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## 'Where Lies this Power Divine?': The Representation of Kingship in Aphra Behn's Early Tragicomedies

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**Abstract:** This article argues that Behn's two early tragicomedies *The Young King* (probably written in the 1660s but not staged until 1679) and *The Forc'd Marriage* (1670) provide critiques of divine right kingship as astute and incisive as that found in their immediate successor, *The Amorous Prince* (1671). It demonstrates that these plays reveal Behn's serious reservations about royalist political theory in the first decade after the Restoration and also, perhaps, given *The Young King's* belated first performance in 1679, during the early stages of the Exclusion Crisis.

**Keywords:** kingship, divine right, politics, royalism, tragicomedy, comedy

Critical studies of Aphra Behn's early tragicomedy *The Amorous Prince* (February 1671) often comment on the play's startlingly outspoken critique of monarchy. Like many other plays of the period, its portrait of a sexually irresponsible ruler probably has Charles II's own sex life in its sights. But, as Derek Hughes observes, the play 'is unusually severe in criticizing the potential for abuse which an aristocratic system possesses'.<sup>1</sup> Janet Todd agrees that the figure of Prince Frederick 'is disturbing in its abuse of power and hereditary privilege'.<sup>2</sup> In this article I examine the politics of Behn's early tragicomedies, concentrating on how *The Amorous Prince's* two predecessors, *The Young King* (1679) and *The Forc'd Marriage* (September 1670), contribute to this astute interrogation of kingship. I aim to demonstrate that these neglected plays are as concerned as their immediate successor to dissect the workings of monarchy.<sup>3</sup> I argue that they provide incisive critiques of divine right which reveal Behn's grave reservations about royalist political theory in the first decade after the Restoration and perhaps, in view of *The Young King's* belated first performance in 1679, during the early stages of the Exclusion Crisis as well.

### I. 'A Mighty God on Earth': Divine Right Kingship in *The Young King*

*The Young King* was probably Behn's first play, despite the fact that it did not reach the stage until the late 1670s or appear in print until 1683. In her dedication Behn calls it 'this first Essay of my Infant-Poetry', and Janet Todd speculates that she wrote it in the early 1660s.<sup>4</sup> The play's examination of kingship and divine right takes place principally in the plot involving Orsames, the young king of the title, whose mother imprisoned him at birth after an oracle declared that he was destined to become a tyrant. This plot is based on Pedro Calderón de la Barca's play *La Vida es sueño* (1635), though we do not know whether Behn had first-hand knowledge of Calderón's play. Her title indicates a significant deviation from it: in Calderón the exiled royal is the heir to the throne; in Behn he is the rightful king. Thus, the revolution that places Prince Sigismund on the throne at the end of *La Vida es sueño* is in Behn's play a restoration.<sup>5</sup> Behn's decision to write a tragicomedy about

restoration, embracing the most popular genre and theme of the early 1660s, helps to date *The Young King* to the beginning of her career, as does the play's feudal setting, so characteristic of early Restoration drama, such as Orrery's *The Generall* (1662) and Behn's own *The Forc'd Marriage*.<sup>6</sup> This discussion of the play will begin by treating it as an early work, before moving on to consider the possible implications of its 1679 premiere.

Orsames is obviously a poor advertisement for divine right. As his single day on the throne makes clear, to be a king is, in his eyes, to be a god on earth, and to be a god on earth is never to be crossed. What is interesting is the way in which Behn accounts for his despotic ideas. Where did they come from, given that Orsames has been locked away in prison with only one human contact, his teacher Geron, the 'old fusty Philosopher' (I.i.55)? We are told early in the play that Geron has taught his charge only two things: 'a deal of Awe and Reverence to the Gods' and that 'his natural Reason's sin' (I.i.57-8). The reference, here and throughout the play, is to a plurality of gods, but the language provides a none too subtle hint that Behn is adopting the favourite free-thinking strategy of using paganism to target Christianity, particularly those branches of it that stress human sinfulness and disparage as pride any claims for the power of human reason.<sup>7</sup> Orsames, then, is the victim of an exclusively Christian education.

On his first appearance in Act II, scene i, we are shown the consequences of this education. Having been told by Geron that all men are just like them – 'Poor, insignificant Philosophers' (II.i.19) – Orsames imagines what he conceives of as a better world comprised of two distinct classes of men: an elite group 'with mighty Souls,/ With thoughts unlimited by Heaven or Man' (II.i.29-30), who exercise 'dominion o'er the lesser world,/ A sort of men with low submissive Souls' (II.i.33-4). Behn makes it clear that this rigidly hierarchical vision derives from Orsames' religious training: his ruling class of supermen are invested with the qualities with which Geron 'paint'st the Gods' (II.i.31), while the 'low submissive Souls' embody the abjection of the teacher's own piety: they 'barely should content themselves with life,/ And should have had th'infirmities of men,/ As fear, and awe, as thou hast of the Gods' (II.i.35-7).

Orsames' imaginary world, then, replicates the only relationship of which he has any knowledge: that between divine power and human submission to that power. He is supposed, of course, to embrace the latter but, not surprisingly, identifies with the former, which Geron's tutelage has apparently stripped of moral content. This throws into sharp relief the deeply strained relationship in Christian theology between divine sovereignty and divine goodness, as we see when Geron asks Orsames what would happen if the masses refused obedience to 'the mighty few' (II.i.43). He replies:

I would destroy them, and create anew.  
 – Hast not observ'd the Sea?  
 Where ev'ry Wave that hastens to the Bank,  
 Though in its angry course it overtake a thousand petty ones,  
 How unconcern'd 'twill triumph o'er their ruine,  
 And make an easie passage to the Shore. (II.i.44-49)

Like the God of Genesis, determined to 'destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth' (King James Version, Genesis 6:7), Orsames does not flinch at the prospect of exterminating his creation.

Orsames, then, has been turned into an incipient tyrant by a Christian education that imparts to him a conception of sovereignty as absolute but dubiously moral. Along with

the vision of an all-powerful divine force goes a view of humanity as its passive and craven subjects. The scene discloses and endorses Orsames' contempt for the Christian conception of the human condition. His fantasy of divine creative power is followed by a lament for his own mortality and insignificance: 'Why, thou and I, though tame and peaceable,/ Are mortal, and must unregarded fall' (II.i.52-3). Geron's counsel that he take comfort in 'thoughts of future bliss' (II.i.57), that 'patient suffering here' will be rewarded with a 'glorious end' (II.i.66,64), meets with angry rejection, which gives rise in turn to the tutor's threats of divine punishment: 'This disobedience', Geron replies, 'offends the Gods' (II.i.75). The threats prove ineffective, however, as Orsames responds defiantly, 'Let 'em do their worst' (II.i.76). It is this resistance to Geron's attempts to bully him into a posture of Christian resignation which gestures towards an underlying fitness for rule. As Geron exits the stage, he comments of his charge, 'He grows too wise to be impos'd upon./ And I unable to withstand his reasons' (II.i.78-9). The dispossessed king has intellectual powers, a capacity for rational interrogation, that threatens Geron's authority and the authority of the Christian doctrine through which he seeks to keep his pupil in awe.

