be read alongside Charles II's own handling of rival women in his life.

[107] In her essay on *The Rival Queens* Nussbaum suggests that that in later performances in the eighteenth century the encounter "would, of course, have resonated with the very public bigamy trial of the Duchess of Kingston in 1776" (149).

[108] See John H. Wilson's *All the King's Ladies* (170-1).

[109] In her essay, "Real Beautiful Women," Nussbaum argues that actresses' rivalries "kept heroic tragedies such as Nathaniel Lee's *The Rival Queens*, and other plays resembling it, viable" on the eighteenth-century stage" (139). Nussbaum provides an excellent overview of the roles of Statira and Roxana as Elizabeth Boutell and Elizabeth Barry performed them at the end of the seventeenth century. She also describes Peg Woffington's portrayal of Roxana in the eighteenth century proper and indicates, "Roxana's epilogue evolved into a kind of comic send-up of a she-tragic sufferer and a mockery of that popular form" (148). The 1677 epilogue to the play suggests that there was a controversy related to the actresses in the play, likely Rebecca Marshall's relationships with men. (Rebecca Marshall played Roxana.) Nussbaum suggests that the 1677 epilogue was likely spoken by the actor playing Lysimachus, but that "the speaker of choice became the forsaken Roxana in order to transform the denouement — Statira's murder, Alexander's poisoning, and Roxana's escaping with her life — into an occasion to reflect on her victimization as the pregnant and deserted second wife. Thus, Roxana's epilogue evolved into a kind of comic send-up of a she-tragic sufferer and a mockery of that popular form. It is not surprising, then, that Peg Woffington, more renowned for her comic than her tragic roles, played the part of Roxana sixteen times from January to April in the 1755 – 56 season and spoke the epilogue" (Nussbaum 148).

[110] The 1677 play text includes a handful of printer's mistakes. It includes, for instance, two page 26's, the second of which include Philip's lines and the following cited lines by Roxana and Cassander, among others. While the play text is in correct order, the numbers are off sequence; after the original pages 25 and 26, the printer began with 25 and 26 a second time. Hence, the second page 26 is actually the twenty-eighth page of the script.

[111] Felicity Nussbaum writes of the connection between descriptions of an erotic body and the "frequent erotic references to the actresses' body parts: heaving snowy breasts, bare necks and shoulders, melting or starry eyes, and wild loose hair" (150). Particularly, she notes later seventeenth-century performances by Elizabeth Barry where "a feverish sexual passion […] seemed to emanate from her real person" (150).

[112] As Canfield notes, "Lee and Dryden [in *The Rival Queens* and *All for Love*, both staged in 1677] cast the injured wife quite differently. The great tragic actress Rebecca Marshal played Alexander's wife, Roxana, as Medea" (*Heroes and States* 64).

[113] In fact, he orders her to "Take all the Spoils of the far conquer'd Indies" (33). When Alexander tells Roxana, "take, take that Conquer'd World, / Dispose of Crowns and Scepters as you please" (33) and later in the play that he would "give an Empire / To save [Statira]" (58), Lee reveals how fragile an empire is if an emperor would trade it all for the love of a woman—a charge that English subjects had made of their own king. Derek Hughes is right to point out that in *The Rival Queens* the "opposition between love and empire, and East and West, is reduced to a very subordinate status" and "the emotional conflict is between love and love rather than, as is more customary, love and imperial duty" (*English Drama* 246).

[114] A point of interest here: Jacques Olivier's conduct manual includes a note on Alexander the Great: "Alexander the Great, duely weighing Pardon and Vengeance, confessed, that there was more need of strength and greatness of mind to be clement and indulgent, than to be revengeful" (104).

[115] In the play's final speech, Lysimachus dwells on treason and revenge in his promise to lead the Babylonians and to punish Alexander's murderers. Cassander and the plotters escape punishment, as none of the men in Alexander's court know that they have punished the emperor.

[116] Canfield and a host of scholars have isolated Alexander's sexual desire as "a trope for the inherent fragility of genealogy as a system for transmission of power" and the "aristocracy's failure to perpetuate itself, of heroes to perpetuate states" (66).

[117] Perhaps, as Nussbaum puts it, Roxana's role in *The Rival Queens* "raises timely issues concerning women's liberty in the face of traditional masculine restraints upon the sex" (143).

[118] First performed in November 1675 at Drury Lane and also in 1676 at court, Dryden's tragedy was staged well into the 1740s.

