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TECHNICAL AND THEMATIC DEVELOPMENTS IN THREE REPRESENTATIVE RESTORATION COMEDY OF MANNERS: WYCHERLEY's THE COUNTRY WIFE, ETHEREGE's THE MAN OF MODE AND CONGREVE's THE WAY OF THE WORLD

M. Sibel Dinçel

Hacettepe University

The Institute of Social Sciences

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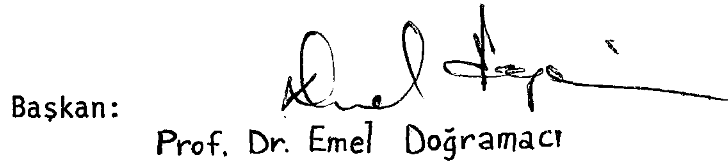
Başkan: 
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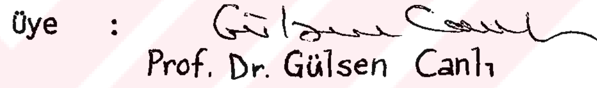
Üye : 
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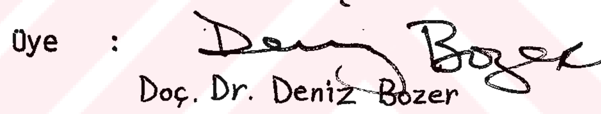
Üye : 
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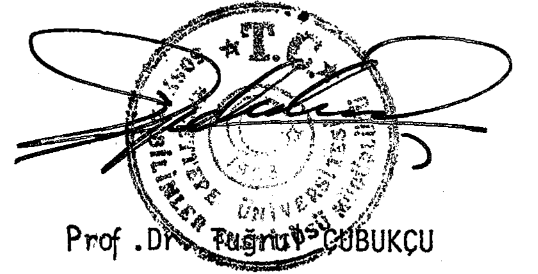

Prof .Dr. Tuğrul ÇUBUKÇU

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TO MY FAMILY...

ÖZET

1660 yılının Mayıs ayında II.Charles'ın Parlemento tarafından İngiltere'ye davet edilmesi ve tahta oturtulmasıyla İngiltere tarihinde "Restorasyon" olarak anılan yeni bir devir başlamış oldu. Bu durum iç savaşlardan ve Oliver Cromwell'in takip eden on yıllık baskılı yönetiminden bunalmış olan İngiliz halkının, kral idaresinin İngiltere'ye yeniden ılımlı bir hava getireceğine inanmak istemesinden kaynaklanıyordu.

Charles Stuart uzun süredir sürgünde olduğu Fransa'dan tahta davet edildiğinde orada bulunan soylu arkadaşlarını da beraberinde getirdi. Bu durum Fransız usul ve zarafetini, ve aynı zamanda o sıralarda altın çağını yaşamakta olan Fransız edebiyatı hayranlığını da ister istemez İngiltere'ye taşıdı.

Restorasyon döneminde tiyatro ve dram sanatı , özellikle Kral ve onun asilleri tarafından destek gördüğünden, en verimli tür olarak ortaya çıktı. Daha önce Püritanlar tarafından kapatılmış olan tiyatrolar II.Charles tarafından açıldı; yetenekli gençler tiyatro sanatı ve bu sanatla ilgili son teknikleri öğrenmek ve bunların Avrupadan İngiltere'ye getirilmesini sağlamak amacıyla Fransa'ya gönderildiler. Kralın bu desteği Restorasyon dönemi oyun yazarlarını da teşvik etti. Böylece William Wycherley, Sir George Etherege ve Sir Charles Sedley gibi isimler tiyatro-sever Kral II.Charles'ı memnun edecek oyunlar ve özellikle komediler yazmaya başladılar.

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Bu dönemde gelişen üç dram tipi arasından, ki bunlar "heroic tragedy", "Restoration tragedy" ve "Restoration comedy of manners"dır, sonuncusu, yani "Restoration comedy of manners"(davranış komedisi) en popüler tür haline geldi. Bunun en önemli nedeni yine II.Charles ve soylularının eğlenceye düşkün olmalarıydı.

Sık sık yapay ve ahlak kurallarına aykırı olduğu düşünülerek yanlış yorumlanan bu komedi türü gerçekte, yalnızca Restorasyon yüksek tabakasının gevşek olan terbiyesini değil aynı zamanda toplumdaki yolsuzlukları ve yanlış bazı sosyal uygulamaları da gözler önüne sererek hicvetmekteydi.

Davranış komedisinin gerçek şeklini bulduğu dönem sadece II.Charles'ın 1660-1685 yıllarını kapsayan hükümdarlığıyla sınırlanamaz. Çünkü davranış komedisi II.Charles devrine mahsus bir tür değildir; sadece o dönemde William Wycherley'in *The Country Wife* (Taşra Kadını)(1674?) adlı yapıtıyla ortaya çıkmış ve Sir George Etherege'in *The Man of Mode* (Zamane Adamı)(1676) ile biçim kazanmıştır. Türün tam olarak olgunluğa erişmesi ise ancak 17.yüzyılın son zamanlarında ve özellikle William Congreve'in *The Way of the World* (Dünyanın Hali) (1700) ile gerçekleşmiştir.

Bu tezde teknik açıdan Wycherley'in oyunundaki tek düze tiplemelerin, derece derece, Etherege'de geliştiği, Congreve'de ise hemen hemen gerçeğe yakın karakterlere dönüştüğü gözlemlenmiştir. Bundan da öte, Wycherley ve Etherege'nin oyunlarında kullandıkları *double entendre* (çift anlamlı sözler) ve "pun" (kelime oyunları)

Congreve'de yerini "wit" (fikir oyunları)'na bırakmıştır. Daha başka bir deyişle, Wycherley ve Etherege'in oyunlarında zaten var olan nükteli diyaloglar Congreve'in oyununda iyice ön plana çıkmıştır.