Act II, scene I, of *The Young King* strongly suggests that, by this early stage of her career, Behn had already embraced the free-thinking attitudes that are now recognised as an integral aspect of her work.<sup>8</sup> The scene expresses some of the cardinal tenets of Restoration free-thinking: an intense suspicion of religious dogma; a robust anticlericalism perhaps most evident in the condemnation of a church that achieves psychological dominance over its adherents through threats of hellfire and promises of heaven; and the privileging of reason over faith. This hostility to religion is given a political dimension in Behn's penetrating analysis of the problems involved in anchoring monarchical government in imitation of an all-powerful and infallible deity.

With the entrance of Urania, the scene enacts another reason why divine right is a bad idea, one that has more to do with nature than nurture: the rapacious libido that erupts when Orsames first sees a woman. Behn makes it clear that that this libido is entirely unsocialised: Orsames has been taught nothing of human sexuality, and is ignorant even of the existence of the female of the species. Thus, on one level, his sexual assault of Urania can be seen as 'innocent', as Amintas describes it (II.i.172). Yet it also testifies to a 'natural' self-assertive aggression and profound lack of fellow-feeling. In Act III, scene i, when his sexual impulses are yoked to his brief spell of royal power, they are represented both as polymorphous – Orsames is aroused by the sight of his own mother – and as an expression of the appetite for unqualified self-assertion that helps to turn his 'king for a day' into a crude caricature of tyranny.

Orsames receives his first instruction in monarchical theory in this scene, and it drives home the intimate connection between divine right and despotism. When he awakes and finds his pitiful existence exchanged for the luxurious trappings of monarchy, Geron tells him he is an earthly god:

Your Frowns destroy, and when you smile you bless;  
At every nod, the whole Creation bows,  
And lay their grateful Tributes at your feet;  
Their Lives are yours, and when you daign to take 'em,  
There's not a mortal dares defend himself. (III.i.7-11)

He finishes this rhapsodic account of royal power with the qualification 'But that you may the more resemble Heaven./ You should be merciful and bountiful' (III.i.12-13). Orsames, that is, will resemble heaven whether or not he opts to be 'merciful and bountiful'. Once

again, Behn underscores the tension between divine sovereignty and divine goodness in the Christian universe. As the addition of virtue to the picture of godlike kingliness is entirely optional, it is no surprise that Orsames chooses to embrace the power and forgo the qualifying divine virtues. Throughout the scene he will brook no contradiction, banishing and threatening all those who seek to frustrate the sexual desires he directs first towards his mother, then towards Olympia. We are invited to see the latter as love rather than lust, and Geron insists that Orsames' ability to be 'tam'd by Love and Beauty' indicates his capacity for rule (III.i.158). But at this point in the play his passion remains inseparable from a tyrannical determination to exercise absolute power over the lives of his subjects.

Janet Todd has commented that 'Orsames' crude notion of kingship resembles the parliamentary caricature of Stuart "divine right" doctrine'.<sup>9</sup> She means, presumably, that the cardinal tenet of divine right theory is that the office of king is divinely appointed, not that the king should be treated as an earthly incarnation of God. But the 'crude' version was commonplace, and not just among enemies of the Stuart cause. Royalists too often allowed the divinity of the office to rub off on the man who inhabited it. So the Anglican cleric Matthew Griffith, in *The Fear of God and the King* (1660), declares that 'God is an heavenly king and eternal, but the King is an earthly and dying God [...] The both are Gods, and both Kings, and therefore to be feared.'<sup>10</sup> In *God Save the King* (1660), his sermon celebrating Charles's restoration, the cleric William Walwyn refers to kings as 'Inferior gods', 'these gods on earth' and 'these mortal gods', reminding his audience that God too 'stiles them Gods ... I have said ye are Gods, saith God himself of Kings, *Psal.* 82.7'.<sup>11</sup>

Mark Goldie has written about the outpouring in the 1660s of ultra-royalist treatises peddling the doctrines of divine right and royal absolutism, many of them composed by Anglican clerics. According to Goldie, it is this 'suffocating plethora of polemic spawned by the triumphant Royalism of the Restoration' to which Locke was referring in the *Two Treatises* (first published in 1689) when he condemned 'a generation of men' which 'has sprung up among us, who would flatter princes with an opinion, that they have a divine right to absolute power'.<sup>12</sup> This is not to claim Locke and Behn as political allies, nor to argue that Behn is necessarily taking a similar swipe at such royal flatterers in *The Young King*. But it seems clear that, in a political climate dominated by divine right ideology, Behn seeks to expose the dangers inherent in a conception of kingship that draws facile equivalences between monarchs and a Christian god invested with omnipotence and infallibility. *The Young King* suggests that her disenchantment with divine right was fuelled both by political anxieties and by a deep-seated hostility to a Christian faith she portrays as a woefully inadequate basis for monarchical government.

This is not to question Behn's royalist allegiances. Far from being anti-monarchical, the play puts forward an alternative ideal of kingship. The play traces the process whereby Orsames disengages himself from Geron's Christian teaching, a process that reaches a climax after his catastrophic day of kingship. Although he claims to believe that it was all a dream, the experience of rule engenders a determination to uncover his true identity that entails a final repudiation of the humble and sin-obsessed Christian vision of humanity. The fear of hellfire and crippling sense of sinfulness that Geron has instilled in him Orsames now rejects in favour of reason: 'Geron, I will no longer be impos'd upon./ But follow all the Dictates of my Reason' (IV.iii.70-71), he declares, unleashing a barrage of questions about the world he inhabits and his own identity. He concludes: 'I find my self enlightned on the sudden./ And every thing I see instructs my Reason;/ 'T has been enslav'd by thee' (IV.iii.92-4).<sup>13</sup> Freed by his reason from enslavement to Christian doctrine, Orsames here gestures towards a radically different brand of kingship, based neither

on imitation of nor submission to an all-powerful deity but on obedience to a rational faculty liberated from the guilt and terrors instilled by Christian dogma.

Not that we ever see this ideal king in action. Orsames' renunciation of his schooling in Christian doctrine is aimed at discovering the truth of his origins; once that aim is achieved, he ceases to serve as the play's vehicle of free-thinking ideas. The anti-Christian strand of the play is taken up instead by Cleomena, now determined to restore her brother to the throne with the help of Vallentio and the army. She presents this plan not only as a restoration of Orsames' birthright but also as a repudiation of priestly mystification. When Semiris reminds her that 'the Gods do disapprove his Reign' (IV.v.92), Cleomena replies:

I will expound that Oracle  
Which Priests unridling make more intricate:  
They said that he should reign, and so he did,  
Which lasted not above a pair of hours;  
But I my self will be his Oracle now,  
And speak his kinder fate,  
And I will have no other Priest but thee, *To Vallentio*  
Who shall unfold the mystery in plain terms. (IV.v.95-102)

The lines set up an opposition between the obfuscations of priests, whose 'unridling' of the oracle actually makes it more perplexing and obscure, and the 'plain terms' of a new order purged of priestcraft, where it is Cleomena who predicts her brother's future and Vallentio who will ensure those predictions are realised.<sup>14</sup> The anti-religious note reappears at the close of the play, when the Queen kneels to her son and condemns her 'duty to the Gods' as a 'superstitious error' (V.iv.223-4).