[119] Unlike most tragedies of the decade, Dryden set his play in the year of the Restoration, 1660. Critics have commented on Dryden's decision to relate the setting and plot so closely to contemporary England. As Bridget Orr has noted, Restoration dramas including *Aureng-Zebe* relocate the "troubles of the English monarchy" in orientalist tales that reflect "disorder in filial and conjugal relations and the wider polity" (113). James Winn suspects that Dryden chose to adapt his story from Bernier's 1671 *Voyages* because of the "recent events in a distant culture" (272), namely issues of succession, and possibly in response to Elkanah Settle's recent play *Empress of Morocco* (cf. Dryden's unfriendly competition with Settle). Anne T. Barbeau connects *Aureng-Zebe* "to the reign of the aging, childless Charles II" and the issues of succession (50). Howard Eskine-Hill discusses the play in relation to politics as he highlights Dryden's move from the king's party to the duke's party in 1675 and argues that *Aureng-Zebe*'s emperor is a political allusion to Charles II and Aureng-Zebe to the Duke of York. For Eskine-Hill, the play might represent Dryden's "abandon[ment of] his Augustan hopes for Charles and his court, though the Exclusion Crisis will bring him round again" (56). James Winn also discusses the theatrical climate in which Aureng-Zebe was staged, particularly the strife between Dryden and the King's Company. Frances Kavenik provides an interesting note about the play's stage history, namely that it was one of the most popular plays staged between 1685 and 1714 with approximately twenty recorded performances. Critics such as Ann Straulman have labeled Aureng-Zebe a transitional play from heroic to sentimental tragedy, and perhaps this explains the resurgence of this "heroic tragedy" at the end of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

[120] The 'real' Aurangzeb upon which Dryden's protagonist is based was not only married with children, unlike Dryden's hero, but also not betrothed to a woman named Indamora (or anyone else for that matter) in 1658. Also see James Winn and Bridget Orr' work on Dryden's adaptation of material. They briefly compare Dryden's play to the historical account of Aurangzeb from Bernier's *The History of the Late Revolution of the Empire of the Great Mogol*, which Winn refers to as *Voyages*.

[121] Decades before the dramatic present we learn that the emperor sent his four sons to rule separate provinces in the hopes of curing their "mad Ambition" (2); when the play begins, a false rumor of the king's death has spurred warfare between the sons over control of the kingdom. This strife develops in large part due to an Indian custom of royal inheritance, which states that the emperor's youngest sons must be murdered upon transmission of the throne from the emperor to his eldest son. While this law essentially leads to the sons' war against each other, the familial crisis between one of the emperor's rebellious sons, Morat; the loyal, heroic son, Aureng-Zebe; the aging emperor; and his "haughty" wife, Nourmahal takes center stage.

[122] As scholars, such as Winn and Blair Hoxby, have pointed out, descriptions of characters or reports of action rather than actual action, such as war, take up a great deal of space in *Aureng-Zebe*.

[123] Nourmahal explains the paradox of being a virtuous wife—namely that a husband "take[s] no pleasure in a virtuous Bed" (23). The emperor, however, explains the general problem with wives:

> Such virtue is the plague of humane life:
> A virtuous Woman, but a cursed Wife. […]
> Virtue's adultery of the Tongue, when loud,
> I, with less pain, a Prostitute could bear,
> Thank the shrill sound of Virtue, virtue hear.
> In unchaste Wives-----
> There's yet a kind of recompensing ease:
> Vice keeps 'em humble, gives 'em care to please. (22)

James Winn speculates that Dryden based this exchange on the quarrels that took place between himself and his wife, and he even argues that "a Freudian might point to the death of Nourmahal as a projection of Dryden's continuing hostility toward his wife, or indeed toward women in general" (284).

[124] Nourmahal has been likened to the Wife of Bath by William Frost in his essay, "Aureng-Zebe in Context" and to an actress playing a part in "the role of a shrewish wife" in this scene (Barbeau 135). Straulman has argued that this scene resembles "age-old satires on women" (42) and compares her exchange with the emperor to a scene out of comedy, rather than tragedy; likewise, Hoxby identifies her as a "hardened virago" who is "disconcertingly funny" (252).

[125] In his essay on feminine ideals in Dryden's heroic dramas, David R. Evans reminds us that "the private role of daughter or wife is the public role for a 'properly' behaving woman" (4).

[126] See Haley 208, Frost 45, Barbeau 58, and Vance 174, respectively.

[127] A number of scholars also have noted the similarity between Dryden's Nourmahal and classical characters. James Winn in *John Dryden and His World* addresses Nourmahal in relation to Seneca's *Phaedra*, and Blair Hoxby in "Dryden's Baroque Dramaturgy" relates Nourmahal to Ovid's Myrrha and to Hercules. Connections have also been noted between *Aureng-Zebe* and Racine's *Phedre* (staged after Dryden's play is first performed) and John Milton's *Samson Agonistes*. In addition to Winn and Hoxby, see Anne Barbeau's *The Intellectual Design of John Dryden's Heroic Plays* and articles by William Frost and Ann Straulman. Nandini Bhattacharya adds that while Dryden "draws upon traditional western rhetoric," Nourmahal "more closely fits the western stereotype of the amazonian woman who disregards all other calls for those of ambition and power, her rampant sexuality being also an expression of her drive for power" (165).

