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**Orientalism and Ambivalent
Colonialism in John Dryden's
Depiction of Cleopatra in *All
for Love***

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to explore an oft-neglected facet in the study of Dryden's plays through a post-colonial interpretation of his play *All for Love*. The research argues that Dryden's choice to present oriental characters in a positive light bespeaks an ambivalent colonialist tendency on his part, given that many of the protagonists in his heroic plays displayed characteristics in a positive light. With a particular focus on the character of Cleopatra, I posit the idea that Dryden's portrayal of the last pharaoh of Egypt showed the viewer a character capable of expressing complex emotions at times, even contesting how the Romans viewed her. By exploring the language of bondage and incarceration regarding Cleopatra and Marc Antony, the study shows how Antony's character is rendered effeminate and, in many cases, impotent in Cleopatra's court, which is a subversion of the Oriental female representation as posited by Edward Said in *Orientalism*. By employing Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture*, I analyse Dryden's character of Cleopatra and outline instances where mimicry and other concepts from Bhabha's works are used to create anxiety on the part of the colonial subject and supplement an understanding of Dryden's play.

Dedication

I am dedicating this thesis to my father and mother, and grandfather, Saady Elsaady, who believe in the priceless worth of education. I would also like to dedicate this to my great grandfather Abdallah Lamlum, the patriarch of my tribe; his physical struggle against colonisation and occupation renders the theoretical study of the post-colonial all the more pertinent and necessary.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

DEDICATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Aim and Approach of the Study-----7

The Use of Edward Saïd and Homi Bhabha in the Study-----15

CHAPTERS

1. THE HISTORIC AND CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND TO DRYDEN’S AMBIVALENT COLONIALISM AND NATIONALISM-

1.1. Support of Monarchic Legitimacy-----18

1.2. Ambivalent Colonialism in Dryden’s Works-----24

1.3. Dryden and His Exotic Plays-----26

1.3.1. *Aureng-Zebe* -----32

1.3.2. *The Conquest of Granada*-----35

1.3.3. *The Indian Emperour*-----38

1.4. Dryden, Plutarch and Depiction of Cleopatra -----41

2. THE WORLD OF *All for Love or the World Well Lost*

2.1. Dryden’s Conception of *All for Love* and Sources-----46

2.2. Historical Background -----50

2.3. Performance and Popularity-----54

2.4. Commentary on the Dedication -----57

2.5. Analysis of the Depiction of the Setting-----	61
2.6. Analysis of the Character of Cleopatra-----	68
2.7. Analysis of the Character of Marc Antony-----	85
CONCLUSION-----	92
BIBLIOGRAPHY	

INTRODUCTION

The Aim and Approach of the Study

A sizeable corpus exists for the postcolonial rereading or reinterpretation of literature from the Renaissance to the beginning of the twentieth century. These post-colonial reinterpretations offer insight into authorial motivations and shed light on prevalent colonial undercurrents that gave way to imperialism. Using the post-colonial lens uncovers a world that was taken at face value. Putting into question the motivations of the Spanish Conquistadores, the diction commonly used to describe the natives and the orientalist terms with which locales were illustrated.

It is no surprise that Shakespeare would be subject to the post-colonial lens. Several essays deal with notions of race in *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice*. Others also detail the master/slave relations between Prospero and Caliban in *The Tempest*. The essays, anthologies and books are numerous and oversaturated, giving room for discussion and even refutation.

Yet, despite the attention Shakespeare has received, Dryden (although wildly popular in his own time) has garnered little when it comes to postcolonial critique. This comes as a bit of a shock to the seasoned reader of Dryden since many of his plays deal with colonialism and exist in locales far beyond that of the Western world. What is doubly astounding is the fact that Aphra Behn's novel *Oroonoko* published in 1688, is the subject of numerous colonial analyses on racial constructs and slavery. Additionally, eighteenth-century plays that deal with colonialism, such as Samuel Foote's *The Nabob* (1772) and Richard Cumberland's *The West Indian* (1771), have received attention. Thus, it cannot be an oversight by genre or period, which begs the question of

why Dryden has remained neglected in the post-colonial discourse. There are possibly two reasons for this which Dr Monika Fludernik has bluntly though no less eloquently, divulged in her essay “Nobel Savages and Caliban: Dryden and Colonial Discourse”. Firstly, and the most obvious of those reasons, is “Dryden’s current lack of popularity particularly concerning his major genre, the heroic drama” (Fludernik p.273). The second reason proposed by Fludernik is that Dryden could never hope to be “politically correct” and thus would yield a one-sided analysis that labels Dryden as another evil colonialist (Fludernik, p.273). But arguably, as this study hopes to reveal and as pointed out by Fludernik, Dryden does attempt to present a balanced view of colonialism. Although he still participates in the pre-colonial discourse, he does so in a way that embodies ambivalence.

While it is true that many of Dryden’s plays display a degree of nationalism both implicitly and explicitly, as is the case with *Amboyna*. *Amboyna* is overtly nationalist and can be termed a propaganda piece. Dryden’s recasting of the Dutch characters in conflict with the English portrayed as gentry evidences his ability to weave political prejudices in his works. His choice came when commerce and colonisation were the sources of conflict between European nations. He attributes negative traits to the Dutch in no arbitrary fashion; he is strategically stirring the public's anger in the Second and Third Anglo-Dutch Wars afresh. Yet, beyond the propaganda and zealous support of the monarchy, Dryden also portrayed ambivalent, if not opposed, views of colonialism. There is something to be said about his portrayal of foreign others in his plays. The heroes and heroines of his heroic dramas are often endowed with qualities deemed honourable, laudable and likeable to audiences. Although this exaltation of characters is a regular practice for heroic dramas, Dryden’s choice to elevate the character of Almanzor (although he is revealed to be a Spaniard by birth) is indicative of his ability to paint

foreign others in a light that allows them to break the stigma of primitive behaviour commonly associated with people of the East. The conflict in *The Conquest of Granada* centres on the relations between two factions of the Moors against each other. Their battles against the Spanish are not placed at the forefront of the play's rising action. However, this should be made with knowledge of the overarching narrative in mind, that *The Conquest of Granada* was also written to display the victory of Christendom over the heathendom of Islam. Yet the moments that mention the Spanish and Moor conflict are presented as a means to display Almanzor's valour. Such instances where "Eastern" characters are endowed with commendable behaviour occur throughout Dryden's heroic plays. They warrant further study but will ideally be mentioned throughout this analysis as they become pertinent.

The main focus of this study centres on what is arguably one of Dryden's most famous dramatic works: *All for Love*. Published in 1677, it stands alone when set amongst his heroic plays. In this instance, he abandons his usual heroic couplet in favour of blank verse. The comparison between Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* is a common critical approach. It is essential to state that Dryden does not conceal much of his source material and characterisations owing to the bard's genius. He fully acknowledges this "In my style, I have professed to imitate the divine Shakespeare [...] I hope I may affirm, and without vanity, that by imitating him, I have excelled myself throughout the play" (Dryden, 2013, p.18-19. 32-33). Dryden's acknowledgement comes at a time when many were imitating Shakespeare and with this play in mind. Dryden's attempt with *All for Love* is not the first. The tale of Antony and Cleopatra has been dramatised many times following Shakespeare by Thomas May, Sir Charles Sedley and Samuel Daniel. The tale's interest indicates a time when alterity was a growing topic of interest, and exoticism became more prevalent during the restoration. The theatre allowed spectators to

voyage and explore strange lands without leaving the safety of the playhouse. The fascination with Cleopatra predates the restoration and renaissance. However, the choice to fix the play's action at the fall of the Ptolemaic Dynasty means that Dryden's play is not exempt from colonial critique. As an Other and a woman, Cleopatra emphasises the intersectionality of the play.

This paper is divided into two parts. I will discuss the historical background and Dryden's works in the first part. I begin by establishing Dryden's connection to the crown. It might seem plausible to affiliate Dryden with the Tories, especially since Charles II granted him laureateship in 1668. However, as Steven Zwicker posits, concealment was essential to The Restoration. Zwicker notes, "The fact of change itself and the extremes to which political change had run impelled men to seek the stance and language of centrist politics" (1984, p.5). Dryden begins his poetic career with an ode praising Oliver Cromwell. He then changed his allegiances when Charles II ascended the throne. By determining the changeable state of loyalties, and the necessity of concealment, I posit that it is difficult to ascertain if Dryden was in support of the crown and, by extension, any nascent imperial ambitions England might have had.

Following this, I discuss the possibility of Dryden's ambivalence towards colonialism. I discuss how Dryden's plays are a necessary and oft-neglected subject of study. I explore why restoration scholars choose to overlook nascent imperial ambitions during this period and are usually in favour of discussing national politics over foreign politics at the time. Bridget Orr notes in her book *Empire on the English stage, 1660-1714*, that there was a tendency to mention the rise and fall of empires (2001, p.28). Although they may have reflected national politics, Dryden's plays also reflected foreign politics, the glimmers of fear regarding the Ottomans, and the growing opportunism of trade in the East. Peter Craft states that some twenty-one factories

from the East India Company were established during Aurengzeb's¹ reign. Furthermore, In *The Conquest of Granada*, Dryden includes the discovery that Almanzor is not a Moor but the son of the Duke of Arcos. This discovery provides a resolution that suggests that the only reason a character could have admirable qualities or show valour is that he is a Christian and European at heart. However, the play also includes the conversions of Almahide and Esperanza, which suggests that there is toleration for those on the margins of civil society to surpass their Otherhood and become assimilated. In such a way, Dryden may have been promoting the acceptance of "New Christians, Spanish Moors or Jews whose motives for conversion were always suspect" (Orr, 2001, p.163). Additionally, Dryden's *The Indian Emperour* is concerned with the fall of the Aztec Empire. In this play, Dryden admonishes the Spanish Empire for its hand in the demise of the Aztecs. However, Dryden's admonition suggests that the Aztecs' "best hope lies in the superior civility of the English" (Orr, 2001, p. 146). Through the play *The Indian Emperour*, Dryden lays the groundwork for the possibilities of English imperial trade relations in South America.

The common point between all three of these plays, other than their discussion of the rise and fall of empires, is love. In all these plays, the protagonists must find a reconciliation between love and duty. Once this is achieved, they can assume control of their kingdoms and resolve any crisis. Once I establish the link between these plays, I open the discussion on *All for Love*. I begin by discussing Dryden's possible inspiration for the plot from Plutarch. Although published before *Plutarch's Lives*, it can be conjectured that Dryden had read and employed elements of Plutarch in his play. In my discussion of Dryden and Plutarch, I also touch upon Dryden's

¹Aurengzeb (1618-1707) The sixth and last of the great Mughal emperors. Under his reign the Mughal Empire flourished, the collapse of the empire was due to his policies that left the empire severely weakened eventually leading to its dissolution.

attempt at translating Plutarch and its general accuracy compared to Thomas North's *Plutarch's Lives* which was the main source text for Shakespeare.

In the second part, I briefly discuss Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra and the implication by some scholars that it is the primary source text for Dryden's *All for Love*. Dryden's use of blank verse, departing from the use of heroic couplets, is an obvious point of comparison. However, it is essential to note that blank verse was also the style of "Fletcher, Daniel and Johnson" (Dryden, 2013, p.369).

Following this, I discuss typical traditions in paintings of Cleopatra during the period of the Restoration and how Dryden's inspiration for Cleopatra was drawn from the Duchess of Portsmouth Louise de K roualle. De K roualle's intrigue figures as a connecting point to Thomas Osborne, the Earl of Danby, who is rumoured to have also had an affair with the Duchess and to whom Dryden dedicates the play. The dedication shows England's sentiments towards France and the extent of turmoil in Charles II's reign. Dryden also comments on colonialism, suggesting that "they are not always the happiest subjects whose kings extend their dominions farthest" (Dryden, 2013, p.6.29-30).

In the following subchapter, I discuss the setting of the play and how Egypt is described throughout the play. The language used to represent Egypt shows a clear division in the portrayal of Rome and Egypt. The division is gendered. Egypt is associated with effeminacy, and masculinity is attributed to Rome. The implications of such a division suggest that the feminine is to be overpowered or conquered. The division between the two countries is restated throughout the play and is often used as a point of distinguishing identity. Octavia, Antony's wife, chooses to define herself as a Roman first and foremost when meeting Cleopatra. The separation between the two states of suggesting that there is an inherent power structure at play.

Following the discussion on the setting and the implications therein, I consider the character of Cleopatra, who is the main subject of this thesis. In the main body of the study, I discuss the mytho-historical story of Cleopatra as told by Plutarch in his *Life of Antony*. The purpose of providing this review is to situate better where the tragedy of Dryden's Cleopatra begins. Dryden, in the course of the play, shows that Cleopatra can garner the audience's sympathy, that she, too, like Octavia, has experienced loss. Of note are other characters' opinions on Cleopatra. Ventidius states that she is a "Smooth sycophant", and Octavia declares that she is a "faithless prostitute"(Dryden, 2013, II.i 154, IV.i. 389). With the projections of these opinions imposed on her, Cleopatra becomes a vessel, or what Edward Said would term a "Vaisseau d'Orient" she is a receptacle that conveys the orient through her womanhood. Said states that the vessel both poses "sexual promise (and threat)" (2003, p.188).

By opening a discussion into the relationship between sexuality and orientalism, I discuss the use of carceral imagery and bondage in *All for Love* by interpreting the terms Antony and Cleopatra refer to each other as slaves. This is particularly pertinent as it relates to the colonial discourse. The discourse allows for this dialectic relationship between master/slave but also, as Homi Bhabha notes, part of the discourse includes subversion. Being Antony's mistress, Cleopatra remains part of a larger discourse. The subversion of her status in relation to Antony not mean she has managed to escape her fate. Dryden additionally juxtaposes Cleopatra and Octavia, where Cleopatra mirrors Octavia's speech. I posit that this is a display of "mimicry" between Cleopatra and Octavia and a means for Cleopatra to create a rift in the discourse. Cleopatra mimics Octavia, reiterates her speech, and adds a caveat: her suffering. Through mimicry she drifts from the realm of certainty. Octavia can not confidently label Cleopatra as the mistress who stole her husband's affections, for Cleopatra, too, has suffered. Given Antony and

Cleopatra's relationship, it would be remiss not to analyse both characters. Following the analysis of Cleopatra is the study of Marc Antony. The suggestion made by J. Douglas Canfield is that Antony's nature is mutable and shifts his intent throughout the play (1975, p.51). One can argue that Antony's mutability leads to tragic events. Derek W. Hughes views this mutability as a common theme in the play and that the characters struggle to overcome it. Canfield, by contrast, disagrees with Hughes's statement and believes that the characters' transcendence overcomes mutability in their act of suicide.

I posit that Antony's mutability, and his restatement of identity, manifest what Bhabha terms the uncanny from the Freudian *Unheimlich* (2004, p.187). As each character, including Antony, recounts the former greatness, he moves farther away from a fixed point. He displaces his identity and thus the "authority of culture" (Bhabha, 2004, p.195). Through this distance, Antony's process of renegotiation of his identity. Thus, Dryden shows how Antony's continuous "hybridization" is undergone throughout the play.

Much like Cleopatra, Antony's sexuality is a focal point in the play, and its relation to Orientalism is pertinent to the study. Ventidius suggests that in Antony's association with Cleopatra, she has "unmann'd him" (Dryden, 2013, I.i.174). Interestingly, references to Antony's sexuality only occur when conversing with other Romans. This preoccupation with Antony's sexuality finds a suitable link in Bhabha's adoption of Freud's fetishism in the colonial discourse. Dryden's *All for Love* melds culture with sexuality. Cleopatra's charms, the feminine "Egyptian timbrels", and Antony's unmanning all indicate the extent to which culture and sexuality are connected. (Dryden, 2013, I.i 194). Antony's attachment with Cleopatra provides him with an ambiguity that is hindered and also craved by the colonial authority. Ultimately,

Dryden's *All for Love* warrants a post-colonial analysis, and further study will be fruitful and necessary.

The Use of Edward Said and Homi Bhabha in the Study

My decision to incorporate Edward Said's *Orientalism* and Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* in my analysis of the characters comes from a perceived gap in post-colonial studies of Dryden's plays during the Restoration. Said's *Orientalism* provides the framework by which the West perceived, investigated, came into contact and wrote about the Orient. Said draws upon Foucault's linkage of power and knowledge to comment on how the Orient was represented. During the Restoration, the sheer volume of plays in exotic locales exceeded those of Elizabethan Drama (Wann, 1918, p.185). Said's text provides a way to explore the plays created with the Orient as its setting to further see how the economy of knowledge helps supply and fuel power to the West. Said's arguments are not without limitations, however. For this purpose, Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* helps fill in the gaps where Said's argument falls short.

Said's *Orientalism* provides a foundational structure to understand the point of contact a colonial authority has towards a colonial subject. However, Said's *Orientalism* has limited scope due to two fundamental reasons regarding the subject of this study. Firstly, Said situates his concept on a set of binary oppositions that are essentialist in nature. Although Said attempts to create a balanced argument, *Orientalism* is rife with this binarism. There is the "East" and the "West". There is the imagined orient and the real Orient (Said, 2003, p.211). These arguments would only simplify Dryden's play based on this interplay between Rome and Egypt. Though Said's work is still engaging in helping establish the existence of such a schism.

Bhabha adds to Said's work by resolving Said's arguments through ambivalence. In using Bhabha's *The Location of Culture*, I apply a set of concepts from his works that align with and supplement the reading of Dryden's characters. Firstly, Bhabha introduces the concept of the partial presence "between Self and Other [...] both positions are partial; neither is sufficient unto itself"(2004, p.72). In this mode, there is no fixed concept of the colonial authority that oppresses nor the colonial subject that is oppressed. Both are insufficient without the other. The partial presence helps in the understanding of Antony and Cleopatra. Additionally, this supplies the analysis of Cleopatra's interaction with Antony's wife, Octavia.