I have thus far treated *The Young King* as an early play that reveals much about Behn's attitude to religion and monarchy in the 1660s. Yet the play was not performed until 1679, by which time the Exclusion Crisis was in its early stages. Does the play belong to its moment of composition or to the period when it was performed? The answer one gives to that question depends in part on how extensively the play was revised for its first performance. Behn strongly suggests in her dedication that the play was not revised; 'this youthful sally of my Pen', she claims, remains 'a Dowdy Lass' whose youth 'should atone for all her faults'.<sup>15</sup> Yet there is certainly one speech that stands out as an Exclusion Crisis interpolation: the Epilogue, which the printed version of the play dedicates to James on his 'second exile into Flanders' which began in March 1679 (SD, V.iv.267). With its assault on 'sedition' and on the 'Knaves and Fools' who challenge royal power, this closing speech smacks strongly of Tory anti-Whig rhetoric of the late 1670s:

Here's no sedition hatcht, no other Plots,  
But to intrap the Wolf that steals our Flocks.  
Who then wou'd be a King, gay Crowns to wear,  
Restless his nights, thoughtful his days with care;  
Whose greatness, nor whose goodness can secure  
From outrages which Knaves and Fools procure? (Epilogue, ll.32-7)

The same could be said of the late scenes dramatising Orsames' restoration, which are shot through with hostility towards the 'RABBLE OF CITIZENS' (SD IV.v. 128) who, despite their support for the king, are portrayed as 'mutinous' (IV.v.148) and wholly irrational. For

Derek Hughes, Behn's negative portrayal of Orsames' low-born supporters is evidence of her sensitivity to the close links between 'the mob psychology of Restoration' and 'the mob psychology of rebellion', and it leads to 'the greatest demythologizing of the act of restoration in early Restoration drama'.<sup>16</sup> But during the Exclusion Crisis the Tories were fond of portraying the Whigs as rabble-rousers who used the mob as a political tool, and the strain in Behn's representation of the citizens as simultaneously loyal, stupid and rebellious might equally be seen as a not entirely successful attempt to incorporate anti-Whig rhetoric into the original play text.<sup>17</sup>

However, looking for signs of revision is, in the main, a highly speculative activity, and one that usually involves choosing between different and often equally plausible contextual readings of the play. Susan Owen, for example, sees Orsames' rapacious libido as an Exclusion Crisis addition: in portraying the young king's sexual disruptiveness as a function of his impoverished education, she argues, Behn alludes to the pernicious effect that exile 'at the hands of an ungrateful and misguided nation' has had and will continue to have on James.<sup>18</sup> This argument gains force from the fact that dramatic representations of rape and attempted rape are rare in the 1660s and much more common during the Exclusion Crisis.<sup>19</sup> However, given that sexual violence in Exclusion Crisis drama often serves as a signifier of tyranny, one can legitimately ask, with Derek Hughes, what political mileage Behn could have hoped to get in 1679 from depicting her excluded king as a would-be rapist.<sup>20</sup>

When it comes to the play's treatment of religion, Janet Todd and Judy Hayden detect authorial revision in the Queen's eventual repudiation of the oracle as 'superstitious error'. The fact that it was misguided religious sentiments that led the Queen to alter the succession in the first place provides a textual echo of what Behn would have seen as the comparably wrong-headed Whig campaign to exclude James from the throne on the grounds of his Catholic faith.<sup>21</sup> Hayden extends this argument to encompass the play's general antipathy to religion, which she reads as an expression of the author's hostility to anti-Catholic hysteria.<sup>22</sup> Yet, as we have seen, the contemptuous dismissal of the oracle is entirely in keeping with the play's defiantly secular agenda, while its attack on religion goes hand in hand with its critique of divine right. Given that James was well known as an inflexible supporter of divine right absolutism, it seems unlikely that Behn would have enlisted such a subversive pairing into the service of his cause.

In the absence of conclusive evidence of extensive revision, it seems prudent to accept Behn's claim in her dedication that the play remained largely in its original state when it reached the stage. This does not mean that the play belongs solely to the 1660s, however. It is surely significant that, as far as we know, it was performed in 1679 complete with its searing criticisms of Christianity and divine right. Behn was apparently not averse to staging a play that takes issue with Stuart political doctrine even as the principle of indefeasible succession was undergoing serious challenge. This is obviously revealing about the nature of Behn's Toryism during the Exclusion Crisis, and it seems to offer further evidence of what several critics have seen as her determination not merely to support but also to advise the royal party in many of the plays and prose works she produced during the protracted political crisis that followed the Popish Plot.<sup>23</sup> With his zeal for Catholicism and embrace of divine right absolutism, James must have seemed an ideal beneficiary of a play that subjects divine right theory to a searching examination from a free-thinking perspective, demonstrating its integral link to despotism and offering in its stead a conception of kingship as a secular office best served by a prince with a well-tuned rational faculty who regards religion as nothing more than a coercive priestly fraud.

II. 'No Laws for Princes': Divine Right Kingship in The Forc'd Marriage

Behn's second play, *The Forc'd Marriage*, was produced in 1670, during the ministry of Arlington. It begins where *The Young King* ends, with a king giving a woman in marriage to one of his loyal servants, without sparing a thought for the feelings of the woman involved.<sup>24</sup> Derek Hughes provides an astute reading of the play as an exploration of 'the place of women in a feudal, militaristic society'.<sup>25</sup> Yet a dramatic world in which the king is empowered to give the bodies of his female subjects to his warriors is clearly one in which royal power is a problem. As Janet Todd comments, the disastrous consequences of the arbitrary decree that opens the play 'might have been used to assault autocratic rule of the sort the Stuarts approved'.<sup>26</sup> In Todd's view, what is curious about the play is that it offers no such critique. This article will argue that the politics of *The Forc'd Marriage* are less odd than Todd suggests and that the expectations raised by the king's gift of Erminia in the opening scene are fulfilled through a sustained if subtle critique of royal absolutism. As in *The Young King*, Behn in her second tragicomedy targets divine right, but here she takes aim not at the inadequacy of Christianity as a foundation for monarchical theory but at the lack of accountability that derives from a cardinal tenet of divine right, absolute monarchy: that 'the King is not subject to the Coercive Power of the Law'.<sup>27</sup>

The play's all-male opening scene introduces the audience to the ruling elite of a warrior society dominated by the values of honour and emulation. Behn characterises the triumphant warrior Alcippus through echoes of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*. Apparently an orphan, Alcippus was 'bred up to Battels' by the general Orgulius (I.i.88).<sup>28</sup> Like *Coriolanus*' mother, Volumnia, who taught her son that 'extremities was the trier of spirits',<sup>29</sup> Orgulius schooled his adoptive son in the overcoming of adversity: 'To meet Deaths horrors with undaunted looks./How to despise the hardships of a Siege;/To suffer, cold and hunger, want of sleep' (I.i.92-4). Alcippus' training also involved being sent to war when 'yet he was but tenderbodied' (*Coriolanus*, I.iii.5). So the king pays tribute to the '[b]rave youth, whose Infant-years did bring us Conquests./And as thou grew'st to man, thou grew'st in glory' (I.i.8-9) – lines that seem to recollect Cominius' formal encomium of Caius Martius, with its story of the sixteen-year-old boy who 'proved best man i'th' field' in his first battle and went on to ever-greater glories: 'His pupil age/ Man-entered thus, he waxèd like a sea' (*Coriolanus*, II.ii.93, 94-5).

