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I hereby recommend that this dissertation prepared under my direction by Donna Elliott Swaim entitled MILTON'S IMMEDIATE INFLUENCE ON DRYDEN be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read this dissertation and agree that it may be presented for final defense.

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent on the candidate's adequate performance and defense thereof at the final oral examination.
STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

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SIGNED: Donna E. Swain
To Bob and Katy and Phil
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ABSTRACT

In the blank verse of *Paradise Lost*, Milton chides his fellow poets for elevating false heroes and for neglecting to write of the true heroism of "patient martyrdom." Critics generally agree that Milton's blank verse eventually influenced Dryden. But the immediacy of Milton's substantive influence after the winter of 1668-1669 has been overlooked. Notable changes in both style and substance in Dryden's critical theory and serious drama occur after his probable reading of *Paradise Lost* that winter. His criticism before 1669 shows little concern for moral instruction in drama; it concentrates instead on what will "delight." Then immediately after that winter of 1669, his critical attention is on exposing vice and promoting virtue—even to teaching precepts of piety in serious drama. Before 1669, his characterization of heroism is flawed by inconsistency and inadequate attention to central thematic statement. Then in early spring of 1669, Dryden wrote, "in haste," *Tyrannic Love*, which dramatizes the contrast between false heroism in the tyrant Maximin and true heroism in St. Catharine—a patient martyr.

Dryden's early criticism had not distinguished the "heroic play" as a separate kind. After reading Milton's impressive epic, Dryden must have re-examined the validity
of his early plays in search of future direction. His "Essay on Heroic Plays" is the result of that re-examination and an explanation of what he has done in Conquest of Granada. In that epic "in little" he dramatizes the education of a false hero into a true one. Almanzor learns that he is not "king" of himself, nor is he outside of other hierarchical restraints. He must accept his role in familial, political, and divine order if he is to realize his identity and his potential as heroic man.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In his survey of Restoration dramatic criticism, Cecil V. Deane includes the critical opinions of John Milton only after an apologetic qualification that Milton's "incapacity to influence the fashionable drama one way or the other" might "disqualify" references to his opinion.¹ Deane's apology may be unnecessary in view of the possible influence of both the style and the substance of Milton's Paradise Lost upon John Dryden, the most "fashionable" of the Restoration dramatists. Evidence of this influence can be found both in Dryden's general shift in artistic purpose after 1669 and, particularly, in his serious plays and in his criticism, where revealing changes occur after the winter of 1668-1669. Attributing these sudden changes to Dryden's reading of Paradise Lost risks the charge of post hoc reasoning, but it seems worth the risk if as a result we can read Tyrannic Love and The Conquest of Granada more accurately and give Milton his due.

Prior to his reading of Paradise Lost, Dryden had assisted Howard with The Indian Queen, produced its "sequel"

The Indian Emperor, and included "heroic" materials in both The Rival Ladies and Secret Love. These first essays into the yet-to-be-defined heroic drama were just that--attempts at, experiments with something relatively new to Dryden and to the Restoration stage. Immediately after his reading of Paradise Lost in December of 1668 or the early months of 1669, Dryden wrote Tyrannic Love in haste. This thoroughly "serious" play shows marked contrast to the plays which preceded it. Its verse is more smoothly flowing, with less antithesis and paradox; its thematic statement is consistently developed and clearly Christian; and its "hero" is a man whose excessive ego destroys his heroic potential in much the same way as had Satan's. Several months after Tyrannic Love, Dryden produced his two-part "heroic play," The Conquest of Granada, in which he focuses upon the "epic" hero, Almanzor, whose moral development results in his subordination of self to love, monarchy, and Christianity.

Prior to his reading of Paradise Lost, Dryden's dramatic criticism was "feeling [its] way toward the heroic drama" but had not yet distinguished the heroic play as a particular "kind." During the months which followed Tyrannic Love, Dryden reassessed his critical position and arrived at the first clear distinction of "heroic plays" in his preface to The Conquest of Granada.

"Of Heroic Plays: An Essay." Moreover, prior to 1669, Dryden's criticism reflected no unusual attention to the moral purpose of art beyond the typical Renaissance acceptance of Horace's "delight and instruction," an acceptance which Dryden had significantly qualified in his Defense of An Essay published in the late summer of 1668:

I am satisfied if it cause delight; for delight is the chief, if not the only end of poesy; instruction can be admitted but in the second place, for poesy only instructs as it delights. 3

After 1669, however, Dryden's Preface to Tyrannic Love specifically defines the "business of the poet" as including "instructions of morality" to the extent of portraying "precepts and examples of piety," and his Preface to An Evening's Love criticizes the morality of his own play.

In this development of both practice and theory, Dryden was subject to multiple influences which have been adequately traced by previous critics, but the influence of both the style and particularly the substance of Milton's great epic was probably much more significant than has been recognized. Because of the speculative nature of this thesis, it will be important to show that Milton's epic could have been read by Dryden as a "rebuke" to himself and to all "heroic" poets, and that Dryden could have been

susceptible to Milton's correction. Whether Dryden's response was as strongly religious as Stanley Fish's "guilty reader"⁴ or whether his reaction was more motivated by his concern for "fame and reputation," or a complex combination of the two, it is apparent in both his practice and theory that Dryden responded to some stimulus which has been overlooked and which may well have been Milton's Paradise Lost.

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⁴ Stanley Fish, Surprised by Sin: the Reader in Paradise Lost (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967). Fish's general thesis is that Milton deliberately used "entangling devices" to catch the reader in a "guilty" admiration of Satan.
CHAPTER 2

MILTON'S REBUKE AND DRYDEN'S SUSCEPTIBILITY

John Milton's choice of subject for his great epic reflects his thoroughly Christian world view. The disparity in Restoration England between professions of Christian belief and contrary behavior must have been painfully apparent to Milton, and the disparity between critical pronouncements espousing Horace's dictum of the purpose of literature by those writers whose works seemed far more directed at pleasing than instructing—especially in Christian precepts—must have been cause for concern for the aging Puritan, who took very seriously the role of the poet as moral guide. Whether this view of the behavior and the literature of his contemporaries added to his motivation to "justify the ways of God to men," it is apparent from his prefatory remarks about the verse form he had used that he was familiar with the contemporary discussion of heroic verse. Cowley's Davideis, Davenant's Gondibert, Dryden's Annus Mirabilis and myriad translations had been written with rhyme, and both Davenant and Dryden had extolled their choice of verse in prefatory remarks. Since the Dryden/Howard controversy about rhyme in drama was a part of the larger contemporary discussion, it is probable that Milton
was conversant with it as well. This probability is increased by Sir Robert Howard's being Milton's "particular acquaintance,"¹ and by Marvell's reference to the controversy in his commendatory poem preceding the 1674 edition of Paradise Lost. Moreover Milton remarks that "Rime" has been appropriately rejected "both in larger and shorter Works" and in "our best English Tragedies." He adds that "the jingling sound of like endings" is a "fault" avoided by the "learned Ancients both in Poetry and all good Oratory." Jackson I. Cope, "with others," agrees that Milton's lines are a "reply to Dryden" and notes Milton's and Dryden's similar use of the word constraint to describe the "limiting force of rhyme."² Because Milton's comments on the rhyme controversy were added in 1668 to the "unsold copies of Paradise Lost,"³ and because Dryden was the primary defender of rhyme, it is likely that it was Milton's added note which called Dryden's attention to the poem in late 1668 or early 1669. If so, it must have been his intention to answer Milton's remarks on rhyme as he had answered Howard's and to defend his Annus Mirabilis against the implied


charge, at the worst, of "wretched matter and lame metre"
or, at the least, of expressing things "worse" than he
would have without the "constraint" of rhyme. He found,instead, a poem which won his respect, which commanded
attention to its substance, and which rebuked other writers
in the heroic mode, who generally misjudged genuine heroism
and chose subjects which glorified individual ego and human
passions in place of Christian patience and obedience. And
it appears, from the striking changes which occur in his
work after the early months of 1669, that John Dryden took
the rebuke personally.

In the opening lines of Book VIII (first edition), Milton speaks directly to the reader, and particularly to fellow poets, of his choice of subject and the inspired nature of his "unpremeditated Verse." He has chosen not to
write of "Warrs, hitherto the onely Argument / Heroic
dee'm'd" (vss. 28-29). He has chosen a "higher Argument . . . sufficient of itself to raise" (43-44) the name
heroic. Others have "with long and tedious havoc" written
of "Knights in Battels" (30-31), "Races and Games,"


5. In January of 1667, in his preface to Annus
Mirabilis, Dryden had written: "All other greatness in
subjects is only counterfeit; it will not endure the test of danger; the greatness of arms is only real" (Watson, I, 97).
"tilting Furniture," "tinsel Trappings," "gorious Knights at Joust and Torneament" (33-37)—"Not that which justly gives Heroic name / To Person or to Poem" (39-40). What poets ought to have done they have left undone. They have left "the better fortitude of patience and Heroic Martyrdom Unsung" (32). Milton's correction here is for the sin of omission, of failure to elevate the substance of "faith" and "martyrdom" in poetry, and of commission, of concerning oneself with triviality ("tinsel") and material externals ("Furniture," "Trappings") which have only "semblance of worth." Their sins of commission Milton rebukes further in Book X. They have chosen to glorify false heroes whose only strength is physical and whose only goal is conquest:

... these Giants, men of high renown;
For in those days Might onely shall be admir'd,
And Valour and Heroic Vertu call'd;
To over come in Battel, and subdue
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
Of human Glorie, and for Glorie done
Of triumph, to be styl'd great Conquerours,
Patrons of Mankind, Gods, and Sons of Gods,
Destroyers rightlier call'd and Plagues of men.
Thus fame shall be achiev'd, renown on Earth,
And what most merits fame in silence hid (vss. 684-695).

And poets have shown these heroes far too subject to the "bent of Nature" (593) which would "yeild up all" (619) to "fair Women" (578), perhaps especially the heroes of Restoration drama who repeatedly succumb to "female charm" (VIII, 999).
In addition to open rebuke, Milton's characterization of Satan can be read as criticism of the Restoration heroic mode. From his first appearance, Satan seems heroic in stature, speaks with the determination and inspiration of a leader, will bow to no strength acknowledged greater than his own. He is characterized as the reader would expect the hero of epic or serious drama to be characterized, as Howard and Dryden, particularly, had characterized their hero Montezuma. But Milton repeatedly reminds the reader that it is the false hero, Satan, whom he is admiring. His narrator's admonitions call attention to the discrepancy between Satan's majestic appearance and the reality of his subordination to God. Satan thinks himself heroic but is deluded, just as his words with semblance of reason may delude the reader. Because Milton has in simile repeatedly compared Satan with other epic "heroes," the pejorative narrative comments about Satan's "semblance not substance of worth" are by implication true of those heroes of epic and drama who boast of their physical prowess and independence without knowledge of their true relationship to the Almighty. Milton repeatedly reminds the reader that "Human Glorie" (X, 690) won by Satan or by Solyman can never compare with divine glory.

6. Jackson Cope posed the "hypothesis" that Satan possessed "as an oblique function the power to satirize the protagonists of that same 'heroic drama' which glorified stage rhyme and John Dryden" (p. 55).
Whether deliberately reminiscent of Davenant's
grandiose "Imperial Throne" of Solyman, Milton's opening
description in Book II shows how he used his verse to
emphasize the disparity between Satan's appearance and the
reality of his position. The placement of accented
syllables in the first five lines emphasizes Satan's
majesty and heroic stature as "the great commander." Only
three of the feet in those five lines diverge from the
regular iambic pattern; the first foot of the first, fourth,
and fifth lines is trochaic to emphasize the words high,
Showrs, and Satan:

High on a Throne of Royal State, which far
Outshon the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Showrs on her Kings Barbaric Pearl & Gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd.

The lines dramatically visualize Satan's self-estimate and
rhetorically seem to support Satan's own assessment of his
"merit," which he feels justifies his war against God.
Satan had envied and defied God's enthroned sovereignty over
all beings; now in Satan's mind ("its own place" [I, 254])
he has enthroned himself, he has "exalted" himself, as the
self-proclaimed hero of epic and drama declares himself
heroic in self-laudatory speech and self-directed action.
Those five descriptive lines read smoothly, lulling the
reader into agreement until the spondee of the second foot
of the sixth line jolts the reader and forces recognition that Satan's false view of his "merit" has "exalted" him to that bad eminence.

The same entangling device of apparent elevation followed by "foul descent" (VIII, 163) begins near the conclusion of Book II. Satan has achieved the impossible task of penetrating the impenetrable "thrice three-fold" (II, 645) gates guarded by the "formidable" (649) shapes of Sin and Death. This Herculean task completed, further challenge lies before him, and he appears heroically equal to the challenge:

Satan . . .
With fresh alacritie and force renew'd
Springs upward like a Pyramid of fire
Into the Wilde expanse, and through the shock
Of fighting Elements, on all sides round
Envison'd wins his way; harder beset
And more endanger'd, then when Argo pass'd
Through Bosporus between the justling Rocks:
Or when Ulysses on the Larboard shunn'd
Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steard.
So he with difficulty and labour hard,
Mov'd on, with difficulty and labour hee
(vss. 1010-1022).

The rapid movement of the heroic comparison slows in the last two lines, labored in pace, expressing the difficulty of Satan's task, and also slowing the reader's pace to focus his attention on the statement immediately following:

"But hee once past, soon after when man fell,
Strange alteration!

This syntactically difficult statement, though forecasting specifically the alteration of the "route" out of Hell by
Sin and Death "when man fell," may also suggest to the reader the coming "alteration" of man, of the universe, and of "heroic" Satan, whose ego-driven pursuit of revenge will necessitate "foul descent" into the serpent's form. Thus, this focus on the total "alteration" to come condemns both Satan and the reader who has succumbed to the heroic picture which precedes it. In his characterization of Satan, Milton repeatedly stimulates reader response to familiar characteristics mistakenly considered heroic, then rebukes the reader for responding. To any reader, there is potential rebuke in *Paradise Lost*; to a poet with a sensitive ear, a professional concern for heroic characterization, a personal religious background, and a reputation to defend, the potential is even greater. Milton's message is directed toward all misguided men but most specifically toward those men who as poets bear special responsibility to morally instruct their fellow men. Whether Milton's contemporaries responded to this rebuke cannot, generally, be known, since such a response would usually be private. But it is possible to see evidence of Dryden's response both in his serious drama and in his criticism immediately after his reading of the epic in 1668-9.

Dryden's respect for Milton's epic is evident in his preface to the *State of Innocence* (1676), in his "Epigram to Milton" (1688), and in his scattered remarks in later criticism, but his immediate response in 1669 has been
overlooked by Ramon Dexter Havens, Balachandra Rajan, and William Riley Parker, who in tracing the stylistic influence of Milton on English poetry have included Dryden's works in their investigations but have concentrated on the abandonment of rhyme in *All For Love* (1677) and on the influence of *Samson Agonistes* on *Aureng-Zebe* (1675). Perhaps because they knew that Milton's early biographers, in their enthusiasm for *Paradise Lost*, erred in assuming a similar enthusiastic response from seventeenth-century readers, twentieth-century critics have been too quick to agree with one another that Milton's contemporary reputation has been "greatly overestimated" (Rajan, p. 12). Both Rajan and Parker argue that the seventeenth-century public was unlikely to have responded to the substance of *Paradise Lost*, but their similar conclusion is supported by quite different reasoning. Rajan presents a hypothetical seventeenth-century reader who was accustomed to a "mass of epic and dramatic poetry" which dealt with similar themes and who was in perfect agreement with Milton's conclusions in weighing human love against heavenly love. Moreover, according to Rajan, Milton's care to see that his possibly heretical dogma did not "obtrude" allowed both the seventeenth-century

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imitator to concentrate on his manner rather than on his matter, on his style rather than on his substance (p. 25). Parker presents us with a contemporary audience quite different from Rajan's. He would have us remember that *Paradise Lost* was "offered to a public then chuckling at the escapades of rakes and applauding the plays of Davenant and Dryden . . . . The stories about the early praise given *Paradise Lost* by Denham, Dryden, and the Earl of Dorset may be true, or they may be legend; but such a poem, appearing at such a time, probably created no sensation" (p. 48).

Each of these points of view is guilty of oversimplification of the complex dichotomy which existed in Restoration England. Certainly the emotional and intellectual make-up of the educated class in England in 1667 included both faith and frivolity. The contrasts between the pious pilgrims now out of power and the cavorting cavaliers newly released from repression or returned from exile are contrasts which existed not only between men but within men as well. What can be seen as hypocritical vacillation between religious idealism and political realism can also be seen as understandable conflict between the spirit and the flesh in a single man, a conflict as old as the race but perhaps unusually heightened by its being embodied in political reality. If it be possible to see how this composite of sacred and secular elements within one man was affected by the substance of *Paradise Lost*, we might
move closer to the ultimately inaccessible response of the seventeenth-century reader to the epic. If that man were John Dryden, we might gain the additional benefits of a more accurate reading of *Tyrannic Love* and *Conquest of Granada* and a greater understanding of why Dryden's treatment of heroism changed after 1669—as John T. Winterbottom has traced that movement "away from the hero as social iconoclast and toward the hero as embodiment of a social ideal."  

Dryden's name occurs with increasing frequency in studies of the influence of Milton's style. As early as 1691, Langbaine pointed out the similarity between lines in *Samson Agonistes* and *Aureng-Zebe*. In our own century, William Frost and Edward Le Conte continue that comparison; and G. Blakemore Evans finds the "temptation dream" in *Tyrannic Love" strongly reminiscent of Milton's use of the same device in the night scene in Eden."  