Dilin bu zekice kullanımı ile birlikte, hiciv dilinde de bir incelik söz konusu olmuştur. Wycherley'in çoğunlukla acımasızca eleştirilerle dolu olan hicvi, Congreve'de daha anlayışlı ve hoş görülü bir uslup kazanmıştır.

Bu gelişmelerin yanısıra, Congreve'e gelinceye kadar geçen dönemde davranış komedilerinin yapılarında da bir takım değişiklikler olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Wycherley ve Etherege'in oyunlarında iyi ve kötü karakterleri birbirinden ayıran "higher plot" (iyilerin dünyası) ve "lower plot" (kötülerin dünyası) Congreve'de tamamen ortadan kalkmıştır.

Congreve karakterlerinin davranışlarını oyundaki iyi ve kötülerin dünyasını birleştirerek sergilerken bunlar arasındaki ilişkileri de daha karmaşık bir şekilde sunmuştur.

Restorasyon komedilerine mahsus olan üç ortak sahneden ikisi, ki bunlar "lady and the maid scene" (hanım ve hizmetçisi sahnesi) ve "proviso scene" (evlilik anlaşması sahnesi)'dir, Wycherley'de hiç görülmemektedir. Bu sahneler Etherege'de kısmen gelişmiş, fakat ancak Congreve'de tüm özellikleriyle ortaya çıkmışlardır.

Restorasyon davranış komedileri teknik açıdan göstermiş oldukları tüm bu değişim ve gelişimlere karşın, temalar yönünden hemen hemen hep aynı kalmışlardır. Ancak Wycherley, Etherege ve Congreve'in bu ortak ama ciddi temaları ele alış biçimler türü "ahlağa aykırı" ya da "gerçeği yansıtmıyor" suçlamalarından kurtarmaktadır.

ABSTRACT

With the invitation of a monarch, Charles II back to the throne on May 1660 a new era, known as the "Restoration" , began in English history. Thus, after after a period of civil strife (1642-49) and of a decade's restriction (1649-1659) under Oliver Cromwell's Puritan regime, the English were once more eager to believe that the King would bring a spirit of moderation back into the country.

Charles Stuart, when invited to the throne came from France together with his Court. He had been living in exile there for quite a long time and had inevitably brought to England French fashions and elegance as well as an admiration for contemporary French literature which was living its golden age.

During the Restoration period in England, drama seemed to be the most prolific genre, particularly for it was very much encouraged by the restored King and his noblemen. The King reopened the theatres which were previously closed down by the Puritans and sent promising young men abroad to France to learn and to import to England the current techniques of dramaturgy from Europe. This royal encouragement also stimulated the Restoration dramatists. Gentlemen like William Wycherley' Sir George Etherege and Sir Charles Sedley began to produce plays, especially comedies, that would please the theatre-loving King Charles II and would perhaps win favour at his court.

Added onto the two other forms of play, heroic and Restoration tragedies, which flourished during the Restoration, comedy of manners appeared as a third form, and obviously because the restored nobility desired to be entertained. This type of comedy, frequently misinterpreted as artificial and immoral, actually displayed and satirized not only the follies of the members of the Restoration upper-class but also some of the malpractices in the society.

The period in which the Restoration comedy of manners took its real shape cannot be limited to Charles II's reign, that is between 1660 and 1685. The comedy of manners was not a form peculiar to the reign of Charles II. It was born at that particular time most significantly with William Wycherley's *The Counntry Wife* (1674?), standardized with Sir George Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676), but was brought to fulfillment only in the last years of the seventeenth-century, during William and Mary's rein, especially with William Congreve's *The Way of the World* (1700).

Technically speaking, the flat types of Wycherley's play gradually developed in Etherege's, but turned under Congreve's treatment almost into round characters.

Moreover, the *double entendre* and pun which Wycherley and Etherege employed in their comedies ceased to hold place in Congreve's works. Instead, the witty dialogues, already introduced in the plays of Wycherley and Etherege dominated Congreve's play and therefore rendered it the most refined.

Along with this refinement of language there also appeared a refinement in the tone of satire. The immediately condemning bitter satire of Wycherley turned into a mora tolerant and understanding criticism in Congreve.

Furthermore, until Congreve's time, other developments took within the structure of these comedies. The lower and the higher plots, which distinguished the good from the bad characters in Wycherley's and Etherege's plays, disappeared in Congreve's for the latter had rendered the relationships between the characters more complex, and hence presented them in one whole plot.

Also among the three set scenes of the Restoration comedies the lady and the maid scene, and the proviso scene which are absent in Wycherley's *The Country Wife* and which are partly developed in Etherege's *The Man of Mode*, appear in their fullest terms only in Congreve's *The Way of the World.*

However, despite all these developments in the technique of the Restoration comedy of manners, the genre goes through no significant change with regard to themes. However, Wycherley's, Etherege's and Congreve's method of handling of their practically common yet serious themes enable them to free the genre of the accusations of superfluousness and immorality.

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INTRODUCTION

A. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE RESTORATION PERIOD (1660-1700)

After having dissolved the last of his three Parliaments[1] Charles I began to rule the country on his own without the interference of a Parliamentary force and this state of affairs lasted for eleven years (1629-1640). During this longest interval between Parliaments in the history of English politics (Carrington and Jackson 1956:360) King Charles I played the role of an absolutist monarch. This gradually gave rise to unrest among some members of the society; especially the Puritans and the ex-members of the House of Commons were not happy with the situation at all. Thus, in 1642 Civil War broke out in England between the Royalists and the Puritans.[2] The Royalists were under the leadership of Charles I, while the Puritans had Lord Fairfax and a Puritan captain, Oliver Cromwell as their leaders. After seven years of strife between these two groups, the Civil War finally came to an end in 1649 with the

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[1] These were the Parliaments of 1625, 1626 and 1628-1629.