Bhabha's concept of "mimicry" helps frame how the colonized subject can continue to have agency. With mimicry, the colonized repeat and mimic the colonizer, though with a difference. The colonial discourse is disrupted by this disparity. Bhabha affirms that "mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference" (2004, p.122). The interaction between Octavia and Cleopatra features moments in which mimicry is at play. Octavia's reaction to Cleopatra also suggests that she feels anxiety. Through their encounter, Dryden shows the tensioned anxiety that a colonial authority feels while trying to fix an idea of the colonial subject. The meeting of Octavia and Cleopatra, with both on an equal footing, has a profound impact on the perception of Cleopatra's character and the colonial discourse at large. Dryden additionally states in his preface that adding this encounter divides the pity meant for Antony and Cleopatra (Dryden, 2013, p.11). However, the encounter does quite the opposite, which suggests that it disrupts the general discourse.

Another point of reference by Bhabha pertinent to the study is the uncanny or *Unheimlich* that Bhabha adopts from Freud and applies to the colonial discourse. The uncanny is what is unhomely, and for Bhabha, while "Culture is *heimlich*[...]cultural authority is *unheimlich*".

(2004, p,195). This unhomeliness is felt in the act of repetition. Throughout the play, repetition is used by Antony and other characters to remind Antony of his former glory and what it means to be Roman. Though Antony feels a kinship to his culture, it also presents a point of discomfort, and with each repetition, he is further displaced.

Bhabha additionally applies the Freudian concept of fetishization. With fetishism, Bhabha suggests that on the part of the colonial authority, there is a “perceived lack” (2004, p.107). “Some [men] do not have the same skin/ race/ culture”(Bhabha, 2004, p.107). Fetishism supplies the understanding of Antony and his relation to his Roman counterparts. As Antony enters into this process of renegotiation of his identity, he is impeded by Ventidius and Octavia. I have chosen to consider that Antony, at this juncture, is more Egyptian than Roman, given that Ventidius and Octavia’s pursuits are directed towards getting them to join their faction. The play features a denial of Antony’s difference:

What is denied the colonial subject, both as colonizer and colonized, is that form of negation which gives access to the recognition of difference. It is that possibility of difference and circulation which would liberate the signifier of skin/culture from the fixations of racial typology, the analytics of blood, ideologies of racial and cultural dominance or degeneration.

(Bhabha, 2004 p.108)

Repeatability has many functions in the narrative, the process by which the characters renegotiate themselves and the process by which this renegotiation is denied. This process is encapsulated in the action of the play, and the episteme of colonialism can help us grasp the meaning (or, more appropriately) ambivalence of meaning throughout Dryden’s *All for Love*.

1. THE HISTORIC AND CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND TO DRYDEN'S AMBIVALENT COLONIALISM AND NATIONALISM

1.1 Support of Monarchic Legitimacy

The political environment in which Dryden's career flourished was unstable. The country was healing from civil war, the monarch's execution, and the protectorate's establishment. This turbulent time was one of ever-changing loyalties and allegiances, sparking the debate whether Dryden was a "turncoat, time server or a man who finally found the leader who's laureate he could sincerely be" (Zwicker, 2004, p.221). That Dryden's allegiances were changeable is indeed a fact. Dryden founded his career on a poem written as a panegyric to Oliver Cromwell. His sentiments were not moderate, going so far as to equate Cromwell with a divine ruler in his poem entitled *Heroique Stanzas to the Glorious Memory of Cromwell*:

His grandeur he derived from heaven alone,
For he was great, ere fortune made him so

(Dryden, *The Works, Volume I*, 1956, VI.21-22)

Nevertheless, such behaviour was a product of its time. Dryden was not the first to change allegiances. The Earl of Shaftesbury Anthony Ashley Cooper thrived after defecting during Cromwell's protectorate and later was a staunch supporter of the Restoration, although not without receiving Dryden's satirical critique in *Absalom and Achitophel*. In fact, on Charles II's return Cooper "informed the king that he had been a secret royalist for six years" (Hutton, 1985, 127) and became a member of Charles' Privy Council along with three others who were previous

supporters of Cromwell (General Monck, Montagu and Howard)². Thus, the practice was expected, though, as Steven Zwicker notes, such behaviour was necessary for Dryden. "Having done it once [...] he had to keep doing it. History, having pushed him into the public sphere, would change its direction so many times during his lifetime that he was constantly playing catch up" (Zwicker, 2004, p.221). For Dryden, this change of allegiances was fortuitous as Charles II granted him the laureateship in 1668. However, Dryden's support of the king came much later than his predecessors. By the time Charles II arrived in May, Dryden's *Astrea Redux*, published in *Mercurius Publicus*, came almost a month after the monarch's arrival, and in that month, there had been a flood of poems in praise of the returned king (Zwicker, 2004, p.224).

However, determining Dryden's actual political affiliations remains to be a difficult task. Firstly, the absence of defined political parties and the constant practice of changing sides made it difficult to truly identify Dryden's political standpoint (Fujimura, 1986, p.93). Secondly, political entanglement with religion added another dimension to the support or lack thereof of the English monarch. Thirdly, as pointed out by Fujimura, barring *The Hind and the Panther* and *Religio Laici*, Dryden "provided no comparable documentation for his political views". Philip Harth tells us that Dryden was a Tory through and through and that although Dryden's religious beliefs were changeable, his political views were consistent (1968, p.229). However, through Zwicker, we can see that Dryden's relationship with the crown was much more nuanced. Zwicker further points out that there was a widening gap between "political realities and political hopes"

² General George Monck (1608-1670) was a notable military figure who fought in the wars of the three kingdoms between England Scotland and Ireland. His support was integral in the reinstating of Charles II during the Restoration.

Edward Montagu the 1st Earl of Sandwich (1625-1672) was an English admiral who fought in the Second and Third Dutch Wars and was responsible for bringing Charles to England during the Restoration in 1660.

Charles Howard the 1st Earl of Carlisle (1628-1685) sat in the House of commons from 1653-1660 and was appointed Earl of Carlisle in 1661 he initially supported the Oliver Cromwell's commonwealth he defected to supporting the monarchy when Richard Cromwell refused his advice regarding quelling government dissent.

and the "political viability of the Stuart monarchy" (2004, p.119). Dryden's ability to change his views bespeaks an era in which the changing of allegiances was necessary for survival. Still, Zwicker posits that literary theory had a hand in changing political affiliations (Zwicker, 2004, p.221).

What is worth noting is that this changing of allegiances cannot be simplified and attributed to a common political practice of every age. Concealment was an integral part of the Restoration. Zwicker even terms it a "political imperative" (Zwicker, 1984, p.5). The country was recovering from civil war, and thus disguising one's political affiliations did not just mean better personal fortune. Concealment kept the country from descending into further turmoil.

Charles' reign was a charged period in English history where a collective national consciousness was geared towards avoiding a civil war. The country was in a period of recovery, and thus this understanding carried with it the implication that political opinions should not divide the country "such convictions must now appear tempered; such a lesson implied that wary politicians would not be alone in concealing forbidden convictions" (Zwicker, 1984, p.10). With the Act of Oblivion, Charles could decidedly quell any political extremism that could cause a downturn in the country, especially those linked to religious zeal. The act ensured that subjects affiliated with Cromwell and the commonwealth would be pardoned.

This need for stability was not just the concern of the monarch or the parliament. It found its way expressed in the poetical works of the time. Poets could shape public thought. As Winn points out, "the jubilant crowds celebrated their hope that the King would at least restore order; the poets added justice, religion" (Winn, 1987, p.105). Many believed that the return of Charles would, in a way, erase or at the very least remedy the twenty preceding years. Dryden's praise of Charles came as a panegyric in *Astrea Redux*, where he lauds the monarch by associating the

monarch with springtime and flowers: "How shall I speak of that triumphant Day/When you renew'd the expiring Pomp of May!" (Dryden, *The Works, Volume I*, 1956, II. 284-91). As Winn points out, such associations to nature and the seasons were common to court masques from the previous era. The significance of King Charles II's praise was that it restored faith in the monarchy. This newfound trust in the monarchy comes after a time of weak national unity and consensus, leading to overarching unrest in the country during the reign of Charles I. Early Stuart England was riddled with religious and political entanglement that often put the king's prerogative power into question, the Restoration of Charles II did not come without its reservations. However, after the interregnum, there was a general movement towards healing instead of the growth of arbitrary power. "In the early seventeenth century, almost everyone agreed that the king's power was in some sense limited by the law" (Sommerville, 1989, p.60).

On the other hand, not everyone agreed on this point. Historian and theologian Peter Heylin stated that "Kings do hold their crowne by no other Tenure than Dei Gratia and that whatever power they have they have from God" (qtd in Sommerville, 1989, p.53). God bestowing divine right was a universal and common belief, but this did not mean that the king was free from censure. The House of Commons regularly made their grievances known to Charles despite the right of laws' limits on divine right (Sommerville, 1989, p.64). In a speech given to the House of Commons in 1640 by politician and member of the house, Nathaniel Fiennes states, "We all know that Kings, and States, and Judges and all Magistrates are the Ordinances of God[...] but before they were the ordinances of men they were the Ordinances of God" (Rushworth, 1692, p.105). What is clear from both these statements is that there were divided views on the king's prerogative power.

On the one hand, there is an explicit acknowledgement of divine power as the absolute deciding factor in English politics. On the other hand, power derives from the people. Such a divide in opinion would surely mean that the Restoration would need to be a curative movement for the nation that allowed for a middle ground in which Charles II could usher England into the stability it needed. The language that Dryden uses in *Astrea Redux* indicates Dryden's "euphoria" (Winn, 1987, p.104) at the arrival of Charles II, reversing the myth of Ganymede the cupbearer, in which Zeus plucks him from the heavens. In this case, Charles' return from the heavens as a divine gift bestowed upon the people, so-called "The Prince of Peace [...] A gift unhop'd without the price of war" (Dryden, *The Works, Volume I*, 1956, II.139-40).

Although Dryden's support of the king shows a particular devotion to the crown, it is essential to remember that he was also displaying an acknowledgement of the subject to whom he was dedicating his writing. He took what Winn describes as "habitual care in matching his style to his subject" (1987, p.94). In Dryden's *Heroique Stanzas to the Glorious Memory of Cromwell*, Winn describes the depiction as highly shaded. There is a marked difference compared to the later royalist panegyrics. He employs metaphor in praise of the protector, glossing over any negative pain points such as Richard being an inadequate successor "And Warr's like mists that rise against the Sunne/ Made him but greater seem, not greater grow" (Dryden, *The Works, Volume I*, 1956, VI.23-24). The critical statement here is that he did not grow greater.

Unlike the euphoric exaggerated lauding of the monarch in *Astrea Redux*, Dryden is more conservative with his praise. He chooses to exalt Cromwell's rejection of the crown. The subject does not demand any flowery language. Despite his grandeur deriving from heaven much like any monarch, Dryden's poem for Cromwell cannot have the emotive language attributed to

kings. The porcelain calm of the Cromwell ode contrasted with the euphoric bliss of the royalist panegyrics is a testament to Dryden's changeable allegiances. Many would later reprint this poem as proof of having praised the "Usurper" (Winn, 1987, p.93). What is worth noting is Dryden's selective care regarding his subjects. He omits any mention of Richard Cromwell and does not praise Cromwell's successor, who did not share in Cromwell's popularity. Dryden's ability to use omission allows him to frame his subjects in a more favourable light, showing poetry's ability not only to share a common opinion but to influence it. Nevertheless, it should be noted that Dryden was not as "prescient" as he would seem to be because he still wrote a poem praising Cromwell when there would be a movement toward royalist panegyrics in the coming years.

Dryden created a portrait of Cromwell that was both grand and realistic, and his depiction of the Lord Protector did adhere to the common traditions of the Royal panegyric. However, there is a marked difference when comparing this ode to Dryden's later poems in praise of the king. In his analysis of Dryden's *To His Sacred Majesty*, Winn mentions that Dryden's metaphors, although meant to laud the monarch, show an evident hollowness (1987, p.114). This hollowness shows Dryden's ability to match the audience's doubt concerning the restored king. Implicit in his poetry is this sense that Charles II did not have any naval military ambitions. What is critical here is Dryden's mastery in being able to critique the crown while praising it implicitly. Zwicker terms Dryden's adjustments "to the conditions of utterance that politics and history had imposed" (Zwicker, 1984, p.36-37). While Winn points out that Dryden's portrayal of the king is a subtle critique of his behaviour and military prowess, Zwicker calls them a "denial and misrepresentation" (1984, p.39).

Dryden was calculated and deliberate in an age where doing so meant favour or opposition. His moderation in *Absalom and Achitophel* was a common practice of political discourse at the time. At the height of the Exclusion Crisis, Dryden behaved as a "clever rhetorician" such selectiveness is enough to suggest that his allegiances and political stances are not as concrete as we would have them (Zwicker, 1984, p.88). Dryden's constant play of keeping up with the times was instrumental when support for the monarchy dwindled (Zwicker, 2004, p.146). His adaptable stance was characteristic of his career, employing "paradox" and "allegory" when his points strayed from logic (Zwicker, 2004, p.146). The disillusionment with King Charles would have to be reflected in his writing so as not to alienate his audience, who found themselves caught between two poles. Whether during the Popish plot or the Exclusion crisis, although it would be in his favour to be a staunch Tory, it would not be apt for his audience and would not show awareness of the political turmoil. His subtlety and selectiveness bespeak a consciousness of the circumstances and prowess necessary for the deserved title of poet laureate.

1.2 Ambivalent Colonialism in Dryden's Works

It is this self-same subtlety that Dryden utilises to show his opinions on colonialism and imperial expansion. Though it might seem out of place in Dryden's literary world, it does warrant discussion. For one thing, Dryden's work, specifically *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, was published mere weeks after the Treaty of Breda (Brown, 2004, p.60). With the backdrop of the Second Anglo-dutch war, a conflict whose foundations stem from the beginnings of European imperialism, it is difficult to discount this from an analysis of Dryden's works. Intersectionality is

necessary. With the Second Anglo-dutch war, the opposing forces between the Netherlands, France and England vied to gain imperial control over global trade systems.

Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* offers insight into the writer's opinions on this subject. The poem recounts events that occurred in 1665-66, which include the Great Fire of London and the Second Anglo-Dutch war. One instance worth noting is one in which the English sailors intercept a Dutch trading ship and begin to loot the items aboard the ship. In it, he describes the sailors as "greedy Sea-men [who] rummage every hold" (Dryden, 1956, *The Works, Volume I*, CCVIII, line 829). In his essay, 'Sacrilege and the Economics of Empire in Dryden's "Annus Mirabilis"' David Parry suggests that Dryden is making a commentary on imperialism and its exploitative aspects (Parry, 2014, p.533). In her essay entitled 'Dryden and The Imperial Imagination', Laura Brown does not hint at any ulterior sinister motive and does not comment on the ethics of an empire. If anything, Brown's commentary notes that in Dryden's work, "there is an ambivalence about the peace and benevolism that accompanied the imperialist apologia of the period" (Brown, 2004, p.73). While *Annus Mirabilis* promotes the English empire under mercantile benevolism, it also subversively discourages Dutch imperialism. Though Brown does not touch upon the implications of calling the sea-men "greedy", such subtleties reflect Dryden's complex relationship with the cultural and political forces during this age.

If one turns to Dryden's plays, one can note similar connotations. Dryden's heroic plays constitute a subgenre that he popularised with plays of closed couplets in iambic pentameter. The subject being grand epic tales meant to be epic poems on stage. In his essay *Of Heroic Plays*, a preface to *The Conquest of Granada* mentions that "an Heroick Play ought to be an imitation, in little of an Heroick Poem" (Dryden, 1978, Line 14). The plays typically depicted characters from or were set in exotic locales. These plays diverted from the complexities of English politics at the

time. Though they were, in part, Brown notes that these plays were a means to "engage with questions of empire" (Brown, 2004, p.70). Of these plays, Brown singles out a chosen few that are concerned with the subject of "imperial loss" I will briefly take a look at how the imperial imagination comes into contact with these plays while singling out *All for Love* in the following chapter.

Whether he is a "propagandist with an uneasy conscience" or a staunch supporter of the Stuart monarchy, his works and as summed up eloquently by Brown, not only "helps to shape the literary praise of empire that characterises England's first age of expansion, but he also provides a paradigm for its critique" (Brown, 2004, p.74). The Orient provided a blank canvas for playwrights, but it is essential to note the motivations behind these exotic persuasions.

1.3 Dryden and His Exotic Plays

During the Restoration, numerous plays were staged in foreign and colonial settings, many of which dealt with past empires. These setting choices were not arbitrary. Making the case that heroic plays "were an allegorical reflection of domestic policy" is a significant objective of historical scholarship. (Orr, 2001, p.4). England and the public were more concerned with internal problems, such as the exclusion crisis, the popish plot, and the accusations of popery that there was no substantial interest in foreign affairs.

Nevertheless, the playhouse offered itself as a panorama of alterity through the plays performed on stage. English spectators could essentially travel and view a world outside their own. "the trope of the world as a stage served an omnivorous dramaturgy fittingly coincident with the nation's experiment as a force in global commerce" (Barbour, 2003, p.38). The stage

was a viewfinder and mirror, allowing audiences to form opinions and reflect on their world. These facts are ubiquitous in Elizabethan drama, which Jonas Barish suggests as having "a voracious appetite for space and time" (Barish, 1977, p.105). However, scholars do not reiterate the same sentiment regarding the Restoration. Tim Harris suggests the motivations for this lack of appetite in the subsequent period. In his paper entitled 'What's New About the Restoration?' He posits that restoration scholars were primarily concerned with three things:

What did the Restoration settle, and what was the legacy of the civil war? Second, why did a crisis emerge toward the end of Charles II's reign (the so-called Exclusion Crisis), what was the nature of this crisis, how was it resolved, and is it legitimate to talk about the emergence of party politics at this time? Third, why did the Glorious Revolution happen, how revolutionary was it, and what precisely did it achieve?