George McFadden's thesis is that Dryden "tagged" *Paradise Lost* as "an

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exercise . . . in developing a technique of internal reinforcement of sound in the manner of Vergil and Milton."

He sees evidence of Dryden's interest in Milton's style as early as "the winter of 1670-1671 when *The Conquest of Granada* was finished," and he concludes with a sweeping, and typically limiting, statement: "Indeed, it was interest in verse style as well as fascination with the heroic poem and concern for the controversy over rhyme that accounted for Dryden's attention to *Paradise Lost.*"  

Certainly, this "interest," "fascination," and "concern" may account for Dryden's having read the epic at this particular time, but they do not account for its substantial effect upon his work which follows.

Similarly limiting in its treatment, most of the recent critical interest in Milton's influence on Dryden focuses upon the "rhyme controversy." Morris Freedman contends, and Eric Rothstein agrees with him, that Milton's criticism of rhyme in his note on the verse was in response to the Dryden-Howard controversy; moreover, Freedman suggests that Dryden's reaction to the epic occurred solely because its verse form constituted a threat to Dryden's

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support of rhyme. Perhaps the first to focus on Dryden's response to the style of the poem rather than the substance was David Masson:

> What was the most obvious peculiarity of *Paradise Lost* on the first glance at its pages? That, though an epic, it was written wholly in blank verse, thus not only asserting by implication the very opposite of Dryden's doctrine for the drama, but vindicating the rights and powers of blank verse, nay, its sole legitimate sovereignty, in domains from which Dryden and all the rest of the world had agreed in assuming it to be necessarily excluded. *Paradise Lost*, therefore, when Dryden first read it, or any part of it, must have come upon him like a revelation or a thunderbolt.  

Masson's use of the term "revelation" to describe a craftsman's response to an artistic technique may be more accurate than immediately evident if we consider that Dryden's response to *Paradise Lost* might have included recognition of what Milton was saying, not just the verse form in which he chose to say it.

Dryden's biographer, Charles Ward, is a notable exception to this critical pattern. His discussion of Dryden's interest in the epic gives credit to Milton's *Paradise Lost* as an important stimulus, and he sees Miltonic influence on *Tyrannic Love* in "passages dealing with the exercise of free will and necessity" (p. 69). He fails,

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however, to see the immediate chronological and theoretical relationship between the two works. Moreover, his assumption that with *Tyrannic Love* Dryden "return[ed] to the heroic play" neglects the very different nature of this play about "heroic martyrdom." He sees *Tyrannic Love* as "the end of [Dryden's] first period, the dividing line between experiment in a variety of ways, and the hope and expectation of moving onto higher ground." Instead, a close reading of *Tyrannic Love* shows that it is the beginning of Dryden's work on the "higher ground" of Christian instruction. In his brief comments on Dryden's eighteen-month period from June, 1669, to December, 1670, Ward calls Dryden's "comparative inactivity" a "problem not easily solved" (p. 70). However, it is less of a problem if the hypothesis of Milton's immediate influence is accepted. This period must have been, instead, a period of great activity during which Dryden re-examined his earlier work, arrived at his definition of heroic drama, saw its potential as a genre in which he might excel the literary past, read for his planned epic, wrote the two-part *Conquest of Granada*, and published *Tyrannic Love*, *Evening's Love*, and *The Tempest* with their prefatory criticism. Ward's discussion of the years 1667-1671 does not disagree, in general, with the thesis I am proposing, but by failing to combine close analysis of individual works with personal chronology he neglects the immediacy of the impact of *Paradise Lost*
and the obvious possibility that its stimulus was religious as well as literary.

Masson's most likely anecdote dates Dryden's probable reading of Paradise Lost during December of 1668 or the early months of 1669 (pp. 628-629). The sequence of events--personal, literary, and political--preceding that reading left Dryden vulnerable to Milton's rebuke. His family heritage was Puritan in faith and in politics. He had poetically portrayed the greatness of Cromwell and may have served in his government under the auspices of his cousin Sir Gilbert Pickering. Then he had joined his countrymen in welcoming Charles' return. He had won the acclaim of the court with his plays and with Annus Mirabilis, and he had received the newly-vacated laureateship in April of 1668. His "cup of honors overflowed" with the honorary MA degree that summer.¹⁶ His financial condition had improved and appeared to be promising. But his petulant tone in the Defense of An Essay suggests his continued vulnerability to criticism, as had his prologues to Secret Love. His fame was newly won and still tenuously held, and his social position on the edge of nobility but still outside it no doubt contributed to his insecurity and defensiveness. In particular, his literary dispute with Sir Robert Howard had become heated and personal. What had begun in

1664 as an exchange of critical opinion about the use of rhyme in drama, had deteriorated, by 1668, to the level of vicious personal attack.

Dryden had called attention to dramatic rhyme in his preface to The Rival Ladies and had commended its aid to "memory" and its "particular . . . grace" in "repartees," in which "the sudden smartness of the answer and the sweetness of the rhyme set off the beauty of each other" (Watson, I, 8). Howard, in his preface to Four New Plays (1665), had objected to its use in drama, particularly where the dramatist would wish to present the "Effect of Accidents not thought of" such as in single lines of dialogue. Though H. J. Oliver assumes that "so far . . . nothing had been said that either could have resented," if Dryden had corrected Howard's couplets in The Indian Queen (which is the most probable explanation for Dryden's claim of having "writ" some part of it), this exchange may reflect a difference of opinion which dates back to their cooperation on The Indian Queen before January of 1663. At any rate, Dryden's next comments on rhyme appear in his letter to Howard (dated November 10, 1666) prefaced to Annus Mirabilis (published in January, 1667) in which he espouses rhyme for heroic verse. The tone of the letter is congenial, and Dryden graciously acknowledges his gratitude to Howard for

past assistance. Then with the publication of his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (August, 1667), Dryden replies more directly to Howard's objections to the use of rhyme in drama with evidence that the public liked rhyme, and he includes in the letter of dedication the observation that "none are very violent against it but those who either have not attempted it, or who have succeeded ill in their attempt" (Watson, I, 13). Just as Dryden's probable correction of Howard's couplets in the *Queen* pointed Howard's earlier criticism at Dryden, the same probability points this comment at Howard—at least Oliver assumes that Howard saw it as such (p. 97). Dryden may have attempted to soften this remark with his inclusion of Howard's *Queen* in his *Essay* list of the four most popular "serious" plays, and he might have expected that Howard would recall the graciousness with which Dryden had placed his "fame and reputation" in Howard's hands in the dedication to *Annus Mirabilis*. It is apparent from the tone of that letter that Dryden saw his pride as well as his "fame and reputation" riding on *Annus Mirabilis*. It is probable that he saw his laureate-ship, awarded in April of 1668, as the reward for his poem, for the tragi-comedy *Secret Love*, and for his *Essay*, since


19. Watson suggests that Dryden postponed publication of *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* "until the complimentary preface to *Annus Mirabilis* could appear" (p. 11).
these three serious works were chronologically most closely associated with his receiving the coveted prize.

In view of all this, Howard's attack with a two-edged blade in his preface to the Duke of Lerma must have hurt. Howard defended the use of blank verse by asserting Dryden's misuse of rational argument in defending rhyme. This side of the blade Dryden could easily turn against Howard who had used faulty reasoning in his own argument. But Howard's final metaphor also unmistakenly reminded Dryden to keep his place and not be "deceiv'd" into "a wrong measure of his own Proportion" by the King's "shining" upon him:

Thus as I am one that am extreamly well pleas'd with most of the Propositions, which are ingeniously laid down in that Essay, for regulating the Stage; so I am also always concern'd for the true Honour of Reason, and would have no spurious Issue father'd upon her. Fancy may be allow'd her Wantonness; but Reason is always pure and chast; and as it resembles the Sun, in making all things clear, it also resembles it in its several Positions: When it shines in full Height, and directly ascendant over any Subject, it leaves but little Shadow: But when descended and grown low, its oblique shining renders the Shadow larger than the Substance, and gives the deceiv'd Person a wrong measure of his own Proportion. Thus begging the Reader's Excuse for this seeming Impertinency, I submit what I have written to the Liberty of his unconfin'd Opinion, which is all the Favour I ask of others to afford to me. 20

This side of the blade must have cut deep, and Dryden responded with angry counter-attack in his *Defense of An Essay*. The petulance of his tone in his *Defense* is understandable if one reads Howard's metaphor in the context of an age in which the sun, the king, and reason were repeatedly equated in simile and metaphor. Moreover, Howard's play on the word *Subject* reinforces this reading. As Oliver reminds us in the biography, Howard was "far above Dryden in social standing" (p. 66), and Howard's intrusion of this contrast into what had begun as a literary difference of opinion precipitated the break between Dryden and Howard which was immediate and of long duration and may have included a "challenge of honor" (Oliver, 108-109). 21

Because of this consciousness of separation from the highest classes, and because of his Puritan past and Royalist present, Dryden was both participant in and observer of the social milieu. He was perhaps aware of both the benefits to be gained and the pitfalls to be avoided—aware that financial stability and public acclaim might come at the expense of personal and artistic integrity. As a Christian who had catered to secular tastes and as a

21. This break may explain why Dryden never claimed any part of *Indian Queen* as his after this date. The "challenge" is also cited by Ward (p. 64) and by John Loftis in his Commentary on *The Indian Emperor* in *The Works of John Dryden*, IX (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966), 306.
classical scholar aware of the traditional moral responsibility of the poet, particularly the poet laureate, Dryden must have listened to Milton's rebuke with chagrin.

His _Annus Mirabilis_ had, after all, glorified what was no more than a mercantile war—hardly heroic substance. His first comedy, _The Wild Gallant_, had not succeeded in either attempt (1663 and 1667), and his _Evening's Love_, produced in June of 1668, must have been an unusually risqué attempt to "delight his age" since it offended both Evelyn and Pepys. In 1668, Dryden appears painfully aware of the difficulty he faces in maintaining his "fame and reputation" in an age which prefers comedy (a preference which he must "force his genius to obey" [Watson, I, 116]) over serious plays which should by their "nature" be "set up above comedies" (Watson, I, 120). His reputation had never been higher, but he recognizes the fallibility of the audience which has acclaimed his plays:

> To please the people ought to be the poet's aim, because plays are made for their delight; but it does not follow that they are always pleased with good plays, or that the plays which please them are always good (Watson, I, 120).

Too often the "seeming contradiction of a poor antithesis" is "the delight of an ill-judging audience in a play of rhyme" (Watson, I, 98). His own Indian play had perhaps not

pleased him as thoroughly as it had the audience. He recognized "material faults of writing in the Indian Emperor" but lacked "leisure to amend them" (Watson, I, 111). His time was too filled with the juggling act of amusing his audience with all the balls in the air: "Habits, Dances, Scenes, and Rhymes; / High Language often; I, and Sense, sometimes." His personal concern for the "sense" of his serious plays could not always outweigh the audience desires for "variety."

Dryden, even more than Davenant and Orrery, had succeeded in pleasing the court with his serious and "oleo" plays, but he probably realized the degree to which that success was due to spectacle, sexual suggestion, and verbal dexterity. Also, his gratifying success may have been tempered by personal assessment of the political reality of the moment in which the first shine of the "golden age" had begun to dim. The death of Sir Gilbert Pickering in October of 1668 could have turned his thoughts to his early years in his Puritan family, and Dryden could have shared the thoughtful attitude of Pepys toward Charles and Cromwell:


It is strange how . . . everybody do now-a-days reflect upon Oliver, and commend him, what brave things he did, and made all the neighbor princes fear him; while here a prince, come in with all the love and prayers and good liking of his people, who have given greater signs of loyalty and willingness to serve him with their estates than ever was done by any people, hath lost all so soon, that it is a miracle what way a man could devise to lose so much in so little time. 25

If Dryden did share Pepys' "reflection," his personal attachment to the court and its moral tastes would be sufficiently qualified to allow the song of the Christian poet to speak to him. Whatever the cause, Dryden's first play of 1669, *Tyrannic Love*, his first work written after *Defense of An Essay*, is a marked departure from his previous works and his own statement of intention in the *Defense*:

> The humour of the people is now for comedy, therefore in hope to please them, I write comedies rather than serious plays (Watson, I, 120).

Between the *Defense*, in late summer of 1668, and *Tyrannic Love*, in early spring of 1669, something had induced Dryden to try his hand at his first "Christian" play—a "godly out-of-fashion play" (Epilogue to *TL*) which he hopes may be "conducing to Holiness" (Watson, I, 139). That something, I am persuaded, was the powerful substance of Milton's epic to which Dryden's perceptive poetic ear would have

been particularly susceptible. This is not to suggest that Dryden returned to his Puritan loyalties either in religion or in politics, rather, that Dryden had been reminded of the Christian heritage of all mankind and of the moral responsibilities of all poets.

If we see Dryden's response to *Paradise Lost* as a personal religious response, his Preface to *Tyrannic Love* can be read as both an explanation for his choice of subject for the play and as a statement which expresses the effect the epic has had upon him. From this view of the Preface, Milton's epic had "by the Harmony of words," elevated Dryden's "mind to a sense of Devotion as ... solemn Musick ... does in Churches." Milton's "lively images of piety, adorned by action" had, through Dryden's "senses, allure[d]" his "Soul: which while it [was] charmed in a silent joy of what it [saw] and [heard], [was] struck at the same time with a secret veneration of things Celestial ..." (Watson, I, 139). At any rate, Dryden had, in haste, written a play which is very different from any of his earlier work, which sings of "patience and heroic martyrdom," and which has as its "hero" a man whose excessive ego causes a "descent" similar to that of Satan's.

In order to see Dryden's theory and practice as having been influenced by Milton's epic, it is not necessary to accept a notion of his having become Stanley Fish's "guilty reader." Motivation is difficult enough to
understand when it is our own we are examining without trying to prove conclusively what Dryden's must have been. His reaction may not have been totally clear even to himself and was perhaps a complex mixture of religious response, genuine admiration for poetic accomplishment, and chagrin that it had come from the old, blind Puritan and not from the Poet Laureate. Even if the two latter elements of motivation were the total composition, with no personal religious motivation at all, the effect remains the same: a hastily written Christian play, then reassessment of his previous theory and practice. Since Dryden was usually perceptive in his assessments of the accomplishments of others, and since it is apparent in his occasional criticism that he most often saw those accomplishments in relation to his own "fame and reputation" (Watson, I, 102), the effect is not surprising. Though Dryden's aristocratic contemporaries may have been unlikely to abandon their "escapades of rakes" or love intrigues for religious instruction from the old, out-of-favor Puritan, Dryden was sufficiently perceptive to realize (as he later acknowledged in the preface to The State of Innocence and the "Epigram to Milton") that future readers would more accurately judge the merit of the poet of Paradise Lost. If a genuine religious basis for Dryden's change of theory and practice appears unprovable, it is possible to understand that change
as a pragmatic realization of which way lay long-range "fame and reputation" based upon genuine poetic merit.

Dryden's immediate response to what he could have read as correction implies that he felt it to be deserved, because he took measures to correct faults apparent upon reflection. His early work had lacked consistent moral instruction, both in practice and in theory. This deficiency was directly related to his inconsistent treatment of heroism. Correction of the deficiency necessitated proper choice of heroic subjects, consistent interrelationship of language, imagery, and characterization with plot, and critical clarification of generic distinction. Dryden's immediate response was his choice of "heroic martyrdom" as the subject for Tyrannic Love, his consistent development of moral instruction in that play, and his prefatory explanation of the purpose of the play to inculcate "precepts of piety." His secondary response involved a critical evaluation of early Restoration "serious" plays to arrive at a generic distinction of "heroic plays." This theory was accompanied by an heroic play, The Conquest of Granada, which demonstrated in practice what his theory

26. In that context of motivation, Dryden's use of the epigraph from Virgil's Aeneid for the title page of Tyrannic Love suggests a personal recognition of having been outdone by Milton: "No more do I, Mnestheus, seek the first place, no more strive to win; yet oh!—-but let those conquer to whom thou, Neptune, hast granted it--it were a shame to return last!" (Loeb translation).
explained and what it implied: that "heroic plays" are "imitations" of heroic poems, and that they must contain "epic" instruction.

In order to argue this hypothetical causality, it is necessary to examine the experimental nature of Dryden's theory and practice. Such an examination reveals Dryden's early plays' lack of moral instruction—especially in contrast to those of Davenant and Orrery—and it reveals a critical lip-service to the Horatian ideal. This examination also reveals an inconsistent treatment of heroism and an absence of generic distinction of the heroic play in theory or practice prior to 1670. Further examination, moreover, shows the striking degree to which there is change in these aspects of theory and practice beginning in early 1669.
CHAPTER 3

CRITICAL THEORY: BEFORE AND AFTER 1669

In the unique Restoration atmosphere of literary experimentation and critical controversy, it is not surprising that an enterprising young dramatist would concentrate his efforts on what might please his audience. Neither is it surprising, in that predominantly Christian age, that the same dramatist might be influenced by an effective Christian rebuke, particularly when it was deserved. That Dryden changed is apparent; that Milton's epic influenced this change is supported by the chronological association and by the particular nature of the "before and after" pictures which can be painted. The change in theory is most immediately apparent in his prefaces to Tyrannic Love and Evening's Love with their notable concern for moral instruction.