[2] Although acted on behalf of the Parliament, this group cannot be called the Parliamentary party because even some members of the House of Commons had joined the King's forces. So, the majority of this party contained those who wanted to "purify" the Church especially from Roman Catholic influence (Carrington and Jackson 372).

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victory of the Puritans; Charles I and the Royalists were defeated. On the 27th of January of the same year, after a trial in which King Charles I was charged with treason, he was disposed of his crown and was executed. Hence, the Parliament appointed Cromwell as the "Lord Protector" to rule the country. Thus, starting from 1649 until 1660 England was to be governed not with monarchy but with a Puritan Commonwealth regime, the leader of which was Oliver Cromwell.

Under Cromwell England experienced a great expansion, especially in foreign trade, and "... all the indications are that ... [Cromwell's] was a time of rising national prosperity" (Ashley 1963:218). However, within a few months, the Puritan regime had proved itself most unpopular in the country because Puritanism and its rules were very strict: services in the Anglican and in the Roman Catholic churches were forbidden; the universities were cleansed of all but Puritan members; all kinds of entertainment like hunting, boxing or bear-baiting were forbidden. The nineteenth-century essayist Macaulay states in *History of England* that, "The Puritans forbade bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators" (qtd. in Carrington and Jackson 1956:385). Theatres were no exception to the rule, "... since play-acting was 'god-les' " (Carrington and Jackson 1956:385), it was prohibited and people were prevented from going to the plays by a final close-down of all the theatres in the country.

When Cromwell died in 1658, the Puritan rule, also called the Interregnum, was over. As a matter of fact, having had enough

of the strict regime of the Lord "Protector", the English were relieved upon his death. Although after Cromwell's death some of his friends attempted to make his son, Richard Cromwell, the Protector, the Puritan Parliament rejected the idea completely. Two years later, on the morning of 25 May, 1660, the young Charles, who was the son of Charles I, was brought from France where he had been in exile and restored to the English throne. Thus, started a new period in English history: the Restoration (1660-1700). The public welcomed Charles II with great expectations as they believed that a monarch would bring a spirit of moderation back into the country.

The Restoration of Charles II to the throne from which his father Charles I was driven away is important mainly from two view points. First of all it marked a return to monarchy in England. Yet, with the growing power of the Parliament over the King, this was no more an absolutist monarchy. With the Restoration, the Parliament had started contriving tricks to render the King less and less powerful. Likewise, before coming to England Charles II had already resigned some of his royal rights. He had issued the Declaration of Breda (4 April, 1660) in which he had promised to pay off and disband the army and punish none of the Puritans except by the wish of the Parliament.

Charles II was a weak king and, in fact, he did not care at all about handing over some of the administrative work to others. Thus, it was not very difficult for the Parliament to handle the affairs of the State with Charles II. The Parliament first made

sure that the privileges which had been won from Charles I before the outbreak of the Civil War were preserved. In other words, Charles II, just like his father, had to still accept the validity of the Petition of Rights (1628) and the Triennial Act (1641) which respectively established the privileges of the public under Magna Carta (1215), such as no man could be forced to pay any taxes or such like charge without the Parliament's consent, and ensured that there should never be an interval of more than three years without a Parliament. Moreover, the King was not allowed to restore Star Chamber and High Commission: the former of which was a court appointed by the king that could hand down arbitrary judgements and torture men to force confessions, and the latter, another session of noblemen who could issue writs according to their will. Furthermore, the King was given a regular sum of money by the Parliament and was expected to govern the country only with that sum. Also, the Parliament of 1679 managed to pass another act, the Habeas Corpus Amendment Act which limited the power of the king as well as the lords to imprison people without a trial. However, if desired there were always a number of ways to evade the use of this act. For instance, James Harrington, a philosopher, "... had been removed from the Tower of London when his sisters applied for 'habeas corpus' and sent out to a rocky island where the writ did not run" (Ashley 1963:146).

The second reason why the Restoration can be considered important is that it marked the beginnings of a reformation process in England in favour of Protestantism as practised by the Church of

England. In other words, within the borders of the restored kingdom the Protestants at first struggled mainly against the Puritans and then against the Roman Catholics so as to convert England into a Protestant state.

When Charles II was restored to the throne in 1660 he had in fact wanted to remain a passifist towards the Puritans; he was not as revengeful as the Cavalier Members of the Parliament who, after their accession together with the King, had contrived an act sending to execution a number of Puritans who had actually taken part in the execution of Charles I. After this event, probably to arrive at a compromise between the opposing parties, the restored King wanted to issue another act, the Act of Indulgence which was to give freedom to all the religious sects. The Parliament, however, rejected it.

On the other hand, the Parliament, very tactfully, started passing acts one after another re-establishing the Church of England while excluding all the Puritans: the Corporation Act in 1661 prevented the dissenters from being members of city corporations; the Act of Uniformity in 1662 excluded every clergyman who refused to conform to the rules in the new prayer book from holding any place in the Church of England; the Conventicle Act in 1664 forbade the dissenters from building chapels; the Five Mile Act in 1665 forced the dissenters to live far away from the place where they had formerly been ministers; and finally the Test Act in 1673 compelled the Members of Parliament, judges, civil servants and

officers in the army and navy to pass the test as Protestants according to the rites of the Church of England. The first four acts are commonly referred to as the "Clarendon Code" because they were issued in the Parliament under the leadership of one of Charles II's chief ministers named Edward Hyde, the Earl of Clarendon. Only a few of the dissenters had dared to break these laws and they were imprisoned for it. John Bunyan, the major Puritan poet of the period, was among them who when in prison had brought into being his greatest master-piece, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1675).