The king represents Alcippus' valour as an inspiration to his fellows, but the prince's friend Alcander feels diminished rather than inspired: 'Why the devil should I rejoyce?/ Because I see another rais'd above me;/ Let him be great, and damn'd with all his greatness' (I.i.137-9). The lines disclose the vicious competition and struggle for precedence at work in this warlike dramatic world, from which not even the king is exempt. If Alcander feels slighted by Alcippus' triumph, the king feels slighted by his repeated refusal of reward for his deeds:

I shall grow angry, and believe your pride  
Would put the guilt off on your modesty,  
Which would refuse what that believes below it. (I.i.45-7)

What sounds at first like commendable modesty ends up sounding to the king like the pride of a man who thinks himself too good for his monarch's rewards.

This diagnosis of Alcippus' motives for declining material honours seems at least partly valid, as his belittling of his deeds – 'I only bade them fight, and they obey'd me' (I.i.20) –

echoes one of the chief symptoms of Coriolanus' anti-social pride. Nevertheless, the king's annoyance reveals that he is as touchy as his warriors when it comes to the order of precedence. Alcippus has explained his reluctance to request recompense for his military service in terms of traditional divine right sentiments:

The Duty which we pay your Majesty  
Ought to be such, as what we pay the Gods;  
Which always bears its recompense about it. (I.i.27-9)

But the king is quick to detect an insult even in such a deferential attitude to kingship.

Throughout this scene Behn characterises the king in terms of an acute sensitivity to affront, manifested chiefly in his attitude to royal gift-giving. He declares that if he fails to honour Alcippus' service, people will 'call it my neglect and want of gratitude;/ In this thy modesty will wrong thy King' (I.i.35-6). Not to ask for a reward is 'to doubt/ My Power or Will, in both you are to blame' (I.i.37-8). Once Alcippus is declared general, and he ventures to suggest that there is another, humbler, reward he has in mind, the king replies, 'It is not well to think my kindness limited' (I.i.109). For the king, the capacity and willingness to bestow his royal bounty on loyal servants are a key signifier of his power, and he is quick to take offence at the slightest suggestion that either his generosity or the resources at his disposal might in fact have limits.

Thus even in a scene of martial celebration there are signs of tension between the king and his warriors. A similarly strained relationship emerges from the story of Orgulius, a vitally important part of the play that Behn reveals only gradually. The opening scene presents the first instalment. When Orgulius surrenders the generalship to Alcippus, the king yet again seems to sense an affront and demands to know why he is stepping down from a post that only a few years earlier he thought 'not unfit' for him (I.i.73). Orgulius explains:

Sir, was it fit I should refuse your Grace?  
That was your act of mercy: and I took it  
To clear my innocency, and reform the errors  
Which those receiv'd who did believe me guilty,  
Or that my Crimes were greater than that mercy;  
I took it, Sir, in scorn of those that hated me;  
And now resign it to the Man you love. (I.i.74-80)

The gift of the post of general was an 'act of mercy' on the part of the king, a royal pardon for 'Crimes' as yet undisclosed, of which Orgulius angrily affirms his innocence. The verse rankles with the speaker's sense of grievance, and there is a deep-seated tension between the resentment and scorn he feels for those 'who did believe me guilty' – a group that must include the king – and a profound awareness of his total dependence on royal favour.

Is the king's prickliness in this scene a justifiable expression of his need to assert himself over his warlike, ambitious nobles? Or is it more accurately described as the suspicion and paranoia of a despot? Certainly Alcippus proves to be a socially disruptive presence, as the echoes of *Coriolanus* suggest he will, and on one level the play can be read as an exploration of the chronic instabilities of an honour culture. But by introducing the possibility that Orgulius was innocent of the charges levelled against him, Behn leaves room for a view of the king as an autocrat predisposed to see threats to his authority where none

exists. As the play progresses, this representation of the king emerges quietly from Behn's portrait of a royal court where monarchical power is shown to be absolute and all-enveloping.

The king's gift of Erminia of course looks decidedly like an expression of tyrannical royal power. It also violates the existing betrothal between Phillander and Erminia. This union between the prince and a commoner has been kept secret from the fathers of both parties, the assumption being that the king would disapprove of the match. When Erminia tells her father, Orgulius, about the betrothal, he is appalled that his daughter could be naive enough to imagine that Phillander would ever marry her or that the king would ever consent to the match. Sounding very much like a Restoration Polonius, he berates his daughter:

Your love from folly, not from vertue, grew;  
You never could beleeve, he'd marry you [...]  
Though by his fondness led he were content  
To marry thee, the King would ne'er consent. (I.iii.49-50, 53-4)

Determined to preserve his 'credit' and Erminia's honour, and desperate not to 'disoblige' the king (I.iii.64, 66), Orgulius brings the marriage forward, and so frustrates Phillander's plan to prevent the union by revealing all to the king. Having heard part of the story of Orgulius' past, we recognise that his decision is driven not just by what he imagines to be best for his daughter but equally by the fear of displeasing the king who has the power to retract his gift of mercy.

*The Forc'd Marriage* contains not one but two royals in love with commoners: Phillander's sister Galatea suffers from an unrequited passion for Alcippus. The doubling serves to underscore the disapprobation with which marriages between royals and commoners are viewed. As Erminia tells Galatea:

You only lose a man that does not know  
How great the Honour is which you bestow:  
Who dares not hope you love, or if he did,  
Your greatness would his just return forbid;  
His humbler thoughts durst ne're to you aspire,  
At most he would presume but to admire. (I.ii.99-104)

According to Erminia, Alcippus would never have presumed to view the princess as a potential love object. Later in the play her claim is proved correct when Alcippus bows to Galatea and speaks of 'That Adoration which I owe my Princess:/ That, with Religion took possession here./ And in my prayers I mix you with the Deities' (III.iii.95-7). As before with the king, Alcippus speaks the language of divine right, but Galatea replies drily, 'I'de rather you should treat me as a Mortal' (III.iii.98).