(Harris, 1997, p.189)

The point made by Harris proposes that there is a limited view when it comes to studying the Restoration. It is not a view that concerns itself with imperial ambitions. Scholars ignore that plays set in exotic locales during the Restoration far outnumbered those of the Elizabethan era (Wann, 1918, p.185). It seems remiss not to mention England's slow growth of imperial ambition during the period. On the other hand, Barbour suggests that the nascent imperialism theme propagated in recent scholarship was due to the predisposition of certain scholars and not the "culture of the day" (Barbour, 2003, p.40). He posits that England was thinking inwardly and was not aspiring to form colonies elsewhere. He further emphasises this point by citing a quote from Joseph Bishop Hall, who wrote *Quo Vadis? A Just Censure of Travel, as it is Commonly Undertaken by the Gentlemen of Our Nation*. Hall's text indicates that it was not the Stuarts but

the mercantile class who had ambitions far beyond the British Isles. However, in addition to merchants, this mode of thought was characteristic of the later Stuarts. Orr suggests that "all the later Stuarts showed considerable enthusiasm in pursuing dominion over the seas" (2001, p.8). Indeed, Dryden's plays were written post the Puritan ban and during the time of Charles II's reign. The link between empire and the monarchy may not have been strong, but to relegate it to non-existence would be an oversight in the study of restoration drama, and in particular heroic plays which grew in popularity during the epoch.

Heroic plays were a vehicle for depicting an empire, not simply for the setting. Firstly, as cited in Bridge Orr's *Empire on the English stage, 1660-1714*, they tended to show "contemporary arguments over empire" or plots centred on foreign nations linked to trading companies (2001, p.28). Secondly, these dramas also employed spectacle in a manner where they could display differences between England and the Orient and show the potential wealth that could be exploited (2001, p.28). Drawing these differences was again a double-edged sword allowing reflection on local and foreign politics. Again, this emphasises the effect to which the plays acted as both mirrors and viewfinders.

Through Orr, we can see such displays of patriotism through the lens of nascent imperial aspirations. To view this thread, one need only look at Dryden's preface to *The Conquest of Granada*. Dryden discusses Davenant's playwriting and likens it to discovery and topography "as first Discoverers draw their Maps, with headlands, and Promontories, and some few out-lines of some-what taken at a distance, and which the designer saw not clearly" (Dryden, 1978, p.10, 18-20). This metaphor attaches to the playwright the label of discoverer and conqueror. Using these exotic locales is a means to establish some form of political dominion over them, with the author as both creator and conquistador.

What is interesting to note is the quality of these locale depictions. We can draw comparisons from Wann's study of the oriental in Elizabethan Drama and the Oriental in Restoration Drama. In his quantitative study, he notes that there is a greater interest in portraying the Orient in 2 specific periods, the first being 1670-1676 and the second being a 19-year period from 1680-1699. In the first group, he notes that in this short period, around 14 plays with Oriental locales were published; in the other 19-year time frame, 19 plays were published, the former being heroic plays and the latter being tragedies (Wann,1918, p.172). The interest in the Orient, however, is not simply limited to the number of plays produced but the number of exotic locales chosen. A brief look at Dryden's body of dramatic works indicates the widespan of restoration drama as far as settings are concerned. Although *The Conquest of Granada* and *Don Sebastian* are not set in the East perse, they feature Moors. The following list below illustrates Dryden's choice of settings :

Scenes of Action

- A- Spain-----(*The Conquest of Granada*)
- B- Portugal----- (*Don Sebastian*)
- C- India-----(*Aureng Zebe*)
- D- Mexico-----(*The Indian Queen, The Indian Emperor*)
- E- Indonesia-----(*Amboyna*)
- F- Ancient Egypt, Greece & Rome-----(*Amphitryon & Cleomemnes, Tyrannic Love, Oedipus, All for Love*)

The total here shows around 11 plays written in exotic locales, or at the very least foreign to England, with a host of different ethnicities as characters, all of which regarding the rise and fall of empires. Though it does not directly link imperial ambition to the content of the play, there is an implication that England was looking outwards and was interested in what these Empires had to say about the legitimacy of power locally and how they could reduce foreign threats. The plays displayed an almost inward knowledge of the East and their customs and modes of governance. Orr points out that some forty plays were written from 1660 to 1714, focusing on the politics of the Orient, from despots to conflict and contests with the West (Orr, 2001, p.61). This display of knowledge indeed has much to say about England's turmoil during the Stuarts' reign, though it could also be a means of establishing supremacy over these countries.

One need only look at Said's analysis of Balfour's speech to see that the study of certain civilisations is not meant simply as a vehicle for self-reflection but a show of power. "To have such knowledge of such a thing is to dominate it, to have authority over it." (Said, 2003, p.32). The necessity to depict such knowledge suggests two things: the need for economic supremacy and beneficial trade relations and the need to quell Eastern threats to the West. To know one's enemy is to gain control over them.

Though it would be an overstatement to call the Orient enemies to England or the West at large, they were no less of a threat. Orr notes that while England was distant from a direct attack by the Turks, they still perceived them as a force to be reckoned with, considering the several campaigns held during the late 1660 and onwards (Orr, 2001, p.63). This fear carried over to the stage and ensured that the Turks depicted on stage were a means to disquiet an English audience and instruct them on governance and sustainable imperial practice. In Barbour, we find that Knolles' *The General Historie of the Turkes* both induces and dissuades the sense of peril posed

by the Ottoman Empire (2003, p.16). Naturally, it would be presumptuous to push a common nineteenth-century critique of orientalism to plays produced and published in the late 17th century. These plays were not clear signs of an imperialist agenda or the nascent glimmers of contention between the East and the West. However, we could arguably call such representations a sign of proto-orientalism. There is a commentary when an Other is present in English books and playhouses.

Such a commentary worth exploring is that made by Dryden about the Mughal emperor *Aureng Zebe* and Cortez's interaction with the Aztecs in the *Indian Emperour*. I posit that both present varied, if not opposing, positions concerning foreign others and explore the theme of empire from different angles. In the *Indian Emperour*, there is a clear difference between the perception of Spanish conquistadors and the Aztecs. In *Aureng Zebe*, the play takes place in Agra with only Indian characters, and no foreign power appears, no conqueror and no noble savages. *Aureng Zebe* still warrants analysis because the play was written contemporaneously during Aurangzeb's reign and around the time the English East India Company was making fruitful trade relations and establishing itself in India. Another play worth discussing is *The Conquest of Granada*, where we see the East is in confrontation with the West but which features an all-to-convenient resolution typical of Dryden's style as a playwright. From these plays, I will be able to show that Dryden's view of these exotic locales (or more appropriately termed the Orient) and, in turn, England's view was quite nuanced and that a post-colonial lens on the Restoration is not only necessary but revelatory of not just local politics but of how England viewed and interacted with the world outside its own.

1.3.1 *Aureng Zebe*

Records of *Aureng Zebe's* performance date back to November 1675, though there may have been earlier performances (Dryden, 1994, p.383). Bernier's *Histoire de la Dernière Revolution des États du Grand Mogul* seems to be the likely source for Dryden's play. However, Dryden does take considerable poetic license deviating from the source. His depiction of Aureng-Zebe differs significantly from the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb³, a despotic ruler who imprisoned his father and brother for the sovereignty of his kingdom (Winn). Of Dryden's plays, this is one where the character depicted was reigning at the play's performance, and the events in which Aurengzeb acceded to the throne were only a mere decade apart. The question arises as to why Dryden chose not only to misrepresent the character but to portray one that is wholly opposed to the historical figure.

What is made clear by Dryden in the preface is that Charles II altered the play and so whatever was omitted or changed for the version that exists is unknown to us. What is suggested by various critics such as Peter Craft and Orr, citing Samuel Johnson's *The Lives of the English Poets*, was that Dryden was again practising his prudence in choosing not to depict Aurangzeb in a way that would potentially displease the monarch (Orr, 2001, p.110). Craft posits a plausible argument that suggests how the play by the poet laureate in England could come into the hands of the Mughal emperor and the damage it could have potentially created, as indicated by Samuel Johnson when referring to Aurangzeb "if he had known and disliked his character, our trade was not in those times secure from his resentment" (1824, p.316). On the other hand, Miles Ogborn notes in his book entitled *Global Lives Britain, and the World 1550-1800*, the political elite of

³ I have used the name Aureng Zebe for the character in Dryden's play and have kept the name Aurangzeb for the historical figure

the Mughal empire did not regard the European presence with any interest beyond seeing fortuitous trade relations that were not of any consequence to the populace (2008 p.79). The relationship, however, was one which at the very least required some cooperation, for the English East India Company's presence in Asia could not progress without local intermediaries mediating their presence. Thus it would not be too bold to assume that Dryden had this in mind when writing *Aureng Zebe* because, at the very least, the English East India Company had links with the monarchy. We can presuppose through Craft that the reigning Aurangzeb was well aware of the English presence in India, given the fact that some twenty-one factories of the East India Company were established during his reign (2009, p.48). Thus it would not be presumptuous to assume that Dryden created this version of Aureng-Zebe to avoid straining trade relations between the Mughal Emperor and England.

The fact remains, however, that Dryden's *Aureng Zebe* is replete with many inaccuracies. Firstly, the historical Aurangzeb was a despot. Secondly, he did not have any filial duty to his father and confined Shah Jahan in a fort while imprisoning his brother Murad Bakhsh. Thirdly, Dryden is very much aware that Aurangzeb and his compatriots were part of the Mughal dynasty and thus were practising Muslims. However, Dryden offers no explanation for the self-immolation ritual or suttee that occurs upon Morat's death, a typically Hindu practice. Dryden's commentary on this in his dedication to Lord Mulgrave suggests an all too familiar orientalist view of the practice, "Those Indian Wives are Loving Fools, and may do well to keep themselves in their own Country [...] Some of our ladies know better things" (Dryden, 1995, p.85). The fact that Dryden refers to women who underwent the practice as "Loving Fools" suggests that he views the practice with some condescension. He takes the point to compare Indian wives to English wives implying a posed superiority.

Similarly, Bernier shares distaste and horror for the practice, "silently lamenting the abominable superstition of these people" (Bernier, 1891, p.314). Bernier also notes that this is a practice primarily performed by the Brahmins (1891, p.315). Dryden, however, does liken the practice to the ancient Romans mentioning that this practice would find its place among the "Arias and Portias of old Rome" (1995, p.85). Thus adding another layer of difficulty in ascertaining Dryden's stance, there is a marked ambivalence here. Orr notes that he begins by saying, "I dare not vindicate [...] neither can I wholly condemn, " which shows that the author's opinion does not try to judge the practice with contempt, nor does he justify it. However, the comparison itself does suggest a sense of alterity. There are the "Loving Fools" and sensible English ladies who know better things.

The play additionally acted as a vessel to make a subtle jab at King Charles. During the play's performance, Charles' sexual prowess was subject to censure from several playwrights. Hughes mentions how the Carolean stage was a way to critique the monarch's age and imprudence. He notes that "[a]fter 1672, tragi-comedies of restoration yield to tragedies of problematic succession, often portraying kings as lustful tyrants" (Hughes, 2004, p.92). Here again, we see that Dryden does not shy away from condemning the monarch. Many of his plays performed around the same time take the same tangent, such as Howard and Dryden's *The Indian Queen* Zempoalla develops affections for Montezuma despite her age. Thus, we see that Dryden again takes an ambivalent stance towards the monarch, able to admonish the king while retaining his position subversively.

What is worth noting is that, unlike Barbour's point above, the literature of the time was far from looking inward. However, concerned with local politics, it still had much to say about foreign politics. Balachandra Rajan, in his book entitled *Under Western Eyes: India From Milton*

to *Macaulay*, suggests that although Dryden's play concerns India, the inaccuracies between the fictional Aurangzeb and the historical Aureng Zebe create alterity as opposed to establishing a connection between England and India (Rajan, 1999, p.77). Rajan further notes that this alterity coupled with the characterisations of Indamora and Nourmahal as feminised representations of India as desirable yet dangerous indicates a proto-imperialist depiction of India in the growing dominance of the West (1999, p.77). It is difficult not to fall into the trap of overinterpretation, especially in texts preceding the formation of the British Empire.

We cannot say what would happen if the play was read by Aurangzeb, how much King Charles adjusted the text, or if Dryden's inaccuracies were the liberties of poetic license. What we do know, however, is that the Restoration opened up an avenue to speak about the Orient in different terms with specific knowledge of preceding dramas in the Elizabethan age. Wann notes, "the Restoration dramatist knew much more about the life, customs, beliefs, and characteristic surroundings of the oriental" (Wann, 1918, p.185). Thus Dryden's plays offer an open space to explore foreign politics, interpret foreign cultures and place commentary on local politics. In *The Indian Emperour*, we see what Dryden has to say regarding land and empire and how Dryden reconciles the trope of the Noble savage in *The Conquest of Granada*.

1.3.2 *The Conquest of Granada*

In 1660 the Spanish Empire was seen as a competitive force against the English. The Anglo-Spanish war 1654-1660, a conflict beginning during Cromwell's commonwealth, allowed the British to gain control over Spanish trade routes. However, such interests were not solely commercial. They also held colonial significance. While spanning several years, the Anglo-

Spanish war ended with the peace treaties in Madrid between 1667 and 1670, respectively. Spain's repute as a force to be reckoned with dwindled. "The conventional wisdom was that the Spanish empire was too weak, depopulated" (Orr, 2001, p.135). Richard Fanshawe, ambassador to England in Spain, in a letter to the Earl of Clarendon dated 1664, states, "the more I see of Spain in these times, the more strongly I am of opinion it will be very hard for their monarchy to subsist long, without England, and against it, impossible" (Fanshawe, 1702 p,187). Thus, the decline of such an Empire makes it a subject of interest for Dryden. This fall is comparable to the fall of the Mughal Empire at the hands of Aurangzeb and the last Egyptian dynasty at the hands of Cleopatra.

The Conquest of Granada occurs during the Moor's defeat at the hands of the Spanish in the fifteenth century. Historians view this event as the ultimate defeat of Islam and its threat to "European stability" (Thompson, 1990, p.212). The play's significance lies in the fact that it stood as a mark of the hegemony of European forces against the Moor and, by extension, the foreign Other. Dryden's play signals "a making of the world safe for European Empire, just as the Roman Empire had once been" (Thompson, 1990, p.212). The end of the play further solidifies this image, revealing that Almanzor, the hero who had heretofore identified as a Moor throughout the play, is the lost Christian son of the Duke of Arcos. The contradiction caused by attributing admirable qualities to a Moor in the face of Christian adversaries meets its resolution with this discovery.

Dryden's depiction of the Spanish Empire is interesting when considering the context. Orr notes that Dryden's play was a means to show how a "free Protestant, England defined herself against absolutist Catholic Spain" (Orr, 2001, p.137). In this way, there is a certain level of ambivalence when it comes to Dryden's attitude towards colonialism. Since Dryden is not

admonishing colonialism altogether, he uses the play as a medium to establish the benevolence of English colonialism and the avarice of the Spanish. In a broader context, however, *The Conquest of Granada* portrays the Christian Empire's success against Islam's despotism. The city seized from the infidel usurpers, and its hero, up until now, a noble savage, is transformed. With his transformation, the plot can reach its resolution.

Almanzor's discovery is an intriguing development in the play. Preceding the discovery is the conversion of Esperanza, Almahide's lady in waiting. Throughout the play, Almahide's virtue is called into question several times. Esperanza offers Almahide a way to escape this through adopting the Christian faith. With Almanzor, his transformation is not a conversion. Though Dryden has shown us that it is possible, this sort of transformation is not sufficient to reconcile the steadfast noble savage. Alan Fisher's essay entitled 'Daring to be Absurd: The Paradoxes of "The Conquest of Granada"' mentions that Almanzor's discovery of his heritage borders absurdity. As an infant, Almanzor had a tattoo of a bleeding heart.

Along with this mark was a bracelet from his mother with a ruby cross. Strangely, Almanzor continues to wear the bracelet while fighting as a Moor. Fisher poses two valid questions: "Do we believe that Almanzor's Moslem captors would not strip him of a ruby cross when little? or that while wearing this cross, he thought himself a Moor?" (Fisher, 1976, p.436). This kind of discovery can be seen as a parody. Indeed, Almanzor was parodied during *The Conquest of Granada's* release by the duke of Buckingham in *The Rehearsal* (1672) (Battigeli, 2002, p.266). However, through this discovery, Dryden asserts that God, and by extension, the Christian faith, was there all along, as if to suggest that Spain's destiny was the fall of the Islamic Empire and the reign of King Ferdinand of Spain and Queen Isabela.

Unlike the *Indian Emperour*, *The Conquest of Granada* depicts the Spanish Empire in a positive light. The Empire was a stand-in for European Christian supremacy in the face of foreign threats. However, Almanzor is not merely a symbol. Almanzor is a Moor who, despite his parodic hyperbolic "huffing speeches", seems to make a statement by his discovery (Battigeli, 2002, p.268). Orr suggests that Almanzor's role is controversial because it is hard to place Dryden's views towards "imperial greatness" she notes that his views are contradictory, which again points to Dryden's ambivalence towards imperialism. Almanzor's conversion is not merely a transformation that sets things right or how they should be. They are also a way to create an affinity for those who choose to integrate into civil society. In such a way, perhaps Dryden hopes to bridge a gap between "New Christians, Spanish Moors or Jews whose motives for conversion were always suspect" (Orr, 2001, p.163). Almahide and Esperenza's conversion is indicative of this assimilation. Through these two characters, Dryden states that there is room to integrate otherhood, albeit through conversion. Unlike the Aztecs in *The Indian Emperour*, the Moors are "sophisticated infidels" (Orr, 2001, p.163). Almanzor's transformation only furthers the intersectionality of his character as Spanish, North African and Christian. His discovery of his faith is not through tracing bloodlines, merely through a tattoo and a bracelet. Orr notes that the "play hinges upon establishing an assumption of fundamental equivalence between Moors and Christians" (Orr, 2001, p. 166). Such considerations are necessary for the analysis of *All for Love* because it allows us to contextualise the play itself and consider what Dryden attempts to say by omission, which makes up a substantial portion of his repertoire of poetic and dramatic works.