[128] Winn writes that the original Aureng-Zebe was a "Machiavellian manipulator" (273).

[129] Evans is right to point out that Dryden's queens typically "provide an alternative to the tame submission of [his] ideal female characters" as they "refuse to be subsumed into the standard patriarchal system, and rebel," and that "as a consequence, they become radical and horrifying threats to social stability" (6).

[130] Bhattacharya suggests that Nourmahal "closely fits the western stereotype of the amazonian woman who disregards all other calls for those of ambition and power, her rampant sexuality being also an expression of her drive for power" (165).

[131] Although some scholars have suggested that Dryden is more concerned with morality and philosophical dilemmas than political troubles in the drama, the future of the "sinking State" is one of the play's key issues. Anne T. Barbeau and Derek Hughes, for instance, argue that Dryden focuses on philosophical issues. According to Hughes in *English Drama 1660-1700*, in writing *Aureng-Zebe*

Dryden is "concerned far less with specific political issues than with the philosophical problems that beset the maintenance of civilization: with the isolation imposed on humanity by the very nature of desire and perception, and the consequent fragility of social units" (104). Hoxby is right assure us, nonetheless, that the play also deals with political strife and addresses the future of a crumbling empire.

[132] As Hughes observes, we find in *Aureng-Zebe* the "incoherence" of a "royal family […] divided by sexual rivalry and the lust for power" (105). Jessica Munns likewise categorizes this play as an "important model for the royal family-in-disarray" ("Images of Monarchy" 117).

[133] For instance, Hughes has argued that Dryden, among other playwrights, understood that the "individual is a prisoner of the mind" (105).

[134] A handful of critics have pointed out that Nourmahal's suicide-by-poison suits her disposition. Robert Hume reminds us that "Dryden gets plenty of shock value out of his ending, with Nourmahal's delirium and death" (316). Canfield writes, she "dies in classical fashion, poisoned with her own monstrosity" (*Heroes and States* 21). Maurer writes, "Nourmahal refuses to give up either her political or sexual aspirations, and as might befit her fervent disposition, she dies a fiery death" (168). James Grantham Turner reinforces that Nourmahal "in the mad scene that becomes her dying speech […] brings to a climax the literal and metaphorical burning thematized throughout the play" (327), and George Marshall's observations on Nourmahal's symbolic fiery death summarizes this theme: "Nourmahal has died from an inner fire, literally caused by poison, but figuratively caused by the inner and private anomie that is partially the result of role conflict" (114). Anne Straulman has suggested that Nourmahal's poisoning of herself is a "weak woman's method of murder" (44). Notwithstanding these evaluations of Nourmahal's death, we might read her self-poisoning as a distorted form of empowerment.

[135] Behn's play was only staged a handful of times, but there is no record of *Lust's Dominion* having been performed. Scholars now believe that the older play might have been written by Thomas Dekker, and possibly even written or altered by John Marston and a couple of other writers. Charles Cathcart's articles on *Lust's Dominion* offer evidence that Marlowe likely was not the author of such a play, or at least not the sole author of the play text Francis Kirkman published in 1657. Cathcart provides an overview of the many hands that might have handled the play at the end of the sixteenth century and at the turn of the seventeenth century, and also alternate titles of the original play. Susie Thomas's work on the play offers up a list of changes Behn made to the original text.

[136] It is possible that Behn's title does not contain such a likeness because Behn was trying to conceal her source. As Janet Todd has discussed in her work on Behn, the dramatist was accused of plagiarism regarding *Abdelazer*. Apparently Behn was chastised for not being forthcoming about her source. Todd notes that this caused a rift between Behn and a few close friends, including Thomas Otway. In Todd's opinion, "Behn was secretive […]; so she opened herself to charges of plagiarism which the form of adaptation did not deserve" (186). Jacqueline Pearson has noted that "Behn is a typical Restoration writer in that her work frequently uses and restructures older texts, adapting them to her own purposes and especially, as Susan Staves has suggested, 'shift[ing] the emphasis toward the woman'" ("Slave Princes" 223). Janet Todd indicates that Behn's play "had, however, a very tenuous connection with history, converting as it did the excessively pious fifteenth-century Queen Isabella into a lust-crazed murderer. Far more it drew on literature, and Behn's Moor came from a Renaissance theatrical tradition of rationally villainous Muslims. […] Given her interest in comparative religion, Behn may also have drawn on Alexander Ross's translation from Koran from French, which depicted a cunning and sensual Mohammed establishing a religion not of conscience but of power" (186).