Concealment and secrecy turn out to be the defining qualities of the king's court and this serves to complicate the characters' determined attempts to apportion blame for the marriage of Alcippus and Erminia. Pisaro seeks to excuse Alcippus of any wrongdoing on the grounds that he did not know that Erminia was the prince's betrothed, to which Alcander replies, 'The Devil 'twill, dost think he knew it not[?]' (I.i.183). Alcander sounds simultaneously certain and uncertain of Alcippus' guilt, and when he speaks to Phillander later on, he ventures Pisaro's argument that 'perhaps [Alcippus] knew not that you lov'd her' (I.iv.27). The prince dismisses this with contempt and in doing so reveals a bit more about Orgulius' past:

Not know it: yes as well as thou and I:  
 The World was full on't, and could he be ignorant[?]  
 Why was her father call'd from banishment,  
 And plac'd about the King, but for her sake:  
 What made him General, but my passion for her.  
 What gave him twenty thousand Crowns a year,  
 But that which made me Captive to *Erminia*[?]  
 Almighty Love, of which thou sayst he is ignorant. (I.iv.28-35)

It turns out, then, that it was Phillander's passion for Erminia that reprieved Orgulius from banishment. But despite the prince's claim that this was common knowledge, we have already seen that Orgulius knows nothing about it. The prince possesses certainty but no more knowledge than others.

In Act II, scene iii, Alcippus reveals that he was not entirely ignorant of Erminia's relationship with Phillander:

He said, *Erminia*, that you were his wife;  
 If so, no wonder you refuse my bed:  
 The Presence of the King hindred my knowledge,  
 Of what I willingly would learn from you. (II.iii.34-7)

So Phillander had told Alcippus of his betrothal to Erminia, but confirmation of that story was frustrated by the presence of the king, which prevented any further discussion of the subject. The story Alcippus tells here may not exonerate him from blame, but it does underscore the extent to which the assumption and the fear of the king's disapproval enjoin secrecy and silence on the subject of marriage between members of the royal family and commoners. Royal power thus emerges as the primary problem the play explores, not simply because the king has the power to give his female subjects in marriage to his warriors, but because an intimidating atmosphere of royal exclusivity prevails at court, buoyed by divine right and a pervasive fear of arousing the king's ire.

The wedding tableau which opens Act II conveys the full extent of the king's power. As Derek Hughes observes, it is 'a ceremonial exercise of authority which manifestly overrides the lives and aspirations of those who are forced to participate in its choreography'.<sup>30</sup> After the tableau, the king does not reappear until late in Act IV. Yet the characters' habitual efforts to avoid stimulating royal displeasure leave us in no doubt that his presence is always felt. He is absent only from his subjects' discussions of culpability; clearly, to suggest that the king is in any way responsible for the forced marriage of Alcippus and Erminia is simply unthinkable.

The central acts of the play are concerned principally with Phillander's and Galatea's plans to undermine Alcippus' marriage to Erminia. After deliberately arousing Alcippus' jealousy and provoking violence between him and the prince, they plan an elopement, a scheme that shows the royal siblings resorting to a considerable degree of coercion. Galatea does not hesitate to try to browbeat Erminia into submission to their plot by stressing how much she owes to Phillander. This is the point in the play when we hear the full story of Orgulius' past, or rather, the 'official' version of it. Galatea portrays him as the over-ambitious general who used his control of the army in an attempt to topple the government and declare himself king. It was only because Phillander recalled him from well-deserved exile that Erminia was able to exchange the obscurity of a 'poor humble Cottage' for a life at court (III.iii.16). When Erminia objects that she is, after all, Alcippus' wife, Galatea tries emotional blackmail:

Perfidious Maid, I might have thought thou'dst prove  
False to thy Prince, and Rivall in my Love [...]  
Thou'st now reveng'd thy Fathers shame and thine  
In taking thus *Phillanders* life and mine. (III.iii.39-40, 43-4)

This torrent of reproach leaves Erminia in tears, but she does manage to emphasise the danger to which the siblings' plot exposes her: 'To your command should I submit to yield/ Where could I from *Alcippus* be conceal'd?/ What could defend me from his jealous rage[?]' (III.iii.59-61). To be fair, Phillander and Galatea expect Alcippus to be away from court when they hatch their plot. But it is important that Galatea never agrees to take part: when Phillander arrives at her lodgings in Act IV, scene iv, she is '*in a dishabit*' (SD IV.iv) and is clearly not expecting him. And, of course, when Alcippus does appear and discovers them both in the bedchamber, Phillander is persuaded with surprising ease to leave Erminia alone with a man who is clearly homicidally jealous and who, a few lines later, tries to murder her.

It is therefore little less than astonishing that, when they hear of Erminia's murder, Phillander faints into Alcander's arms and Galatea curses the heavens, but neither of them utters a syllable of self-reproach. Indeed, Galatea wastes little time in placing the blame elsewhere. When Orgulius demands that Alcippus pay for Erminia's murder with his life, Galatea tells him that his daughter's death is a just punishment inflicted on him for forcing her to marry Alcippus. Orgulius addresses his reply to the king, present on stage for the first time since the wedding tableau, asserting 'That was a fault of duty to your Majesty' (IV.vii.78). The king then confounds expectations by telling Orgulius:

Though that were honest, 'twas not wisely done,  
For had I known the passion of my son,  
And how essential 'twas to his content,  
I willingly had granted my consent,  
Her worth and beauty had sufficient been,  
To've rais'd her to the title of a Queen.  
Did not my Glorious Father, Great Gonzal  
Marry the Daughter of his Admirall[?]  
And I might to my Son have been as kind,  
As then my Father did my Grandsire find. (IV.vii.79-88)

By the end of Act IV, most of the central characters have expressed or acted in accordance with the view that the king is an inflexible opponent of marriages between royals and commoners. Hence it comes as something of a shock to hear him declare that he would have given his consent to the marriage between Phillander and Erminia had he known how much it meant to his son, and that his own mother was a commoner. How should we interpret this speech? Have the king's children and subjects simply misjudged him, failing to recognise his fundamental benevolence? Or are we witnessing a deft royal evasion of responsibility for Erminia's death? Orgulius' claim that he acted out of duty to the king implies that the king's opposition to marriages between royals and commoners might be at issue here. Small wonder that the king hastens to shift the blame back onto Orgulius, insisting that he would have consented to the match. Orgulius responds with a further defence of his actions, this time with reference to his past:

You once believ'd that I had guilty been,  
And had the punishment, but not the sin,

I suffer'd when 'twas thought I did aspire  
 [And should by this have rais'd my crimes yet higher]. (IV.vii.89-92)

How could he have countenanced a marriage that would have laid him open to further false charges of treasonous ambition? Orgulius receives no reply to his second affirmation of his innocence, but the final scene of the play will make clear that he, and not the king, will bear the burden of guilt for the forced marriage of Erminia and Alcippus.