1.3.3 *The Indian Emperour*

The Indian Emperour was Dryden's first independent rhymed play. It was preceded by *The Indian Queen*, co-written with Dryden's brother-in-law, Sir Robert Howard. Michael Alssid, in his essay entitled "The Perfect Conquest: A Study of Theme, Structure and Characters in Dryden's "The Indian Emperor"" states that Dryden distributed pamphlets during the opening night of the play to establish a connection with the plot of the Indian Queen.

The Indian Emperour is concerned with the fall of an empire. In this case, the play is concerned with the Aztecs and the eventual conquest by the Spanish. In Dryden's "Connexion", he mentions that the invasion by the Spanish led to the demise of the Aztec empire "the Discovery and Invasion of Mexico by the Spaniards; under the conduct of Hernando Cortez...wholly Subverted that flourishing Empire"(1956, p.27. 17-20). The contrasts created between the Spanish and the Aztecs are worth studying because we can see Dryden's varied opinions regarding imperial ambitions and the foreign other.

The play opens with the conquistadors arriving at the shore of Mexico Dryden here wishes to invoke the idea that the land was prime for the taking by Providence. Vasquez states, "No useful arts have yet found footing here/, But all untaught and savage does appear"(1956, I.i.10). This statement appears to justify the conquest. The land has not been touched by what the Spanish deem as useful, and anything on the land heretofore utilised or cultivated by the indigenous people living there, which by standards today would constitute a civilisation, is to the Spanish "untaught and savage". Dryden does not share this view. He refers to the empire as flourishing and the invasion of the Spanish as a subversion. In this case, it would be easy to infer that here Dryden admonishes imperialism, but again the playwright is more nuanced.

The first point is that throughout the play, Dryden establishes a contrast between the Aztecs and the Spanish. Through this juxtaposition, Dryden demonstrates that though "flourishing", they were far more primitive and thus more susceptible to conquest by the Spanish. Montezuma processes the arrival of the Spanish with superstition. He believes that the Spanish are some supernatural being though he cannot determine whether Cortez is "a devil or a saviour?" (Alssid, 1962, p.547). Still, Dryden does endow him with some primitive form of deductive reasoning. Montezuma wonders if Cortez is mortal like him, there is both an innocence and an awareness in Montezuma. We can see this same instance of innocence and awareness on a larger scale, Montezuma as the "embodiment of the primitive world... [recognising] that this world must fall despite its nobility and because of its weaknesses before the onslaught of history" (Alssid,1962, p.554).

Though the fall of Montezuma's world is inevitable, considering that the Spanish Empire was perceived as weakening by contemporaries suggests that Dryden was paving the way for the British Empire. This is evident in the dedication of the play directed to the Duchess of Monmouth, where Dryden suggests that in this play is Montezuma offering himself up to Britain almost "Under your patronage Montezuma hopes he is safer than in his Native Indies and therefore comes to throw himself at your Grace's feet" (Dryden, 1956, p.25). The fact that Dryden mentions this in the play's dedication is no happenstance. However, he admonishes the Spanish for their hand in the demise of the Aztec empire solely because the "best hope lies in the superior civility of the English" (Orr, 2001, p. 146). In this way, we can see two determinants for the fall of the Aztecs, the first being their innocence and the second being the cruelty of the Spanish, laying the groundwork for the British or the possibility of British imperial trade in that part of the world.

Nevertheless, these are not the only determinants for the fall of an empire. A common theme ties in all three plays with the focal point of this study, *All for Love*. The critical word lies in the play's title, love or passion. In all three plays, the hero finds himself in a predicament concerning love and honour. For Aureng Zebe, he finds himself in a quandary between his love for Indamora and his duty towards his father. For Almanzor, again, his commitment toward the Moors and his love for Almahide causes him much strife. In *The Indian Emperour*, Cortez finds himself in a conflict between his honour and his love for Cydaria, Montezuma's daughter. The contrast drawn here happens in a dialogue between Cortez and Cydaria "What is this honour which does love control?" (I.II. 38). Reconciliation of the two is necessary "the aims of the hero-as-lover, and the hero-as-warrior must in some way be joined" (Alssid, 1962, p.552). The person to realise this cannot be the ageing Montezuma, Shah Jahan, or Boabdelin, who, in their declining years' lust after young women much like the often critiqued and imprudent Charles. If one can reconcile these two worlds, then honour and love can co-exist on the condition that this love is appropriate in age. With *All for Love*, neither Antony nor Cleopatra can achieve that delicate balance, and perhaps we can see a departure from his traditional resolution. Not all empires can flourish, nor can love and honour be so easily reconciled.

1.4 Dryden, Plutarch and Depiction of Cleopatra

When analysing *All for Love*, it is necessary to consider Dryden's potential source for the play. Up until Dryden translated Plutarch's Lives from the original, Thomas North's *Plutarch's Lives* was the reigning English translation adapted from the French translation of Jaques Amyot. This selfsame version of Plutarch's Lives served as part of Shakespeare's library and was a

source for such plays as Antony and Cleopatra, Julius Caesar and Coriolanus. Dryden's translation from the original was the only English translation directly linked to the text to date, though later overshadowed by Langhorne's translation which followed. It is also worth noting that the Langhorne translation of Plutarch's Lives remains one of the most popular translations of Plutarch's works to the present day.

Although the translation of Amyot was the forerunner source material in English history, it is essential to note that it was not without errors. French physician and man of letters Dr. Guy Patin notes "On dit qu'il avait corrigé dans son Amyot huit mille fautes, et qu'Amyot n'avait pas de bons exemplaires. ou qu'il n'avait pas bien entendu le grec de Plutarque" (Patin, 1701, p.14)⁴ with around a 8000 errors to account for, it is no surprise that Thomas North's own translation would be riddled with the same errors along with additional liberties the writer may have taken. Dryden's translation was not an improvement. In the preface to their text, the brothers Langhorne themselves state that the Dryden translation contained "the grossest errors". However, a significant bias exists in their commentary on the translation. They do note that it was not an easy feat, given the fact that Dryden's version of the text was a task taken up by a team of translators in which Langhorne's comment on Dryden's statement that the translation was written by "almost as many hands as there were lives" (Langhorne, 1794,V.). Thus on a linguistic level, there is a complexity regarding Dryden's rendering of Plutarch, and on another end, there are the artistic liberties Plutarch took in depicting the historical Cleopatra. Consequently, the reader and spectator's distance to a representation of the ancient Egyptian queen without bias or fault is great.

⁴ "It is said that he had corrected in his Amyot eight thousand mistakes and that Amyot did not have good copies. or that he had not understood well Plutarch's Greek"

Nonetheless, Plutarch's accounts remain to be the most complete and thus the most valuable as a source of information on Cleopatra VII through his *Life of Anthony*. Plutarch's interest in Roman antiquity shines through in the text. Much like Dryden, he took on the task of translation, using Latin sources to supply his *Lives* and simultaneously did not have a full grasp of the language. C.B.R Pelling in his book entitled *Plutarch Life of Antony*, tells us that his Latin was limited, citing that "he knew Latin literature no better than contemporary Roman authors knew Greek" (Pelling, 1988, p.6). However, his attempts to draw a Greco-Roman connection were not merely due to his preoccupations or interests and were a means to portray concepts of morality and virtue. Plutarch's *Lives* was not concerned with political systems and tactics implemented by the Roman Empire:

It must be borne in mind that my design is not to write histories but lives, And the most glorious exploits do not always furnish us with the clearest discoveries of virtue or vice in men; sometimes, a matter of less moment, an expression or a jest, informs us better of their characters and inclinations, than the most famous sieges, the greatest armaments, or the bloodiest battles whatsoever.

(Plutarch, 1902, p.160)

Consequently, the text's main preoccupation is instruction towards morality portrayed through a contrast of Greek and Roman personages. The concern with virtue and vice suggests a deliberate characterisation of those depicted, which in this case would be Marc Antony and Cleopatra. Plutarch's choice to include Antony among the others in *Lives* was a means to discourage vice through the excesses that reduced him from a powerful general and politician to a dependent on Cleopatra.

Plutarch's depiction of Cleopatra is an interesting construction. Plutarch reveals her character slowly. Her entrance into the narrative occurs on "the river Cydnus in a barge with gilded stern [...] dressed as Venus in a picture" (Plutarch, 1902, 178). Her opulent arrival was indeed a means to display Cleopatra had expended all efforts in her seduction of Antony, rolling out the barge and her entourage to declare her presence. As their romance continues, Plutarch tries to show how she was a distraction for Antony, whether "serious or disposed to mirth [...] at every turn she was upon him" (Plutarch, 1902, p.182). Christopher Pelling suggests, however, that although Plutarch starts in this manner, his treatment of Cleopatra involves "considerable sympathy and involvement", unlike his peers in the tradition (Pelling, 1988, p.16). He notes that her affection for Antony deepens. Throughout the narrative, he cites moments in which her character and, at the very least, her loyalty and love for Antony are commendable in the final chapters. This shift in register might explain the supposition by other scholars that the author of these chapters may have been different altogether. Though this was not something that Dryden would have possibly been aware of at the time. Subsequently, it would not be too presumptuous to assume that this very same trend follows in Dryden's depiction of Cleopatra in *All for Love*, especially more so since the play does not concern itself with the beginning of the Antony and Cleopatra's relationship since it does not display her as in Plutarch using her wiles to ensnare Antony. Instead, Dryden chooses to depict the final moments of their relationship with references to preceding moments given through accounts by various characters in the play, from Dollabella to Ventidius to Cleopatra and Antony himself, all with varying intent. His choice to depict only the final day of the queen's life while also being a deliberate choice to adhere to the unities of time, space, and action are a means for him to reproduce a balanced view of

Cleopatra's character if not to, at the very least, garner some sympathy as Pelling suggest happens in Plutarch. Even though the action of Dryden's play limits itself to a few hours and not the sprawling 50 years of Shakespeare's, his construction of Cleopatra leaves much to be discussed and discovered.

2. THE WORLD OF *All for Love* or *The World Well Lost*

2.1 Dryden's Conception of *All for Love*

and Sources

The story of Antony and Cleopatra was one of interest for several English dramatists in the seventeenth century (Thomas May in 1626 with *The Tragedie of Cleopatra Queen of Aegypt*, Charles Sedley *Anthony and Cleopatra* 1677, John Fletcher and Philip Massinger's *The False One* to name a few). However, the most famous would have to be Shakespeare's treatment of the tale of *Antony and Cleopatra*. In the preface, Dryden mentions that his style was a means to "imitate the divine Shakespeare" (Dryden, 2013, p.20.17). He further explicates that "by imitating him, I have excelled myself throughout the play". Certainly, Dryden's *All for Love* comes close to Shakespeare's play though it is also far removed from it.

William Strunk, Jr., in the 1911 edition of *All for Love*, comments on the similarities between the two plays. Strunk begins by noting that "*All for Love* has but one source and that source is Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*" (Strunk, 1911, xxi). Strunk's introduction states that there is no evidence that Dryden used Appian or Dio Cassius as a source for his text (Strunk 1911, xx). On all points, he finds that the text imitates Shakespeare's play and not *Plutarch's Lives*. The two deviations Strunk notes are "Cleopatra's death", in which Dryden finds his inspiration in Plutarch, where Cleopatra clasps the asp to die upon her discovery of Antony's death and, not as protection Roman's slander, which occurs in Shakespeare. Strunk notes another instance as a deviation from Shakespeare: the scenes in the "temple of Isis", which he remarks as

being attributable to Plutarch (Strunk 1911, xx). Strunk's point fueled many critiques that ran along the same vein.

Another point of similarity in which *All for Love* was an imitation of *Antony and Cleopatra* is the use of blank verse, which many see as a departure from Dryden's style of rhyming couplets. In addition to being the style of Shakespeare, it was the style of "Fletcher, Daniel and Johnson" (Dryden, 2013, p. 369). The commentary in the University of California Edition of *All for Love* suggests that any point made by scholars suggesting that "Dryden relied solely on *Antony and Cleopatra* as his source should be abandoned as unsound" (Dryden p.368). The point made here is pertinent when considering Dryden's response to Thomas Rymer's *Tragedies of the Last Age Considered*. Rymer was an English critic of good repute in his time. In the *Tragedies*, he lays the foundations for what he deems to be the most critical aspects of a drama where he suggests that drama should be concerned with "purging away corruption" and "reforming manners" (Rymer, 1692, p.7). In response, Dryden draws away from Rymer. He finds that drama can excite passions through language. Dryden aligns himself with Rapin's views stating that when the discourses are "natural and passionate" as that of Shakespeare (Dryden, 1800, p.302). Thus it can be seen here that Dryden's choice to follow Shakespeare's style in adopting blank verse is more to do with an affinity toward a movement. It reflects a changing attitude of the times and not copying Shakespeare. In short, Shakespeare's works offer inspiration for Dryden though it would be presumptuous to treat *Antony and Cleopatra* as the only source for *All for Love*.

Another argument made about the points of similarity refers to passages that occur in both plays, and on this point, we can see that the similarities are apparent. One passage that

several scholars point out is Enobarbus' description of Cleopatra in Act II, Scene 3 of *Antony and Cleopatra*:

ENOBARBUS. Never! he will not.
Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety. Other women cloy
The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry,
Where most she satisfies. For vilest things
Become themselves in her, that the holy priests
Bless her when she is riggish.

(Shakespeare, 2011, II.3. 239-245)

Dryden takes this same statement and makes Ventidius deliver the speech. In this case, we can note the differences between both:

VENTIDIUS. Age buds at the sight of her and swells to youth ;
The holy priests gaze on her when she smiles,
And with heaved hands, forgetting gravity,
They bless her wanton eyes; even I who hate her,
With a malignant joy behold such beauty,
And while I curse, desire it.

(Dryden, 2013, IV. 1.239-244)

In the above passage, Dryden echoes Shakespeare, even using the same diction such as "Age" and "holy priests", but the differences are apparent. Dryden adds to the metaphors though he does not carry the same skill as Shakespeare, merely making the holy priests "smile" at her presence and, rather than " Bless her when she is riggish", only "bless her wanton eyes". The

difference between these two passages is due to two causes. The first is that Dryden's foray into blank verse and departure from rhyming couplets would not be without its hurdles. Dryden is not Shakespeare and does not attempt to be. The second reason regards the purpose of the content. In the above passage of Shakespeare, the statement made by Enobarbus is a commentary on Cleopatra's seductive prowess. The one made by Ventidius reveals more about Ventidius' character than it does regarding Cleopatra's seductive abilities.

Dryden does not merely take inspiration from Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. D.T Starne's essay reveals that Dryden incorporated countless other passages of Shakespeare's plays into his work. One example is the opening of the play, where Serapion foreshadows misfortune talking of the Nile flooding "so unexpected and so wonderous fierce" (Dryden, 2013, I.1.5). He further mentions that the dead rose from their graves along with the apparition of Ptolemy XIV who "Reared his inglorious head...[and] Cried 'Egypt is no more!'" (Dryden, 2013 I.26-28). This portent of the dead rising is similar to that of the ghost of Hamlet's father rising in *Hamlet*. The difference here is that Dryden, unlike Shakespeare, does not leave much for the imagination, the ghost is a portent of evil, and Egypt's doom is imminent. The extent to which Dryden embedded passages from Shakespeare in his text is immeasurable and would be the subject of its study, with scholars going so far as to say that it borders on "pastiche" (Dryden 2013, p.370)

Though the imitation of Shakespeare is apparent, there is still much that differentiates Dryden's play. In the first instance, Shakespeare wrote *Antony and Cleopatra* in the manner of a chronicle-play. Dryden's play is more organised regarding the progression of action, adhering to the unities of time, space and action. The play takes place one day before the demise of Antony and Cleopatra, with each act standing in for a few hours. Another instance worth noting is the proximity of time to the catastrophe. For Dryden, the action occurs in the final moments of the

Egyptian Queen's life. The play's plot drastically affects the characterisation of Dryden's Antony, as Dryden only portrays Antony in his last days, when he is no longer the experienced general who commanded the admiration of his troops. Any semblance of his greatness is recounted to the viewer by Dollabella and Ventidius. Whilst both shower him with praise of his glory days, Antony laments his current state.

Many previous scholars fail to conclude the importance of contextualising these plays in their concurrent study of *All for Love* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. Each was written with a specific purpose, with particular ends meant to affect the audience. With this in mind, we can begin to consider the historical and political nuances that influenced the conception of this play. Despite his imitation of Shakespeare's style, For Dryden, there was much more affecting the play and its characterisations.

2.2 Historical Background

Firstly, it is essential to consider the attitudes of Dryden's epoch concerning the treatment of Antony and Cleopatra. Their tale's interest can be traced in English, Italian and French dramatic works and spanned from the Renaissance to the restoration. Preceding Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, as far as English dramatists were concerned, there was: Samuel Daniel's *Tragedie of Cleopatra* (1594). Following Shakespeare's own and performed in 1607 was Thomas May's *Tragedy of Cleopatra Queen of Aegypt* (1626), followed by Sedley's *Antony and Cleopatra* in 1677. For Shakespeare, there was only Daniel's play preceding his own and North's translation of Plutarch was unencumbered by the influence of previous works. With several of these English playwrights preceding him, Dryden's task was not as easy as the preceding plays,

with varying plots, purposes and scenes of action. The most interesting of those that preceded Dryden was Daniel's play. Samuel Daniel's play was written in the Senecan tradition with a chorus at the end of each act. Daniel wrote his play in quatrains which differs from the blank verse employed by both Shakespeare and Dryden⁵. The plot begins to post the death of Antony and ends with Cleopatra's demise. It concerns itself with how Cleopatra will face the Romans and come to terms with losing her kingdom, ending her life as a means to end and curb any humiliation that might occur from her captors.