[137] Unlike her Jacobean predecessor, Behn presents her queen as a sexual agent, not a victim of a Moor's lechery. In *Lust's Dominion*, Queen Mother claims that Eleazar made her his concubine and vows to kill herself unless Eleazar will hear her speak. Jacqueline Pearson is of the opinion that "it is hard to see what attracted [Behn], usually so critical of stereotypes of race and gender" to *Lust's Dominion* because the characters in the former play are "extremely simple forms of the lustful Moor and his accomplice and then victim, the 'lascivious [white] queen' of the subtitle" ("Slave Princes" 226).

[138] In the original play, the queen is simply called Queen Mother and her daughter, Isabella. In Behn's play, the daughter is named, Leonora, and the queen-mother, Isabella.

[139] In writing about wives and mothers Allestree attests that "a Mother is a title of so much Tenderness" but concedes that "we find this (as other Instincts of Nature) is sometimes violated, and oftner perverted and applied to mistaken purposes" (201).

[140] These speeches are entirely new to Behn's play.

[141] I make this connection. Thomas does not write of Isabella's vengefulness in making this claim.

[142] As Andrew Hiscock notes her speech acts "destabilise her children's birthrights" (551).

[143] Anne Barbeau writes of a "Hobbesian power-seeker" character type in her work on Dryden. Barbeau has male characters in mind in discussing this type. There might be a connection between Hobbes and Behn, nonetheless, as Derek Hughes in *The Theatre of Aphra Behn* indicates that Behn "had sympathized with the materialist Hobbes" (62) in the preface to *The Dutch Lover*.

[144] Indeed, as critics like Jessica Munns have pointed out, Restoration drama in the 1670s was renegotiating the role of absolutist monarchy on stage, an image that projected British evaluations of the devolution of absolutist monarchy in the late seventeenth century—a point Michael McKeon makes in *The Secret History of Domesticity*.

[145] Of course, Behn's own royalist tendencies would not endorse such a claim. Even though Abdelazer has murdered King Ferdinand, Isabella convinces the Spanish to make him the "protectorate" of Spain. When Abdelazer is finally granted the crown he eschews it, much like Cromwell. He offers that he will "cast aside the Rays of Majesty," and as he "*kneels, and lays the Crown on the Table*" (as the stage notes indicate) he attests that he will "humbly offer up / This splendid Powerfull thing, and ease your fears / Of Usurpation and of Tyranny" (52).

[146] Roderigo's name offers makes a more obvious parallel to *Othello*.

[147] Stallybrass argues that seventeenth-century men considered women's bodies simultaneously both a "map of the integrity of the state" and the "dangerous terrain that had to be colonized" (129, 133). See Wilputte's essay, "Harridans and Heroes: Female Revenge and the Masculine Duel in Jane Barker, Delariviere Manley, and Eliza Haywood."

[148] See Vivien Jones work on women in the eighteenth century for more information about how women are placed within a "moral narrative constructed for public consumption" (2).

[149] See Dryden's dedication in *Marriage a la Mode* to John Wilmot, second Earl of Rochester, where he criticizes a "*midling* sort" of courtiers who seek to imitate or harangue wits such as himself and Rochester. According to Sarah Ellenzweig, Dryden confronts "the familiar contradictions of upward mobility" in his dedication to *Marriage a la Mode*, which "exposes an uncomfortable proximity to those from whom the aristocratic amateur is supposed to remain distanced" (711, 706). Ellenzweig refers to this drive for upward mobility as an attempt "to acquire status privilege, to become absorbed within the upper gentry and aristocracy," and discusses a middling sort in terms of a "demystification of status hierarchies" (711). Ellenzweig has broached in her work the distinction that scholars, including Georg Lukacs, have made about class and status. According to Ellenzweig, Lukacs prefers the term, "'status consciousness,' precisely because it denies the centrality of the economic'" (711). For the sake of my discussion, I find it useful to invoke 'class' as a term because of its association with economic return, but find 'status consciousness' to also be a helpful term for considering social climbers' goals. For more scholarship on class and Restoration literature, see Aparna Dharwadker's work.

[150] These characters are generally conceived of as villains comparable to Shakespeare's Iago.

[151] The play was first performed at Lincoln Inn's Field in April 1665 with the success of at least a three-night run; at court in October and November 1666 (in part due to the closing of the theatres as a result of the plague); back at Lincoln Inn's Field in January, September, and October 1667 and February 1668; and at Drury Lane or Dorset Garden in October 1686.Although the *London Stage* records indicate that the play was staged on April 3-6, 1665, Elaine McGirr suggests in her recent book on heroic modes that the play had an initial run of ten days and argues that the play "might have had an even more impressive premiere" had the plague not forced the theaters to close their doors in the first week of June 1665 (42). Of the 1667 performances, McGirr intimates that "Charles II specifically chose it for the first dramatic performance in London after the twin disasters of plague and fire, clearly thinking that the exotic romance would serve as the perfect counterpoint to local disaster" (42). McGirr points to Pepys' attitudes about the play as a sign of public taste; she cites Pepys' "growing appreciation for the production" (41) as an "excellent barometer of the new play's effect on the public consciousness, of their appetite for heroic spectacle in the wake of plague, fire, and humiliating war" (42). In *Restoration and Regicide* Nancy Klein Maguire writes about *Mustapha*'s success, quoting John Evelyn's description of the play as being "exceedingly well writ'" (176) and Downes' record of the Duke's Company having gained "vast Profit" from its 1665 productions (177), and noting Charles II's request for the court architect to create scenic effects for the Whitehall performance (177).