A few scenes later we learn that the king himself married for love. Having heard the story of his son's relationship with Erminia, he responds:

Thou'st entertain'd me with a pretty story,  
 And call'd up so much Nature to thy Cause,  
 That I am half subjected to its Laws:  
 I find thy lovely Mother plead within too,  
 And bids me put no force upon thy will;  
 Tells me thy flame should be as unconfin'd,  
 As that we felt when our two souls combin'd. (V.iii.1-7)

What is curious about this speech is that the matter seems to have been decided in Act IV, scene vii, when the king spoke so indulgently of Phillander's love for Erminia. Yet he was speaking there about a dead woman who presented no threat. Here, confronted with the fact that she is not dead after all, he sounds rather less impressed; the love story Phillander tells may be 'pretty' and natural, but the king is only 'half subjected' to it, and his consent requires the intervention of the spirit of his late wife to plead with him to 'put no force upon thy will'. So, although the king does at this point soften and give his blessing to the union, his speech reflects back unfavourably on his earlier lines, confirming how facile, even cynical, was his self-presentation as the advocate of cross-class marriage, and underscoring the alacrity with which he, like his daughter, evaded any responsibility for Erminia's fate by placing the blame on her father.

The subject of culpability remains the focus of the play's final scene. When the mock funeral of Erminia explodes into more violence between Phillander and Alcippus, the king enters and delivers a stern rebuke to his rebellious subject in the form of a lesson in divine right and non-resistance theory:

– Is this an object for your rage to work on[?]  
 Behold him well, *Alcippus*, 'tis your Prince.  
 – Who dares gaze on him with irreverend eye?  
 The good he does you ought t'adore him for,  
 But all his evils 'tis the Gods must punish,  
 Who made no Laws for Princes. (V.v.83-88)

Janet Todd has commented on the strangeness of this climactic speech, which places so much emphasis on the royal 'evils' which the loyal subject has no choice but to endure, given that princes are not subject to human law.<sup>31</sup> Yet in view of the king's oppressive rule, his children's ruthless pursuit of their own interests and the royal family's refusal to be held responsible for their actions, the speech makes perfect sense: through this apparent endorsement of orthodox late Stuart political theory, Behn unveils the theoretical basis for the dramatic world of her play, in which royals are never held to account for the wrongs they commit. The point is underscored when Orgulius appears on stage in the role of

scapegoat, accepting the burden of guilt for the forced marriage and announcing that 'My King already has forgiven that error' (V.v.202). While Orgulius may not be blameless, the play has made clear his reasons for hastening Erminia's marriage to Alcippus and left open the possibility that the original charge of rebellion may be no more than a figment of the imagination of a jealous and despotic king. Is this, then, the second time that Orgulius has received a royal pardon for a crime he did not commit?

Alcippus bears a greater share of responsibility for the disastrous consequences of his marriage to Erminia. Overcome with remorse, he offers the king his life in payment for his crime, but the king decides, rather grudgingly, to pardon him instead:

If I should take it 'twere no more than just,  
Yet once again I will allow it thee,  
That thou maiest owe me for't a second time,  
Manage it better than the last I gave. (V.v.115-18)

The lines make clear that the king gives gifts, including the gift of mercy, not out of generosity but in order to create obligation. As with Orgulius, a royal pardon is part of the process of bringing a troublesome warrior to heel by making him the king's debtor. The humbling of Alcippus thus involves the further gift of Galatea – the 'right' woman this time. Although Alcippus' unease with royal bounty persists in his disinclination to accept a gift he feels he cannot possibly merit, the revelation that Erminia is alive resolves that issue, and he is happily bound as debtor to his prince and king.

Running alongside Behn's anatomisation of the role of women in a warrior culture is a perceptive study of a manipulative royal family, adept at extracting maximum mileage out of the impunity bestowed by divine right. Critics have detected numerous topical references in the play: to James's scandalous marriage to the commoner Anne Hyde; to the fall of her father, the earl of Clarendon, the over-powerful subject; and to Arlington, Clarendon's successor as chief minister.<sup>32</sup> Behn's reference to Arlington is the most transparent of her topical allusions, for it would be hard not to make a link between the patches the cowardly fool Falatius wears on his face to substantiate his false claims to valour and Arlington, 'the quiet, portly minister with the black plaster over his nose'.<sup>33</sup> As Todd reminds us, Behn had good reason to make jokes at Arlington's expense, for it was he who had 'left her so coldly in the lurch' when she was desperate for money while working as a government spy in Antwerp in 1666.<sup>34</sup> The play's insistence on the self-interested motives that underlie royal largesse may well stem from Behn's first-hand knowledge of the government's indifference to the claims of loyal service.

Yet judging by Behn's quietly sympathetic treatment of Orgulius, her hostility to Arlington derived as well from his role in the fall of Clarendon.<sup>35</sup> There are striking parallels between Orgulius and Charles's ill-fated Chancellor. What he most fears – that he will be accused of ambitious over-reaching if his daughter weds a prince – is precisely what happened to Clarendon in 1660. He went on to be made a scapegoat for the king's humiliating defeat in the Second Dutch War in 1667. An accusation of treason followed which drove him into exile.

In Orgulius, Behn presents the low points of Clarendon's career with the order of events discreetly reshuffled. Her treatment of the powerful royal favourite contrasts sharply with two other plays on the same subject produced in the wake of Clarendon's demise: Frances Boothby's *Marcellia: or The Treacherous Friend* (1669) and Sir Robert Howard's *The Great Favourite, or The Duke of Lerma* (1668). In both plays royal favourites are depicted unambiguously as villains who use marriage to consolidate their position at court. Howard was

one of the principal architects of Clarendon's downfall, and *The Great Favourite* offers a more transparent attack on the Chancellor than Boothby's play. The Duke of Lerma seeks to guarantee his power at court by prostituting his daughter to the king and, like Clarendon, he is ennobled as a result of the liaison. More interestingly, his control over the court is manifested principally in the king's embrace of absolutism:

Must Princes favours then be limited,  
Or Judg'd by common Breaths?  
'Tis restless Envy, that urges Mutinies  
Shelter'd under Duty. (III.i.94-7)<sup>36</sup>

This is very much how Howard, Buckingham and the other anti-Clarendonians represented the Chancellor to the House of Commons. In their efforts to secure the support of MPs for their campaign to topple Clarendon, they portrayed him as the champion of an unconstrained assertion of the royal prerogative and themselves as the supporters of Parliament and the liberties of the subject.<sup>37</sup> They accused their adversary of advising the king to govern by a standing army, and demanded his impeachment for high treason.<sup>38</sup>

Historians generally offer a very different picture of Clarendon's politics. Mark Kishlansky, for example, argues that his desire for an alliance between king and parliament 'curbed Charles's absolutist tendencies'.<sup>39</sup> Paul Seaward credits him with developing 'a secular royalist ideology, which depended little on the divine right of kings and set them firmly within a framework of law'.<sup>40</sup> His contemporary Gilbert Burnet praised him for insisting on 'the just limitation of the prerogative'.<sup>41</sup>