Towards the second half of the reign of Charles II (1674-85) England was politically polarized into two groups. One of these groups were the Court Party made up of Courtiers or Cavaliers who supported the King and the Church of England, and the other group were the Country Party formed of commoners who were in complete opposition to the Government. The Court Party was supported by Lord Danby, the new Lord Treasurer of the Crown (1673-79). Lord Danby was a very cunning and tactful man and by a careful choice of candidates for Parliament and by use of bribery he had gradually become the leader of a great majority of these Cavaliers who were later to be called the Tory party in the Parliament. On the other hand, the Country Party was supported by the Earl of Shaftesbury who was previously known as Lord Ashley. Shaftesbury was one of Charles II's leading ministers. He was very much influenced by a close friend, the philosopher, John Locke and this influence had also determined the basic beliefs of the political Whig party that

Shaftesbury was soon to form. He had brought this party into being out of the Country Party plus the remaining Cromwellians. The emergence of the Court Party and the Country Party was important in the political history of England because thus had come about the first party leaders of the modern kind.

Tories believed in the Divine right of kings which was that God appointed the royal family to rule the country and that a man can neither have a right to claim the throne, nor can he change the order of succession to the throne. However, Shaftesbury, and the Whigs had quite an opposite opinion on this subject. The Whigs based their views on the beliefs of the philosopher John Locke. According to Locke's views the king ruled only by means of a "Social Contract"[3] made with his people and the people may depose the king if he broke his side of the contract (Carrington and Jackson 1956: 411). Thus it is evident from the difference in opinion of the Tories and the Whigs that with their emergence England was to expect in the future more of an unrest.

In spite of the Protestants' struggle to dismiss the Puritans from the government, the first four years of the Restoration were generally years of peace, prosperity and happiness for the country. King Charles II had married a Portugese princess, Catharine of Braganza and thus had re-established the old alliance with

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[3]Also the name of one of John Locke's works.

Portugal. As her dowry Catharine of Braganza added to the property of the English Empire, two Portugese colonies, Bombay and Tangier. Also under Charles II English commerce had reached great proportions. The English trade companies had established quite a number of trading posts all over the world. For instance, the East India Company established posts in Surat, in Madras and in Bombay; the Levant Company in Egypt, Turkey and Syria; the Hudson Bay Company in north-west America.

However, this state of peace was soon disturbed; the years that followed were filled with wars, calamities and unrest. In 1664 the English were forced to enter a second war against the Dutch.[4] This war, however, proved only a little beneficial for the English as they managed to seize the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam in America and renamed it after the King's brother, Duke of York, as New York.

Also early in 1665, the country was visited by the first of the two frightful calamities, the Plague which had killed a quarter of the population of London.Samuel Pepys[5] describes these

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[4]The First Dutch War took place during the Interregnum (1652-53).

[5]Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) was a clerk of the Navy Board and later James II's Secretary of the Admiralty. Pepys was a theatre-goer of his times who kept a diary in cipher that he left together with his library to Magdalen College, Cambridge, later to be deciphered and used as a historical document that shed light upon the Restoration society.

days as follows:

> July 31st, 1665.... Thus we end this month,... after the greatest glut of content that I ever had; only, after some difficulty because of the plague, which grows mightily upon us, the last week being about 1700 or 1800 [dead] of the plague....
>
> August 8th.... The streets mighty empty all the way now, even in London, which is a sad sight....
>
> August 25th.... This day I am told that Dr. Burnett my physician is this morning dead of the plague... poor unfortunate man.
>
> September 14th.... when I came home, I spent some thoughts upon the occurances of this day... my meeting dead corps's of the plague, carried to be buried close to me at noon-day... and more then that one of my own watermen... fell sick as soon as he... landed me on Friday morning....
>
> October 26th.... the town [London] begins to be lively again... though the streets [still] very empty and most shops shut.... (Pepys 1985: 511-13, 518, 526-27, 546).

Towards the end of October 1665, the plague had gradually died, out, but the next year it was to be followed by another calamity, the Great London Fire (1666). Early in the morning the fire had started in the house of the King's baker, Thomas Farrisnor and by the evening, "... the whole City at [10 miles'] distance seemed to be on fire" (Evelyn 1955:451). The next day, over a kilometre of the city was burning (Evelyn 1955:453-54). On the

third day many famous buildings such as the Guildhall and St. Paul's were destroyed (Evelyn 1955:452). The Mayor of London had failed to act and the fire was stopped only with the King's final order of the destruction of the houses in the path of the fire (Evelyn 1955: 458). Within four days, the fire had burnt down quite a number of streets, eighty-four churches and over thirteen thousand houses (Evelyn 1955:460-61). One hundred thousand people became homeless but only a few lost their lives (Evelyn 1955:461). After the Fire, Christopher Wren, the greatest of English architects at that time, was appointed by Charles II to rebuild London and this task was to take him about thirty-five years.

Following the wars and calamities towards the end of Charles II's reign the question of who should be the next king created considerable unrest. Although Charles II had quite a number of illegitimate children from his mistresses, he had no legitimate successor from his queen, Catharine of Braganza. So, inevitably the crown was going to pass onto his brother James, the Duke of York who had openly declared himself a Roman Catholic. However, Shaftesbury and the Whigs wished to ensure a Protestant succession, instead. So, in accordance with their wish the Whigs firstly organized the burning of a "mock-Pope" in London and then started to make speeches against the Catholics. The Whigs were also active in the Parliament; they started to try passing an "Exclusion Bill" in the Parliament which was a law to exclude the Duke of York from succession. The candidate of the Whigs as the next king was a Protestant, Monmouth who was one of Charles II's many illegitimate sons. However, in

order to have a rightful claim over the throne, Monmouth had to be legitimized. Therefore, the Whigs now contrived tricks to force Charles II to legitimize Monmouth. For instance, they spread around rumours that Monmouth's mother and Charles II had entered a form of marriage but to this the King objected very strongly.