[152] The play opens with conflicts of religion (Muslim versus Christian) and the conquests of empire wherein we learn that the Ottomans have murdered the Hungarian king and captured the queen and infant heir to the throne.

[153] While Knolles offers a negative characterization of Roxolana, Orrery softens his presentation of Roxolana as a concerned mother who cares for both her own son, Zanger's life, and for the captive queen of Buda's infant son's well being. As Bridget Orr has discussed, the play "departs markedly from Knolles' interpretation of events" (72). Orr mentions that Paul Rycaut's 1667 prose piece, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, was later added to publications of Knolles's *Turkish History* (64). While Rycaut's work does not bear a direct influence on Orrery's original writing of *Mustapha*, it reflects negative attitudes present in the 1660s about the Turks' religion and cruelty and, in Orr's estimation, "instruct[s] an English audience in their own good fortune, as free Christian subjects under a ruler who respected private property and the rule of law" (64). Orr attests that "interest in the Ottomans was high in 1664-65, not just because a new, important trade agreement had been reached

the year before, facilitating the activities of the Levant Company, but because the Turks were again at war with the Austrians" (76).

[154] In the mid-1660s, the English dealt with not only the aftermath of "natural and naval disasters" of the plague, the Great Fire of London, and multiple wars with the Dutch, but also the strife of political in-fighting: from Buckingham (indicted for treason) to Clarendon, "Charles's privy counselors were eagerly—and publicly—trying to depose each other and were throwing Whitehall into utter confusion" (McGirr 43). Orrery had privy insight into the make up of advisors because he was not only a dramatist commissioned to write plays for the king, but also a trusted friend of Charles II, who later made him a magnate in Ireland.

[155] Conversely, Rustan recognizes the king's longing for glory and encourages him to live up to the origins of his violent religion:

> In lazie peace let Christian Monarchs rust,
> Who think no War, but what's defensive, just.
> Our Valiant Prophet did by slaughter rise:
> Conquest a part of our Religion is. (55)

[156] We could read Roxolana's statement about "poisoning" Rustan as suggesting that she is the source of the poison, but given that Orrery has softened his depiction of Roxolana, we might understand her words as implying that the *power* given to this statesman has poisoned him. When she initially describes him, she states, "He is a Cloud between the Sun and me" (61)—a true interference.

[157] In Act IV he even warns, "Pow'rs private safety is the publick good." When the queen of Hungary Turkish customs of fraticide and declares that "Pow'rs private safety is the publick good; / It lives in health by letting others blood" (93), the first half of her claim could easily describe the pitfalls of power relations in any court or culture.

[158] Orrery's use of diction gestures toward anti-Catholicism when the sultaness insultingly compares Rustan's speeches to "Those heights of which our Priests can only Preach" (62).

[159] Rustan's view of religion as conquest is later countered in the play by Zanger, who notes:

> Nature no Religion knows but Love,
> He that loves most, does most Religious prove:
> Religions true design in Love consists,
> Heav'n owns not that which States-men teach our Priests. (74)

[160] Orrery approaches dissembling more than once in *Mustapha*. Later in the play, Roxolana tells the viziers, "States-men, like States, are but the works of Art" (104).

[161] Roxolana later will relay the eunuch's warning to the sultan that she has upset his counselor for not following his advice to murder the infant: "Your *Vizier* is a most impatient Saint: / He cannot suffer wrong without complaint" (64).

[162] When Solyman later confronts her about her involvement in the plot, telling her, "write fully your ambition down / In changing the succession of my Crown" (122), Roxolana says, "I have but little through ambition done; / Nature did more, and 'twas to save my Son" (122).

[163] Before this line Haly relates that the viziers "are both slain" by the sultan's order (117), and Achmat announces, "The tortur'd *Viziers* did their guilt confess; / And, e're they dy'd, accus'd the Sultaness*:* / Who to their first proposal did encline" (118-19).

[164] Reading Mustapha and Zanger as Charles II and James II, McGirr suggests, "The play's fable reinforces the idea that Charles and James were a team" and "it insists that the royal brothers have everything under control" (43).

[165] While the *London Stage* states that the play might have been staged in January, the first printing of the play text notes a licensing date of March 6, 1671.

[166] *The London Stage* notes that *The Forc'd Marriage* was performed on January 9, 1671 and *The Humorists* on January 14.