To get a sense of Cleopatra's popularity during the restoration, her depictions in the art are indicative of the changing attitudes related to the queen. Painters have always been drawn to the depiction of the last monarch of the Ptolemaic dynasty. The interest can be linked to the exoticism and extravagance that the tale of Cleopatra presupposes. During the Renaissance, paintings of Cleopatra reflected European attitudes towards beauty with fair skin and blonde hair, often with her bare breasts as a nod to her sexual appeal. There are many worth noting, but Guido Reni's is an interesting one and depicts Cleopatra looking up to the heavens as if repentant of her act of suicide. She is often likened to Magdalene. Many artists took up the tradition of painting Cleopatra's death. Notably, there is Benedetto Gennari's painting which features an all too nonchalant Cleopatra as she clasps the asp beneath her breast semi-nude. Another of Guido Cagnacci's (circa 1660-62) features Cleopatra reclined on a leather chair as the asp wraps itself on the arm of the chair.

⁵ For a more detailed overview of Dryden's borrowings from Daniel, see Muir, K. (1968) 'The Imagery of All for Love, in *Twentieth Century Interpretations of All for Love: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Prentice-Hall (Spectrum book).



(Reni, 1628) ⁶

Later paintings would depict Cleopatra's lavishness and extravagance, the most renowned feature of *The Banquet of Cleopatra*, painted by Giambattista Tiepolo (1744), shows Cleopatra dissolving her pearl earring in vinegar or wine, a scene described by Pliny in his *Natural History* and *Plutarch's Lives*. This particular scene was the subject of many portrait historié, which featured people's portraits as the monarch herself. Of those paintings worth noting is one by Benedetto Gennari of Lady Elizabeth Howard (Lady Felton by marriage). Lady Howard was said to be the mistress of the Duke of Monmouth. It is also noted that in Gennari's records, the painting was for Monmouth. The suggestiveness of the image furthers the assumption that there was an intimate relationship between the two. The second is one of the Duchess of Portsmouth, King Charles II's French mistress Louise de Kéroualle. It is no coincidence that Dryden fashioned his Cleopatra in *All for Love* (Huse, 2000, p.23). With de Kéroualle as the muse for Cleopatra, "Dryden champions a national leader's choice of a foreign woman" (Huse,2000, p.27). The play, in this case, works as a commentary on a broader political context.

⁶ Guido Reni (1575-1642) was an Italian Baroque painter known for his classical idealism. This painting, in typical Bolognese style, displays Cleopatra looking to the sky in concurrence with a tradition that depicts saints similarly

Charles' sentiments for the French and Catholicism were a point of contention in 1677, the same year *All for Love* was initially published. Parliament was strong-arming the monarch by renouncing his allegiances (which, up to this point, had been secret). They allowed voting of further taxes upon the condition that Charles join the Dutch-led alliance against France. The king resisted the claims that his sovereignty would lose credibility. In the same instance, the same year, Andrew Marvell published a political pamphlet entitled *An Account of the Growth of Popery and Arbitrary Government in England*, outlining fears of absolute tyranny, the growth of prerogative power and the possibility of French influence. The French sentiments so near to the crown were an evident threat because they bespoke the possibility of a Catholic heir to the throne.

Thus, Charles was met with opposition from the parliament, the people, who feared absolute power and popery and the protestants. On another end, Sedley's play of the same year also made a commentary on the politics of this time. Much of the play positions characters such as Antony and Cleopatra in a different light. Where courage and duty to one's country are seen as commendable, and there is even a likeness being drawn between Antony and the Earl of Shaftesbury Antony Ashley Cooper, who was in strong opposition to absolute monarchy and in favour of parliamentary power, which at the time was aligned with nationalism (Dryden, 2013, p.374). Dryden's play was a means to raise some sympathy or "pity", as he says in his preface, for Antony and, in turn, Cleopatra (Dryden, 2013, p.10. 18). "Dryden wrote a play about great lovers in adversity[...]he demonstrates how sensual passion on the level of a monarch and his mistress might be viewed as an heroic emotion " (Dryden, 2013, p.374). Such political entanglements in the theatre are not arbitrary. It is no coincidence that Dryden published his play

with the dedicatory epistle to Thomas Osbourne, the Earl of Danby.⁷ The works were not indifferent to the atmosphere of turmoil and were, in turn, trying to influence public opinion through their choice of plot, characterisation and scenes of action.

2.3 Performance and Popularity

All for Love was widely popular among the general public. Several records exist that detail its popularity since its first publishing. The earliest record of a performance is 12 December 1677 in the Theater Royal on Drury Lane, though this may not have been its opening night (Dryden, 2013, p.363). Robert Gould's *The Play House: A Satyr* offers a contemporary opinion on the popularity of Dryden's performance, first published in 1685, a mere eight years after the play's first showing:

Our *Fear and Pity* does advance as high
As ever yet was done in *Tragedy*.
His *All for Love* and most Correct of all,
Of just and vast applause can never fail,

(Summers, 1934, p.307).

Another certainty regarding the play was that it was the last play that Dryden for the King's Company which was actually in a state of decline despite the success of *All for Love*'s debut (Dryden, 2004, p.2). The most notable success is attributed to a performance dated 3 December 1718. It was succeeded by a decade of over thirty performances. In the eighteenth century, the success of the play resounded, it is no surprise that John Dennis was heartily

⁷ For more details on the Earl of Danby and the political intrigue associated, subchapter: Commentary on Dedication

discontented when *All for Love* was chosen for the winter of 1719 instead of his adaptation of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* as was promised to him by Richard Steele stating that "they spent about two months of the season in getting up *All for Love or the World Well Lost*" (Hooker, 1943, p.162). Steele, however, was not a proponent of Dennis' view. He provides a prologue for a small amateur performance of *All for Love* for the Duke of Marlborough. He states, "While love and fame alternately prevail/ As the great master works the charming tale" (Montgomery, 1971, p.157). Here the "great master" is Dryden. In the following year, playhouses also took up performances of *All for Love* (to the dismay of John Dennis), a clear display of this play's lasting power on its contemporaries.

Many are wont to suggest a rivalry between *All for Love* and Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, and it certainly might seem plausible, especially since Dryden makes mention of Shakespeare in the play's preface (Dryden, 2013, p.18.17). However, "there is no record of a Restoration stage performance of *Antony and Cleopatra* before Dryden wrote *All for Love* and none afterwards until 3 January 1758" (Dryden, 2013, p.365). The practice of putting *All for Love* and *Antony and Cleopatra* against each other began with Sir Walter Scott's compilation and commentary on Dryden's works. Though comparisons between the texts are abundant, and one seldom can mention Dryden's *All for Love* without mentioning Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, the comparison should not be made to determine if one is better. Again, both were published and performed under different conditions for different purposes. Additionally, Shakespeare's text should not be used as a measuring stick for Dryden's. It is worth determining whether Dryden's play was successful in imitating Shakespeare's style, as he mentions in the preface, or to note how both succeed concerning their subject matter, characterization and plot.

2.4 Commentary on the Dedication

Dryden dedicates *All for Love* in an epistle to Thomas Osbourne. Osbourne, the Earl of Danby, sat as Lord Treasurer from 1673 before being impeached in 1679. Danby was preceded by Thomas Clifford, who held the position of Lord High Treasurer before resigning in 1673. This dedication was not the first attempt that Dryden sought a patron of a Lord High Treasurer (Huse, 2000, p.38). His dedication to Clifford in *Amboyna* secured him patronage for unsettled debts (Huse, 2000, p.38). Dryden began his attempt to secure funds from Danby by writing a letter to his son Lord Latimer. In the letter, Dryden states, “ I have a further honour to beg that my Tragedy, which will be acted at Michaelmasse, & is already written, may have the honour to be addressed to My Lord Treasurer” (Dryden, 1942, p.12.). Latimer granted Dryden's request, and in March 1678, when the play was published, it included the dedication to Danby. Dryden certainly used this opportunity to ask for the salary owed him a sum of a “hundred pounds” (Dryden, 1942, p.12). Danby was not the first nor last amongst Dryden’s patrons, who were as powerful as they were influential. As such, his dedications were concerned with the politics of his day. A typical dedication would be ringing praises and showing support⁸.

Apart from the financial requests made by Dryden, which would be expected for playwrights of his time, Dryden takes the point to make a commentary on the political dealings of Danby while also critiquing those that oppose him. Before discussing the dedication, it is essential to situate Danby’s stance on England’s foreign policy and his relationship with Charles II. Thomas Osbourne, the Earl of Danby, became Lord High Treasurer after Thomas Clifford, the previous Lord High Chancellor, was forced to resign as he could not comply with the Test Act of

⁸ For a full list of Dryden’s Patrons, see p.70, Griffin, D.H. (1996) *Literary patronage in England, 1650-1800*. Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press.

1673. The Test Act of 1673 entailed swearing an oath to the king and taking communion in an Anglican church. It also denied transubstantiation, which was typical of Catholicism. Those who refused these terms were denied from holding office. Clifford, a Catholic, was forced to resign, and Danby took his place. Danby's efforts were directed towards getting the support of the parliament, a parliament that had grown suspicious of the king's position given the Declaration of Indulgence of 1672, which suspended sanctions against Protestant nonconformists and Roman Catholics. At the same instance, there were fears about the Duke of York's conversion to Catholicism. Danby was trying to quell these fears amid a predominantly anti-French and anti-Catholic parliament. Through his negotiation, he secured the marriage of the Dutch William of Orange to Mary, the daughter of the Duke of York. Since Mary was brought up as a protestant, this dispelled some of the parliaments' latent fears and, on another end, bolstered Dutch support against the French.

Danby's position, however, was unlike Charles II, who was receiving a pension from the French to dissolve and prorogue the parliamentary sessions. "Danby's anti-French anti-Catholic agenda represented a fundamental breach with his policies of toleration for Catholics and a nagging interference for his hunger for French Bribes" (Huse, 2000, p.39). Dryden, in heaping praises on Danby, seeks to show that Danby holds a position where "moderation" is practised (Dryden, 2013, p.5, 23). For Dryden, an English minister should be like an "isthmus betwixt the two encroaching seas of arbitrary power and lawless anarchy" (Dryden, 2013, p.5, 28). Dryden acknowledges the difficulty of Danby's position and states it would take nothing short of an "extraordinary genius", which in this case is Danby, to be able to find a way to keep England from descending into anarchy or turning the tides towards prerogative power. Though Dryden puts a lot of faith in Danby and his political capabilities, praising him for his excellence of

character, he does not show support for a republic. Apart from finding it loathsome, Dryden also states that it has a “mock appearance of a liberty” (Dryden, 2013, p.6, 8). The alternative that Dryden provides is the monarchy. He presents a series of arguments as to why he finds a republic and the power expended by the parliament to be a form of slavery “People must suffer without a remedy, because they are oppress'd by their Representatives.” (Dryden, 2013, p.6, 13-14). In this case, Dryden illustrates his stance by not endorsing the parliament. Though he mentions a fine line between arbitrary power and lawless anarchy, his allegiances lie with the king. His support for Danby only stretches as far as his laureateship will allow. “If I must serve, the number of my masters, who were born my equals, would but add to the ignominy of my bondage” (Dryden, 2013, p.6, 16). Here, Dryden suggests that aligning with the power of a government of elected officials is not only a form of slavery but that there is an added humiliation associated with it. Despite this, he is still able to not create any polarizations. He points out that neither arbitrary power nor a commonwealth would be prosperous for England’s governance.

Dryden also uses dedication as an opportunity to critique as well as praise. He does not shy away from attacking his opponents in his dedication. In this case, he directs his jeering comments toward Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Earl of Shaftesbury. Shaftesbury shifted his support from the king, becoming a prominent figure in the Whig opposition party. Despite Dryden’s moderate stance in the dedication, he makes sure to make deliberate attacks on Shaftesbury’s changing allegiances. “He who has often chang'd his Party, and always has made his Interest the Rule of it, gives little evidence of his sincerity for the Publick Good (Dryden, 2013, p.7, 22). Here Dryden demonstrates that those who are changeable in their views do not have national interests in mind. In Shaftesbury, Danby and Dryden have a common enemy. By

opposing Shaftesbury, Dryden can display his allegiance to the crown and Danby by proxy while showing that those in parliament might hinder England's progress.

Without further entering into the particulars of Dryden's praise of Danby or attacks on Shaftesbury, I would like to draw attention to a claim made in the dedication where Dryden displays elements of ambivalent colonialism:

Tis true that vaster and more frequent taxes might be gathered when the consent of the people was not asked or needed, but this were only by conquering abroad to be poor at home: and the examples of our neighbours teach us that that they are not always the happiest subjects whose kings extend their dominions farthest.

(Dryden, 2013, p.6. 26-30)

When Dryden's *All for love* was published, France had already established colonies in India from Chandernagore to Pondichéry. The French East India Company was established a mere decade before the play. While critiquing France's politics, Dryden indirectly discourages the spread of colonialist ambitions not because of any indication that colonialism is an abhorrent practice. But rather because it would mean a lack of focus on national interests. Prior to this, Dryden offers an explanation as to why England would not be suited to casting its dominion elsewhere. He states the impediment of the "temper of the natives", who could easily overthrow or behead a king if angered or at the very least enter into a civil war (Dryden, 2013, p.6, 18). His other reason regards the topography, "an island being more proper for commerce and defence," and finally, the "nature of our government", a government whose values and interests as Dryden, as mentioned throughout the dedication, should be directed inwards (Dryden, 2013, p.6, 16-17). Dryden even goes so far as to lament the actual financial burden of colonialist ambitions that

though England could potentially venture outwards to collect taxes, “this was only by conquering abroad to be poor at home” (Dryden, 2013, p.6, 27)

The figure of the Duchess of Portsmouth does not appear in Dryden’s dedication; however, her alliance with Danby was present, and we must assume that Dryden was aware of this fact. “Danby used his office to provide de K roualle with jewels” (Huse, 2000, p. 43). There are suggestions that de K roualle could have been Danby’s mistress or that he, at the very least, was trying to win her affections by providing these gifts. Thus a parallel can be drawn between Antony and Danby and Cleopatra and de K roualle, especially since Danby and Antony find themselves between their duty and passions. Despite Danby’s attempts to display his anti-french sentiments to the parliament, he implicitly, through his gifts, shows support to de K roualle, much like Antony finds his allegiances put to question when put against his passion for Cleopatra. However, I would posit that Danby is more akin to Dollabella. He is Antony’s loyal friend, and though he is not free from being seduced by Cleopatra, his loyalty to Antony and, in addition to Rome, make him an admirable character. As in *Aureng Zebe*, Dryden's comparison of the two principal characters is a commentary on the king and the general politics of the time. Huse mentions that *All for Love* simplifies relations between France and England “into a national leaders affair with a foreign woman” (Huse, 2000, p.45). It seems in his depiction of Dollabella. He warns Danby, who, in his attempts to help Antony, only makes matters worse for himself by being banished despite his constancy with Antony.

Similarly, Dryden seems to be hinting at the fact that Danby should not be like the treasonous “private persons” who threaten the welfare of the country (Dryden, 2013, p.4, 31). Similarly, he portrays Dollabella as a virtuous character whose intent becomes misconstrued throughout the play. In addition, Dollabella displays valour and constancy towards his general

and country. Through *All for Love*, Dryden succeeds at securing himself a patron, making a commentary on the turmoil in English politics and reaffirming his allegiance to the monarchy through moderation.

2.5 Analysis of the Depiction of the Setting

Before analysing the setting, it is necessary to summarise the play and the actions therein briefly. The play opens with the priests of Isis and Cleopatra's court members lamenting the ill portents that have befallen Egypt. Following this, the viewer learns that it is Antony's birthday. Antony, instead of celebrating, is grieving to the point of desperation for his loss at the battle of Actium. Ventidius, Antony's lieutenant and friend, tries to pull Antony out of his isolation and attempts to convince him to take up arms against Octavius. Additionally, Ventidius suggests that Antony should abandon his love, Egyptian Queen Cleopatra, whom he believes has been the source of all Antony's troubles, "a worthless woman" in his eyes (I.I. 372). Ventidius' efforts are thwarted by Alexas, the eunuch who serves as an advisor to Cleopatra. Alexas succeeds at gaining a meeting between Cleopatra and Antony. After a brief victory over Caesar's forces, the lovers have a moment of respite to reclaim their affection for each other. Ventidius strengthens his resolve to break apart the pair and calls Dollabella, Antony's faithful friend, to his aid. Ventidius also calls Octavia to his aid, Antony's virtuous and loyal wife. With their help, Ventidius succeeds in changing Antony's mind, there is also the prospect of a peaceful settlement with Octavius, Octavia's sibling. Cleopatra, desperate at the potential loss of her lover, agrees to take on Alexas' scheme to reignite Antony's love by making him jealous of Dollabella and his

affections toward the Egyptian queen. Dollabella's affections are however "no more than friendship will allow" (Dryden, 2013, IV.i.496).

Dollabella and Cleopatra's meeting is not an illicit meeting between lovers, both true to Antony. They do not engage in anything beyond a conversation in which Dollabella states that he will aid Cleopatra in having a final encounter with Antony. This exchange, however, is seen by Octavia and Ventidius, who see Cleopatra and Dollabella conversing and inform Antony that his friend and his love doubly betray him. Upon hearing this, Antony is enraged. Serapion, the priest, advises Cleopatra to make herself scarce until Alexas explains the situation. Alexas, however, fearing Antony's reaction, resolves to tell him instead that Cleopatra has committed suicide. This statement plunges Antony into despair and prompts him to impale himself with his sword. He does not die immediately. The wound itself though fatal, allows him a brief meeting with Cleopatra, where they reconcile. The play concludes with Cleopatra staging a ceremony with the body of the deceased Antony of their first meeting. She kills herself with an asp and dies by his side. The priest Serapion gives the concluding statements in which he announces the arrival of Octavius and blesses the fallen couple.