In addition to all this confusion, a certain Doctor Titus Oates came forward the following year (1677), revealing a secret Catholic plan known as the Popish Plot in British political history. According to this plot the Catholics were planning to kill Charles II and establish a Catholic state under the Duke of York. Oates added that he had deposited the documents of evidence with the London justice of Peace, Sir Edmund Godfrey. A few days later Godfrey was found murdered in a ditch. It was at once proclaimed that Godfrey had been murdered to make sure that he would keep quiet. From then on Oates had found grounds to further his lies upon both the murder of Godfrey and the Popish Plot. Consequently, upon Oates' words there began in the country the arresting and murdering of many innocent people, mostly Catholics. For instance, three Papists,[6] Green, Berry and Hill,

> "... one of them the porter of Somerset House where the Duke of York lived, were arrested and convicted of murder after a trial in which judge and jury were grossly prejudiced against them.... the three men who were hanged, were

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[6]Another name given to the Roman Catholics.

> probably innocent..." (Carrington and Jackson 1956:409-10).

Also added onto this unfortunate group were some Papists in the highest places in the government like Lord Stafford and Oliver Plunket, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin.

Oates' testimony also gave Shaftesbury, the Whig leader a chance to realize his plan of ensuring a Protestant succession to the English throne. Therefore, Shaftesbury became Oates' chief supporter in the Parliament which had not yet lost its hopes to pass an "Exclusion Bill" against James, the Duke of York.

The Popish Plot proved to be unsuccessful on part of the Catholics. On the other hand, Titus Oates seemed to have changed the matters to the advantage of the Protestants; however, with the final defeat of another "Exclusion Bill" (1681) and the King's dissolving of the Parliament the same year, the Plot turned out to be a defeat on part of the Protestants as well. The evidence for the Popish Plot, if it ever existed, was lost, but the majority of London believed in its existence and they also believed that Godfrey was a Protestant martyr and Titus Oates, a Protestant hero. John Dryden, one of the most outstanding literary figures of the Restoration period, looks at the matters from the side of King Charles II and summarizes this plot in the following lines:

> From hence began that Plot, the nation's curse,
> Bad in itself, but represented worse;
> Raised in extremes decried;

With oaths affirmed, with dying vows denied;
Not weighed or winnowed by the multitude;
But swallowed, unchewed and crude.
Some truth there was, but dashed and brewed with lies,
To please the fools, and puzzle all the wise
(Dryden 1979:1754).

After Charles II's rejection of the last of the "Exclusion Bills" and his dissolving of the Parliament in 1681,[7] Shaftesbury was sent to the Tower on a charge of treason. Later however, he proved innocent and fled to Holland where he died in 1683. Thus, "It seemed that the Whig party [and the hopes for a Protestant state] was destroyed for ever: [though] in the next reign it was to make a surprising recovery" (Carrington and Jackson 1956: 413).

On 5 February, 1685 Charles II died declaring at the very last moment that he had always been a Roman Catholic. His Roman Catholic brother, James succeeded him to the throne. Thus, in spite of all the trouble that the Whigs undertook James II had finally become the king but he had yet to overcome a last rebellion against Monmouth who still insisted on claiming a right over the English throne.

Together with about eighty men, Monmouth left the

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[7]From then on Charles II ruled the country without a Parliament until his death in 1685.

Netherlands where he was in hiding and landed in Lyme Regis. However, after an unsuccessful attack by night on the royal camp of James II, Monmouth deserted his men and fled. Later he was caught and sentenced to death by his merciless uncle. James II appointed Colonel Kirke to capture the supporters of Monmouth and hand them to Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys for punishment. About fourteen hundred people were brought before Jeffreys and of these about three hundred were hanged and gibbeted along the roadsides to set an example. This event, known as the Bloody Assizes in history, was one of James II's many mistakes, for "No one of the many rebellions of the century had been punished with such severity" (Carrington and Jackson 1956:417).

James II's other mistake was to add onto his Whig enemies the Tories, the majority of which had always been his suprorters. On 21 October, 1685 James II dismissed one of his Tory ministers, Halifax, and replaced him with a corrupt and trecherous politician, the Earl of Sunderland. By 1688 James II was left with no friends in either of the parties.

After realizing the very ease with which he had suppressed Monmouth and his followers, James II was perhaps more easily encouraged to attempt gaining his absolute powers as the monarch and through the use of these powers, to continue with his rather too immature Catholicizing policy. In November 1685, James II assembled the Anglican Parliament and wanted to repeal both the Test Act (1673) and the Habeas Corpus Act (1679). Naturally the

Parliament rejected this and the King very decisively dissolved the Parliament which was never to meet again officially during his reign. In 1687, since there was no standing Parliament to protest, James II issued a Declaration of Indulgence and suspended the laws against the Catholics and Protestants.

Henceforward, James II also started to appoint many leading Roman Catholics to important posts both in the government and in the universities. For instance, the Lord Chief justice, Jeffreys was made the Lord Chancellor and many Roman Catholics, "... who had only barely escaped with their lives from the furies of the Popish Plot" (Ashley 1963:171) were made members of the Privy Council. A Papist was made the Dean of Christ Church and another, Master of University College but when James II forced another of his candidates to be the president in an Oxford College (Magdalen), he met with opposition. In this case, James II went there in person and by expelling the Fellows that resisted his decision he settled the matters by force.