[167] In naming the play after Cambyses, Settle situates the tyrant in the tradition of tragic heroes. While Settle in no way stages Cambyses as a hero, he ameliorates an image of this notorious historical despot (who put empire before family and had his brother killed). Thomas Betterton played the role of Cambyses, and this informs the staging of the monarch as one who would move audiences to tears, especially in his moment of death, despite his tragic flaws. As Bridget Orr has noted, playwrights in the 1670s has in mind English fears of despotism at home and abroad when they constructed their plays. But while Orr and Hughes look to the play's staging of rival kings' competition for the throne in their examinations of the play's depiction of criminality, we should turn our attention to Settle's villain, Prexaspes, because his ambitions to rule Persia underlie the crises traced in the play.

[168] Herodotus's Cambyses is a madman who, angered by Prexaspes' comment that the Persian people have labeled him a drunkard, spitefully kills Prexaspes' son (the royal cupbearer) to prove, ironically, that he is neither mad nor drunk.

[169] In *The Histories* a Persian regent named, Patizeithes, allegedly positions his brother as the Smerdis imposter, while in *Cambyses* Settle Prexaspes with the aid of Patasisthes secures the switch from true to faux Smerdis. Additionally, Herodotus' Prexaspes reveals Patazithes' plan to Cambyses, but no such revelation occurs in Settle's work. Herodotus explains that Prexaspes hid his part in the murder of Smerdis out of fear that the Persians would retaliate against any man who had murdered royalty.

[170] For translations of the tale, see the 1862 *The History of Herodotus: A New English Version*, edited by George Rawlinson, Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, and John Gardiner Wilkinson, and the more recent Oxford edition of *The Histories* edited by Waterfield and Dewald.

[171] Mabel L. Lang's work on Herodotus' Prexaspes provides us with a lens through which we can view Prexaspes, even though Lang does not address Settle or any version of the Cambyses/Prexaspes tale after the fifth century. Lang refers to Prexaspes as both a "double-agent" and a "Janus-agent" because not only has he killed the real brother of Cambyses and pretends that he has not murdered him, but also he agrees to work with a group of men known as the Magi to keep the murder a secret so that the Magi can raise an imposter to the throne (202)—for this latter (in)action, Herodotus conveys that the Magi promised to make Prexaspes a wealthy man and asked him to convince the Persians of the Smerdis imposter's legitimacy because the Persians would believe the honorable Prexaspes. If, as Lang suggests, "Herodotean Janus-agent" tales always focus on an individual who "is ordered to do something and ends by doing the opposite" (202), Settle's Prexaspes *doubly* fits the bill as a Janus-faced, double-agent because he not only murders the real Smerdis and lies about it, but also engineers the usurpation of the Persian throne by *his* appointed imposter (instead of merely helping the Magi

keep the secret about *their* imposter) and then betrays the imposter by revealing his secret to the Persians in order to take the throne for himself after he has killed Cambyses. In a way, Settle is a Janus-agent, too, for history tells us that a faithful representation of the ancient Cambyses, king of Persia, and his favorite, Prexaspes, would cast the king as a crazed tyrant and the favorite as a devoted countryman. Settle does 'the opposite': he takes great pains to amend his version of the Cambyses/Prexaspes tale to improve the image of the monarch and vilify the court favorite/messenger.

[172] Settle makes no mention of Prexaspes having a son, much less one slain by Cambyses. Whether or not Settle assumes that his audience would assume that Prexaspes' son was killed before the dramatic present is undistinguishable and perhaps even irrelevant.

[173] Prexaspes' elaboration of his goals in the remainder of his speech elucidates this drive for domination:

> Now I will find fresh subjects for fame's wings,
> To tell the World I rule the fate of Kings.
> Though I can't boast of Crowns, my glory is,
> That Empires by my power do fall, and rise. (5)

Here we find a trace of the Herodotean Prexaspes whom the Magi won over by promising great wealth, among other things. As Prexaspes says, "Statesmen should not regard / The Justice of the Act, but the reward" (5), Settle highlights two conventional representations of statesmen as men who are driven by fame and rewards.

[174] Hughes is right to point out in *English Drama* that *Cambyses* addresses the problem of criminal rulers (87).

[175] Cambyses also claims that Heaven will avenge his death: "That just revenge which is to murder due" (55). But he also threatens Heaven, saying, "if you fail to right my wrongs, and me, / May you want Temples, Altars, Flames, and be / From Homage and from Sacrifice debard" (55).