The play's actions occur in Egypt and, more specifically, in Alexandria, which would have been the seat of power in the Ptolemaic dynasty. The play opens in The temple of Isis, where Antony isolates himself. There is no reason to assume that the setting changes throughout the play, barring Cleopatra and Antony's ceremony after their short-lived victory. However, we have no reason to assume this would be done at another location other than the temple. This fact becomes especially apparent as Dryden points out in his preface "The fabric of the play is regular enough, as to the inferior parts of it, and the classical unities of time, place and action, more exactly observed"(Dryden, 2013, p.10.20-24). Therefore it is safe to assume that the action takes

place in the temple of Isis and does not occur at any different location, or at the very least continues to be in Alexandria, adhering to the unities, unlike Dryden's predecessor Shakespeare.

Several considerations must be made regarding the ways Egypt as a setting features in the play. The analysis can be done through a two-pronged approach. Firstly, what is said about Egypt throughout the play. Secondly, what is implied about Egypt and what we can infer about the location from the play's action. In the first act, the play opens with the priests of Isis detailing the ill omens and strange occurrences that have lately befallen Egypt. "Our fruitful Nile/ Flowed ere the wonted season, with a torrent/ So unexpected and so wonderful fierce"(Dryden, 2013, I.3-4). Dryden opens the play with a description of the Nile which is the most defining characteristic in Egypt's topography, and describes that it flowed in a way unlike it typically would. What is interesting regarding Serapion's description of the Nile's storm is that seals, dolphins and sea horses, marine life that would be otherwise limited to the sea, washed up on the banks of the Nile. This omen is intriguing, and perhaps the invasion of this foreign marine life on the Nile shores indicates the foreign invasion of Rome. However, it should be said that such acts of nature as foreshadowings were common in Shakespeare's plays. Given that Dryden states that his play is in imitation of "Shakespeare's stile" (Dryden, 2013, p.18, 17), it follows that the play should have a similar portent of doom.

Following this, we learn that the Roman invasion looms over the city of Alexandria and that Roman encampments are to the south. Alexas makes this statement to dispel any fears that Serapion might have, suggesting the doom to befall Egypt is the possibility of being conquered by Octavius. Thus these portents of destruction are linked to the death of Cleopatra and Mark Antony. Interestingly, the potential death of the monarch bespells the decay and ruin of the city

and the land as well. There is more emphasis on this stated by Serapion later in the act regarding Marc Antony:

SERAPION. If he be vanquished
Or make his peace, Egypt is doomed to be
A Roman province, and our plenteous harvests
Must then redeem scarceness of their soil.
While Antony stood firm, our Alexandria
Rivalled proud Rome (dominion's other seat)

(Dryden, 2013, I, 63-68)

The link between the land and the fates of the principal characters is interesting. On the one hand, there is the implication of the lasting impact and effects on the land's prosperity if the monarch falls. In other words, England would be less prosperous if Charles II lost his power at that point, being contested by parliament. On the other hand, Dryden is making another commentary about Egypt. The references thus far regarding Egypt refer to the harvest, the Nile, the agriculture. These assets depict the location as a treasure trove, a wealth to be collected. They also establish Egypt as prey and Rome as the predator that looms above it. Throughout the play, it is reiterated that Octavius' forces are on the borders. Additionally, it is stated that Egypt is on the brink of being conquered by the Romans. Its slim chance of success lies on Cleopatra and Marc Antony's shoulders.

As the play progresses, the references to Egypt also change and morph concerning the characters' current states. In an exchange between Antony and Ventidius, Antony refers to Egypt and states, "I long to leave this prison of a town" (Dryden, 2013, II, 146). Alexas' statement contrasts this when he offers a gift to both Antony and Ventidius, requesting a meeting for

Cleopatra, “With all the wealth of Egypt”(Dryden, 2013, II, 184). Antony referring to Egypt as a prison coincides with the language of bondage that figures prominently in the play of which Monika Fludernik’s essay entitled “Love Versus Bondage: Dryden’s All for Love” provides a wealth of information. What is interesting is the way conquered land is treated as a commodity. There is no mention of them beyond the wealth they could potentially offer, and they are spoken of not in terms of who inhabits them or any semblance of culture. There are few descriptions of Egypt beyond references made to its fertility, the wealth it possesses and the fact that it is on the precipice of becoming a lost kingdom.

In Act III, after Octavia’s arrival, Alexas protests to Cleopatra and her reply is indicative of the statement made above:

ALEXAS. You are no more a Queen;

Egypt is lost.

CLEOPATRA. What tell’st thou me of Egypt!

My Life my Soul is lost! Octavia has him!

(Dryden, 2013, III.i 394)

This mode of referring to Egypt as lost or gained is in dialogue with a larger discourse. Edward Said’s *Orientalism* can give some explanation for this. He posits that the relationships between the Orient and the West are predefined and simplifies this in the following statement “There are Westerners and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated, which usually means having their land occupied, their internal affairs rigidly controlled, their blood and treasure put at the disposal of one or another Western power” (Said, 2003,p.36). When the

rhetoric around Egypt only refers to its wealth or the harvests, the implication is that this wealth can be exploited.

In Act V, another reference is made to Egypt. Serapion enters to give Cleopatra news of the Egyptian fleet. Interestingly, they neither fought nor fled the Roman fleet but were immediately assimilated into the fleet “th’Egyptian galleys, / Received like friends... and now they all come forward,/ And ride within the port” (Dryden, 2013, V.i.89-94). The assimilation of the fleet is indicative of the complacency of the Egyptians. The way the fleet goes from Roman to Egyptian is seamless.

There is no resistance, whether through fighting or fleeing. The key here lies in the play. There is no foreshadowing of Egypt’s loss. It is a statement of fact constantly repeated throughout the play. The Nile overflowing and the dead rising in the tombs mentioned in act I are not predicting Egypt’s loss, for that has already happened. If anything, it is merely a prediction of the misfortunes of its rulers. Egypt is lost, and thus the transfer of power from Egyptians to Roman was smooth. The Egyptians accept their fate. Only Cleopatra and Antony are left to mourn their losses and the humility of defeat. “Think not tis thou has conquered Antony,/ But Rome has conquered Egypt.” (Dryden, 2013, V, 148-149). By Act V, Egypt is neither connected to Antony nor Cleopatra, it is neither Antony’s prison nor Cleopatra’s kingdom. Egypt's demise is separate from the pair's, though they are concurrent.

Despite Antony and Cleopatra sharing fates, there is a clear juxtaposition between Egypt and Rome. Egypt is portrayed as a dying kingdom whose Nile river, once a source of life, now inundates and floods irregularly, a harbinger of doom. Rome, however, is a rising kingdom. Interestingly, the first mention of Rome occurs in the descriptions given by Serapion and Alexas, who first describe the Roman lieutenant Ventidius “But who’s that stranger?By his warlike port,/

His fierce demeanor and erected look,/ He's of no vulgar note" (Dryden, 2013, I.i. 89-90). Ventidius is the embodiment of Rome. His "warlike" presence places Rome as an invader and conqueror. Rome is masculine and associated with war, while Egypt is feminine and a symbol of fertility, wealth and passivity in how it becomes conquered. This association of Rome with conflict and being on offence is further emphasised by Ventidius when he describes Antony as having been "Rough in battle/ As the first Romans when they went to war;" (I.i.184-185). This reference suggests that this "warlike" demeanour is part and parcel of being Roman. At the very least, part of the mytho-historical origin story of Rome names Romulus and Remus as "the sons of Mars" (Wiseman, 1995, p.73). Ventidius, however, does not stop at reiterating Rome's strength in battle but also intentionally creates a distinction between Egypt and Rome "Let your Egyptian timbrels play alone,/ Nor mix effeminate sounds with Roman trumpets" (Dryden, 2013, I.i.194-195). The timbrels associated with the Egyptians are instruments typically used in festivals and dance, while again, here, the Roman trumpets are linked to the trumpets of war. What is particularly interesting is Ventidius stating that these Egyptian sounds are effeminate, thus solidifying the association that all that is Egyptian is feminine and weak, and all that is Roman is masculine.

In her book entitled *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, Ania Loomba states that "from the colonial period till its end (and beyond), female bodies symbolise the conquered land"(1998, p.154). The sexualising of these two locales also prefigures the potential conquering of one over the other, the conception of colonialism being difficult to unlink from the patriarchy. This system places what is in the masculine realm in positions of domination. The system, by contrast, places the feminine domain into a position of passivity and submission. Helen Carr sheds some light on this, stating:

In the language of colonialism, non-Europeans occupy the same symbolic space as women. Both are seen as part of nature, not culture, and with the same ambivalence: either they are ripe for government, passive, child-like, unsophisticated, needing leadership and guidance, always described in terms of lack—no initiative, no intellectual powers, no perseverance; or on the other hand, they are outside society, dangerous, treacherous, emotional, inconstant, wild, threatening, fickle, sexually aberrant, irrational, near the animal, lascivious, disruptive, evil, unpredictable.

(Carr, 1985, p.50)

What is evident is the duality of this feminine energy portrayed throughout the play. It is passive yet dangerous and disruptive. Its ways are not as bombast as the Roman trumpets, yet they can lead to ruin. Ventidius is aware of the division that exists between Rome and Egypt, and he is also aware of the damage it can cause to Roman values. This awareness translates into his constant attempts to reinstill Roman values into Antony throughout the play. “O, women! Women! Women! All the gods/ Have not such power of doing good to man/ As you of doing harm,” he states (Dryden, 2013, II. i. 451-453). In creating these two realms, Dryden sets the stage for comparisons and the potential for redefining power dynamics through his characterisation of Mark Antony and Cleopatra.

2.6 Analysis of the Character of Cleopatra

An overview of the mytho-historical atmosphere that precedes the play can clarify the play's plot and Dryden's characterisation of Cleopatra. This overview, indeed, cannot be regarded

with any historical accuracy and should be seen as a means to give an overview of what precedes the play's narrative. Cleopatra is the last of the Egyptian monarchs who were waging war against her brother Ptolemy to seize power. Cleopatra's forces were not faring well in the conflict, so she sought Julius Caesar's help. With the help of Apollodorus, Cleopatra finds a way to gain access to Caesar whilst remaining undetected. The sources vary, but in *Plutarch's Lives*, as translated by Dryden, "she thought of putting herself into the coverlet of a bed and lying at length"(Plutarch, p.307). Cleopatra succeeded in persuading Caesar, much to the dismay of his Roman subjects, who found it "dangerous and dishonourable, and noways necessary"(Plutarch, p.306). Caesar returned to Rome but was later assassinated. Julius Caesar's reign was followed by the Triumvirate with Lepidus, Octavius and Mark Antony. Once Antony took over the Eastern part of the Roman empire, he called on Cleopatra to meet him. She arrived in an opulent barge with "Purple sails:/Her Nymphs, like Nereids, round her Couch"(Dryden, 2013, III.i.164-165). Antony became enamoured with the Queen despite his prior duties and marriage to Fulvia. He resolved to go to Alexandria. Together, Antony and Cleopatra lived in frivolity and debauchery. In the meantime, Fulvia declared war on Octavius, but she shortly died following this.

After Fulvia's death, Antony went to Italy and made peace with Octavius, marrying his sister Octavia. Octavia as Lucy Hughes-Hallet notes in her book *Cleopatra: Histories, Dreams and Distortions*, unlike Cleopatra, was "demure and dignified, not overtly alluring", a difference pertinent to Dryden's play (Hallet 1990, p.12). Yet this was only a brief respite, and Antony relapsed back to Cleopatra. Octavius did not take this lightly and waged war on Antony and Cleopatra. Octavius met Cleopatra and Antony's forces in a naval battle at Actium at Cleopatra's behest, although Antony was not a skilled naval soldier and was more adept on land. The battle,

however, did not go in their favour, Cleopatra fled, and Antony abandoned his troops and followed suit. Antony felt immeasurable shame and sank into a deep moroseness. These are the events that precede the play. What follows is depicted by Dryden in *All for Love*.

The first mention of Cleopatra happens in her absence in the first act, where Serapion and Alexas are discussing Antony's presence in the temple of Isis and that he "Has not beheld the face of Cleopatra" (Dryden, 2013, I.i.59) . What is interesting is that the reference to Antony and Cleopatra's love is taken in a negative sense described as if it were disease not only by Ventidius whose efforts are directed towards distancing Antony from Cleopatra to restore him to his former glory but they are also reiterated by Alexas of Cleopatra's court "we much fear by absence/ To cure his mind of love" (Dryden, 2013, I. i. 61-62). The implication here is that the love between the two is like a disease that plagues Antony, one that's cure lies in distancing himself from Cleopatra. This might imply that Cleopatra is the disease that plagues Antony. However, Alexas also expresses that he wishes Antony "divided from her arms" initially, which suggests that he too sees that the match between Cleopatra and Antony does not bode well neither for Egypt nor for Rome (Dryden, 2013, I.I.84). Serapion, however, mentions that "she dotes" on Antony despite his sorry state and that her love is thus unchangeable. Dryden emphasises this point throughout the play through the many accusations and faults reiterated by Cleopatra's detractors. Cleopatra's constancy is one quality that subverts the stereotype of the seductive mistress who uses her wiles to ensnare Antony. In Act II, she displays a letter written by Octavius offering her Syria and Egypt, but to her, Antony is more valuable:

CLEOPATRA And yet you leave me!
You leave me Antony, and yet I love you,
Indeed I do. I have refused a kingdom;

That's a trifle

(Dryden, 2013, II. i. 400-403)

Cleopatra views a kingdom and the dominions she would potentially rule over if she accepts Octavian's offer as a "trifle". She is willing to renounce her identity as a monarch to win Antony's affection. This is a testament to her constancy towards Antony. However, this also displays her imprudence as a leader. Her willingness to relinquish all for Antony shows that she is impulsive and not attentive to the welfare of her subjects. However, this constancy is still an honourable trait because she proves herself a "mistress true"(Dryden, 2013, p.20.18). Cleopatra favours identifying herself as Antony's lover than the glory of being a monarch. Unlike Antony, whom J.Douglas Canfield states "vacillates" constantly between two states of identity, Cleopatra decidedly relinquishes her identity to remain with Antony (1975, p.51). When implored by Alexas in Act IV to deceive Antony, she states:

CLEOPATRA Nature meant me
A wife, a silly, harmless household dove,
Fond without art; and kind without deceit;
But Fortune, that has made a Mistress of me

(Dryden, 2013, IV.i. 91-94)

Cleopatra views herself as harmless. Her love for Antony is not only consistent but pure. Its purity prevents her from using deception to win Antony over. Interestingly, she acknowledges that others view her as a "faithless prostitute", as Octavia states (Dryden, 2013, IV. i. 389). Throughout the play, there are references to Cleopatra's deceptive nature and eroticism. However, this is not how Cleopatra sees herself. She would rather be a "silly harmless household dove" (Dryden, 2013, IV.i. 91). However, there is an authenticity in her affections. The authenticity of these affections is emphasised in her reactions to the injustices she faces from

others. Although “domesticated” and noticeably more subtle in her eroticism and appeal, Dryden's Cleopatra shows emotional awareness. She can comment on how others view her and voice her discontent. In her encounter with Octavia, she states:

CLEOPATRA the world contemns poor me;
For I have lost my honour, lost my fame,
And stained the glory of my royal house,
And all to bear the branded name of mistress.

(Dryden, 2013, III.i, 460-465)

With each of these losses, she strives to gain a station above her own regarding her attachment to Antony. In her confrontation with Octavia, she begins proud, stating that she is “queen” (Dryden, 2013, III.i. 417). Octavia meets this statement not by saying that she is Antony’s wife but by stating that she is “ A Roman: A name that makes, and can unmake, a queen” (Dryden, 2013, III.i.420). By the end of their confrontation, Cleopatra is indeed unmade. After her proud display of station and title, Octavia reduces her to self-pity, lamenting her mistress status. Despite the kingdom she possesses and the title of Queen, she does not possess the title she covets: a wife. However, Octavia is not as covetous of this title as Cleopatra. Canfield notes, “Octavia, who has called Cleopatra “faithless”, herself finally in her Cornelian pride and jealousy deserts Antony” (Canfield, 1975, p.51). For Octavia, what ties her to Antony are the bonds of duty. When she finally takes leave of Antony, she states, “My duty shall be yours./ to the dear pledges of our former love” (Dryden, 2013, IV. i. 423-424)

In her article entitled ‘Eroticizing Virtue: The Role of Cleopatra in Early Modern Drama’, Reina Green suggests that prioritising love over duty was common during the Restoration (2002, p.97). Nevertheless, Dryden’s choice to stage the two women together is bizarre, as it divides the audience's sympathies. Everett H. Emerson, Harold E. Davis and Ira Johnson state that “Dryden

wished to show how Antony, torn between these two, chooses unreasonable passionate love and is consequently punished for his denial of reason” (p.84, 1955). Dryden divides the pity “like the cutting of a river (Dryden, 2013, p.11.6). However, the river does not seem to be divided equally “Octavia is so undeniably self-righteous—and it is difficult to believe that she would not have seemed so to a Restoration audience” (Emerson, Davis and Johnson, 1955, p.85). Dryden states that Octavia’s appearance could arouse substantial compassion, so much so that it would affect the level of pity meant for Antony and Cleopatra. However, Octavia’s meeting only solidifies her presence as a foil for Cleopatra, strengthening Cleopatra’s claim on Antony. Virtue is confronted with constancy, a stronger force that is accompanied by “transcendent passion” (Dryden, 2013, II.i.20). Subsequently, the play succeeds in garnering pity for Cleopatra. The play is hinged upon the premise that “pity must prevail”, as Dollabella points out in act IV (Dryden, 2013, IVi.462). Dryden’s *All for Love* and his characterisation of Cleopatra and Antony is not meant to be a warning. Their downfall does not excite any feelings of terror. Otto Reinert, in his essay entitled ‘Passion and Pity in *All for Love*’ affirms that the play succeeds in “evoking pity and even a sense of waste that so great a power to love should be wrecked on undisciplined passion” (1963, p.85)

Despite Cleopatra’s ability to arouse the audience’s sympathies and gain Antony’s love, she remains ill-fated. Firstly, she is constantly bound by the opinions of others. Secondly, throughout the play, she continuously has to implore her lover to return to her. Subsequently, her constancy is rewarded with Antony’s mutability. As a monarch, her kingdom is surrounded by Octavius. Lastly, she will be remembered from time immemorial as Antony’s mistress. Each character has an opinion of the Queen. To Ventidius, she is a “worthless woman” who has caused the ruin of a great Roman leader (Dryden, 2013, I.i.372). To Octavia, she is a “prostitute”

(Dryden, 2013, IV.i. 389). To Antony, she is glorified. He calls Cleopatra his “brighter Venus” when in his favour. When Cleopatra is out of his favour, she “has ripened sin/ To such monstrous growth” (Dryden, 2013, IV.i. 478-479).