It has become commonplace to remark on the occasional nature of Dryden's criticism. Robert Hume reminds us that "the importance of the occasional circumstances of Dryden's criticism can scarcely be over emphasized."\(^1\) Moreover, Frank Harper Moore insists that "the comparison

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of theory and practice must be made chronologically." But in spite of these caveats, critics too often lump together the opinions and works of Dryden's first ten years of production without sufficient discrimination. For example, Hume neglects his own reminder when he discusses Dryden's concern for morality. He cites as "one of the few marked changes that appears in Dryden's criticism" the "increase in his concern for morality":

A belief in the moral and educational function of literature goes back to the beginning of his career (it is certainly prominent in the Preface to Tyrannic Love, quoted above), but early in his career he did write some rather smutty comedies. By the end of his life he had decided not to make this sort of concession to popular taste (p. 224).

This loose treatment of Tyrannic Love as if it had come "at the beginning of his career" results in Hume's overlooking the specific chronological point at which Dryden's "increase in . . . concern for morality" begins, in the early months of 1669 immediately after Dryden's reading of Paradise Lost.

In his early criticism, Dryden shows surprisingly little concern for moral instruction in contrast to both predecessors and contemporaries. From Sidney to Jonson, the English critical tradition emphasizes moral instruction, as do the more contemporary remarks of French critics. Jean Chapelain and Jean-François Sarasin place greatest weight

upon the "improvement in the morals of mankind, which is the purpose of poetry"³ and remind that Aristotle was "not of the opinion of those who consider the final purpose of [tragedy] to be the pleasure of the people."⁴ Moreover, Dryden's immediate contemporary and fellow countryman, Thomas Sprat, "anticipated the central features of Neander's patriotic defense of his country's drama" but considered it "beyond all dispute, that the true intention of such Representation, is, to give mankind a Picture of themselves; and thereby to make Virtue belov'd, Vice abhor'd."⁵ Dryden shared the concern of critics who, like François Hédelin, abbé d'Aubingnac, focused upon the mechanics of play-making, but d'Aubingnac devoted an entire chapter of his Whole Art of the Stage (1657) to instructing the playwright in how he might skillfully include "Didactic Discourses or Instructions" without stopping the pace of the action.⁶

In contrast, prior to 1669, Dryden's critical remarks on moral instruction were few and always indirect. His first critical prose, prefaced to The Rival Ladies


⁴. Sarasin, "Discourse on Tragedy" (1639), in The Continental Model, p. 57.

⁵. Quoted in the Commentary on An Essay of Dramatick Poesy in Works, XVII, 344.

(1664), neglects instruction altogether in preference to
discussion of the "beauties" of a play. This first treat-
ment of the difficulties of "plotting and writing" sets the
tone and defines the issues of most of his criticism prior
to 1669. The concern of the playwright is to "delight" and
to give "pleasure." This he does through proper choice of
language (avoiding pedantry or affectation [Watson, I, 5]),
through proper use of the "new way of writing scenes in
verse" (concluding the sense in "distichs" and exploiting
the "particular . . . grace" of the "sweetness of . . .
rhyme" in "discoursive scenes" [Watson, I, 7-8]), and
through decorous choice of characters and argument suitable
for "verse."

Dryden's Essay of Dramatic Poesy, written in 1665
and published in 1667, is a more extensive undertaking, but
the balance of critical concerns differs little from his
first preface. Whether the discussion at hand involves the
"rules," the rhyme controversy, or the nature of tragi-
comedy, the underlying consideration is the success with
which Restoration writers were making use of these materials.
Dryden does mention "virtue" and "instruction," but when
weighed against the far more frequent references to
"delight" and "pleasure," these isolated snips and pieces
appear insignificant. After Dryden defines "a play" in
traditional Restoration terms, as Moore has noted, the
"other function . . . the instruction of mankind, is sadly
neglected" (Moore, pp. 29-30). Eugenius' speech critical of
the ancients appears to balance the Horatian concerns for
both instruction and delight: "they have failed both in
laying of their plots, and managing of them," so that "they
have ill satisfied one intention of a play, which was
delight; so in the instructive part they have erred worse;
instead of punishing vice and rewarding virtue, they have
often shown a prosperous wickedness, and an unhappy piety"
(Watson, I, 38). But the apparent balance comes in this
single statement after Eugenius has devoted numerous pages
to criticism of the Ancients' repetitively used plots and
characters. These, he insists, "destroy" "delight": "that
one main end of dramatic poesy" (Watson, I, 35, italics
mine). Similarly, in the Defence of an Essay (1668),
Dryden's strongest defense of "moral truth" as "the mistress
of the poet" concludes with a line from Horace which re-
affirms Dryden's primary concern for "delight":

False reasonings and colours of speech are
the certain marks of one who does not under-
stand the stage; for moral truth is the mistress
of the poet as much as of the philosopher:
poesy must resemble natural truth, but it must
be ethical. Indeed the poet dresses truth,
and adorns nature, but does not alter them:

ficta voluptatis causa sint proxima veris
[Let fiction made for delight be near to the
truth] (Watson, I, 120-121).

Before 1669, Dryden's emphasis was not on moral
instruction. In his first preface (1664), Dryden had
complimented Orrery on the "delight" and "pleasure" he had
given others through his writing. This emphasis Dryden maintains in his Essay (1665-7) with repeated references to those elements which will "afford a greater pleasure to the audience" (Watson, I, 59). Neander's assessment of tragi-comedy calls it a "more pleasant way of writing for the stage than was ever known to the ancients or moderns of any nation" (Watson, I, 58), and he assumes that the English prefer comedies and tragi-comedies because they "come to be diverted at our plays" (Watson, I, 60). By autumn, 1668, this emphasis upon delight reaches its greatest weight in Dryden's Defence of An Essay: "I am satisfied if it cause delight; for delight is the chief, if not the only end of poesy; instruction can be admitted but in the second place, for poesy only instructs as it delights" (Watson, I, 114). Moreover, in the Defence, the same grounds are cited in support of rhyme:

All I can say is only this, that it seems to have succeeded verse by the general consent of poets in all modern languages; for almost all their serious plays are written in it; which, though it be no demonstration that therefore they ought to be so, yet at least the practice first, and then the continuation of it, shews that it attained the end, which was to please; and if that cannot be compassed here, I will be the first who shall lay it down. For I confess my chief endeavours are to delight the age in which I live (Watson, I, 116).

Finally, in his assessment of the inability of audiences always to judge plays accurately, he insists that "to
please the people ought to be the poet's aim, because plays are made for their delight" (Watson, I, 120).

Frequently, in the Essay, Dryden emphasizes a critical point by contrasting what is appropriate in a play with what would be appropriate in church. For example, Lisideius objects to the practice of ending plays with a conversion: "As for example, the conversion of the usurer in The Scornful Lady seems to me a little forced . . . ; but that he should look on [his being duped] as a judgment, and so repent, we may expect to hear of in a sermon, but I should never endure it in a play (Watson, I, 55). Similarly, Neander finds fault with lengthy speeches:

When the French stage came to be reformed by Cardinal Richelieu, those long harangues were introduced to comply with the gravity of a churchman. Look upon the Cinna and the Pompey; they are not so properly to be called plays as long discourses of reason of State; and Polyceute in matters of religion is as solemn as the long stops upon our organs. Since that time it is grown into a custom, and their actors speak by the hourglass, as our parsons do (Watson, I, 60).

In contrast to the French, Neander continues, the English "come to be diverted at our plays"; thus the concern of the poet is for those "graces" which are "the greatest pleasure of the audience" (Watson, I, 60), with, by implication, instruction left to "dull divines." 7

Twice in his Defence of An Essay, Dryden states his intention to please his age by writing comedy: "For I confess my chief endeavours are to delight the age in which I live. If the humour of this be for low comedy, small accidents, and raillery, I will force my genius to obey it" (Watson, I, 116). Then just four pages later, the conditional clause ("If the humour . . .") has been replaced by assertion: "The humour of the people is now for comedy, therefore in hope to please them, I write comedies rather than serious plays" (Watson, I, 120). Yet in spite of these statements of intention, Dryden's next play, "contrived and written in seven weeks" in early 1669 (Watson, I, 141), is a thoroughly serious Christian play. Moreover, though Dryden had previously (in the Preface to Annus Mirabilis, 1667) insisted that "all other greatness in subjects is only counterfeit . . . the greatness of arms is only real" (Watson, I, 97), the subject of this play is the true heroism of "patient martyrdom"--as Milton had advocated.

The subject of the play is something new for Dryden, and its preface provides a striking contrast to the criticism which precedes it. Now Dryden has "considered that pleasure was not the only end of poesy." He would include "instructions of morality." Moreover, he would move beyond that "business of the poet" to assert that "precepts and examples of piety were to be" included
In contrast to his earlier pejorative comparisons of playwrights with parsons, Dryden now writes that "to leave the employment [of promoting piety] altogether to the clergy were to forget that religion was first taught in verse . . . . And it were also to grant (which I never shall) that representations of this kind may not as well be conducing to holiness as to good manners" (Watson, I, 138).

Whatever the cause of this notable change in Dryden's critical point of view, he recognized that his audience would wonder why their poet laureate had written such a "godly out-of-fashion play." His first sentence of the preface anticipates this question by giving an acceptable, but intriguingly ambiguous, explanation for such uncustomary behavior: "I was moved to write this play by many reasons: amongst others, the command of some persons of honour, for whom I have a most particular respect" (Watson, I, 138). Yet the play is dedicated to the Duke of Monmouth with a tone not indicative that either the Duke or the Duchess had suggested he write a Christian play. Among his "reasons," and of primary importance, I am convinced, was his reading of Paradise Lost during the winter months of 1668-69, immediately preceding his "hasty"

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8. Novak, in his Commentary for the California edition of Tyrannic Love, cites two theories about Dryden's choice of subject, but he appears convinced by neither (p. 400).
composition of the play. At any rate, he was now ready, as never before, to "maintain, against the enemies of the stage, that patterns of piety, decently represented and equally removed from the extremes of superstition and profligacy, may be of excellent use to second the precepts of our religion" (Watson, I, 139). This marks a major change in critical view. That this change is more than a superficial defense of a shallow experiment is supported by his personal remarks in explaining the characterization of Maximin as "a deformed piece" to "set off the character of S. Catharine": "This, Reader is what I owed to my just defense, and the due reverence of that religion which I profess" (Watson, I, 140). He defended himself against the charge of "atheism or profligacy" with an equally personal oath: "by the witness of my own conscience, which abhors the thought of such a crime" (Watson, I, 140). It is also possible that the passage of affective criticism explaining how poetry influences behavior reflects Dryden's personal response to Paradise Lost:

By the harmony of words we elevate the mind to a sense of devotion, as our solemn music, which is inarticulate poesy, does in churches; and by the lively images of piety, adorned by action, through the senses allure the soul; which while it is charmed in a silent joy of what it sees and hears, is struck at the same time with a secret veneration of things celestial, and is wound up insensibly into the practice of that which it admires (Watson, I, 139).
In addition to the striking increase in moral concern, two other changes are evident in the preface to *Tyrannic Love*. First, he points out that he has "not everywhere observed the equality of numbers in [his] verse." Though partly due to "haste," this was "more especially because I would not have my sense a slave to syllables" (Watson, I, 141). In previous comments on the couplet (1664), he had been consistent in advocating "confining the sense to [the] couplet" (Watson, I, 8): "Mr. Waller ... first showed us to conclude the sense most commonly in distiches" (Watson, I, 7). Even when explaining (1665-67) how some "variety of cadences" may be obtained, he does so after acknowledging that "most commonly, the sense is to be confined to the couplet" (Watson, I, 82). But, in *Tyrannic Love*, Dryden's greatest concern is for the "sense" of the entire play rather than the "wit" of individual couplets. Moreover, his poetic ear may still be hearing and responding to echoes of Milton's flowing verse paragraphs.

Second, in this preface to *Tyrannic Love*, it is apparent that Dryden had already written at least part of his *Conquest of Granada*, to which he refers, and had already reassessed his past work and newly defined the generic distinctness of the "heroic play." He defends his use of "astral or aerial spirits" on the grounds that "these heroic representations, which are of the same nature with the epic, are not limited but with the extremest bounds of what is
credible" (Watson, I, 142). Also, in the letter of dedica-
tion to the Duke of Monmouth, Dryden uses the term "Heroick
Play"\(^9\) in his complimentary comparison of the Duke to
Achilles and Rinaldo, both of whom will be comparisons for
Almanzor in his Essay of Heroic Plays still to come but
obviously already at least mentally composed. Just as
Milton's rebuke may have stimulated Dryden's attention to
morality, Milton's achievement in the epic genre may have
challenged Dryden to attempt an epic "in little."

Dryden's next piece of critical prose, the Preface
to an Evening's Love (1671), includes his new awareness of
the "heroic play" as a separate kind of drama, but he
"defer[s]" his "design" to discuss this comparison "till I
publish the Conquest of Granada where the discourse will be
more proper" (Watson, I, 144-145). It is, however, proper
to the preface at hand to express his new opinions on moral
propriety. He speaks of his "disgust of low comedy" which
"requires . . . much of conversation with the vulgar," and
he distinguishes comedy from farce which he "detest[s]." He
"acknowledge[s] that most of those comedies lately written
have been allied too much to farce" and adds: "While I say
this, I accuse myself as well as others: and this very play
would rise up in judgment against me if I would defend all

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9. This use of the term "Heroick Play" is directly
related to his new generic distinction. It had not been
earlier, as I shall discuss, pp. 44 ff.
things I have written to be natural; but I confess I have given too much to the people in it, and am ashamed for them as well as for myself, that I have pleased them at so cheap a rate" (Watson, I, 146-147). He does defend his comedies against his "enemies" by pointing out the difference "betwixt the rules of tragedy and comedy" which relieves comedy of much of the obligation to punish "faults," and he defends himself against the charge of theft. But he concludes the defense with self-criticism: ". . . though I have reason to be proud of this defence, yet I should waive it, because I have a worse opinion of my own comedies than any of my enemies can have" (Watson, I, 153). His new attention to the importance of "instruction" is particularly apparent in his explication of the "rules of tragedy": "In tragedy, where the actions and persons are great, and the crimes horrid, the laws of justice are more strictly to be observed; and examples of punishment to be made to deter mankind from pursuit of vice . . . . Thus tragedy fulfils one great part of its institution: which is, By example to instruct" (Watson, I, 151, italics mine). No such forthright desire to "deter mankind from pursuit of vice" appears in Dryden's criticism prior to 1669, but it appears suddenly (in the Tyrannic Love and Evening's Love prefaces) with obvious contrast to what precedes it, and it continues to be a part of Dryden's theory and practice henceforth.
Dryden's writing of *Tyrannic Love* was followed by a period of "stock-taking" and "assessment" which Ward calls a "period of comparative inactivity" (p. 69):

Coming after at least three very active years this slackening poses a problem not easily solved. One of the most obvious explanations is that he was tired and needed a period of freedom and refreshment to supply a literary reservoir on which he had made heavy demands. Yet by this time he was a professional writer devoting his life to his craft, and writing was his life.

An equally "obvious" explanation is that Dryden, reacting to Milton's challenge, was re-examining his past work and the work of his contemporaries because of his concern for "fame and reputation." Milton's epic had not only criticized but had surpassed anything Dryden and his contemporaries had done. Dryden's reported remark that Milton "cuts us all out" acknowledges that fact. Clearly, greater effort was called for, but Dryden must first decide upon the area in which to concentrate his efforts. In 1672, his generic distinction of the "heroic play" as a separate kind of drama in which the Restoration "may justly claim precedence" over "Shakespeare and Fletcher" (Watson, I, 144) appears to represent his decision.

Prior to 1669, Dryden had made no such definite distinction—a fact too often ignored by critics who wish

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10. Masson, VI, 629, n. 1 cites Richardson's Life of Milton prefixed to "Notes on Paradise Lost" (1734), pp. cxix-cxx. Richardson's Life is also quoted in the 1760 edition: "cuts us all out and the Ancients too" (p. xlvii).
to see a direct line of development from Indian Queen, through Indian Emperor, Tyrannic Love, and The Conquest of Granada, to Aureng-Zebe. This assumption of a consistent pattern from 1661 to 1675 has resulted in distorted readings, particularly of Indian Emperor and Tyrannic Love, and in neglect of Milton's immediate influence on Tyrannic Love. A close reading of the criticism prior to 1669 shows that Dryden used conventional classifications—not always consistently. He spoke of comic, tragi-comic, tragic, and "serious" plays. The latter catch-all category is Dryden's most frequently used term for all plays not clearly comic, including many which later critics would call tragi-comedy or opera. As is the case with most twentieth-century critical treatment of Dryden's moral awareness, recent critics have too often telescoped the first ten years of Dryden's career, taking his 1672 definition of the heroic play and applying it retroactively to all of his "serious" work preceding that date, while ignoring his use of "heroic" verse in tragi-comedies. 11

Prior to 1669, Dryden had written only one play, The Indian Emperor, which was thoroughly serious. His sole use of the term "heroic play" occurs in the letter of dedication for that play in a context which is similar to his infrequent

11. William S. Clark provides an early exception to this error in his article, "The Sources of the Restoration Heroic Play," RES, 4 (1928), 49-63.
but consistent use of the adjective "heroic" to represent "noble" or "great." In none of the early criticism is there the equation between the heroic poem and the heroic play ("an imitation, in little, of an heroic poem") which defines the genre in the 1672 Essay. Rather than this generic distinction, Dryden's use of the word "heroic" before 1669 distinguishes only a proper setting for the "new way" of "writing scenes in verse" (that is, in rhyme). Indeed, this single use of the term appears to equate "heroic play" with one written in "Verse." He used this "heroic" verse in Rival Ladies and in Secret Love, as well as in Indian Emperor, for the expression of "noble passions" by "great and noble characters" (not always consistently). He chided those who thought that distorted word order sounded "more heroical" (Watson, I, 6), and proposed instead the "excellence and dignity" of rhymed speech which was properly elevated above "ordinary speaking." But he included this rhymed speech in tragi-comedies as well as in a serious play, in lovers' laments as well as in scenes of

12. "The favour which Heroick Plays have lately found upon our Theaters has been wholly deriv'd to them, from the countenance and approbation they have receiv'd at the Court, the most eminent persons for Wit and Honour in the Royal Circle having so far own'd them, that they judg'd no way so fit as Verse to entertain a Noble Audience, or to express a noble passion." Works, IX, 23.