[176] Bridget Orr suggests that Settle might have been influenced by Lancelot Addison's 1671 *West Barbary, or, A Short Narrative of the Revolutions of the Kingdoms of Fez and Morocco*, which includes "an account of the region's recent tumultuous history" as a source for his play" (100). This text does not include the names of characters from Settle's play, nonetheless. Maximillian Novak indicates that the play was performed at court before being staged at Dorset Garden on July 3, 1673. In that same year, Settle published the play "with Sculptures" showing what these scenes would have looked like; Novak explains that "Settle's play was announced for publication in the *Term Catalogues* for 24 November 1673 with the inaccurate blurb, 'A Tragedy. With Sculptures. The Like never done before'" (vii). Although *The London Stage* records do not comment on the duration of the play, scholars, including Novak, Robert Hume, and Derek Hughes, have generally agreed that Settle's play was very popular with audiences—even though the writers of the anonymous *Notes and Observations* claim otherwise. It might have been revived throughout the Restoration, but we have record of a December 1673 revival directly following Thomas Duffet's burlesque. The King's Men and the Duke's Men staged the two within a night of each other. Settle's play might also have been revived in the 1686-7 season (interestingly enough for the purpose of this chapter in the same season as a *Mustapha* revival) when it was published again. *The London Stage* also suggests that the play might have been revived as late as the 1697-8 season when the play was reprinted yet again.

[177] In the play's opening moments, we learn that the king has died, and that his death results in the freedom of his enchained son, Muly Labas. As the play wears on, and we discover that Laula has

murdered the king, and we find that her son, new king, Muly Labas, falls victim to Crimalhaz and her usurpation of the throne.

[178] It is generally assumed that Dryden, Shadwell, and Crowne wrote the piece, even though no authors name appear on the tract.

[179] In a few instances, Settle speaks directly to criticisms of his villains and their motivations. He writes: "I am of opinion none ever *loved* and *gloried in wickedness* but for *wickedness sake*: for the very *satisfaction* and *pleasure* which men take in the doing of *wickedness*; and for which *end* they commit wickedness, is *wicked* as well as the *doing* it" (65-6). The *Notes and Observations* diatribe is significant for both its criticism of Settle's work, and for boosting his notoriety. For one thing, it afforded the playwright an opportunity to enter a literary debate on his work. Settle's reply to the play's criticism in his *Notes and Observations on The Empress of Morocco Revised* also provides us with an account of the playwright's characters and intentions concerning numerous passages in the play. Of note for this discussion, it particularly provides valuable insight into Settle's villains.

[180] This relationship has generally been overlooked in scholarship on the play, which has examined *The Empress of Morocco*'s scenic effects and "wicked" empress, or how the play spawned a great rivalry between Settle and Dryden, Settle's depiction of Crimalhaz's ambition has gone practically unnoticed.

[181] Bridget Orr hypothesizes that Settle chose to set his play in Morocco because of "increasing commercial, military and political" concerns about the region, namely "the onset of hostilities or with the establishment of new trading arrangements" present at the time, particularly in Tangier (97). She hypothesizes that the ambassador, Ahmed Hadu "attended *The Empress of Morocco*, as the play was performed during his sojourn in London, as was Settle's second play on a North African theme, *The Heir of Morocco*" (100).

[182] The monarch had to deal with repeated military failures in the Dutch wars, problems with the Declaration of Indulgence and Test Act, and then James' marriage to the Catholic Mary of Modena in late 1672/early 1673. Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, was also dismissed, according to Spurr, for not supporting the matrimonial union.

[183] Settle shows that Muly Labas understands this counsel all too well:

> Oh Prophane Gold, which from infectious Earth,
> From Sulph'rous and Contagious Mines takes Birth.
> It grew from Poysons, and has left behind
> Its native Venome to infect Mankind.
> Rapes, Murders, Treasons, what has Gold not Don? (34)

[184] She utters a similar speech in this scene in response to Crimalhaz's suggestion:

> Heav'ns, shall I live to act so great a Sin!
> To right a Monarch must I damn a Queen?
> Be gon! I hate thee now worse than before.
> Descend to thee? No, I that Thought abhorre.
> And though his Blood does loud for Vengeance call;
> I know hee'd scorn his Queen so low should fall. (54)

In another aside Morena confers with herself, through a dialogue with her dead husband, about how she can achieve revenge. She worries that agreeing to satisfy Crimalhaz's request and give him her love is the only "Offering" that will convince Crimalhaz to "revenge [Labas's] Blood" (54).

[185] Cf. Davenant's *Hamlet* wherein the title character promises to fly to revenge. Crimalhaz makes a similar claims, as does Settle's later hero, Saxony, in *The Female Prelate*.

[186] Settle addresses his treason in *Notes on The Empress of Morocco Revised* when he writes, "I was of opinion that a *resolution* or a *designe* of *Rebelling* against a King, might be *Treason;* […] if *Crimalhaz* design'd to be a Traytour no doubt he'd be so kind to lend his helping hand to put his Treason forwards" (54).

[187] Settle identifies the murder of Morena as a welcome death when the dying Morena thanks the queen for her murder, resigns herself to go to Heaven, and prays for both Labas and her deaths to be "reveng'd" (60).