In his essay entitled “Art and Life in All for Love”, Derek Hughes discusses the metaphors used to describe characters throughout the play. He states, “Cleopatra’s tragedy is that no one else views her with such sober realism” (1983, p.99). The difficulty of other characters to fully comprehend the depth and breadth of her character demonstrates the extent of her struggles. She constantly has to restate her identity throughout the play. She restates that she is Antony’s faithful mistress, she repeats that she is Queen, and she reiterates that she feels unjustly treated. When Antony wrongfully accuses her of betrayal, she states, “My only comfort is, I know myself” (Dryden, 2013, V.i.581). Despite the comfort of knowing herself, she is still unprotected from the preconceptions and projections of others concerning her identity. Cleopatra becomes a vessel by absorbing all the disparaging (and occasionally uplifting) statements made toward her. More adequately to the point, Cleopatra becomes what Said terms the “Vaisseau d'Orient [... a] woman as the vessel carrying the orient”(2003, p.184). As a vessel carrying the Orient, Cleopatra’s very presence illustrates “sexual promise (and threat)” that many try to grasp, but few can possess. Ventidius spends much of the playmaking disparaging comments about Cleopatra stating he finds it hard to resist her, and that her sexuality captivates him. This sexuality has no place in a civilised society and must be kept separate from what is Roman. This Egyptian sexuality and femininity are constantly at odds with Roman masculinity, which manifests in how Ventidius and Octavia try to distance themselves from it. The only alternative to possessing Egypt, which is the source of both repulsion and allure, is through conquest. Octavius who is only mentioned in the play and does not appear at any point, makes military

advances to gain possession of Egypt. Dryden's omission of Octavius Caesar in the play could be a commentary on Cleopatra's wiles and sexual prowess, making her irresistible to mankind. Thus justifying his absence in the play.

The confrontation between the Roman and the Egyptian become apparent in the encounters between Octavia and Cleopatra. Octavia's coldness and self-righteous virtue further display her coldness of character and the sharp contrast between Cleopatra and Octavia.

Interestingly, Dollabella's description of Octavia gives some insight into her character:

DOLLABELLA She's neither too submissive
Nor yet too haughty; but so just a mean
Shows, as it ought, a wife and a Roman too.

(Dryden, 2013, III. i 265-268)

Dollabella suggests that Octavia's character is not passive. He additionally links her character with being Roman. It is treated as if it were a laudable attribute. Thus it can be conjectured that this is not the case for an Egyptian, or by extension, Cleopatra. This distinction amplifies the marked difference between Cleopatra and Octavia. The statement made above emphasises the clear divide between Rome and Egypt. However, Green suggests that they meet as equals in their encounter, mirroring each other's sentences.

When Octavia enters the scene, she states, "I need not ask if you are Cleopatra [...] Nor need I ask who you are" (Dryden, 2013, III.i.416-420). They both mirror each others' speeches, but there is a fundamental difference between Octavia and Cleopatra. Octavia is a Roman and Antony's wife. She exists in the realm of civilised society. Cleopatra is Egyptian and Antony's mistress. She strives to be included in society and ultimately cannot be included. Her need for inclusion is apparent in the remonstrances she makes in her confrontation with Octavia, "if you have suffered, I have suffered more" (III.i.459). As Antony's wife, Octavia does not bear the

same difficulties that Cleopatra endures. These difficulties are rooted in her alienation from society and establishing her otherhood. When Cleopatra prepares to end her life, she states, “I have not loved a Roman not to know/what should become his wife—his wife, my Charmion/ For ‘tis to that high title I aspire” (Dryden, 2013, V.i. 413-415). This statement is an intriguing one because it indicates Cleopatra’s desires. She does not wish to reclaim her kingdom and does not discuss self-preservation by ending her life. The end of her life marks the beginning of a new one as Antony’s wife. Cleopatra renounces everything, even her own life, for the title that Octavia possesses. With this title, Cleopatra can gain legitimacy in a civilised society. However, Dryden does not allow the lovers to legitimise their bond. In *All for Love*, there is no place for Antony and Cleopatra. The only solution exists in the afterlife. The limits of Cleopatra’s aspirations suggest the extent of colonial dominance. The fact that Cleopatra does not have any desires beyond wanting to be Antony’s wife suggests the restrictive delineations of the Roman colonial presence. Cleopatra’s marginalisation from society affects her even while she resides in her kingdom among members of her court. By deeming herself unworthy, Cleopatra is a willing participant in the Roman project to subjugate her, which occurs ideologically by Octavia and Ventidius, and militarily by Octavian. Octavia, Antony’s legitimate wife and a Roman, pleads her case to Antony in a few instances before she decides to abandon the endeavour. Octavia’s legitimacy in civilised society does not stem from her attachment to Antony. Her meeting with Antony has a specific purpose “I come to claim you as my own; to show/My duty first” (Dryden 2013, III.i.265-266). Her duty is far more critical. The title of a wife holds a different value for her:

OCTAVIA No matter where, I never will complain,
But only keep the barren Name of Wife,

And rid you of the trouble.

(Dryden, 2013, III. i. 303-306)

Holding the name of wife for Octavia does not mean that she is Antony's companion. The title maintains her societal status for Octavia and does not necessarily indicate her attachment to Antony. For Cleopatra, however, it legitimises their relationship, allowing them to be in each other's company without the presence or interference of others. Green takes note that Cleopatra possesses something that Octavia does not possess. In their encounter together, Octavia enquires Cleopatra, "Dost thou not blush to own those black endearments/That make sin pleasing?" (Dryden, 2013, III.i.443). Cleopatra's charms, sexuality and eroticism are what distinguish her. To Octavia, such charms are sinful, and Cleopatra should practise modesty in possessing them. Cleopatra responds, "You may blush, who want'em"(Dryden, 2013, III.i.444).

Green suggests that the statement holds a double meaning "want' signifying both Octavia's lack of charms and her desire to have them"(Green, 2002, p.99). Although Octavia reprimands Cleopatra for using her beauty to charm others, Cleopatra implies that Octavia secretly desires these charms. This sexualisation of Cleopatra is a common motif in the Western perception of the Orient. Said states that the "Orient seems still to suggest not only fecundity but sexual promise (and threat), untiring sensuality, unlimited desire, deep generative energies". (Said, 2003, p.188). Cleopatra embodies this "sexual promise (and threat)". This sexualisation of the Queen signifies her objectification and the sexualisation of the Orient on a larger scale. Green, however, indicates that:

Cleopatra's charms both provoke the gaze and resist definition[...]even as Octavia attempts to assert her superiority over Cleopatra by trying to objectify her, she reveals the Queen of Egypt's power.

(Green, 2002, p.99)

Octavia struggles to grasp the Queen of Egypt's charms and thus cannot objectify her. Dryden's Cleopatra differs from the Oriental woman described in Said's *Orientalism* because she is not a "display of impressive but verbally inexpressive femininity" (2003, p.187). Dryden's Cleopatra can express her wants and needs in a given moment. Her desires, however, are limited by restrictions that indicate a colonial discourse at play. Her ability to recognise and comment on her status in society implies her difference. She is, by contrast, verbally expressive and, at times, even contentious. Said suggests that the "vaisseau d'orient" exists to be filled in by the Western presence. Indeed, that does occur in the play. However, a vessel suggests an absence. Cleopatra asserts her presence throughout and finally proclaims herself as Antony's wife at the end of the play. Although she aspires to gain this title through her marginalisation, she has the power to give herself the title as well. She does not require external forces, nor does she require Antony in the process. Thus she lacks the properties of a vessel of the Orient. The difficulty in situating Cleopatra as an Oriental woman within the body of Said's work arises from Said's deliberate omission of sexuality from his analysis (Said, 2003, p.188). Said does hint at latent Orientalism, which is relevant to the study in so far as sexuality is linked to the unconscious. However, the limitations in Said's analysis and his choice not to include sexuality in the "province of [his] analysis" raises some questions (Said, 2003, p.188). Meyda Yeğenoğlu, in her book entitled *Colonial Fantasies Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism*, suggests that:

we need to subject Orientalist discourse to a more sexualised reading. By doing so we can understand how the representation of otherness is achieved simultaneously through sexual as well as cultural modes of differentiation. The Western acts of understanding the Orient and its women are not two distinct enterprises, but rather are interwoven aspects of the same gesture.

(1998, p.26)

Sexuality figures prominently in Dryden's *All for Love* and is an integral aspect that supplements the rationale behind Cleopatra's characterisation. On a larger scale, Cleopatra's sexuality aids in the understanding of the broader colonial discourse. These two points cannot be dissected from one another. Power and sexuality are entangled in the play, with Cleopatra and with the discourse at large. Cleopatra's control over Antony derives from her "inevitable charms, that catch/ Mankind" (Dryden, 2013, III.i 438). Charms leave Octavia questioning how she can ensnare Antony and all of mankind. The key to understanding Cleopatra depends upon what lies behind her "inevitable charms". The charms that Ventidius has come to Egypt to put an end to (Dryden, 2013, I.i.193). These same charms are linked to "effeminate sounds" and should give reason enough for Cleopatra to blush to have them. It must be assumed then that Cleopatra's charms are related to her femininity and sexuality. Although Octavia exists as another woman in the play of equal status, references to her always regard her being a Roman and Antony's wife. Thus Cleopatra's charms are not simply linked to her femininity but to her being an Oriental woman. Octavia needs to move closer to uncover what Cleopatra possesses that has "ruin'd" Antony (Dryden, 2013, III.i 438).

Yeğenoğlu suggests a chain of equivalence between the Orient and the feminine (1998, p.56). This association situates the Western subject as a male presence. The female Oriental charms and these charms are hidden. They confound, they mystify. The masculine is represented as the Western subject attempts to uncover these charms. The result of such an encounter leads to one of two outcomes in the play. The first outcome is that the Western subject succumbs to Cleopatra's charms.

An example is Antony, who becomes, as Ventidius points out, “unman’d” (Dryden, 2013, I.i. 174). The second outcome occurs with Western subjects, who are aware of Cleopatra’s charms but do not succumb to them. Both Ventidius and Octavia have reactions of repulsion towards Cleopatra despite their curiosity. When Alexas sends Cleopatra’s message of love to Antony in Ventidius’s presence, Ventidius remarks, “smooth Sycophant!” and “false crocodile” (Dryden, 2013, II.i. 154, 161). Though there is an appreciation for her beauty, there is an aversion to her charms. “ Even I who hate her,/ With a malignant joy behold such beauty;” states Ventidius (Dryden, 2013, IV.i. 241-242). Cleopatra’s body holds a lasting power that triggers acceptance or resistance. In his essay *The Other Question*, Homi Bhabha explores the relationship between the body and power. Bhabha states that “the body is always simultaneously (if conflictually) inscribed in both the economy of pleasure and desire and the economy of discourse, domination and power” (2004, p.96). The play highlights this inscription through metaphors of freedom and bondage. Cleopatra is portrayed as a mistress, with Antony as her slave.

In Act II, when Alexas delivers Cleopatra’s gifts to Antony, their brief exchange gives some insight into the nature of their relationship:

ALEXAS Your slave the Queen—
ANTONY My Mistress.
ALEXAS Then your mistress.

(Dryden, 2013, 196-198).

This exchange is particular because it begins with an initial establishing statement. Alexas suggests that Cleopatra is in servitude to Antony. Antony corrects him and states, “mistress”. The word could hold the meaning of a mistress in the sense of a lover. However, juxtaposing this

word with the preceding “slave” implies a master/slave dialectic. The inversion is doubly interesting when considering Antony's interruption. Alexas states, “The Queen”, which prompts Antony to interrupt, but he does not do so when Alexas states, “Your slave”. The statement could also imply that Antony relegates Cleopatra to the mistress status. The final implication would be that Antony feels Cleopatra has less dominion over Egypt and more dominion over himself, as indicated by the pronoun “My”. Despite the variance in the meaning of this exchange, it is clear that the relationship involves slavery and ownership.

Cleopatra is not solely Antony’s mistress but his slave as well. When she fears that Antony is leaving her, she states:

CLEOPATRA I am no Queen:
Is this to be a Queen, to be besieged
By yon insulting Roman, and to wait
Each hour the Victor’s Chain? These ills are small;
For Antony is lost and I can mourn
For nothing else but him. Now come Octavius,
I have no more to lose; prepare thy bands;
I’m fit to be a Captive: Antony
Has taught my mind the fortune of a Slave

(Dryden, 2013, II.i. 7-15)

By also being held captive by Antony, their relationship transfers into the realm of ambivalence. She is his mistress and slave, and Antony is both enslaved and enslaver. However, the inversion of roles with Cleopatra as the master of Antony should not be interpreted as a subversion of a traditional master/slave narrative. To interpret the nature of Cleopatra and Antony’s relationship in terms of binary oppositions of slave/master presupposes subversion.

More precisely, as Yeğenoğlu points out, the strategy of reversal “ remains locked within the same logic, should be seen as an inevitable extension of the adoption of a totalising dialectics of “self and other” (1998, p.60-61). The act of subversion suggests that the Romans are always the coloniser/ master/ conqueror. Bhabha provides the tools to understand this subversion in terms that help clarify the liminality of this position. “The desire for the Other is doubled by the desire in language, which splits the difference between Self and Other so that both positions are partial; neither is sufficient unto itself”(1994, p.72). Cleopatra and Antony’s positions are partial and subsist on each other. Without Antony, Cleopatra is “no Queen”, and her status as slave and mistress is a partial one that requires Antony for its fulfilment. Antony does not feel fulfilled until he joins Cleopatra in death. His final moments with Cleopatra allow them to have an exchange in which he points out his contentment in having died together. Antony also states that although they failed as leaders, they will lead “Whole troops of lovers’ ghosts” (Dryden, 2013, V.i. 396). From this exchange, one can note that Antony and Cleopatra are not at fixed points concerning each other, neither is the master nor is one person, particularly the slave. Antony and Cleopatra’s identities are not placed in binary opposition in the context of Dryden’s play. They continuously negotiate and negate their identities throughout the play, whether concerning each other or themselves. Understanding the articulation of one character necessitates gaining an understanding of the other.

Aubrey Williams confirms this statement in her essay regarding the imagery of ruins and nature within Dryden’s *All for Love*. Though his critique does not venture into the scope of a post-colonial analysis of the play, it contains an element of agreement with Bhabha’s statement above. Dryden succeeds in recreating this ambivalence with Cleopatra and her relationship with Antony. Williams establishes a metaphorical connection between Antony, an elm, and Cleopatra,

a vine. Williams bases this on an instance where Alexas informs Serapion about Cleopatra's state. "O, she dotes, She dotes, Serapion, on this vanquished Man,/And winds her self about his mighty ruins;" (Dryden, 2013, I. i. 76-78). This winding might suggest a vine that latches on and suffocates the object it clings to. However, Williams states that the use of the ivy imagery is two-fold, representing a latching and a crowning. "[N]o matter how much his innate nobility of character has been impaired[...]he is yet, as the text of the play affirms, a [...] "mighty ruins" (1984, p.16). Dryden succeeds at recreating this ambivalence of meaning. The vines have a way of uplifting and also bind. There is an inexplicable link between Antony and Cleopatra. Perhaps understanding their relationship as a dialectic hinders our means of truly comprehending the nature of their relationship, which is a constant renegotiation of the self and a constant negation. The liminality of Antony and Cleopatra's identity and their interaction allows what Bhabha terms a "cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (2004, p.5).

Cleopatra also engages in what Bhabha would term mimicry. In Cleopatra's exchange with Octavia, we can see her use the exact phrase but redirect it back to Octavia. The exchange begins with Cleopatra and Octavia facing each other on stage with their trains on either side (III.i.417).

OCTAVIA

I need not ask if you are Cleopatra,

Your haughty carriage—

CLEOPATRA Shows I am a Queen:

Nor need I ask you who you are.

OCTAVIA A Roman:

A name that makes, and can unmake a Queen.

CLEOPATRA

Your Lord, the Man who serves me, is a Roman.

(Dryden, 2013, III.i.416-420)

In this exchange, Cleopatra mirrors Octavia's speech. Octavia begins by asking, "I need not ask if you are Cleopatra". Cleopatra ends with, "Nor need I ask you who you are". To which Octavia begins her response: "A Roman". Again, Cleopatra mirrors this and ends with "a Roman".

However, in her response, it comes at the end of the sentence and serves another purpose.

Cleopatra's adoption of Octavia's language embodies Bhabha's concept of mimicry because it also features a vein of mockery. Cleopatra's mimicry not only "ruptures" the colonial discourse but also transforms it. As a result, the colonial subject's presence becomes a " 'partial' presence [...] both 'incomplete' and 'virtual'" (Bhabha, 2004, p.123). Cleopatra threatens Octavia "mimicry is at once resemblance and menace" (Bhabha, 2004, p.123). Cleopatra, in voicing Octavia's statements back at her and following it by listing the ways she suffers, also leads Octavia to experience "anxiety" (Bhabha 2004, p.143). This anxiety changes the Other from the "*idée fixe*" (Bhabha, 2004, p.143). The exchange creates a crisis, confounding Octavia to the point where she can only respond, "Be't so then; take thy wish" (Dryden, 2013, III.i. 465).