13. Watson, I, 158.

14. See above, n. 12.
"argumentation and discourse." The California editors, who consider it strange that Dryden did not use this "label for the new type of drama until the dedication" of Indian Emperor, should also have considered that the use of the "label" prior to 1669 occurs only twice, used once by Davenant, and once by Dryden, and only in dedications, in contexts which suggest that it was no more than a complimentary adjective which identified the "gift" as "noble," thus fit for the noble recipient. The "strangest" consideration is that in all the heat of the rhyme controversy, Dryden never made use of the label nor of the equation to support his use of rhymed verse in drama.

The early Restoration plays of Davenant, Orrery, Howard, and Dryden share important characteristics—love is a central concern; armed conflict threatens public or private safety; noble passions are represented, and rhymed verse is used—but these characteristics can be found in tragedies, in tragi-comedies, and in plays published with no generic label. Not until the 1672 definition of the "heroic play" did Dryden critically distinguish these elements as appropriate to a particular kind of play.

After 1669, Dryden's examination of his past work, in preparation for moving to "higher ground," led him to the

15. Comparison of George Cartwright's title, Heroick Lover, with his play shows his 1661 use of "heroick" as meaning "noble."
"reflection" that "an heroic play ought to be an imitation, in little, of an heroic poem," which is "the most noble, the most pleasant, and the most instructive way of writing in verse, and withal the highest pattern of human life" (Watson, I, 158, 162). The description of his accidental opening of Ariosto may be factual, but I agree with Clark that it occurred during that period of "inactivity" when his attention was focused upon his next project and the question of what form it should take. Only then do his theory and his practice reflect such an equation.

Both the immediate attention to "moral instruction" and the subsequent generic distinction of the "heroic play" were changes in Dryden's criticism which could have been stimulated by his reading of Paradise Lost—an inference which is reinforced by an image accompanying the publication of Tyrannic Love. In the letter of dedication, Dryden uses religious language and imagery with some of the same self-deprecatory tone of Nell's characterization of the play as "godly" and "out-of-fashion." He refers to his having dedicated one of his former plays to the Duke's wife. The play had been so well received that the Duke's household is in danger of having Dryden's "Verses, perpetually sounding in [their] ears . . . more troublesom than the neighborhood of Steeples." He continues:

16. See above, p. 45, n. 11.
I have been favourable to myself in this expres­sion; a zealous Fanatick would have gone farther; and have called me the Serpent, who first presented the fruit of my Poetry to the Wife, and so gain'd the opportunity to seduce the Husband (Works, X, 107).

Even superficially, this use of temptation imagery supports the chronological association of Dryden's reading of Paradise Lost and his hasty composition of Tyrannic Love. But far more significantly, it shows Dryden's awareness of Milton's particular treatment of the temptation. In Milton's version of the fall, Satan "too easie entrance won ... into [Eve's] heart" (PL, VIII, 734). Then through Adam's love for the fallen Eve, Satan's goal was achieved, as Adam fell: "fondly overcome with female charm" (PL, VIII, 999).
Dryden's vulnerability to Milton's rebuke is as apparent in his early work as it is in his early criticism. Experimentation with what would "please" had too often led Dryden into inconsistent treatment of heroism. Emphasis upon other demands (patriotism, variety, amusement, topicality) had too often demoted instruction from primary consideration. In four major works these faults are most apparent: *Rival Ladies*, *Indian Emperor*, *Secret Love*, and *Annus Mirabilis*. Moreover, it is on the last three of these works that Dryden most likely saw his reputation dependent. In all of these, Dryden's treatment of heroism is inconsistent, ill-defined, and susceptible to Milton's charge of false heroism. In none is there sufficient interrelationship between the individual "beauties" of spectacle, language, imagery, and characterization to support consistent moral instruction.

Although the tragi-comedies are seldom included in discussions of Dryden's "heroic drama," Dryden himself calls attention to his use of the "new way of writing scenes in verse" in his Preface to *The Rival Ladies*. This letter of dedication to Lord Orrery clearly associates his own play
with those of Orrery, also in rhyme, which are more consistently serious and more clearly "heroic" but which do mix comic with serious matter.\(^1\) In this Preface, as in all the early criticism, Dryden identifies heroic verse with "noble passion," "Honour," and "Virtue" which will "instruct the Age."\(^2\) He asserts that the "excellence and dignity" of rhymed heroic verse call for both argument and characters to be "great and noble" (Watson, I, 7, 9). Also, in the Prologue to Secret Love, Dryden points at his combination of "Jonson's humor with Corneille's rhyme" (Works, IX, 119).

Yet both early tragi-comedies are deficient in admirable characters whose roles contribute to moral instruction appropriate to heroic verse.

In the first (Rival Ladies, 1664), consistent statement about heroism is repeatedly sacrificed to momentary demands of individual scenes. Thus, Gonsalvo, who "heroically" appears in most of the "scenes in verse," is inadequately rewarded with Honoria, whose stature has been marred by her role in scenes of farce. At the same time, Julia, whom Gonsalvo loves, is the prize of the Jonsonian humor character, Rhodorigo, a sullen, rude, vengeful

\(^1\) Orrery's The General includes an extended comic discussion about "mistresses" between characters important to the heroic plot. Also, the tone of Davenant's Siege of Rhodes is interrupted at the conclusion of each "representation" with a light, almost comic, song.

\(^2\) Dedication to Indian Emperor in Works, IX, 24.
"villain." Moreover, while language and incident suggest a Providential resolution of the play, the conclusion implies that love is totally irrational and that "Heav'n" rewards "villains" above virtuous men. In his second, somewhat better, tragi-comedy (Secret Love, 1667), Dryden added an armed revolt not in his source, apparently to heighten the heroic plot. To further increase its seriousness, Dryden includes the subject of succession to the throne and appears, sporadically, to build toward a thematic statement about hierarchy and order. But Philocles is too flawed to deserve his heroic rewards, Lysimantes' treason goes unpunished, and the decorum of the play is repeatedly disturbed. Even the characterization of the Queen, the only character, according to Dryden, intended to be "perfect," is flawed by petty jealousy and irrationality. In striking contrast to these early tragi-comedies, after 1669, Dryden's "best" in this kind (Marriage a la Mode, 1672) juxtaposes ideal "miracles" with comic reality in a play of interrelated language, imagery, and characterization which "informed the Nation" and "led" men "all the way to Reformation." 3

In The Indian Emperor (1665), Dryden's only unaided thoroughly serious play preceding 1669, he capitalizes on the success of The Indian Queen by emphasizing the spectacle

of blood and feathers and the savage nobility of Montezuma, by contrasting the simplicity of the savages with the civilized worldliness of the Spaniards, and by developing ever more complex patterns of amorous conflict. But in doing so, Dryden sacrifices consistent heroic characterization to the "beauty" of the immediate scene and sometimes treats "love" as amoral.

The major faults of the play, and its lack of central thematic instruction, are primarily the result of Dryden's inconsistent treatment of Montezuma. In both the Dedication and the "Connexion of the Indian Emperour, to the Indian Queen," Dryden spotlights Montezuma. In the Dedication, the Indian hero "comes to throw himself at [the] feet" of the Duchess of Monmouth and to relate his "sufferings" in "his story," which is "perhaps the greatest, which was ever represented in a poem of this nature" (Works, IX, 25). In the "Connexion," Dryden describes Montezuma as "in the Truth of the History . . . a great and glorious Prince" who ruled a "flourishing Empire." Arthur C. Kirsch calls these remarks "misleading," citing the obvious changes in this Montezuma from his predecessor in the Queen. 4 On the other hand, Michael W. Alssid begins with Dryden's remarks in order to trace a "tragic degeneration" of the "primitive" leader of an "unsound monarchy" in a play which, he asserts,

has "a dominant thematic-structural pattern." To show this pattern, however, Alssid must ignore significant inconsistencies between Montezuma's speech and his actions. More accurately, Kirsch points out that "it is rather perilous to discuss an over-all theme for The Indian Emperor" (93), and most accurately, John Loftis attributes the "qualified success" of the play to its "incomplete assimilation" of themes and to its "depiction of Montezuma": "the exigencies of separate dramatic situations [force] an emphasis on different qualities of his personality which ill accord with one another." Loftis insists further that it is "difficult to reconcile the clarity of mind and the resolution of will [Montezuma] intermittently displays with his abject submission to Almeria." Though he bears resemblance to other "protagonists" who experience "emotional turmoil" and vacillate, "unlike the other protagonists he appears in the quite different role of spokesman for a critical rationality. At times the middle-aged lover suffering under the tyranny of a youthful beauty, he is at other times the audacious and perceptive critic of irrational institutions; and the two roles are not made consistent with any show of plausibility" (p. 318).


Dryden's "incomplete assimilation" of themes and his inconsistent characterization of Montezuma are interrelated faults. For example, two contradictory themes are suggested—that natural goodness compares favorably with civilized artifice, or that Christian truth exposes savage ignorance—but neither is fully developed. Elements of the first show Montezuma as a "great King" and "Great Monarch" with a "haughty mind," subject only to the "power" of "Love." Montezuma's highly rational arguments are consistent with this description and relate, appropriately, to Cortez' speech in the opening scene of the play: "Wild and untaught are Terms which we alone / Invent, for fashions differing from our own" (I, 11-12). However, the second potential theme calls for Montezuma's abject submission to Cortez with emphasis upon savage ignorance and gore:

Thy actions show thee born of Heavenly Race.
If then thou art that cruel god, whose eyes Delight in Blood, and Humane Sacrifice, Thy dreadful Altars I with Slaves will store.
Or if that mild and gentle god thou be, Who dost mankind below with pity see, With breath of incense I will glad thy heart; But if like us, of mortal seed thou art, Presents of rarest Fowls, and Fruits I'le bring And in my Realms thou shalt be more than King (I.i. 235-245).

Furthermore, if a theme of Christian truth over savage ignorance is dominant, Vasquez' first speech of explanation to Montezuma is confusing in tone and arrangement:

Spain's mighty Monarch, to whom Heaven thinks fit That all the Nations of the Earth submit, In gracious clemency, does condescend
On these conditions to become your Friend,  
First, that of him you shall your Scepter hold,  
Next, you present him with your useless Gold:  
Last, that you leave those Idols you adore,  
And one true Diety with prayers implore  
(I.ii. 266-274).

Vasquez lists first power, then gold, and finally truth as the Spanish King's requirements. The ironic tone of "useless Gold" fits the characterization of Montezuma as a simple savage who might be deceived by Vasquez into believing the gold "useless," thus giving it up easily. Certainly Montezuma's speech, on his knees to Cortez, has shown him to be naive about divine power and ready to denigrate his own power ("in my Realms thou shalt be more than King" [245]). Yet fewer than 100 lines later, the "great King" Montezuma speaks sententious couplets in striking contrast to his role as simple savage:

That Monarch sits not safely on his Throne,  
Who suffers any pow'r, to shock his own (317-318).  
. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

I cannot in a base subjection live,  
Nor suffer you to take, though I would give.  
(324-325).

Neither in individual acts nor in the play as a whole is either of the possible themes fully developed, but abortive inclusion of both damages Montezuma's characterization.

Yet a third thematic statement is suggested by Vasquez' link between gold and the Christian God. But again Dryden's treatment of the relationship is inconsistent. Both Barbeau and Alssid see Cortez as the
"normative," the "ideal" hero, while Pizarro and the "Christian Priest" are greedy. Some such dichotomy appears to exist between Vasquez and Pizarro: Vasquez hopes to "possess the Beauty," Pizarro, "the Gold" (IV.iii. 77). Similarly, Pizarro would "steal from [his] Post, and in the Plunder share" (IV.iv. 180). But in the first act, it was Vasquez who made the pitch for gold, and it was Pizarro who insisted that they had come "thus far Religion to extend" (296). Moreover, the purity of Cortez' own motives is questionable. In the first scene of the play, when Vasquez calls attention to the "golden Ore" and the "silver shower" (27-30), it is Cortez who explains that "this wealth" has been hidden by the wisdom of "Heaven" for the "bravest Nation" who would "Dare boldly go" to "a New found World to force" it from its owners (31-34).

However, in the rack scene of the fifth act, Cortez releases Montezuma from his torture and rebukes the "holy Avarice" (116) of the Christian Priest. In his anger at the priest he attacks not only greed but priestcraft:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{And you,} & \quad \text{-----------------------------} \\
\text{Who sawcily, teach Monarchs to obey,} \\
\text{And the wide World in narrow Cloysters sway;} \\
\text{Set up by Kings as humble aids of power,} \\
\text{You that which bred you, Viper-like devour,} \\
\text{You Enemies of Crowns} & \quad \text{-----------------------------} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(IV.ii. 125-130).

That Cortez has accurately exposed the Priest's vicious greed is supported by the Priest's opening lines (5-9). Yet the philosophical discussion between Montezuma and the Priest which follows those lines has shown them both to be capable of virtuous rational support of their respective positions. In balanced lines, in closed couplets, with an effective use of antithesis, the Priest teaches Montezuma, and momentarily, the audience:

That which we worship, and which you believe,
From Natures common hand we both receive;
All under various names, Adore and Love
One power Immense, which ever rules above.
Vice to abhor, and Virtue to pursue,
Is both believ'd and taught by us and you:
But here our Worship takes another way
(V.ii. 61-67).

In turn, throughout the rack scene, Montezuma's reasoning skills, his "sufferings and constancy"\(^8\) are obviously treated affirmatively.

The confusion of all of this results from what appears to be momentary attempts to sometimes show the naïveté of the savage mind not exposed to sailing ships, gunfire, or armor, and at other times to emphasize Montezuma's "great and glorious" qualities, including a highly rational mind capable of effective debate; to sometimes exploit the savage practice of human sacrifice for verbal spectacle, and at other times to contrast civilized greed with Montezuma's "natural" goodness; to sometimes

\(^8\) Connexion in Works, IX, 28.
emphasize the heroic quality of a "Heaven"-directed conquest of savage lands and at other times to capitalize on the English horror at Spanish cruelty in the New World.

The final scene of the play is perhaps the best example of the sacrifice of Montezuma's characterization for a momentary effect. A potentially audience-pleasing dilemma is created for Cortez. Cydaria is at the mercy of Almeria, and Cortez is caught: "I dare not go; and yet how dare I stay? / Her I would save, I murder either way" (287-288). But the scene which led up to this dilemma shows Montezuma abjectly taking orders from Almeria, deliberately lying to his daughter, standing aside, as if helpless, while Almeria shoves Cydaria about, and then committing suicide leaving "poor [Cydaria] defenceless" (251). As a result, his final words--"But I'm a King while this is in my Hand" (234)--are empty rhetoric, and his suicide appears more the result of weakness than a last brave act dramatizing his "sufferings and constancy." In his Dedication to the Duchess of Monmouth, Dryden has called this play Montezuma's "story" filled with "his sufferings" and "his griefs," but far too often, producing transitory pleasures for his audience has apparently taken precedence over consistent rendering of a "great" though unfortunate Prince whose fall from power might have been instructive.

Dryden's lack of concern for consistent moral instruction in this thoroughly serious play is more apparent
to us (and must have been to him after reading *Paradise Lost*) when it is juxtaposed with some of the serious plays being produced and published during the same early Restoration years. The plays of Davenant and Orrery, and others, were clearly teaching the value of Christian trust as opposed to jealousy, the eternal value of Christian love in contrast to the temporary vanities of secular life, and the relationship between God's providential plan and man's moral choices. Not all of the lessons, of course, were taught in competent plays. The instructional intent of the author is most apparent in the least competent.

For example, George Cartright's *Heroick Lover or the Infanta of Spain* (1661) is so intent upon teaching both absolute loyalty to the King and the value of the Christian contemplative life that the play fails to develop characterization, produce tension through conflict, or justify its title. The plot of the play does little more than provide the opportunity for major characters (three of whom "retire" into nunneries or a hermitage) to deliver instructive soliloquies, but the substance of their private musings provides a striking contrast to the motivation of Dryden's Guyomar and Alibech whose goals "beyond the Mountains" are "Peace" and "Freedom" and that of Julia whose goal in the nunnery is safety. Bellarius will "retire" "quietly, into some silent wood . . .
to live and die,
And meditate upon Eternity;
Calling to mind, the shortness of this life,
How full it is of Evils, and of strife.
How every thing, which we court here below,
With so much passion, soon away does go.
Come, come, my soul, and let us search a Cell,
Where thee, and I, most lovingly will dwell (pp. 63-64).