Nevertheless, James II soon committed a fatal mistake, the most significant consequence of which was his losing the crown: he imprisoned Archbishop Sancroft together with six other bishops in the Tower of London for they had refused to read the Declaration of Indulgence from the pulpits of their churches. However, after their trial, these bishops were found innocent and they were freed (30 June, 1688). In the meantime, however, four Whigs, Shrewsbury, Devonshire, Sidney and Russel and three Tories, Danby, Lumley and

Bishop Compton of London entered into a secret alliance and wrote an invitation to William, the Prince of Orange in Holland to invade England with a Dutch army.

Neither the public nor King James II's two daughters, Mary and Anne approved of their father's conduct. In fact, Mary was married to a Protestant prince, William of Orange and she could not have thought otherwise; and Anne had also deserted her father and had married George of Denmark, another prince, this time with Protestant favourites around him.

In the meantime, James II's queen had given birth to a son, Edward (10 June, 1688) envisaging an unending Roman Catholic dynasty in England. For James II's enemies, this was indeed a calamity. Therefore, especially the Whig leaders started spreading the rumour that James II's son, Edward the Pretender[8] was not the King's true heir and the people of London quite readily believed this story.

William of Orange who had been invited to invade England was the great-grandson of William the Silent, a national hero who had saved the Dutch from a Spanish invasion. Similarly William had become a national hero and was made the *Stadtholder* and Captain-

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[8]Pretender means "claimant", taken from the French word *prétendant*.

general of Holland,for he too had saved the Dutch from an invasion, this time by the French. Although William was married to James II's elder daughter Mary, a woman to whom he owed the English crown, he was always cold, indifferent, ungrateful and unfaithful towards her. Infact, no other cause interested William but his struggle against France. When he received the secret invitation from England he accepted it willingly because he believed that if he could get hold of the English crown, he would have the English in alliance with the Dutch in the next war against Louis XIV of France, his perpetual enemy.

Throughout the Autumn of 1688, William of Orange made his preparations and King James II had at last realized the approaching danger. Hastily James II published a proclamation in which he promised to summon a fresh Parliament and make up for the injustices done towards the Anglican bishops and towards the university fellows that he had recently dismissed from holding their offices. Unfortunately, however, it was too late for him.

On November, 1688 William of Orange landed at Torbay. There he waited to see whether the English would side with or against him. The commoners showed no reaction but as William started to march slowly towards London, the lords and gentry gradually joined him on the way.

Upon the news that the towns in the north were surrendering almost with no resistance, James II began to realize

what awaited his crown and himself. His daughters had already deserted him and now his friends were doing the same. In a very last attempt, James II tried to resist the invaders in Salisbury, but shortly afterwards he had to return to London because of sickness. After summoning the Parliament which suggested to him to reach an agreement with William of Orange, James II fled to Faversham from where he unsuccessfully tried to escape. There, James II was recognized and brought back to London from where he was allowed to escape to France and live there together with his wife and son Edward as refugees at the court of Louis XIV. In the meanwhile William of Orange had entered London and since James II had fled to France, William of Orange took over the crown without bloodshed and settled himself in St. James' Palace. In the English history this event is known as the Glorious Revolution (1689).

Although William and his wife Mary were now at St. James', they were not declared king and queen until the Parliament summoned and issued the Declaration of Rights in 1689. The Tories at first rejected this very strongly; they could not accept William III as their rightful king because of their doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings. However, the Whigs who claimed that the people had always the right to elect a new king, forced and persuaded the Tories soon to change their opinion. So, what the Tories did was to find some comfort upon the fact that James II had run away and therefore had abdicated the throne by his own will.[9] Finally the two parties had

[9] During the reign of William III the Tories caused problems because especially after Mary II's death in 1694 they could no longer pretend to believe that William III was their rightful king.

reached a compromise and together in 1689 they issued the Declaration of Rights,[10] declaring William III and Mary II as the rightful owners of the English throne.

The Bill of Rights is generally classed by the historians with the Magna Carta (1215) and the Petition of Rights (1628) as being among the three great charters of English liberty (Carrington and Jackson 1956:426). The issuing of the Bill meant at once a re-establishing of the Parliament's supremacy over the monarch. The king was still powerful enough to appoint all government officials and make war or peace whenever he felt necessary but he could no more be a tyrant and rule the country on his own without a Parliament. He had to rely on the votes of the Parliament both for maintaining his soldiers[11] and for his own income.[12]

The Bill of Rights also determined the end of that age-long struggle of the Reformation process in England. It meant the disposal of both the Puritans and the Catholics from the crown. The clause which read, "In future the king, the queen and the heir to the throne must be Protestants" (Carrington and Jackson 1956:426) ensured that England henceforward was to be a Protestant state.

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[10] It was later converted to a bill.

[11] Annual Mutiny Acts or the Army Acts which began in 1689 granted the king the right to raise a limited number of soldiers for one year only.

[12] Annual Appropriation Acts also began in 1689. According to these acts the Parliament was to set what taxes should be laid on to the king and on what the money should be spent.

During William III's reign, England had to break her alliance with France and join the Dutch in saving Europe from the danger of falling under the domination of France. This meant the beginning of the first of the seven Great Wars with France (1689-1815) that end with Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo.

France, under her powerful King Louis XIV was now making plans to save England from the hands of William III. In doing this, Louis XIV was relying upon the help of the Scottish Jacobites[13] and James II because at the French Court James II now had recovered and was quite ready to win his crown back from William III. Thus, for their mutual benefit the French safely conducted James II to Dublin in 1689 where he began gathering forces against William III.