Behn does not characterise Orgulius in terms of his politics, but in representing him as quite possibly the victim of a despotic king she subtly challenges Howard's equation of the royal favourite with the fomenting of tyranny and locates absolutist tendencies in the figure of the monarch rather than his anxiously dependent servant. Moreover, her interest in *The Forc'd Marriage* in the issue of royal impunity suggests that she shared the view that Charles had wronged his Chancellor, using him as a scapegoat in order to avoid assuming any responsibility for the failures of his reign. This view was apparently widespread. During the impeachment proceedings, one MP asserted that he '[w]ould not have the faults of all miscarriages laid upon the scapegoat, Lord *Clarendon*',<sup>42</sup> while Pepys's *Diary* for late 1667 registers critical assessments of Charles's conduct:

He [James Pierce, courtier and surgeon to the duke of York] doth say, and I think with right, that the King doth in this do the most ungrateful part of a maister to a servant that ever was done, in this carriage of his to my Lord Chancellor. That it may be the Chancellor may have faults, but none such as these they speak of. That he doth now really fear that all is going to ruin.<sup>43</sup>

This critical stance was particularly marked among James's supporters. The duke of York's staunch support for his father-in-law throughout the impeachment crisis soured relations between the royal brothers and produced a foretaste of the exclusion campaign, as Buckingham began to canvas the possibility of having Monmouth declared heir presumptive.<sup>44</sup> Behn's allusions to the Clarendon story, with their attendant positive portrayal of marriage between royals and commoners, may have been a bid for the duke of York's patronage, or they may be a sign of the attachment to James that would manifest itself so strongly later in her career. But *The Forc'd Marriage* leaves us in little doubt that Clarendon's

fall from favour had great political resonance for Behn, illustrating forcefully the perils of courtly power and the oppressive and arbitrary nature of divine right kingship.

### III. Conclusion: 'Where Lies This Power Divine?'

It is clear that Behn's outspoken critique of abusive kingship in *The Amorous Prince* builds on both *The Young King* and *The Forc'd Marriage*. Prince Frederick is another would-be rapist, a monster of sexual appetite fully prepared to use his political power to bully women into having sex with him. When that fails, he does not hesitate to resort to physical force, as we see in Act III, scene i, when he threatens his friend Curtius' betrothed, Laura, with rape. He has also seduced and abandoned Curtius' sister Cloris. In addition to targeting Charles's own sexual irresponsibility, Behn's principal interests are similar to those she explored in her two previous plays: the moral content of a royal office hedged around with divinity and the problem of the ruler who cannot be held to account for his crimes.

The play shows us Frederick's wronged subjects grappling with the discrepancy between the ideal and the reality of royalty. In the second scene, when Frederick tells Curtius that he has slept with Cloris and has no intention of keeping his promise to marry her, Curtius, in the first of several soliloquies, questions how a good man could 'refuse so sweet and soft a maid' (I.ii.125).<sup>45</sup> The muted criticism produces an immediate retraction, as Curtius takes refuge in the traditional excuse for royal bad behaviour: 'No he is just and good, only too much misled/ By youth and flattery' (I.ii.126-7). When he discovers Frederick threatening Laura with rape, he immediately draws his sword, an apparently treasonous action that he justifies on the grounds that it was aimed not at a prince but at 'a Ravisher./ A foul misguided Villain./ One that scarce merits the brave name of Man' (III.i.75-7). The lines at once condemn Frederick and insist on the impossibility of a prince acting as he has acted. Cloris exhibits the same incredulity: 'A Prince, and be unjust to her that loves him too?/ – Surely it is impossible' (III.iii.10-11). These characters want desperately to believe that royal power has a moral foundation, but this is a claim that Frederick himself simply laughs off; when the terrified Laura asks him, 'Oh where is all your Honour, and your Virtue?', he replies, with staggering cynicism, 'Just where it was, there's no such real thing' (III.i.63, 64).

Faced with the harsh truth that princes do commit crimes, Curtius seeks to punish Frederick for his misdeeds. Yet he finds all paths to justice blocked: he cannot take revenge on Frederick without becoming guilty of treason, nor can he overcome his own psychological resistance to killing his prince:

Was ever wretched Lovers fate like mine!  
– And he who injures me, has power to do so;  
– But why, where lies this power about this man?  
Is it his charms of Beauty, or of Wit?  
Or that great name he has acquir'd in War?  
Is it the Majesty, that Holy something,  
That guards the person of this Demi-god?  
This aw's not me, there must be something more,  
For ever when I call upon my wrongs;  
Something within me pleads so kindly for him,  
As would persuade me that he could not erre.  
– Ah, what is this? where lies this power divine,  
That can so easily make a slave of mine? (IV.ii.150-62)

Curtius wants to identify the source of the royal power that holds such sway over his own heart and mind and that persuades him, in the face of hard evidence to the contrary, that the prince 'could not erre'. He speaks with the voice of a sceptic and rationalist when he states that 'there must be something more' than 'the Majesty, that Holy something' that allegedly surrounds the royal person and for which he claims to feel no awe. He wants a rational explanation for his feelings of reverence but, of course, cannot find one. The 'power divine' that makes a slave of him derives from an indoctrination in divine right from which even his scepticism cannot free him.

Curtius continues to be caught between the longing for justice and the 'strange irresolution' in him that stops him taking action (V.iii.15), an impasse resolved only by the prince's reformation in the closing moments of the play, a tragicomic resolution that concisely signals the paucity of opportunities that divine right kingship provides for responsible rule. Lorenzo, that curious combination of corruption and insight, reminds us how unlikely the prince's reformation is: 'but to change nature,/ To turn good on a sudden, and never give a man/ Civil warning, is a defeat not to be endur'd' (V.iii.211-13). The prince's closing speech, which resorts to the discredited story of the high-spirited and misguided young royal to explain away his offences, seems designed to stress how little things have changed.

Behn's three early tragicomedies make it abundantly clear that, at this stage of her career, her royalism was not of the divine right variety. On the contrary, she presents in these plays an anatomisation of divine right that lays bare the intrinsic weaknesses of a conception of monarchy that, at least in its cruder forms, equates kingship with divinity, foments tyranny and gives the subject no redress against royal abuses of power. Throughout, her focus is on the moral deficiencies of divine right and its failure to provide any anchor for monarchical virtues beyond the will of the man who wears the crown. Although *The Young King* proposes a model of kingship based on intellectual freedom from Christian doctrine, the plays do not really offer an agenda for change; nor do they envisage any alternative to monarchy. But her blistering criticism of divine right in these tragicomedies strongly suggests that in the first decade of the Restoration Behn was out of step with the absolutist tendency of Stuart royalism, favouring instead a secular and mixed monarchy as the soundest basis for stable and just rule. *The Young King's* belated production in 1679 seems to indicate that these political principles remained intact even as Behn was embarking on her fierce long-term defence of late Stuart kingship.