Francina's soliloquy also emphasizes concern for the next world and regret for misspent hours:

How quiet are my thoughts, me thinks since I
Resolv'd to go, into a Nunnery!
Since I resolv'd, to bid this world adieu,
And with its follies, have no more to do.
The time that I have spent, to make me brave,
And nee're so much as thought, upon a Grave.
Nee're call'd to mind, this body which I fed
With so much care, must one day Earth re-wed.
The howers I at Cards, have play'd away,
And never thought, upon my latter day!
Nee're thought upon, the Count which I must give,
For all my actions, when I cease to live!
How I have study'd, mortals for to move,
And been with every thing, But Heav'n in love!
Kind Heav'n forgive me, and accept the vow
Which I intend to make, unto you now (p. 64).

There is in none of Dryden's early plays this attention to the next life nor the religious awareness of the temporal nature of the physical world. But it is not only this undramatic open moralizing which contrasts with Dryden's early work. A more skillful example available for comparison is provided by Davenant's *Siege of Rhodes*, which presents Ianthe as the model for "Christian wives" to follow. His choice of subject provides edifying contrasts between the Christian and non-Christian cultures as does Orrery's use of the same characters--Solyman, Roxolana,
Mustapha, and Zanger—in Mustapha. In the latter play, the Christian Queen of Hungary embodies the values of loyalty (to her dead husband), trust, pity, and Christian courage, as had Ianthe. In both plays, it is "divine Pow'r" which by "design" uses the beauty of the ladies to obtain Providential "Liberty" for the people of Rhodes and of Hungary.

If, as I am proposing, Dryden re-examined his early work in the light of Milton's rebuke, he could have seen his faulty treatment of heroism and the striking absence of consistent moral argument even in his latest, and most successful works upon which rested his "fame and reputation."

In both Annus Mirabilis and Secret Love, Dryden has presented reality in ideal garb, as if one could make the real ideal simply by saying it was so. His defense of Philocles' treasonous act, as "that which every man . . . would have done on the like occasion," exposes his early practice of using the gentlemen of his society for models of virtue and heroism rather than representing ideal models for their admiration and emulation. 9 In contrast, Davenant instructs "Christian wives" with Ianthe as the ideal "example" (I.II.iii. 114). When Roxolana, marveling at Ianthe's virtue, asks if all "Christian wives" are "so true and

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9. Dryden objected to critics of Philocles, that he had not intended him to be "perfect." However, Philocles was loved by the Queen and may succeed to the throne—certainly not typical characteristics of "every man."
wondrous kind" (2.V.vi. 87), the audience is called upon to recognize that they are not but should be.

Just as Dryden's *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* aims at justifying current English literary practice in a universal critical context, *Annus Mirabilis* aims at justifying particular history by elevating it to universal significance. The poem was finished by November of 1666, published and well received in February of 1667, but must have been less gratifying to Dryden (even before 1669) after the reality of June, 1667, when the Dutch navy, so severely denigrated in Dryden's poem ("too base a foe"), had sailed up the Thames, terrified the populace, fired the ships, and, with admirable restraint, had refrained from the plunder and pillage the English feared, content instead with the symbolic victory of towing home the damaged royal vessel "Charles."

When Dryden wrote the poem, the English navy had been successful, and Dryden's patriotic desire to celebrate that success and to glorify Charles must have prevented accurate poetic judgment of the faulty moral argument underlying the poem. But after reading *Paradise Lost*, Dryden should have been able to see how uncomfortably close his poem comes to Milton's description of false heroism.

In *Annus Mirabilis*, Dryden attempts to unify and elevate to universal significance the particular history of the Dutch war and the fire of London in order to glorify Charles and to explicate the events in terms of Providential
regeneration. Michael McKeon's impressive analysis of the poem and his supporting historical evidence of unifying mythical pattern imply that Dryden succeeded, but McKeon's analysis fails to deal with several inconsistencies of language and imagery which leave the poem without solid moral foundation. In the poem, Dryden equates boldness and strength with "desert" (profits with honor), unduly denigrates the Dutch navy, ignores historic fact, and uses inappropriate images which misrepresent rather than heighten his subject. The poem celebrates a mercantile war entered by Charles for profits (Stanza 13) or for "Honour" (Stanza 45), but because the following stanza attributes the "loving" generosity of Charles' subjects in funding the war to interest in their own "abundance," it appears that Dryden is equating "Honour" with "abundance." If so, then the claim of Stanza 31, that the English "deserv'd" the "prey" of Dutch merchant ships in the neutral Danish harbor, means that one deserves what it would be "honorable" to have (that is, material goods); therefore, one gains "honour" by waging war in order to take them. In spite of Anne Barbeau's assumption that, by the end of the poem, London is purified by the fire and punished for pride in naval

successes, the emptiness of Charles' Exchequer (reflected in Stanza 46) still calls (as late as Stanza 289) for one more appeal to the people for "generous" funding so that further naval successes might be possible: 11

They have not lost their Loyalty by fire;
Nor is their courage or their wealth so low,
That from his Wars they poorly would retire,
Or beg the pity of a vanquish'd foe.

It is only in the transition between the Dutch war and the fire of London that Dryden clearly identifies the fire as punishment by "an unseen Fate" for pride in "late successes on the Foe." But even in the transitional stanzas, the language raises questions about the nature of this divine force and about Dryden's view of the activity he describes. While "triumphant flames" destroy the Dutch vessels, "Our greedy Sea-men rummage every hold, / Smile on the booty of each wealthier Chest: / And, as the Priests who with their gods make bold, / Take what they like, and sacrifice the rest" (208). This piratical taking of "booty" (this "bring[ing] home of spoils with infinite man-slaughter" PL X.688-689), Dryden curiously calls one of life's "joys" "sent from Heaven." Such "joys" are short lived because "an unseen Fate" now "feed[s]" the "envious eyes" of "France and Holland" with "English loss" (210) by sending the fire of London. A similar "joy" was the outcome of the "attempt at

11. Ward devotes much of his third chapter to discussion of Charles' perennial need of money.
Berghen" (Stanzas 24 through 35). In that British attempt to steal Dutch merchandise (in the neutral Danish harbor), "storms" prevented them from taking the "prey" which they "so deserv'd"; then the storms "repent[ed]" and "restor'd" "part of it" as a "tribute" from the "Sea" sent by "The British Ocean" to Charles. What relationship the Christian God has to the "Heaven," the "Fate," or the personified "storms" of these passages is unclear unless all represent Providence and the moral justification is that whatever is is right. After Milton's reminder that man with free will bears responsibility for his choices of action, such a view of Providence might have appeared to Dryden as shallow and superficial.

Dryden concludes this episode with a momentary moral lesson inconsistent with his larger argument. Citing the Dutch loss, he chides all "Mortals" who "vex [them]selves in vain / For wealth" which comes with "uncertainty" and is lost. Yet the justification for the war has been presented as English desire for wealth. Moreover, Dryden draws two pathetic pictures of a Dutch son and a Husband and father whose families reach for them "in vain" because they have been lost at sea in battle. These vignettes are cited by McKeon in support of Dryden's general use of "familial integrity" as justification for unity between Charles, the father, and his subjects, the children. Yet, the effect is more likely to draw attention to the interrelationship of
the family of man, particularly in a Christian context. Any war so destructive of one's human family ought to have greater justification than personal or national "interest." Dryden chides the Bishop of Munster for basing "friendship" on "interest" (38) in a total context which attempts to justify hostility based on "interest."

Barbeau assumes consistent Providential design throughout the poem and asserts that Dryden, through use of "allusions to biblical history," "makes the war with Holland an epitome of the entire scheme of salvation, from Moses to Christ" (p. 204). Though McKeon further documents this pattern, such a comparison is nevertheless incongruent as Dryden must have recognized his equation of Rupert with Christ to be, since he changed Stanza 105 to eliminate it. Just as the "third day" imagery drew Dryden into that ill-chosen analogy, his attempt to unify the events of 1666 drew him into a momentary cause-and-effect relationship between the war's successes (worth celebrating as "triumphant") and the fire (better that causal relationship than the rumored report that the plague and fire were retribution for the licentious personal behavior of Charles). Certainly, if Dryden intended the fire to be seen consistently as sent from the hand of the Christian God for necessary purification, he chose erratic imagery to support it, calling the fire an "infant monster" (871), a "mighty Murderer" (873), an "insulting fire" (877), played
with by the winds personified as "crafty Courtezans" (881). Typical of his serious work prior to 1669, in this poem Dryden has used imagery and language that can be harmonized into a consistent design only by judicious choice.

More accurately, it is possible to examine Dryden's treatment of one element of particular history, retreat in battle, to see the process he has followed in his attempt to universalize particular events. When he must handle the English retreat (Stanza 93), Dryden prepares for it by outrageously describing the battle ("Where not to be o'rcome was to do more / Then all the Conquests former Kings did gain," Stanza 80), then depicting the English courage as deserving of classic comparison (93) and salvation by the "Messiah" (114). In contrast, when the Dutch retreat, their "flight" made them "too base a foe" for the English to value the victory (196-197). Dryden says, with derision, that the Dutch "call'd that providence which we call'd flight" (192). But this "journalistic" denigration of the Dutch navy contains irony which can be turned against him. He chastizes their attempt to change reality to the ideal with the change of a word, while throughout the poem this has been his method--to elevate reality to the ideal by heightened language alone.

In spite of the faults of this early work, Dryden's poetic skills far exceeded those of most of his contemporaries. In all of the early work, his artistic
potential is evident though not thoroughly realized. What was necessary, I am proposing, Milton's checks and goads provided. After 1669, Dryden's serious plays demonstrate his new awareness of instruction as the first consideration of the poet. In *Tyrannic Love*, Dryden immediately acknowledges that human strength and success in battle are not sufficient criteria for distinguishing heroism. Then, in *The Conquest of Granada*, he dramatizes the education of that limited human strength into a genuine heroism. In all of his work after 1669, Dryden clearly distinguishes true from false heroism and provides "examples" which can lead "the way to Reformation."

12. Epilogue to *Marriage a la Mode*. 
CHAPTER 5

AFTER: TYRANNIC LOVE, CHRISTIAN PRECEPTS AND PIETY

After years of relative lack of concern for "instruction," and immediately after his open avowal to write comedy to please his age, Dryden wrote, in haste, the thoroughly serious Tyrannic Love with instruction "in precepts and examples of piety" (Watson, I, 138). Not only is this prefatory statement of intention a radical departure from that in the immediately preceding Defense of An Essay, but the play is notably different. Its subject matter is "patient Martyrdom," and there is consistent relationship between characterization, language, imagery, and verse, all directed toward a central moral statement. Both G. B. Evans and Charles Ward have recognized an affinity between Tyrannic Love and Paradise Lost, but neither has noted the permeation of the entire play with imagery, language, and characterizations which show Dryden making his first respectful "comment" on Milton's epic. Jackson Cope notes the general interrelationship between Milton's Paradise Lost and Dryden's "heroic drama," but he fails to see, specifically, Dryden's immediate reaction in Tyrannic Love. Cope argues accurately that Milton used Satan to satirize false heroism, but he does not recognize Maximin as modeled on
Satan, nor that St. Catharine embodies the "patient martyrdom" advocated by Milton.¹

The plot of Tyrannic Love focuses on the conflict between a martyr, St. Catharine, and a tyrant, Maximin. The central theme affirms the superiority of divine power by contrasting the true heroism of St. Catharine with the false heroism of Maximin. This contrast is mirrored in the dominant imagery of water and fire and in the less prevalent but consistent imagery of light and darkness, heavenly crowns and imperial crowns, captive and tyrant, payment and reward. The language of Christianity and courtly love join in mutual affirmation of a "fixed" love based upon self-less trust as opposed to a "wandering," selfish lust. The same contrast is evident in conflicting motivations. Berenice, Porphyrius, and Valeria, like St. Catharine, are generous, benevolent, and capable of self-sacrifice ("martyrdom"). Along with Apollonius, they are rational and capable of learning the necessity for faith, trust, and constancy. In contrast, Charinus and Placidius, like Maximin, are dominated by self-interest and are deluded. The conflicting emotions of pity and spite, forgiveness and vengeance, love and lust also reinforce the contrast in character. With a consistency not evident in

¹. Evans, p. 144; Ward, The Life of John Dryden, p. 69; Cope, pp. 53-54.
Dryden's earlier plays, the various elements of this one are organized into coherent patterns of meaning.

Milton's rebuke is directed at poets who glorify false heroism. The role of Maximin dramatizes Dryden's new awareness that a potential hero, self-deceived and with misdirected strength, becomes instead a "Destroyer," a "Plague" to men. In the preface, Dryden defends his characterization of Maximin as "designed" by him "to set off the character of St. Catharine" (Watson, I, 139). This defense was necessitated by charges of "Prophaneness and Irreligion" brought by "some ignorant or malicious persons" who had failed to see that St. Catharine's "brightness" increased as Maximin's "gloomy Cloud" of "Crimes" decreased his stature. Though few critics today would repeat the charges of Dryden's contemporaries, the reception of Maximin has been equally misunderstood by critics who would place him in direct line of descent from Montezuma to Almanzor and Aureng-zebe. This attempt has led to two major misinterpretations of his role in the play and his role in Dryden's heroic drama. Those who see the rant of all the heroes as an inevitable feature of their heroic gloire tend to see Dryden secretly admiring the ego of Maximin even though he must, for purposes of propriety, destroy him for impiety. Equally far from the mark is the conclusion of those critics who have read Maximin's characterization as ironic, satiric, even comic. What Dryden has done with
Maximin is dramatize what Milton had shown him, that heroic strength can be monstrous and that misdirected pride must undergo "foul descent." Just as Satan's towering stature is diminished, Maximin's is reduced both morally and physically to the ludicrous position of sitting upon a dying body because he can no longer stand. Even here he cannot conquer; even while being sat upon and dying, Placidius countermands Maximin's orders to his soldiers. Maximin's final stabs at Placidius, the last superfluous, are surely the least heroic deeds portrayed on any stage.

This attack upon the false "heroism" of Maximin permeates the language, imagery, and incident of the play and culminates in the ludicrous final scene. Though much of the attack is launched in ironic language aimed at Maximin's "heroic" stature, the attack is not upon the heroic genre, as Bruce King and D. W. Jefferson have assumed, but upon the grotesque excesses of the pride-bloated "hero." The "heroes" of Dryden's early works had, in part, displayed pride in boasts of prowess, but the "bombast" or "rant" most often assumed by critics to be part of heroic drama begins with his exploration of the excesses of false heroism. C. V. Deane comments on Dryden's introduction of bombast in

Tyrannic Love and use of it in The Conquest of Granada, then marks its decline "soon afterwards" in his reminder that though "overstrained rhetoric is usually accounted to be the most characteristic feature of the heroic play . . . the most formidable rants were confined to a short period": between Tyrannic Love and Aureng-Zebe. Deane's accurate and important reminder fails, nevertheless, to recognize that Dryden's use of rant in Tyrannic Love, The Conquest of Granada, and Aureng-Zebe specifically marks the exposure of the false hero (Maximin), the education of the false hero into a true hero (Almanzor), and the juxtaposition of a true hero (Aureng-zebe) with a false (Morat). This pattern of change in the hero from selfish to altruistic began, it seems to me, once Milton directed Dryden's attention to the potential for both good and evil in heroic pride.

The impetus for examination of the hero had probably come from Milton, and the pattern for the characterization of Maximin probably came from Milton's Satan. Satan's self-deception, his pseudo-heroic stature, his bloated ego, his "guile, hate, envy, and revenge" (PL VIII.465-466) are all mirrored in Maximin. The imagery of Satan's flames of rage


4. Loftis' commentary in the Cal. Ed. of Indian Emperor cites the play as "largely free of the bombast that marks Tyrannic Love and Conquest of Granada" (Dryden, Works, IX, 318), but he neglects the reason why it is so large a part of the latter plays.
and god-defiance are repeated in Maximin's vaunting words. Satan's devices of temptation are used by Maximin against both Porphyrius and St. Catharine, but with little effect, because St. Catharine is sufficient to stand and Porphyrius is capable of learning from divine instruction.

Throughout *Tyrannic Love*, true knowledge and reason are contrasted with self-deception and delusion to distinguish those characters aligned with divine or human power. This self-deception, primarily Maximin's, Dryden exposes in a pattern of convincing appearance followed by various modes of correcting reality, much as Milton had done in counteracting Satan's heroic Boasts with the narrator's correcting reminders of God's immutable, eternal power. Like Milton's Satan, Maximin is first presented to the audience as heroic in speech and in the arts of war and government. Then through the speeches of Berenice and Porphyrius, Dryden corrects this view. Maximin is self-deceived, and the audience has been deceived by hearing of his heroic exploits and by seeing his "god-like" stature through the eyes of Charinus and Placidius. Maximin thinks his "merits" have won the approval of the gods, but Berenice, like Milton's correcting narrator, insists that he, and we, "witness this just day, when [the gods] begin [his] mischiefs to repay" (I.1.287-288). This correction of Maximin's assumption of continued "crown'd" success for his "Arms" (I.1.1) had been "fore-shown" in Nigrinus' vision, but those characters who
rely on "Swords" could neither see the vision clearly nor understand it.