In Scotland, the leader of the Jacobites was John Graham of Claverhouse, also known as Viscount Dundee. Although Dundee had fought a very successful battle against the English General Mackay, he was killed by a chance shot and his supporters, the Highland clans were immediately separated. This of course had changed the matters in favour of their opponents, that is, William III's supporters, who in the end had promised to forgive the Jacobite rebels on condition that they should come to Inverary to swear an oath of allegiance to the King before 1 January, 1692. No one had resented the offer and they were all on their way to take the oath

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[13] They were the Scottish Roman Catholics who saw James II still as their rightful King.

but unfortunately a group lead by Macdonald of Glencoe was held up by snow until 6 January. Although they were planning to surrender themselves to the King, this little group was mercilessly murdered by a group of soldiers lead by a Whig officer, Campbell of Glenlyon and this was not without the consent of the King.

After having "settled" the matters in Scotland, William III had now turned his attention to Ireland, the weakest spot among his dominions. Ireland was mainly a Roman Catholic country and therefore when James II had come to Dublin in 1689, he had managed to find a considerable amount of supporters in a matter of few weeks. Only the city of Londonberry was still held by the supporters of William III. William III went to Ireland in 1690 and although he was wounded in a struggle, he managed to defeat James II's Frenchmen in the naval Battle of Boyne. This was indeed a great success on part of William III, for it had been enough to settle the matters in Ireland. However, on part of James II it was the end of his hopes for recapturing the English throne. Thus, from then on James II lived a quiet life and died in exile in France, in 1702.

Between the years 1691-97 William III fought with Louis XIV also in Flanders. Louis XIV's invasion of the Spanish Netherlands (1691) had made it necessary for William III to stop Louis XIV's further advance. William III did this by the battles of Steenkirk (1692) and Landen (1693). In 1695 William III had also shown the success of besieging Namur, the strongest of the French Barrier Fortresses in the Spanish Netherlands. After this event,

the war was given an end by a treaty at Ryswick because both the parties were in need of men and money and there had appeared some clues of a coming event that interested them more than anything else: the Spanish succession. King Charles of Spain was dying without an heir to succeed him to the throne. Upon the will of the dying King, the Spanish crown was handed over to a son of the Dauphin of France but William III was not pleased with the situation at all. So began the War of the Spanish succession.[14]

At the time of William III's death in 1702, the matters with France and Spain remained unsettled; however, with the reign of Queen Anne, the Augustian Period, with its emphasis on reason and enlightenment, began in England.

B. The Social Background of the Restoration Period

So far, the Restoration England was taken up with its historical, political and religious aspects. Now in order to have a better understanding of the genre that will be analyzed in the following chapter of this study, the Restoration society will be dealt with.

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[14] The cost of William III's wars were so much that after his death the country inherited nothing but a national debt to be paid by the following generations.

John Harold Wilson, resembling the seventeeth-century society to a pyramid, divides it into three main classes: i) the citizens and countrymen ii) the gentry iii) the nobility (1968: 33). At the very bottom of this pyramid Wilson places the citizens and the countrymen who are again grouped among themselves as the labourers, the merchants, the tenant farmers and the yeomen.

The labourers were the largest class of all; they constituted perhaps three quarters of the entire population. Gregory King, a statiscian of the Restoration era, divided the labourers into two more categories and "... estimated that out of a total population of 5,500,520 people there were 1,275,000 'labouring people and outservants'... and 1,300,000 'cottagers and paupers'..." (Hibbert 1987:255). Hibbert also summarizes King's further estimations about the income of these people. According to King the former group had a yearly income of about fifteen pounds[15] a year per family and the latter had to survive on six pounds ten shillings per family (Hibbert 1987:255).

As a matter of fact, only a little is known about these poor people whom Wilson places at the bottom of the pyramid. This is mainly because they had neither been able to produce or publish any autobiographies nor had many writers considered them worth

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[15] Judged by modern standards, the English pound was worth fifteen to twenty times of what it is today (Ashley 1963:18; Trevelyan 1978:242).

mentioning. However, Ashley estimates that among the lower classes, the farm labourers were to suffer the most because they were the ones who were paid the least (1963:23). Although some of these labourers had the advantage of growing their own food on the piece of land behind their cottages, the majority was not able to do so. Thus, for the latter group life must have been harder. They must have found it desperately difficult to make both ends meet, especially in the years of 1693 and 1699 when prices rose and the cost of bread doubled (Hibbert 1987:257).

In addition to working as farm hands, the poor also tried to scrape a livelihood from coalmining which had become an important industry in the seventeenth-century due to the scarcity of timber as a result of deforestation. The life of a miner was not easier than that of an agricultural labourer or a shop assistant and in fact it was "... in many respects worse than that of any other large class of the community" (Trevelyan 1978:248). As the pits grew deeper, the miners had to spend more time under the ground. Explosions occured, very frequently causing the death of many miners including women and children.

Above the labourers is the group known as the merchants. They were far better off than the labourers first with respect to their income, second with respect to their ever-ameliorating place and rank in the society. Men were generally born into these ranks, however, status was also purchasable. That is, one could easily buy a peerage only if he had enough money. Therefore successful

merchants started buying land in hope of improving their social standing as well as increasing their incomes. According to Gregory King's tables of the year 1688, there were about forty-eight thousand "lesser merchants" with a yearly income of about hundred and ninety-eight pounds, and sixteen thousand "eminent merchants" with an income of about four hundred pounds a year (Hibbert 1987: 257-58).