[188] Muly Hamet gains the crown by merit and honor and vows to Mariamne, "Th'usurpers Scepter's to your Hand remov'd: / His blood, when he his forfeit Head dares show, / Shall pay what to your Brothers Dust I owe" (64), and whenever she is captured bemoans, "Here I my baffled hopes of Vengeance lose: / To right my King my Mistress I Expose" (65). After Crimalhaz captures Mariamne for a second time and offers to barter her life in exchange for restoring his crown, Muly Hamet's offer of vengeance against Crimalhaz increases twofold as he will both avenge a king and punish Crimalhaz for injuring his lover—a sign of retribution that resembles blood revenge: "Think on the Vengeance which that Crime attends: / Think what a fierce Revenge I for her sake, / Will on my Princess bloody Murd'rer take" (65-66).

[189] Bridget Orr suggests that this scene mirrors "images [that] had their origin in contemporary accounts of Barbary which often mention these deadly iron spikes, known as the 'Algiers hook'" (57).

[190] Although Ayanna Thompson argues in *Performing Race and Torture on the Early Modern Stage*, that "the final torture scene does not function as a purgation of the former excesses of the court" (42), I argue otherwise. Bloodletting also relates the drama back to a depiction of its source and to political strife. Bridget Orr has noted that "bloodletting in the Moroccan Court reflect[s] the conviction of […] jealousy, mistrustfulness, craft and inconstancy, a vision of Barbary Moors equally apparent in Addison's account of the region's recent internecine civil strife" (102).

[191] Thompson focuses on the relationship between race and torture in her study of *Empress of Morocco*, but she also recalls the play's correlation to contemporary political culture as well, noting that the plays' contemporary critics were troubled by the ways in which Settle "promise[d] the exotic, but deliver[ed] the familiar" (26). While Thompson suggests that "artistic depictions of torture replicate the anxieties about the relationship between torture, subjectivity, *and* nationality" (11), Settle's play stages the productive value of villains' torture.

[192] Kerrigan contends, "Revenge tragedy did not vanish from the English stage in 1683, or 1688, any more than it did after 1642: the narrative energy and moral ambiguity of a theme which had attracted dramatists since Aeschylus would not be lost overnight. In some respects, in fact, the potency of the theatrical formula ensured that talk of providential retribution was kept alive on stage as it faded out of other contexts. Old works in the genre were revived and adapted, and new ones, both domestic and more largely political, were written—not just in the 1690s but as late as, for instance, the high-flown tragedies of Aaron Hill" ("Revenge Tragedy Revisited" 252).

[193] Of course, as Felicity Nussbaum notes, "When critics speculate about the reasons for the public's failing interest in heroic plays in the last two decades of the seventeenth century, they neglect to consider the frequent performances of Restoration plays throughout the period. After the union of the

two theaters in 1682, it became more difficult to launch *new* plays on the London stage, which meant that older plays were frequently revived and adapted to the taste of new audiences" (142). We find that dramatic works staged after 1682, during a time in which the theatrical companies were undergoing their own economic struggles and battles for creative rights, some of the plays discussed in this dissertation were staged again, such as Lee's *The Rival Queens* and Dryden's *Aureng-Zebe*. In fact, a number of plays from the earlier half of the century were reproduced upon the United Company's erection in late 1682. With the exchange of theatrical ownership to Betterton and other actors' hands; Charles II's waning health in 1683-5 and death in February 1685; Monmouth's Rebellion in 1685; and James II's ascension to the throne in that year, theatrical records suggest that dramatists were not producing the volume of works written in previous decades. Much of this lack of new work descends from censorship during the Exclusion Crisis and the problems associated with the combined theatrical companies, and much of this vacuum pertains to the political strife of the age and the death of the king.

[194] It is worth noting that Manley's play did not sit well with her contemporaries, even though this work helped paved the way for its "she-tragic" successors, including Nicholas Rowe's *The Fair Penitent*, which mentions of revenge but does not relate it to national politics.

[195] We can also add to this list, Thomas Scott's 1697 *The Unhappy Kindness, or, a Fruitless Revenge*, which Sandra Clark has described as an adaption in which a "cuckolded husband refrains from revenge on the tyrannical ruler because he cannot contemplate killing a king" (287). In 1694 Settle's *The Ambitious Slave: Or, A Generous Revenge* was published; although *The London Stage* contains no record of its performance, it was probably written earlier than that and even performed in 1681, for the play's title page suggests that it was acted at The Theatre Royal. This play examines its "generous" revenge in the context of a kind of blood revenge on behalf of slain kin and abducted virtue; the ambitious slave refers to a female courtesan who desires to be queen.

[196] As Cecilia Feilla has noted in her study of masculinity in eighteenth-century drama, masculinity in tragic works move from the heroic, sexual, volatile to the to sensitive and stoic. Also see Julie Ellison's *Cato's Tears* for a broader discussion of masculine emotion in the eighteenth century.

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Vita

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