The pattern of deceptive appearance corrected by reality is repeated in Maximin's first dialogue about St. Catharine (II.i.137 ff.). Placidius' warning against the "infected zeal" of St. Catharine and Maximin's reply have the appearance of reasonable statements, particularly since they sound royalist and anti-puritan. But the reality of St. Catharine's "high Air and meen, which marks . . . the greatness of a Queen" belies this appearance, leaving Maximin's "Fair foe of Heav'n" remark exposed as without substance. Moreover, the language of illness ("infected zeal," "infectious madness," "contagious Erroor") used by both Placidius and Maximin about Christianity provides a later and more subtle correction of deceptive appearance, when St. Catharine uses similar language in the fourth act to instruct Maximin about the "real" source of his "sickly appetite" and his "fev'rish dream" (387-394). Also, in this same first meeting between Maximin and St. Catharine, his question about the source of her belief reflects his "view" that "pride" or "frenzy" must "misguide" her "mind" (163-164). She corrects his error—"a setled mind, / Enlightened from above, my way does mark" (166-167)—and again uses language which will throughout the play distinguish Maximin's as the mind misguided by bloated pride to the point of madness.
In the same scene, Apollonius argues the reasonable view of moral behavior without Christian faith. He cites the similarity among "all Religions," in which both "solid truths" and "pleasing Fables" can be found. Like the words of Maximin and Satan, these tempting words of Apollonius have "semblance of truth" but no "substance," but unlike Eve's susceptibility to deception, St. Catharine's "divine" reason returns truly rational arguments which convert Apollonius with the "convincing power" of "Truth" (181-224).

Dryden's most effective "deflating" corrective device is irony. Maximin's very early statement that the Christian "victims" are "blind" to their "own destruction" since their "zeal is . . . pious madness of the mind" (I.i.169-170) becomes gradually more ironic as Maximin's ego-centric "piety," his worship of self, destroys his reason and leads directly to his "own destruction." He becomes more and more "blind" to reality as his rant moves closer to true "madness." Early references to the "captive" Christians as "victims" in "bonds" also becomes ironic as repeated use of "captive" imagery shows St. Catharine and Maximin exchanging roles of captive and ruler. Moreover, Maximin's diatribe against free will in the fourth act serves as the focus for Dryden's contrast of those

5. This echoes the natural-law argument of Montezuma in The Indian Emperor and may be Dryden's acknowledgment of previous error.
characters totally free to choose their actions and those imprisoned by their passions and their blindness. The subtle and pervasive interrelationship of imagery and characterization is apparent in Dryden's repeated identification of all divine-directed characters as "martyrs." As St. Catharine demonstrates, martyrdom is a self-chosen fate. All of the characters aligned with St. Catharine choose, deliberately, to serve others or to serve a cause instead of their own appetites. This unselfish service, of course, results in just "payment," in "rewards," in "crowns" of a "brighter" hue which reflect the light of the divine power with which they have aligned themselves. They have chosen unselfish adherence to principle beyond immediate temporal, physical, personal satisfaction. Repeated imagery presents these characters as free to act while "fixed" in their resolve to serve just ends, while it shows the satanic characters as "captive" to their "own desires" as they "roam about, and never are at rest" (IV.i.384). St. Catharine instructs Maximin in the proper way to make himself "a God below" by learning to "rule" his "own desires" (IV.i.380 ff.). The lesson of the paradox is that one gains freedom by exercising one's will in appropriate

6. This language of mercantile imagery and contrasted earthly and heavenly crowns is found throughout the play.

7. Similarly, the spirits aligned with Maximin "wildly ... roam in discontent about" (IV.i.179).
self-restraint. Maximin's self-centered view of divinity assumes absolute freedom to accompany his absolute power. His assumption of power grows louder, more verbal, and less rational as it increasingly fails to reflect the reality of his very rapid loss of power over himself and others.

Dryden's irony is never stronger than in Maximin's speech directed at Berenice's newly accepted faith:

With what a holy Empress am I blest,  
What scorn of Earth dwells in her heav'nly brest!  
My Crown's too mean; but he whom you adore,  
Has one more bright of Martyrdom in store  
[(IV.i.436-439)]

The irony begins with Maximin's tone of voice, which reflects his own "scorn." It continues as he uses the language of her faith and the imagery established throughout the play to support the validity of that faith. He contrasts the relative merits of his "Crown" ("too mean") with the "more bright" crown of "Martyrdom." He calls her "holy" and uses the verb "adore" to represent her "love" of divine power. And while he speaks with vicious sarcasm, the "bright" truth of the words he speaks shines through his tone. But still he fails to understand it.

Maximin is unable to understand even the lesson taught by Amariel's "flaming Sword" in Act V. The empty power of Maximin's "drawn Sword" and threatened "fire" (293, 297) has been exposed by Amariel's response to St. Catharine's appeal to "Heav'n," but Maximin's bloated pride sees her "immortality" only as proof "she's fit for" him.
St. Catharine's correction is an open, direct statement of reality: "A pow'r controls thee which thou dost not see" (334). But Maximin is blindly "drowning" in his delusions as he argues with himself his own need for St. Catharine to live ("But I love, not for her sake, but my own" [p. 373]). And he denies the factual report of her death with irrational assumption of his ability to change her "Fate."

Toward the conclusion, Maximin's "vaunting" boasts bring together the imagery repeated throughout the play. He threatens the power of heaven ("Keep you your Rain and Sun-shine in your Skies" [V.i.596]) with vengeance ("And I'le keep back my flame and Sacrifice" [597]) with the assumption that Divine Providence will then be unable to reward the virtuous ("Your Trade of Heav'n shall soon be at a stand, / And all your Goods lie dead upon your hand" [598-599]). Then, in the final ironic scene, in a mad delusion, Maximin shouts orders, threatens, and stabs with ignoble, bloody viciousness the body upon which he sits. The image of Maximin as a "mighty weight" which "press[ed] [Porphyrius] down" with his obligations (II.i.119-120) echoes Porphyrius' earlier charge that Maximin had made his marriage to Berenice "a step to mount [the Throne] on" (II.i.25). In the conclusion of the play, both images are represented by Maximin's actions as he "sets his foot on" Valerius and sits upon the dying body of Placidius. In every instance, Maximin has figuratively or literally
"stepped" on others to "mount" above his rightful place in a universe governed by a "pow'r" which will prevent his "rising." The "mount" in Maximin's last line echoes the earlier "mount" and joins with Maximin's delusion of "high flight" of "Eagles tow'ring in the Sky" to underline the irony in the final scene. Like Milton's Satan, Maximin is "high uplifted beyond hope" (PL II.7). What hope he has had was "false presumptions hope" (PL II.522), but even that he has deliberately "cut off" as he would teach Valeria to do (V.i.537).

Dryden may have been influenced by Milton's emphasis upon the guile and self-deception of Satan and upon Eve's susceptibility to the temptation "to know." The characters aligned with human power are capable of deception of others and of themselves to serve selfish ends. Maximin's charge against Porphyrius ("No, Fool, thou art too honest to be great!" [IV.i.656]) underlines his pride in this capability. And Placidius, too, shows himself capable of satanic guile in "serving" Maximin: "None but a Fool distastful truth will tell, / So it be new and please, 'tis full as well" (IV.i.206-207). Moreover, it is their self-deception which is most destructive. Maximin's assessment of his "absolute" power over others, his assumption of "control" over "Fate," and his mental image of himself "tow'ring in the sky," "shoving back the Earth," and "scatter[ing] all the Gods" are the deceptive images of a Satan who thought he could
remake the reality of Hell into a Heaven and shake the
throne of God. This dichotomy that distinguishes human
characters also distinguishes the "spirits" that appear in
"visions": Amariel sees clearly with "open eyes" in the
"streams" of divine "light," while Damilcar "reel[s] and
stagger[s]," overcome by the power of divine truth, because
he "dwells" in "double sense" and "twi-light truth"
(IV.i.176-202).

Even when told the truth directly, neither Placidius
nor Maximin is capable of accepting it. At the conclusion
of the visions in Act IV, Nigrinus tells Placidius that a
"holy Being" has "invade[d] this place" and that he must
leave because "no Charms prevail against the Christians God"
(197-200). Placidius' reaction is doubt and his decision is
for deception. Then, near the conclusion of the play, St.
Catharine explains to Maximin the destruction of his "Engine"
("Heav'n has shown its pow'r" [328]) and the cause of his
own destruction ("A pow'r controls thee which thou dost not
see" [334]). Maximin's response is to call for "their
heads." The only "reality" he sees is the physical reality
of blood and gore.

Milton had rebuked poets for mistakenly portraying
"infinite man-slaughter" of war as "Heroic Vertu." These
so-called "great Conquerors" should be "rightlier call'd"
"Destroyers" and "Plagues of men" (X.691-693). Dryden's
later criticism appears to acknowledge this rebuke,8 and his immediate response may be reflected in Maximin's single-minded concentration upon Imperial power, upon physical punishments, upon "swords" of war and "blood" which cannot prevail over St. Catharine's "Heroick proofs" of "death's contempt" (IV.i.529). The focus of the play is upon her "better fortitude of patience and heroic martyrdom" (PL VIII.31-32).

St. Catharine's transcendent victory over Maximin's bloody threats is dramatized as the direct result of her appeals to "Heav'n" for aid, as the "reward" for her steadfastness in the face of increasingly effective temptations. Though St. Catharine does not appear on stage until near the end of the second act, the power she serves has, from the beginning, opposed the Bloody hand of Maximin and has foretold his defeat by Catharine in the prophecy of Nigrinus:

A Curtain drawn presented to our view  
A Town besiegd; and on the neighb'ring Plain  
Lay heaps of visionary Souldiers slain.  
A rising mist obscur'd the gloomy head  
Of one, who in Imperial Robes lay dead.  
Near this, in Petters stood a Virgin, crown'd;  
Whom many Cupids strove in vain to wound:  
A voice to morrow, still to morrow rung:  
Another To; To, Paean sung (I.i.100-108).

This vision, unintelligible to Charinus, Placidius, and Maximin, introduces the imagery which throughout the play

will contrast the choices facing St. Catharine and every other character: the choice between an Imperial or a divine crown, between "fetters" imposed from without or from within, between sensual or transcendent love. In each situation, the reward for the proper choice is an eternal "to morrow" in place of temporal death, hope instead of despair.

St. Catharine's first conflict with Maximin shows the strength of her rational argument. It both stymies Maximin and converts his priest, Apollonius. The second direct conflict between the two opens the third act, with Placidius as Maximin's agent of temptation. He compliments her "constancy" and offers her the "Aegyptian Crown." Both compliment and crown are presented as "gifts" from Maximin, and both she spurns in favor of the "Crown" for "constancy" which "Heav'n . . . will give." Though Christian literature abounds in temptation scenes, this scene may echo, particularly, Satan's temptation of Eve, for Placidius commends her "Vertue" which "does deserve a nobler Scene": "You are not for obscurity design'd" (III.i.43-44, cf. PL VII.541 ff.). Then, as Satan had questioned the nature of God, Placidius questions the nature of that "Heav'n" to whom St. Catharine appeals:

   Why do you lose an unregarded pray'r?
   If happiness, as you believe, be rest,
   That quiet sure is by the Gods possesst:
   'Tis greatness to neglect, or not to know
   The little Business of the world below (vss. 63-67).
But Catharine rejects this Epicurean doctrine, and, unlike Eve, does not succumb to "persuasive words" that only appear "impregnated with reason . . . and with truth" (PL VIII 737-738). Neither Maximin's repeated offer of the "Aegyptian Crown" nor his threats of "fires" can "move" St. Catharine's fixed resolve to "pursue a brighter Diadem." Maximin acknowledges her purity (91) and expresses his love, but as her steadfast refusal reverses their roles ("I command, and thou art but a Slave" [III.97]), Maximin "burns" with the "tides of fire," of "rage" and "desire." His loss of human reason becomes apparent as he asks Placidius, "What petty promise was't that caused this frown?" (104). Placidius' reply ("You heard: no less than the Aegyptian Crown") emphasizes Maximin's loss of rational control, since he had not only heard but had spoken the offer himself, with stress upon its value ("Can any brighter than the Roman Be?" [82]). Further loss of control is evident in his impulsive gamble of the "Crown on Berenice's head" ("I am resolved to double till I win" [108]). Following St. Catharine's exit, the random pattern of his speech emphasizes his inability to think or speak rationally, while the final lines show his total lack of awareness of their relative worth: "We look like Eagles tow'ring in the Sky; / While her high flight still raises mine more high" (109-110). Dryden's use of the eagle, in Roman tradition the symbol of divinity of the emperor, shows Maximin's mistaken assumption that
Both he and St. Catharine are divine. As the drama develops, St. Catharine, through alliance with true divinity, "soars" while Maximin, fettered with the illusion of his own divinity, "descends."

In the first encounter, St. Catharine's rational powers have proved sufficient in her exchange with Apollonius. In the second, with Placidius, she has called upon "Heav'n" to aid her reason against "semblance of truth." In the third temptation scene, cited by Evans as "borrowed" from Paradise Lost,³ "soft visions" of sensual love invade St. Catharine's dreams. She is here more seriously threatened, for Placidius "read[s]" "on her face . . . a wandering joy." But Amariel comes to her rescue, and two images are implicitly contrasted. The "immortal steel" of Amariel is, as Damilcar himself acknowledges, representative of a power superior to that of Maximin's "flames" and "Swords" (III,i.172). In the dream temptation, St. Catharine's ability to correctly read the potentially deceptive imagery is mirrored in our own intended response to Damilcar's song. Dryden's consistent pattern of water and mercantile imagery has prepared us to recognize that sensual love, though tempting in its beauty, is temporal and exacts too high a "price." In the dream, the "flow" of carnal love decreases with "Age" because it is temporal.

Throughout the play, the "flow" of divine love increases because it is eternal.

St. Catharine's fourth temptation (IV.i.460 ff.) she calls her "greatest tryal," because adherence to faith is in conflict with "pity" for Berenice. This "doubtful conflict" which she "must try / Betwixt [her] pity and [her] piety" may, in human eyes, be seen as an "equal choice." Twice, in this scene, St. Catharine must "instruct" Porphyrius that the "private brest" is often unable to judge the "will of Heav'n," because that "vast Abyss" of "Heav'ns deep" cannot be fathomed by the "short Plummets" of "humane Wit." This "correction" of Porphyrius, by implication, corrects Dryden's practice in his earlier plays of juxtaposing conflicting goods for a superficial increase in labyrinthian complexity. St. Catharine resists the temptation to choose the lesser "crime" by leaving the decision to the higher power she serves: "If the All-great decree her life to spare, / He will the means, without my crime, prepare" (IV.i.554-555).

St. Catharine's "greatest tryal" of the fourth act pales by comparison when, in the fifth, she is faced with the dilemma of her mother's pleas. The demands of filial love, pity, and gratitude (obligation) call for St. Catharine to save Felicia's life, but the unfolding scene gradually reveals the weakness of Felicia, which had been foreshadowed by her fear in the midst of the tempest. Her
fear of, rather than faith in, divine power is exposed as she asks St. Catharine "but some false promise" to "give," "only to gain me so much time to live" (218-219). The language of her plea is that of the false temporal desires of those characters who fail to see clearly their relationship to divine power. St. Catharine's "instruction" of her mother (288 ff.) uses mercantile imagery to remind her that life is temporal and not worth the "cost" of "sin." Felicia's motherly "Love" which had been "stronger than [her] fear" (254 ff.) when St. Catharine was a child has far greater need for strength now, since the "waves" which would drown St. Catharine if she were to succumb to the temptation to sin are eternal; the earlier "waves" were, in comparison, only a deceptive threat to her safety. Dryden's description of the earlier incident speaks of St. Catharine's standing "innocently" on the "Bank," Felicia "ran and rusrht in ---- and from the waves [her] floating pledge did bear." She was unable then, as now, to recognize that the same force which can drown, can float those whose "pledge" of faith is innocent and "true." The juxtaposition of this water imagery with that of St. Catharine's immediately preceding speech underlines St. Catharine's instruction: man on the "Bank" of "Eternity" must be able to "plunge" into it because of his faith in divine power. The validity of her instruction is re-affirmed by the direct aid of heaven through Amariel's "flaming Sword."
Dryden's dramatic portrayal of St. Catharine and Maximin in the temptation scenes re-enacts the Satanic temptation of Eve with flattery, with rational argument, with sensual appeal, and with promise of higher status, but Catharine's responses show her sufficient to stand even against the strongest of temptations—to choose one good against another. In her repeated instructions to her mother in Act V, it is as if she were instructing the mother of us all that obedience to God's law is the supreme good, against which lesser goods—physical desire, social or political power, human reason, even filial love—pale in comparison.

Lesser characters align themselves with either St. Catharine or Maximin. Porphyrius, Apollonius, Berenice, and Valeria are converted to the Christian faith after appropriate trials or tests of their virtue. Even before conversion, each demonstrates capacity for pity, compassion, self-sacrifice, and trust. Each sees honor as dependent upon these virtues, and finally recognizes the rational basis for Christian "Truth." In contrast, Charinus and Placidius assume that honor is won in battle and held with uncompromising god-like force. They both prefer the "noise of war" over the "little Arts of Peace" (I.20, 24).