Bhabha also notes that the partial presence is restated constantly and outlines the link between mimicry and this presence. "through the repetition of partial presence, which is the basis of mimicry, articulates those disturbances of cultural, racial and historical difference that menace the narcissistic demand of colonial authority" (Bhabha, 2004, p.126). In turn, this also justifies Cleopatra's identity crisis plunged into this space of anxiety herself. She can neither be the "faithless prostitute", the Queen of Egypt, or Antony's wife.

Cleopatra fluctuates between this process, far from a longed-for certainty. She is both Queen and no queen. Cleopatra knows her status as Antony's mistress but seeks to be his wife. She is aware of the power she holds over others, or "Mankind", as Octavia aptly states when

trying to assess Cleopatra's charms, yet she remains marginalised. The sheer profundity of Dryden's Cleopatra necessitates viewing the characters in the realm of ambivalence. Dryden's ability to present Cleopatra's character provides insight into the workings of colonial presence. On a larger scale, *All for Love* offers an intriguing case study through post-colonial analysis. Whether through Said's *Orientalism* or Bhabha's *Location of Culture*, the play is part of a broader colonial discourse and certainly requires further study.

2.7 Analysis of the Character of Marc Antony

In the context of Dryden's *All for Love*, the pair's fates are intertwined, and their characters' power dynamics imply a symbiotic relationship. They simultaneously draw strength from each other and lead to the other's ruin. Dryden's characterisation of Antony is particular as he offers only one representation of Marc Antony. The representation of Antony in *All for Love* is of Antony before his death. Consequently, the audience only views Antony as weakened. This representation is due to Dryden's adhering to the unities. The play's action must be as near to the crisis as possible. Any semblance of Antony's previous grandeur is the product of nostalgia, often perpetuated by the Romans in the play: Ventidius, Octavia, Dollabella and, at times, Antony himself. Cleopatra also uses nostalgia to coax Antony to join her once again. Antony, however, cannot reconcile these two selves, and the play begins with him in crisis. The Roman Antony and the Egyptian Antony are not the same. The disconnect between the two has several consequences in the play that affect several characters:

1. Dollabella is banished after Antony suspects him of betraying him with Cleopatra.
2. Antony abandons Octavia and his children.
3. Ventidius kills himself,
4. Antony and Cleopatra kill themselves

Consequently, Egypt falls and is conquered by Octavius. Incidentally, this does not imply a direct correlation between Antony's vacillations and these tragic events. However, as tragic characters, Antony and Cleopatra have a hand in the events throughout the play.

Derek W. Hughes suggests that mutability is a central theme of Dryden's *All for Love*. Hughes uses the theme of mutability to rationalise the state of Egypt, such as the unnatural ebb and flow of the Nile. This mutability also accounts for Cleopatra's state of distress and Antony's vacillating from one decision to the other. Hughes believes that the characters are disconnected between "vision and reality". They seek transcendence but ultimately "refuse to recognise the inevitable facts of mutability" (Hughes 1970, p.556). However, J. Douglas Canfield disagrees, stating that the transcendence that Antony and Cleopatra seek is sought after by most other characters. Canfield also suggests that Dryden intended to portray the possibility of transcendence through love (Canfield, 1975, p.56).

Antony's vacillations to negate the truth of what is happening or to transcend the present moment are not the focus of this study. The occurrence itself, the repetitive harkening back to the past, is an intriguing action. One instance where Antony's nostalgia occurs is when Ventidius reminds Antony of his former glory, to which he replies, "Thou shalt behold me once again in iron,/ And at the head of our old troops" (Dryden, 2013, l.i.426-427). Antony references his past self to reassure Ventidius that he is restored. Antony also recounts various other battles as a mode of reassurance to Ventidius and himself. I posit that this repetition is a manifestation of the

uncanny (*Unheimlich*), as pointed out by Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* “Repeatability, in my terms, is always the repetition in the very act of enunciation, something other, a difference that is a little bit uncanny”(2004, p.187). Antony, Ventidius and Dollabella use nostalgia to remind Antony of his old self, but there remains a difference. The Antony that first entered Egypt as a colonial authority is not the same one that reminisces about his former glory days. Ventidius even alludes to this point when he first sees Antony in the Temple of Isis:

VENTIDIUS I tell thee, Eunuch, she has quite unman'd him:
Can any Roman see, and know him now,
Thus alter'd from the Lord of half Mankind,
Unbent, unsinew'd, made a Womans Toy,

(Dryden, 2013, I.i.174-177)

Antony is no longer Antony, nor would he be easily recognised by a Roman. For Antony, what it means to be Roman is reordered and changed fundamentally upon his entry into Egypt and his association with Cleopatra. Thus Antony finds himself in what Freud would term *Unheimlich*. The very act of repetition, the recounted history of each battle and conquest, although meant to be an act of drawing Antony closer to “Romaness” and distancing him from it. “the repetition of the ‘same’ can be its displacement, can turn the authority of culture into its own non-sense precisely in its moment of enunciation” (Bhabha, 2004, p.195). The uncanny creates a crisis for Antony, who laments, “I am now sunk from what I was” (Dryden, 2013, III.i.128). However, though Antony feels that he is a shell of his former self, the uncanny provides a means for him to establish a new self. As Bhabha suggests:

The act of ‘rememoration’ [...] the present of narrative enunciation into the haunting memorial of what has been excluded, excised, evicted, and for that very reason becomes the *unheimlich* space for the negotiation of identity and history.

(2004, p.284)

Antony’s repetition creates a displacement that distances him from his Roman identity and history. Although these rememorations are meant to be a mode to draw Antony back to his former self, what occurs is the exact opposite. The distance created from this rememoration process allows Antony to renegotiate himself “but all improved,” as he states before he dies (Dryden, 2013, V. 392). Antony’s renegotiation is part of his “*hybridisation*⁹” (Bhabha, 2004, p. 158). This renegotiation is met with impediments, however. Ventidius and Octavia’s acts of reminding Antony of his past self should not be classified as rememoration.

Throughout the play, the colonial authority, by way of Ventidius and Octavia, tries to reinstate itself. They do so by trying to project a fixed idea of Antony. Octavia constantly reiterates “your Octavia, your much injured wife” to establish ownership over Antony (Dryden, 2013, III.i 258). Antony responds to this by frustratingly stating to Dollabella, “And now I must become her branded slave” (Dryden, 2013, III.i 286). Antony again references that if he succumbs to Octavia’s pleading, he will enter into servitude. However, the master/slave relationship between Octavia and Antony would not be his own with Cleopatra. Octavia requires Antony because his presence validates her position in civil society.

Antony derives nothing from his relationship with Octavia. There is no ambivalence, nor is power shared or exchanged. Antony’s identity in his attachment to Octavia would be fixed.

⁹ I have italicised for emphasis

Antony presents a problem to the Roman presence because he constantly renegotiates his identity. When he yields to Octavia's begging, he states, "I am vanquished: take me" (Dryden 2013, III.i 363). The Roman presence aims to establish a difference, thus distancing Antony from the self that he is in the process of renegotiating. However, these remembrance instances in the play only help Antony renegotiate his identity further. They are part of the process. Dryden allows Antony to transcend the limitations brought on by the Roman anxiety through the transcendence that he and Cleopatra share in their suicide.

Additionally to Antony's ongoing hybridisation in the play, sexuality plays a part in interpreting his character. Ventidius refers to this when he suggests Cleopatra has "unmann'd" Antony (Dryden, 2013, I.i.174). There is a preoccupation with Antony's sexuality when referencing his relationship with Cleopatra. When Ventidius points out the threat of Octavius, Antony replies, "Now he mounts above me" (Dryden, 2013, II.i.140). These references to Antony's unmanning only happen when he speaks to a Roman, either Dollabella, Ventidius or Octavia. As Rome stands for the colonial authority in the play, there is the implication that Antony's association with Cleopatra has become more feminine. However, feminine would be too fixed a concept for Antony's hybridisation. Instead, his hybridisation places him in a continual space of gender ambiguity. Furthermore, the preoccupation with sexuality implies a fetishism on the part of the Romans. Bhabha links the colonial discourse to Freud's psychoanalytic concept of fetishism (2004, p.107).

Yeğenoğlu states that it might be problematic to transpose sexual differences to cultural differences. For the theory of fetishism to correlate in colonial discourse, there must be a perceived lack that one craves of the other. Yeğenoğlu states that "it is not clear how the perceived lack (all men do not have the same skin/race/culture) of the cultural other constitutes a

threat for the coloniser”(1998, p.29). Yeğenoğlu has a point as to the limits of Bhabha’s argument. However, Dryden’s play provides the stage in which culture and sexuality come into contact. What Roman lack, which Cleopatra presents as a potential and menace, is what Antony seeks. Antony attains this through the renegotiation of his selfhood. The colonial authority seeks to fix Antony and Cleopatra’s identity through the Roman. Their need to control Antony and condemn his ongoing transformation to manifest their fetishism. Antony, “unmann’d”, can dwell in the realm of ambiguity.

In contrast, Bhabha states that there is no dialectic relationship placing colonised and coloniser at opposing views. Romans lack something that both Cleopatra and Antony possess. Canfield suggests that it is transcendence (1975, p.57). However, there is a far more profound motive. Perhaps transcendence is one mode to describe what the characters reach through suicide. Through their fatal ends, they can attain ambiguity. Indeed, this is not a fixed point nor a material object to attain, but Antony and Cleopatra can reach a point where that is “too strong/ For *Roman* laws to break” (Dryden, 2013, V,i,416-417). Thus, the love between Antony and Cleopatra liberates through its ambiguity. The Romans, who crave fixity and stability, are meant to dwell in a world where they consistently desire order. Their colonial presence attempts in vain to grasp a fixed point. Whether through gazing intently at Cleopatra’s face to gauge her charms or reprimanding Antony for not being Roman any longer.

Though the lovers meet fatal ends, implying that craving ambiguity in a world which demands fixity is a vain pursuit. Dryden still succeeds in stirring the audience's passion for feeling sympathy for the pair. Allowing this exchange to occur via the Egyptian and the Roman Dryden shows that there is something commendable in the lovers' pursuit, vain as it may be. Dryden might not be showing his full support, the lovers die, and the Egyptian empire collapses

with the entry of Octavius. However, the ending is a departure from his previous works and bespeaks an ambivalence in an opinion by succeeding in making the audience feel pity for Cleopatra and Antony. Dryden veils his opinion, and as his prologue suggests, “He who would search for Pearls must dive below”(Dryden, 2013, p.20. 26). Thus, readers of Dryden, we must conjecture his intent in presenting the lovers as he does. Fortunately, the play’s ending provides insight with Serapion blessing the pair, stating, “No lovers lived so great or died so well” (Dryden, 2013, V.i.518)

CONCLUSION

The colonial discourse's significance in supplementing the study of Dryden's plays is immeasurable. The neglect of post-colonial critique in Dryden's works implies the gap and necessity of applying post-colonialist readings to Dryden's heroic plays. Indeed, the politics of Dryden's time significantly influenced the subjects of his work. Nevertheless, many arguments must be made for the necessity of revisiting Dryden's plays through post-colonial critique.

Firstly, Dryden's works are concerned with empires' rise and fall. As mentioned above, these plays provided commentary on England's national concerns. Dryden's choice to depict foreign imperial crises and to reflect on national politics allowed him to reflect on the policies of the monarch. Complications that the Stuart monarchy underwent were explored from usurpation, to luxury and excess. The heroic play allowed Dryden to comment on the king's shortcomings, to appeal to the general public. However, the degree to which Dryden's plays engaged with foreign practices and histories suggests a profound interest in cultural differences in Restoration theatre. Dryden's *Aureng-Zebe*, written during his reign, is a testament to this. The English East India Company's establishment at the beginning of the century in 1600 and the subsequent factories created around India do not indicate implicit nascent imperialism. However, how knowledge is shared about the orient is pertinent. Dryden's preface to the play comments on the act of self-immolation, suggesting "Indian wives are loving fools" and compares them to English ladies who "know better things" (1995, p.85). The statement precedes this commentary on the practice. "I dare not vindicate[...] nor can I wholly condemn", suggesting Dryden's ambivalence to the act despite his following point (1995, p.85). Orr comments that this statement implies "a sense of unease in the face of radical difference" (2001, p.115).

Nevertheless, Dryden's opinions are elusive and difficult to ascertain. As mentioned in the first chapter, Dryden's practice of concealment was expected if not encouraged during the Restoration era. Additionally, since the play was written during Aurangzeb's reign, there is the implication that Dryden was being prudent. As Samuel Johnson notes, Dryden's depiction of Aurengzeb is an avoidance of ruining trade relations (1824, p.316)

Secondly, Dryden's plays feature characters of aristocratic status displaying heroism. Almanzor and Aureng-zebe hold high positions in their societies, and their virtues place them in the space of admiration by their peers. Such depictions disrupt modern concepts of racial and ethnic difference, which is common in Dryden's oeuvre. Dryden is not subversive for depicting his characters in this manner. Almanzor discovering his Christian heritage suggests that Dryden was far from championing difference. Nonetheless, Dryden's plays offer a space for the difference to manifest on display. As Dryden notes in the dedication of the *Indian Emperour*, "begs only that when he shall relate his sufferings, you will consider him as an *Indian Prince*" (Dryden, p.25.16). Thus, Dryden, through his plays, offers up his characters to the audience while retaining their status.

Thirdly, displaying customs, commodities and people gave the audience insight into locales outside their own. This insight provided a stage in which the Restoration's public could depict imperial ambitions and fears. By showing how these empires derived their strength or fell to colonial powers, the play displays the opportunity of the English empire and the external possibilities in the Orient.

Finally, heroic dramas as a genre should be studied in their framework by exploring specific recurring themes in Dryden's plays, such as the ageing monarch, the oriental woman as a temptress and the difficulty reconciling desire and duty. This can provide an insight into the

colonial discourse through the differences in which Dryden depicts Indians, Egyptians, and Moors and their distinctive characteristics.

All for Love stands alone when put against Dryden's oeuvre. The play in five acts, written in blank verse, departs from Dryden's usual style. Johnson notes that this is the "only play which he wrote for himself: the rest were given to the people" (1824, p.317). Examining how Dryden's play differs from the heroic dramas above necessitates looking at how the play differs and is similar to Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. Dryden is aware that his work is a reproduction of Shakespeare's. This does not hinder him from an attempt to explore the tale of Antony and Cleopatra's love. The play could be a commentary on Charles II's intrigue with Louise de K roualle, a woman who also had entanglements with the Lord High Treasurer Thomas Osbourne, the Earl of Danby. The use of Cleopatra as a muse was common in literature and art; however, how she was depicted changed over time.

Dryden's depiction of Cleopatra intended to capture a more innocent side to Cleopatra, one that evoked pity "a silly harmless household Dove,/ Fond without art; and kind without deceit." (Dryden, 2013, IV.i. 91-92). This humanises Cleopatra and relegates her to the realm of the domestic. Her constancy towards Antony reveals the true nature of her love and her attachment toward Antony. The loss of her kingdom is not what concerns her, but the possibility of falling out of Antony's affections presents an imminent threat. This, however does not impede characters such as Ventidius and Cleopatra from viewing her as a temptress who has corrupted Antony with her charms. Said's *Orientalism* helps codify all that is said about Cleopatra into the term the "vessel of the Orient." (2003, p.188). Her femininity and her seductiveness encapsulate all that the orient is and the mysteries it holds.

Said's work also aids in understanding the binarisms prevalent in Dryden's play regarding what is Roman and Egyptian. Roman represents the masculine domain of the rational conqueror, exacting, logical and ready to act when necessary. The Egyptian represents the feminine domain, ever-alluring and passionate, but its passions push its peers into the realm of inaction. This inaction is depicted in Antony's inability to take arms against Octavius throughout the play, and the Egyptians surrender to Octavius by joining the enemy forces (Dryden, 2013, V.i.93). Said's *Orientalism* helps lay the foundation in which the colonial episteme that underlies *All for Love* functions. Though this argument is limited and does not offer an explanation for moments in which the Romans seem to be inactive in their anxieties or for why Antony refers to himself as a slave to Cleopatra. Carceral and bondage imagery abound in Dryden's play, and the key to understanding it lies in seeing how the body fits into the economy of power. Thus Said's works can help explore Dryden's play up to a point.

To navigate the full scope of meaning that Dryden's play has to offer, Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* helps to supplement the work. Additionally, the nuances in Dryden's *All for Love* surpass the master/slave dialectic into the realm of ambivalence. Firstly, through Bhabha's "partial presence" the existence of the colonial authority is articulated in terms beyond the dialectic. On a large scale, neither the colonized nor the colonizer is sufficient without the other. In the case of Antony and Cleopatra, they are both partial, and their relationship should be seen in terms of symbiosis. In their suicide, they escape the need for fixity that manifests as anxiety in Ventidius and Octavia. Dryden's Cleopatra holds a particular magnetism, not solely for her ability to tempt all who look at her using her charms but in her ability to disrupt the colonial discourse through dialogue. Her agency allows her to put Octavia in a state of anxiety through mimicry, to claim her title as Antony's wife and transcend a world that demands her to be fixed.

Her enduring symbol, especially in Dryden's *All for Love*, depicts how identity can be renegotiated. An analysis of Cleopatra would not be complete without considering Antony. The choice to consider Antony as the Egyptian Antony and not the Roman Antony stems from the rhetoric used to describe Antony throughout the play. Ventidius and Octavia attempt to push Antony towards stability, which puts his identity in crisis. His vacillations, as pointed out by Canfield, are a manifestation of Bhabha's concept of rememoration and displacement. Thus the combination of Said and Bhabha's works enhances comprehension of the intricate interactions between the colonizer and the colonized that control the text.

Ultimately, Dryden's *All for Love* is a worthy subject of analysis by post-colonial scholars. By dealing with colonialism and the rise and fall of empires, Dryden's plays are in dialogue with the colonial discourse. The worlds he presents in his plays, the characters who inhabit them are merit investigation and further research even as he "brings a Tale which often has been told" (Dryden, 2013, p.20.8).

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