## NOTES

1. Derek Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p.40.
2. Janet Todd, *The Secret Life of Aphra Behn* (London, Sydney and New York: Pandora, 2000), p.150.
3. Exceptions include: Derek Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p.14-46; Judy A. Hayden, *Of Love and War: The Political Voice in the Early Plays of Aphra Behn* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), p.17-121; Maureen Duffy, *The Passionate Shepherdess: The Life of Aphra Behn, 1640-1689* (London: Phoenix Press, 1977), p.110-11, 190-98; and Janet Todd, *The Secret Life*, p.63-5, 138-43, 148-53.
4. 'To Philaster', *The Young King; or: The Mistake*, in *The Works of Aphra Behn*, ed. Janet Todd (London: William Pickering, 1996), vol. VII.83. See also Todd's Introduction, p.80. All subsequent references are to this edition, with act, scene and line numbers given parenthetically within the text.
5. Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p.18; Hayden, *Of Love and War*, p.18-19.
6. Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p.16-17.
7. Behn would encounter this strategy again much later in her career, when she translated Fontenelle's *Histoire des Oracles as A History of Oracles* (1688). Both the original and the translation offer a history of paganism that strongly implies that Christianity is as implicated in priestly frauds as its pagan predecessors. See: J. A. I. Champion, *The Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken: The Church of England and Its Enemies, 1660-1730* (Cambridge:

Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.145, 158-9; Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p.159; and Line Cottagnies, 'Aphra Behn's French Translations', in Derek Hughes and Janet Todd (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Aphra Behn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.231-3.

8. For accounts of the role of free-thinking in Behn's work, see, for example: Arlen Feldwick and Cary J. Nederman, '“Religion Set the World at Odds”: Deism and the Climate of Religious Tolerance in the Works of Aphra Behn', in John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman (eds), *Beyond the Persecuting Society: Religious Toleration before the Enlightenment* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Philadelphia Press, 1998), p.216-31; Sara Ellen Zweig, *The Fringes of Belief: English Literature, Ancient Heresy, and the Politics of Freethinking, 1660-1760* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), p.53-79; and Anita Pacheco, '“Little Religion” but “Admirable Morals”: Christianity and Honor in Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*', *Modern Philology* 111 (2013), p.253-80.

9. Todd, *The Secret Life*, p.65.

10. Matthew Griffith, *The Fear of God and the King* (London, 1660), p.1, 10. N. H. Keeble remarks that Griffith's sermon caused considerable embarrassment; see *The Restoration: England in the 1660s* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), p.69.

11. William Walwyn, *God Save the King, or, A Sermon of Thanksgiving for His Majesties Happy Return to the Throne* (London, 1660), p.13.

12. Mark Goldie, 'John Locke and Anglican Royalism', *Political Studies* 31 (1983), p.61-85. See also Tim Harris, 'Tories and the Rule of Law in the Reign of Charles II', *The Seventeenth Century* 8 (1993), p.11-12, and Keeble, *The Restoration*, p.67-8.

13. For a different reading of this episode, see Hayden, *Of Love and War*, p.41.

14. For the meaning of 'intricate', see the OED, adj. 2: 'Of thoughts, conceptions, statements, etc.: perplexingly involved or complicated in meaning; entangled; obscure.'

15. 'To Philaster', p.83.

16. Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p.25.

17. See Todd, *The Secret Life*, p.253-4.

18. Susan Owen, 'Sexual Politics and Party Politics in Behn's Drama, 1678-83', in Janet Todd (ed.), *Aphra Behn Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.19. Janet Todd makes a similar point; see *The Secret Life*, p.252. She also argues for a later date for Orsames' sexual awakening, on the grounds that it is indebted to Dryden and Davenant's 1667 adaptation of *The Tempest* (p.253). Both plays clearly show an interest in male sexuality in a state of nature, but so does Calderón's play, which, moreover, contains a scene of attempted rape very similar to Orsames' sexual assault on Urania.

19. See Derek Hughes, 'Rape on the Restoration Stage', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 46 (2005), p.227-32.

20. Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p.116. For accounts of the political meanings of rape in Exclusion Crisis plays, see Susan J. Owen, *Restoration Theatre and Crisis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p.175, and 'Sexual Politics and Party Politics', p.16, and Hughes, 'Rape on the Restoration Stage', p.232.

21. Hayden, *Of Love and War*, p.48-9; Todd, *The Secret Life*, n. 15, p.481.

22. Hayden, *Of Love and War*, p.47-8.

23. See, for example: Todd, *The Secret Life*, p.268, 281, 326, 344; Anita Pacheco, 'Reading Toryism in Aphra Behn's Cit-Cuckolding Comedies', *Review of English Studies* 55 (2004), p.700, 706-7, and '“Little Religion” but “Admirable Morals”', p.272-3; and Richard Kroll, '“Tales of Love and Gallantry”: The Politics of *Oroonoko*', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 67 (2004), p.573, 578.

24. Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p.30.

25. Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p.16.

26. Todd, *The Secret Life*, p.140.

27. John Curtois, *A Discourse Shewing That Kings When Dead Are Lamented* (London, 1685), p.11. For a very different reading of the politics of the play, see Hayden, *Of Love and War*, p.60-71.

28. All quotations from *The Forc'd Marriage* are from *The Works of Aphra Behn*, ed. Janet Todd (London: William Pickering, 1996), vol. V. All subsequent references are to this edition, with Act, scene and line numbers given parenthetically within the text.

29. *Coriolanus*, in Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard and Katharine Eisaman Maus (eds), *The Norton Shakespeare*, 2nd edn (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 2008), Act IV, scene i, l.l.4. All subsequent references are to this edition, with Act, scene and line numbers given parenthetically within the text.

30. Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p.33.

31. Todd, *The Secret Life*, p.140-41.

32. See, for example: Duffy, *The Passionate Shepherdess*, p.110; Todd, *The Secret Life*, p.141; and Hayden, *Of Love and War*, p.82-5.

33. Ronald Hutton, *Charles II, King of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p.254.

34. Todd, *The Secret Life*, p.141.

35. See Clayton Roberts, 'The Impeachment of the Earl of Clarendon', *Cambridge Historical Journal* 13:1 (1957), p.6-7, 12, for an account of Arlington's role in Clarendon's fall from favour.

36. All quotations from *The Duke of Lerma* are from David Womersley (ed.), *Restoration Drama: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000). All subsequent references are to this edition, with Act, scene and line numbers given parenthetically within the text.

37. See Roberts, 'The Impeachment', p.6-7, 9, 12. See also Nancy Klein Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration: English Tragicomedy, 1660-1671* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.128-9.

38. Roberts, 'The Impeachment', p.9.

39. Mark Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain, 1603-1714* (London: Penguin Books, 1996), p.243-4.

40. Paul Seaward, 'Hyde, Edward, First Earl of Clarendon (1609-1674)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, 2008: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14328> [accessed 28 July 2013].

41. Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1823), vol. 1.271-2.

42. Quoted in Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration*, p.129.

43. Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration*, p.129; Robert Latham and William Matthews (eds), *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (London: Bell and Sons Ltd, 1974), 27 November 1667, p.550. Burnet too judges that Charles's reputation was seriously damaged by his treatment of Clarendon; see *Bishop Burnet's History*, p.283, 443, 445.

44. See Hutton, *Charles II*, p.252.

45. All quotations from *The Amorous Prince* are from *The Works of Aphra Behn*, ed. Todd, vol. V. All subsequent references are to this edition, with Act, scene and line numbers given parenthetically within the text.

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