Because Dryden emphasizes the alignment between Maximin's false heroism and his son, Charinus, the final defeat of Maximin's self-serving human power is
pre-figured in Charinus' early death. Charinus believes his father god-like (I.i.45) and, in emulation of him, causes his own death attempting some "noble action" in war. This seems necessary to Charinus, because he sees himself outdone by Porphyrius in martial arts. Sharing his father's lack of insight, he fails to realize that Porphyrius' stature as a "tall Tree" "O're-shading" lesser shrubs comes from his moral virtues of trust, constancy, and compassion, from his ability to withstand the temptations of power and status offered by Maximin, and from his ability to receive "instruction." Charinus' "ruine," the result of "his too great thirst of fame" (I.i.239), came as he fought "beyond all humane force" (240) and "stood like Capaneus defying Jove" (246). This classic image of heroic defiance mirrors Maximin's consistent refusal to acknowledge divine power as stronger than his own. Moreover, Placidius' mistaken connection between his earlier "Vision . . . of [a] fatal day" and the death of Charinus links that death with Maximin's still to come. Placidius' vision (I.i.100 ff.) had clearly forecast Maximin's defeat by Catarine. Thus, Placidius' mistaken interpretation emphasizes the forecast and establishes in the first act, at the height of Maximin's power, the underlying message of the play: human power and glory are helpless in combat with divine power and virtue.

The imagery of forceful water and light combine to represent the power and wisdom of the Christian faith, which
are inevitably triumphant in conflict with Maximin's "flaming" rage and "gloomy Cloud" of self-deception. The water imagery, initially, appears to establish Maximin's heroic stature with his capability to pass over "German Lakes," enclose his "Foes . . . in watry Fastnesses," and "sound . . . the depth of trembling Marshes" (I.i.3-7). But this deceptive appearance is corrected when fire imagery replaces water as Maximin's dominant image. Placidius goes to Nigrinus for knowledge of "Heav'ns doom" because he mistakenly thinks Nigrinus can "bind the head-long flood in sudden ice and where most swift it flows, in chrystal nets, the wond'ring fishes close" (1172-1174). But these Charms are ineffective against the "Christians God" (IV.200). Moreover, they are insubstantial in contrast to the envisioned eternal "rising mist" of St. Catharine. This symbol of divine power "obscur'd the gloomy head" of Maximin, who in the trappings of earthly power ("Imperial Robes") "lay dead" (I.103-104).

Maximin's "greedy flames" of ego-centric rage (I.i.168) and his "raging flames" of lust (III.i.295) threaten St. Catharine with "other fires" than his "desires" (III.i.85). But they threaten her Christian faith with little success. With biblical allusion, she unites the fire and water imagery in her exhortation to Apollonius to "be
Baptiz'd in fire" (II.i.238). In the midst of her second temptation scene, she tells Placidius that the "blest" man is he who from a "safe Cliff" of faith views "the labours of the Deep" as the "tenth wave" of divine power overwhelms the "Gold-fraught Vessel" of vain human power (III.i.46-53). Placidius mistakenly believes Maximin a sufficient "Pilot" for such a challenge, for he shares Maximin's self-deception that he is "Monarch both of Earth and Seas" (55). Porphyrius, in contrast, is a skilled pilot who must, and does, "move to the Port" of virtuous love by steering carefully "near the Rock" of Valeria's love (157).

Maximin's identification with fire imagery suggests that his false heroism leads his son to death: "fiery showers" (I.243) of battle destroyed Charinus. His "too great thirst of fame" (239) had taken him away from the "rising mist" of divine power into the "rising dust which troubles all the air" (113)--the field of mortal battle which measures only human power. The divine power, in contrast, can both satisfy "thirst" and can "drown" the "Spirits of Fire," whose power is temporal ("Like leaves in the Autumn"). In direct confrontation, the forces of "fire," defeated, "fall down" into the "wide Ocean" and "hiss in the Water and drown" (IV.i.63-66).

Additional water imagery shows Felicia frightened of divine power in the face of both the tempest and Maximin's threat of death. She lacks the faith to "plunge" into "Eternity." The same inevitable divine power is imaged in Placidius' lament: "The mid-stream's his; I, creeping by the side, / Am shoulder'd off by his impetuous Tide" (II.i.125-126). Porphyrius' successes reflect the strong watery force of virtue—even pre-Christian self-less virtue. In gathering drops of pity, compassion, generosity, self-sacrifice, and martyrdom, the stream of divine virtue gains gradually in force and ultimately "swallows" the fires of ego-centric rage, lust, jealousy, vengeance, spite, and self-defined "divinity." Like an irresistible current, St. Catharine's rational faith "sweeps away" Legions and makes "Martyrs" even of Maximin's army, symbol of Imperial power (II.i.249-250). Her power is so strong that Maximin himself fears "one look more will make that Martyr me" (270). Maximin's love for St. Catharine, when allied with "pride" and "revenge," is a "fire" blown by "windy passion" (III.i.295-297). However, when his love responds to her "high Air and meen" (II.i.159-160), to her genuine "greatness" and purity (III.i.91), it is a love which he has never felt before: a "sleeping form" that "wak'st like drowsie Sea-men" (4). It is this love which has the power to turn his heart to liquid (25). But when his love is spurned by Catharine's "true piety" (96), Maximin, "wild
with [his] rage, more wild with [his] desire" compares his competing passions with "meeting tides": "but mine are tides of fire" (103). These destructive forces of human passion have obviously infected his mind. With "a sickly appetite" as "in a fev'rish dream" he wonders why his "thirst is never gone" (387-389). The same "too great thirst" which destroyed his son is destroying him because he fails to "see" that only the "waters" of Christianity can quench that thirst. The same water which threatens with tempests, tides, and strong currents those who oppose it, buoys up the ship guided by a good "Pilot." "Love" rides "safe at Anchor" when it is fixed upon one person, but "losing once that hold, to the wide Ocean born, / It drives away at will, to every wave a scorn" (IV.i.365 ff.).

The language of mercantile imagery reinforces the disparity between the "worth," "value," and "gain" associated with "solid" "rewards" of divine Providence and the too great "cost" of "empty" temporal "rewards" if the "bargain" involves "a sin." Occasionally, the mercantile language appears conventional, as in the Berenice/Porphyrius conversation in Act II (70 ff.), but most often it directly represents the conflict between human and divine power. Maximin accuses the gods of trying to "rob" him, and he assumes that his human power ("flame and Sacrifice") is sufficient to prevent Providential rewards ("Your Trade of Heav'n shall soon be at a stand, / And all your Goods lie
dead upon your hand" [V.i.598-599]). The particular effectiveness of this description of defiance, as mentioned above, comes from Dryden's combination of imagery in a single statement. Maximin's flames and blood have been pitted against the water and light of divinity throughout the play, and he has assumed throughout that he could thwart the "Trade of Heav'n." However, early in the play, in another instance of combined imagery, Berenice and Porphyrius accurately forecast the divine destruction of Maximin, "the Pirate," whose "ill-gotten gains" will sink with him into the "Sea . . . [which] swallows all" (II.i.34 ff.).

Dryden's thematically consistent use of language and imagery indicates a concern for moral instruction much greater than in any of his earlier works. His use of verse further indicates that, in this play, his concern for "sense" is dominant over other considerations. Dryden's prefatory remarks call attention to this:

I have not everywhere observed the equality of numbers in my verse: partly by reason of my haste; but more especially because I would not have my sense a slave to syllables (Watson, I, 141).

In addition to his concern for "sense," the audible difference in this more smoothly flowing verse might be the result of Milton's music still echoing in his poetic ear. The notably different sound is caused, in part, by the greater use of enjambment between couplets which more
effectively breaks the couplet pattern than enjambment within the couplet. There are in *Tyrannic Love* forty-four instances of enjambment between couplets compared to only fourteen in *The Indian Emperor*. Milton's prefatory comments added to *Paradise Lost* in 1668 describe "true musical delight" as found in "apt numbers, fit quantity of Syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one Verse into another" (italics mine). But even without the use of enjambment, Dryden has varied his rhythm, used shortened lines, and decreased the use of the caesura to emphasize verse paragraphs of sense rather than epigrammatic couplets. For example, in St. Catharine's "instruction" to her mother (V.i.228-2411), every couplet is end-stopped, but two lines are short, the instruction is paragraphed, and only one line (231) has the strong central caesura found in the abundant lines of antithesis and paradox of the early plays. Moreover, in that one line with its strong caesura, Dryden emphasizes the thematic contrast between mortality and immortality, between that which is worth "our cost" and that which is of no value. Though an "ill-judging audience in a play of rhyme" may have found "delight" in "the seeming contradiction of a poor antithesis" or in the "jerk or sting of an epigram,"¹¹ Dryden knew the difference, and in this play, he paid far more attention to the difference.

¹¹. Watson, I, 98.
Where an antithetical couplet appears, there is direct relationship to the character speaking and to the central thematic statement. Perhaps the best example is in Maximin's early statement about fortune: "The lucky have whole days, which still they choose; / Th' unlucky have but hours, and those they lose" (I.i.65-66). His lack of perception about Christian Providence leads him to the mistaken conclusion that man is subject to the forces of blind chance, and he expresses man's gain or loss in temporal terms. Throughout the play, it is apparent that Divine Providence aids those who "choose" correctly, while those who "lose," lose eternity. Maximin is repeatedly associated with language and imagery of aging and death (e.g., IV.i.667; V.i.154-155) emphasizing his foolish adherence to the "empty joys of Earth." These Berenice forgets in her choice of eternal "happiness." If it were not for the consistent thematic interrelationship, Berenice's lines would be little more than a traditional commonplace:

That happiness may Berenice find,
Leaving these empty joys of Earth behind;
And this frail Being, where so short a while
Th' unfortunate lament, and prosp'rous smile,
Yet a few days, and those which now appear
In youth and beauty like the blooming year,
In life's swift Scene shall change; and cares shall come,
And heavy age, and death's relentless doom
(IV.i.409-416).
But because of Dryden's greater concern for "sense," these lines add to the characterization of Berenice and comment upon Maximin's human folly.

George McFadden's interest in Dryden's development of a technique of internal reinforcement of sound in the manner of Vergil and Milton need not have taken him to The State of Innocence for verification. He correctly attributes Dryden's interest in the technique to Milton's example, but he mistakenly assumes Dryden's use of the technique in State of Innocence to be a simple "exercise" in the skills of his trade. Examination of only a few of Dryden's couplets from Tyrannic Love yields a wealth of evidence that Milton's influence was immediate. Dryden's use of the technique is prevalent and directly related to the "instruction" of his central thematic statement. For example, in Maximin's statement of susceptibility to St. Catharine's power

Absert, I may her Martyrdom decree;
But one look more will make that Martyr me
(II. i. 269-270).

Dryden's alliterative repetition of seven m sounds emphasizes Maximin's final destruction because of the power inherent in Catharine's martyrdom. In a similar use of alliteration, with assonance and consonance,

A love so chast, as Conscience could not chide;
But cherisht it, and kept it by its side
(V.i.455-456).

Dryden links the key words—chast, chide, and cherisht;
Conscience, could, and kept—to emphasize the lasting value
of the constancy and purity of Berenice's love for Porphyrius
which will "endure" the "test of Heav'n itself" (453-454).

In an example of more subtle use of internal sound,
Dryden repeats n's, l's, and s's while using vowels in
rhyme words to reinforce the sense and break the even
rhythm of the couplet. Porphyrius assures Berenice that
their souls will recognize one another after death without
a "Scroul" because hers will be "so bright" in its reflec­tion of divine virtue:

That needs not, sure, for none will be so bright,
So pure, or with so small allays of light
(V.494-495).

The rapid pace of the single syllable words of the first line
is broken by the key word sure which is set off both by
commas and by the repeated n sounds. Then the parallel
construction of so bright, so pure carries the reader to a
pause at the comma only two syllables into the second line.
This gives equal emphasis to four rhyme words in place of
only two. Each of the pairs of rhymes, sure/pure and light/
Bright, underlines the thematic statement of assured reward
of bright crowns for those whose purity reflects their
adherence to divine light. Moreover, the syntax reflects that quality of Milton's verse noted by W. K. Wimsatt.  

Again, Dryden presents an image of "blind" mankind failing to understand the true source of their dissatisfaction:

Poor humane kind all daz'd in open day,
Erre after bliss, and blindly miss their way
(IV.405-406).

With a play of sound— daz'd/day, erre/their, bliss/miss, bliss/blindly— Dryden catches the ear of the reader in order to engage his mind.

Perhaps the best example of internal sound used to reinforce sense occurs in Berenice's "instruction" to Porphyrius about the nature of their dilemma:

We both are bound by trust, and must be true;
I to his Bed, and to his Empire you.
For he who to the Bad Betrays his trust,
Though he does good, becomes himself unjust
(II.1.48-51).

They have, in their preceding conversation, been carefully weighing two points of view to see which will represent their "true" course by tipping the scale of decision. Their arguments appear balanced in relative merit because both pursue virtuous ends, but Berenice's carefully balanced lines give an answer whose key words—trust, must, true—emphasize its substance with their sounds, linked as they

are by alliteration or internal rhyme. The chiasmus of the second line makes it as carefully balanced as the last line with its strong caesura. But the repeated alliteration of b's links all four lines together to emphasize that the apparent balance is deceptive. The must represents a metaphysical obligation far outweighing any human distinction between good and bad. The latter couplet read out of context sounds much like Dryden's earlier sententious use of conventional wisdom. But, here, the wisdom is an inherent part of a pattern of sound, in a pattern of debate, in a patterned play, where individual lines are integral parts of coherent instruction to man, who must choose between the City of God and the City of Man.

This coherent statement of Christian instruction, I am convinced, is Dryden's immediate acknowledgment of Milton's moral rebuke. His next task was to determine the genre in which he could match or surpass Milton's artistic accomplishment. After writing Tyannic Love, Dryden must have spent the following months of 1669 examining his past work and reading for an epic. Prefaces written during this period reflect his chagrin over past "uncorrectness" (Preface to The Wild Gallant, Watson, I, 132) and "vulgar" "low comedy" (Preface to An Evening's Love, Watson, I, 145). They show his new attention to moral instruction (Watson, 141-152) and inculcation of piety (Watson, 139). And they reflect his new generic distinction of the "heroic play"
with mention of the Conquest of Granada. Both the Preface to Tyrannic Love and the Preface to An Evening's Love contain references to the Conquest, but it is in the latter that Dryden reveals his conclusion after examination of genre: it is "in heroic plays [that Restoration dramatists] may justly claim precedence of Shakespeare and Fletcher." He defers further discussion of this "difference" until he publishes the Conquest, "where the discourse will be more proper" (Watson, 144-145). But his second task is apparently finished. He has defined the new genre and written a play fitting his definition. Moreover, in this epic "in little" his heroic characterization continues the response to Milton begun in Tyrannic Love. Maximin's satanic strength is destructive because uncontrolled. Almanzor's strength, too, is potentially destructive, but he acquires control as he gradually acknowledges his place in the universal order.
After examination of early Restoration drama, Dryden must have decided that his use of heroic verse was justified and his serious work was somewhat defensible. But it needed the legitimacy of generic distinction. Three pieces of critical prose accompany The Conquest of Granada. When combined, the letter of dedication, the essay "Of Heroic Plays," and the "Defense of the Epilogue" accomplish the three critical tasks Dryden faced. First, by tracing the origin of "heroic plays" to Davenant, they include a retroactive justification of Davenant’s and Dryden’s pre-1669 serious plays. Second, by equating heroic drama with epic, they generically define what he has now consciously written in the Conquest. Third, they examine the "difference" between this accomplishment and those of past writers, to the detriment of the latter.

Dryden’s decision to stake his reputation on the Conquest of Granada is supported by his critical argument. "Heroic poesy has always been sacred to princes," and "heroic plays" share the values of "heroic poesy"—"the most excellent and most profitable kind of writing." They, like the epic, can be "of the greatest use to humankind" since
they can excite "to virtue the greatest men." ¹ This universal moral value elevates "heroic plays" above other "serious" plays. Indeed, "the drama" has "one advantage" over epic, "namely, that it represents to view what the poem only does relate" (Watson, I, 162). Furthermore, the social "advantages" of Dryden's "present age" lend themselves, particularly, to the expression of "gallant" wit appropriate to "heroic plays" (Watson, I, 169). Therefore, Dryden needs "no other argument to justify [his] choice in this imitation" of "the most noble, the most pleasant, and the most instructive way of writing in verse, and withal the highest pattern of human life" (Watson, I, 162). It should answer Milton's call for moral instruction and support Dryden's attempt at lasting fame. At the same time, it should satisfy the Restoration desire for "noble" pleasure and Dryden's desire for immediate reputation.

As W. S. Clark has noted, and as I have earlier discussed, Dryden's critical equation of epic with "heroic play" is probably the result of post-Tyrannic Love considerations. After dramatizing his acknowledgment that misguided heroism could be satanic, he turned his attention to examination of how he might "contend" with the

¹ John Dryden, "Dedication to His Royal Highness the Duke," prefixed to The Conquest of Granada in Dryden: The Dramatic Works, III, 15. All further references to this work will appear in the text, distinguishing part, act, scene, and page number. Lines are not numbered.
"pre-eminence" of past and present writers. He challenges that "pre-eminence" with The Conquest of Granada and, at the same time, continues his response to Milton's rebuke. Again his hero is potentially destructive, but here he is capable of learning his proper relationship to hierarchical order. Through the influence of love and the aid of Divine Providence, Almanzor learns that he is not a self-sufficient "king" of himself (l.l.i, p. 34), but is subject to familial, political, and divine responsibilities. These responsibilities, in fact, are the source of his true identity. Reflecting the need for epic instruction in his newly defined genre, Dryden "begins with the moral" borrowed from Homer: "union preserves a commonwealth, and discord destroys it." Then he integrates plot, characterization, language, and imagery to focus upon Almanzor, whose excessive individualism must be restrained and re-trained so that his strength can serve the familial, political, and universal order of which he finally sees himself a part.

In Paradise Lost, Dryden could see Milton exploring a major Renaissance question: What is the source of individual identity? Is Satan's potential greatness that of an Archangel in a divinely created and ordered universal

2. I borrow the terms Dryden used in his "Defense of the Epilogue" (Watson, I, 169).

3. Preface to Examen Poeticum, Watson, II, 167. The specific political "discord" toward which Dryden directs his moral is a subject for a further study.
hierarchy? Or does his heroic stature come from proud defiance of a pre-ordained order that unjustly denies him equality with divinity? Milton's answer is unequivocal. Though the issue of identity may have become clouded by Renaissance glorification of individuality, Milton's corrective reminder insists that individual glory is only possible within the whole pattern of divine hierarchy. Cervantes may have suggested, with comic ambiguity, man's ability to create his own reality. Montaigne may have explored man's consciousness of self apart from social role. Corneille may have dramatized individual "gloire." But Milton reminds that self-identification is self-delusion. The mind is not "its own place." It cannot "make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven." True wisdom acknowledges patient obedience and acceptance of divinely ordained role. At the highest level of hierarchy, Satan will not accept that role and willfully misinterprets it as slavery. Adam and Eve do not accept their role, either, until after their fall and repentance. Then both Adam and Eve accept Michael's explanation of their proper relationship to each other and to God. Almanzor's instruction and final acceptance involves yet a third, intermediate, level of hierarchy: the social or political. His true identity is determined by union with Almahide and the Duke of Argos at the familial level, by allegiance to Ferdinand at the
political level, and by acceptance of Christianity at the
level of universal order.

At the beginning of the play, Almanzor has no
identity except what he has earned for himself. He is a
"stranger," a "brave unknown," distinguished by his "brave"
youth and by his strength. "Strange" in his origins and
"more than man" in his actions, both his anonymity and his
capability appear to free him from human limitations
(I.1.i, pp. 30-31). He has animal strength ("lion-like"
[I.III.i, p. 54]) and elemental force ("like a tempest"
[I.II.i, p. 39]). With these powers he can subdue the
"fiery Arab" he rides and the bull he kills. He can "face
[the] storm, that thickens in the wind; / And with bent
forehead, full against it go" (I.II.i, p. 40). He is a
"noble stranger" and a "gallant stranger" (I.I.i, p. 35)—
one of those "great souls" who consider nothing impossible
(I.IV.ii, p. 72). His courage is "vast," and his mind is
"boundless," and he "acknowledges no power above his own"
(I.I.i, p. 35). There is something in Almanzor that "looks
divine" (I.III.i, p. 53). Moreover, to himself he is a
"noble savage," subject to no man but himself. "I alone am
king of me" (I.I.i, p. 34). Nor is he susceptible to the
power of love: "The charms of beauty like a pest he flies"
(I.I.i, p. 35). This detailed characterization of Almanzor
as totally without hierarchical restraints establishes early
in the play the three levels of order which create human
identity: familial, political, and divine. His parentage is unknown and he "flies" the perpetuation of his familial identity through sexual union. He acknowledges no social or political superior and makes his own laws, "but only for [his] sake" (1.I.i, p. 34). He "appears more than man" and "know[s] no power above [his] own" (1.I.i, p. 34). Thus his response to instruction must include change on all three levels before his true identity can be revealed.

On the first level, Almanzor must be "stung" by the "Tarantula" of sexual desire before Almahide's spiritual influence can be effective. The openly sexual song accompanying the Zambra dance emphasizes Dryden's thematic contrast between Almahide and Lyndaraxa. Both are sexually attractive. Both can use their charms to influence men. But Lyndaraxa is deliberately deceptive. She represents Circe and the Syrens of epic tradition (1.III.i, p. 47). With "open arms, loose veil, and flowing hair" (1.III.i, p. 52) she leads both Abdalla and Abdelmelech to destruction and to death. In contrast, Almahide represents the ennobling female power of courtly-love Romance. Her "veiled" (1.III.i, p. 53) charms lead Almanzor toward the fertile death and birth of sexual union. Thus, the double entendre of "die" in the song is directly related to woman's sexual potential both for evil and for good.

The song's "bright vision," with "careless veil of

of lawn . . . loosely spread" (1.III.i, p. 50) about her
head, leads the dreamer to a sterile illusion of sexual satisfaction. Similarly, Lyndaraxa's un-veiled charms lead men toward lust for flesh and for battle, where any hope of satisfaction or success is an illusion. Her "blood" is "warmed" by sounds of battle, and her pulsating words imitate the pulse beat of sexual excitement:

Ye winds, waft hither sounds more strong and quick;
Beat faster, drums, and mingle deaths more thick
(1.III.i, p. 52).

Unworthy of trust, Lyndaraxa's "hyaena" smiles and "crocodile" tears are calculated to deceive. Her destructive "gorgon" beauty should be "shroud[ed]" from "all human view" (102) but is flaunted to satisfy her private ambition.

Without insight and without self control, Abdalla succumbs to Lyndaraxa's "Syren" voice:

Like him, who on the ice
Slides swiftly on, and sees the water near.
Yet cannot stop himself in his career,
So am I carried. This enchanted place,
Like Circe's isle, is peopled with a race
Of dogs and swine; yet, though their fate I know,
I look with pleasure, and am turning too
(1.III.i, p. 47).

This and other use of epic imagery show Dryden's conscious demonstration of his new generic equation. Moreover, his contrast may deliberately reflect Homer's contrast between Penelope and Clytemnestra and Virgil's between Dido and Lavinia. Dryden had characterized both evil and good women in his earlier plays but without this conscious relationship
between imagery and language and without this reinforcing depth of epic allusion.

In contrast to Lyndaraxa, Almahide's beauty serves public order and divine plan. Only at the request of her husband and the urging of Esperanza (hope) does Almahide use her charms to attract Almanzor's aid. He appears "roughly noble," like an unpolished "gem," with "divine" potential (1.III.i, p. 53). Thus he is a worthy object for stimulation by her always controlled ("veiled") beauty. Almanzor must learn from Almahide the necessity for this self control. His "untaught" love must learn to run in "channels" (1.III.i, p. 56). Early in the play, Almanzor cannot distinguish between woman as "bane and soft destruction of mankind" and woman as divine guide (1.III.i, p. 53), but his instruction comes gradually through Almahide's ennobling influence. They assume a courtly love relationship. He wears her "scarf, which, since by [her] it has been borne. / Is blessed, like relics which by saints were worn" (2.II.i, p. 114). He learns that "Heaven has ... destined [him] to succour the distrest" (2.II.iii, p. 113). He learns, through her "just reproach," that he has "erred" (2.III.i, p. 119): "I have been faulty and repent me now" (2.III.i, p. 120). But as he struggles to "deny" his own desires" (2.IV.iii, p. 143), he knows he is but half converted yet" (p. 144). "Like a lion, whom no arts can tame," he is still potentially dangerous (p. 144). Finally,
no longer a raging "lion," he knows he "was created for no
other end":

Born to be yours, I do by nature serve,
And, like the labouring beast, no thanks deserve
(2.V.ii, p. 154).

With similar change in animal imagery, he acknowledges her
instruction:

Listen sweet heaven, and all ye blessed above,
Take rules of virtue from a mortal love!
You've raised my soul; and if it mount more high,
'Tis as the wren did on the eagle fly
(2.V.ii, p. 157).

Thus Almanzor's growing awareness is emphasized by echoes
of the imagery associated with Maximin in *Tyrannic Love*.
In Maximin's delusion, he saw himself with Catharine "like
Eagles tow'ring in the Sky" (1.III,i, p. 110). Almanzor's
assessment of Almahide's virtue is more accurate, as his
pride is gradually controlled. Moreover, his words addressed
to "sweet heaven" acknowledge the relationship between
divine and "mortal love."

Also, on this first, familial, level of hierarchy,
Almanzor must learn to whom he owes obedience as a son.
Throughout the play, age is contrasted with youth and
parent-child relationships are emphasized. When appro-
priately allied with love and rational justice, these
relationships support the public order. Children must
"obey" parents; "parents" must, in turn, obey "reason"
(1.V.ii, p. 76). Moreover, these familial roles are
inextricably associated with political order. Both parents
and children must place public good before private desire. Abenemar's insistence upon private vengeance divides the "middle stream" into "two brooks" (l.I.i, p. 34). In contrast, Selin's ability to forgive heals the breach in his family and in his country.

As a younger man, the Duke of Arcos, like Almanzor, had been a "bold adventurer" (l.II.i, p. 40) who "suffered" for a "crime" of "love" (2.V.ii, p. 159). But the mature Duke represents the "just and rightful claim" of Ferdinand who "draws" "his hope from Heaven's assistance" (l.I.i, p. 38). As the Duke has assumed his role in hierarchical order, so Almanzor must accept his. Their relationship begins with the respect of noble adversaries. It grows as a "secret motion" of the mind and a feeling of a "boding heart" "foretell" emotional ties between them "more than kind" (2.III.iii, p. 125). Finally, full knowledge is heaven-sent. The "holy shade" of Almanzor's mother, sent by "a watchman angel," tells him of his royal blood and his Christian Baptism (2.IV.iii, p. 140), revealing all but his father's name. In the final combat, "heaven" itself guides the Duke's sight to the symbols of Almanzor's true paternity and Christian heritage. At the same time, the "sacred voice" of the "blest shade" stops Almanzor's "threatening" arm (2.V.ii, p. 159). Thus Divine Providence prevents parricide, teaches Almanzor his true filial identity, and implicitly suggests his proper role in all three levels of order.
Before he learns his proper role, Almanzor sees himself free of restraint either from father or from king. He considers the figures of "father" and "king" between himself and Almahide "small" hurdles to his "private" satisfaction (1.IV.i, p. 721). He sees himself "born . . . to command" (p. 73). Both incident and imagery support his opinion. Boabdelin, by contrast, is "impotent," a passive "weathercock of state" (1.III.i, pp. 45-46). Similarly, Abdalla's "empire's but a dream of kingly power" (1.IV.ii, p. 61), while Almanzor is that "great soul" who can "multitudes control" (1.I.i, p. 36). He quiets the "unthinking crowd" in scenes reminiscent of Virgil's simile from the Aeneid. Yet, on this second hierarchical level, the political, Almanzor must learn that public chaos results from inadequate kings who place private desires over public good. Neither Abdelmelech nor Boabdelin recognizes that "the mad people's rage" calls for proper kingship. In a sympathetic description unusual for Dryden, the "many-headed Beast" is shown to be composed of the "needy," the "aged," and "wives" with "helpless infants" who "despair" (2.I,ii, pp. 97-98) because they have no proper king. Almanzor's strength "satisfies" the people temporarily. But within hierarchical order, a king must rule by right, not by

4. Dryden's 1697 translation of the Aeneid calls the common people "th' ignoble crowd" who, when confronted by a great man, "hush their noise." Almanzor tells the "unthinking crowd" to "go" "hushed as midnight silence."
power alone. Almanzor's natural strength must be "channeled" into service of Ferdinand, whose royal blood he shares. It is Ferdinand who rules both with rational control and with rightful claim to the throne.

The language of "saints" and "penitence" relates Almahide's instruction of Almanzor to the third level of hierarchical order—the divine. Also, the instruction from the "holy shade," the "parent-form," reveals both his lineage and his true faith. He has been "born" and baptized a "Christian," but "bred in errors," he "misemploy[s]" the "strength Heaven gave" him (2.IV.iii, p. 140). Moreover, the warning of the shade shows "Heaven" to be the source of reproach, not for ignorance, but for his intended "known crimes of lawless love" (p. 140). Thus he must learn to "deny [his] own desires" both at Almahide's urging and at the behest of "Heaven." He considers "Heaven[s] . . . decree" a "dark . . . riddle" (p. 141) in a soliloquy on free will and foreknowledge reminiscent of Tyrannic Love. As Ward has suggested of the TL passage, this too may have had its impetus from Paradise Lost. Moreover, Dryden's thematic treatment of "freedom" in both Tyrannic Love and The Conquest of Granada is clearly Christian. As self-assumed martyrdom frees St. Catharine, Almanzor's acceptance of hierarchical restraints "restore[s]" him (and Granada) to "freedom and true faith" (2.I.i, p. 94).
When Almahide is falsely accused, it appears to Abdelmelech that universal order is destroyed:

Heaven is not heaven, nor are there deities;  
There is some new rebellion in the skies,  
All that was good and holy is dethroned,  
And lust and rapine are for justice owned  
(2.V.i, p. 148).

But trust in "just heaven" is rewarded. Almahide learns that the virtue she had "served" is "no god, nor has [virtue] the power divine." Almahide must turn, instead, to "the Christian's Deity" (p. 149). Similarly, Almanzor's virtues are inadequate unless knowingly allied with the true faith. From the beginning of the play, his "rough" instinctive virtue calls for support of the weak and oppressed (1.I.i, p. 34). He speaks "rude, unfashioned truth" (1.III.i, p. 56). His straightforward honesty is in striking contrast to Abdalla's plots and schemes. Almanzor "would give a crown in open day" (1.III.i, p. 46), and he disdains the "statesman's art" of deception:

My kindness and my hate unmasked I wear;  
For friends to trust, and enemies to fear  
(1.IV.i, p. 60).

But his virtues must be allied with knowledge of Providential plan. Once he has "admit[ted] . . . sovereignty" to Almahide, to his father, and to the Christian faith, he can appropriately fight for Ferdinand and "wave . . . conquering crosses in the air" (2.V.ii, pp. 161, 163). At the Beginning of Part II, Isabella explains the interrelationship of hierarchical order: "noble" love, properly
controlled, is an "heroic passion" serving political
unity as "Heaven thinks good" (2.I.i, p. 96). By the
conclusion, Almanzor's identity reaffirms that interrela-
tionship.

In repeated allusions, Dryden echoes both Paradise
Lost and Tyrannic Love. He acknowledges once more that
"man" cannot "make his fate according to his mind" (l.II.i,
p. 44). Neither can he "raise" himself by "mount[ing]" on
the "head[s]" of others (2.V.ii, p. 160). Divinely created
and ordered hierarchy determines what man "was created
for" (2.V.ii, p. 154). In his verse, he gives further
evidence of that "interweaving and internal reinforcement
of sound" stimulated, according to McFadden, by Milton's
verse.\(^5\) Also, he uses repeated consonant sounds with the
"careful and curious dislocations" noted by Wimsatt in
Milton's verse.\(^6\) What Wimsatt calls "intellect threading
complexity" appears in a passage directly related to the
instruction of his "epic" hero. Almahide assures Almanzor
of "Heaven[s] . . . reward" for self control. Then she
emphasizes the ephemeral nature of physical love:

'Twas but a dream, where truth had not a place;
A scene of fancy, moved so swift a pace,
And shifted, that you can but think it was; --
Let, then, the short vexatious vision pass
(1.V.ii, p. 84; Italics mine).

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5. McFadden, p. 283.
The "'Twas" of the first line begins the syntactical statement concluded by the third line ("it was") rather than the second. The repeated "s" sounds emphasize the "swift ... pace" of the lines. Moreover, placement of the words scene, shifted, and short creates a deliberate "dislocation" to avoid simplistic parallels of sound.

Again, Milton's influence is evident in a passage underlining the natural greatness of Almanzor:

Disgraced, distressed, in exile, and alone,
He's greater than a monarch on his throne;
Without a realm, a royalty he gains;
Kings are the subjects over whom he reigns
(2.1.ii, p. 99; italics mine).

McFadden calls attention to the similarity between the first line and Milton's "Defac't, deflourd, and now to Death devote" (PL IX. 901). But he does not note the internal sound of the following lines, which shows Dryden mirroring Milton's deliberate "dislocation." Line placement of Disgraced, greater, and realm in a general pattern of repeated r's and s's again emphasizes the "sense" of his verse and of his play. Just as the metrical influence has most likely come from Milton, so also has the emphasis upon moral instruction as well.

Later, isolated comments in Dryden's critical works can be read, along with his familiar encomia on Milton, as acknowledgment of the hypothesis I am proposing. In the "Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy" (1679) he acknowledges that "the first rule ..., to the writer of an heroic
poem... is to make the moral of the work, that is, to lay down to yourself what that precept of morality shall be, which you would insinuate into the people" (Watson, I, 248), a theory not enunciated and a practice apparently not followed until after 1669. Then in his preface to the translation of Aeneis (1697), he explained (with a statement that perplexed both Addison and Johnson) why Paradise Lost is not properly to be considered an epic. It might have been, he writes, "if the Devil had not been his hero, instead of Adam; if the giant had not foiled the knight, and driven him out of his stronghold, to wander through the world with his lady errant" (Watson, II, 233). What has been overlooked in that statement is a possible ironic tone of voice. With that tone, Dryden could be acknowledging Milton's use of Satan in the guise of hero to chastize all poets who mistakenly elevate false heroism. In the Preface to Examen Poeticum, Dryden discusses the heroes of Homer in language strongly reminiscent of Milton's reproof in Paradise Lost: "[Homer] forms and equips those ungodly man-killers whom we poets, when we flatter them, call heroes; a race of men who can never enjoy quiet in themselves, till they have taken it from all the world. This is Homer's commendation, and such as it is, the lovers of peace, or at least of more moderate heroism, will never envy him" (Watson, II, 167). After 1669, we find Dryden among those "lovers" of more moderate heroism.
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