The group that is placed above the merchants are the tenant farmers. The tenant farmers primarily worked on the land owned by a landlord for which they paid rent in cash or in a share of the crops. In addition to this land the tenant farmers also worked on lands of their own which were usually found behind their cottages. These tenant farmers and their families were about a little less than one-eighth of the population of the country (Trevelyan 1978:264). Throughout the seventeenth-century, following a pattern similar to the mercantile classes, the tenant farmer prospered more and more until the 1710's when he reached the status of a yeoman or even became richer than some of the yeomen. As a matter of fact, the tenant farmer could afford buying more land for himself, however, he did not; he still preferred working on other land as a tenant. Thus, "... the tenant farmer had the benefit of his landlord's capital poured into his lands" (Trevelyan 1978:264). In other words, although there were some exceptions, the tenant farmer farmed one piece of land as a tenant and another piece as its owner (Trevelyan 1978:265). Therefore, he had additional resources besides his own that in the long run proved to be

beneficial both for him and for his status.

The above depiction of a tenant farmer may render it almost impossible to make an absolute distinction between the class of tenants and the class of freeholders, the yeomen (Trevelyan 1978:265). The latter is most commonly placed above the former in the social pyramid (Wilson 1968:33). In this respect, some members of the tenant farmer class may even fit into the category of yeomen as "copyholders" or "leaseholders", the two groups into which Ashley (1963:21) divides the yeomen. The copyholders or the lease-holders were those who possessed land as tenures by means of a written contract signed between them and the landlord.

The class known as the yeomen, numbered about one-hundred and twenty-thousand with incomes that varied between forty pounds and two-hundred pounds a year (Hibbert 1987:320), but for some, this amount doubled by means of long term leases. That is, some people "... who were lucky enough to have long-term leases or... tenures of the kind that was by law not breakable, reaped the full advantage from the soaring prices of their products because their rents could not be raised..." (Trevelyan 1978:107). Therefore, since the land-lords could not raise the rents as they wanted to, they found means to take this money from the other unfortunate group that had to renew their leases annually. As a result, towards the beginning of the eighteenth-century the living standards of some of the yeomen had begun to decline while some had started to live like the gentry who were in reality placed above them.

The second group in Wilson's pyramid is the class known as the gentry or the gentlemen. At the lower end of this class comes the squires. In the years after the Reformation, that is the establishment of the Anglican Church by Henry VIII, squirearchy began to broaden because lands that had formerly belonged to the Church were sold in large quantities. Later when the civil war began, many people, including a number of Cromwell's officers were also able to buy a share of these lands at incredibly low prices. Moreover, such "... opportunities offered by the civil war converted..." many disreputable members of the society "... into respectable country gentlemen..." (Ashley 1963:19).

Most squires had an income of about four-hundred and fifty pounds a year (Hibbert 1987:257; Trevelyan 1978:243). They obtained this money by the proceeds of farming their own land plus by the rents that they collected or by other property. According to Ashley their income was even greater; a squire who owned a substantial amount of land could earn as much as a thousand pounds a year while a squire with less land made eight-hundred pounds (1963:18). Only the great squires were able to survive after the Restoration. The less significant squire who was to live upon cultivating his own land with little or no extra rent to support him financially, began to decline as the greater squires bought large pieces of their land by making tempting offers. In addition to this, "The economic situation was [also] gradually turning against... [the small squire] for capital was needed to keep up with the new methods of land improvement" (Trevelyan 1978:236). The

small squire mostly distrusted innovation and stuck to his traditional ways but the landlords and the farmers who had started practising the new agricultural methods, such as using fertilizers, were to survive longer. Thus, the small needy squire lost most of his property and was consequently wiped out from the socio-economic scene.

Throughout the seventeenth and the eighteenth-centuries, apart from the army and navy, there were only three major professional fields: the law, medicine and the ecclesiastics (Hibbert 1987:605). The members of these professions also belonged to the gentry. Some clergymen, doctors and lawyers, however, also went into agriculture. They were among the group who had started to buy land after the civil war when it was selling at low prices. They wished to improve their social standing as well as to increase their incomes. According to George Macaulay Trevelyan (1978:112), especially the lawyers "... formed a large proportion of the 'new' men who introduced themselves into the country circle by purchase of land and by building of manor houses," for themselves.

Lawyers were mostly the younger sons of the squires. They were educated at the Inns of Court with incomes that varied between two-hundred and forty, and two-hundred and eighty pounds a year (Trevelyan 1978:243). Starting from the times of James I lawyers had grown in power and had become very influential in the Parliament, especially in the House of Commons. During the Commonwealth the lawyers had even managed to exercise power over

Cromwell so that he would not violate the Common Law, which ensured the supremacy of law against the King or the Protector, for the convenience of his government. With the Restoration, the power of the lawyers became greater; the King, for instance, could no longer exercise law in his private courts, that is the Star Chamber and High Commission; instead the lawyers had the higher say.

After the lawyers, the doctors are ranked as the second professional class. Most of the doctors were educated at universities which were under the jurisdiction of the Church and in these universities medical teaching consisted "...of [the] reading of and commenting on inaccurate Latin versions of Greek and Arabian writers; and for anatomical instruction the student had to rely upon... works in manuscript or upon private tutors" (Hibbert 1987:157). Although poorly trained, these students were to graduate as doctors and perform their profession either as private doctors of families especially in London or as medical practitioners in the service of hospitals.

The fashionable London doctor was rather inclined to look down upon the medical practitioner. Similarly, a physician at that time (Hibbert 1987:310) regarded himself superior to a surgeon. This was the state of affairs with the doctors of education who could consciously apply their medical knowledge upon the patients and even cure them.

Yet, there was another group, the quacks, who were

pretenders to the medical profession. Unfortunately these men caused the death of many patients. After the Great Plague of 1665, together with the other refugees, many of the doctors left London for the country-side. Thus, the care of the sick in the city was left in the hands of these quacks who made, "... handsome profits by dispensing to a gullible public a variety of highly coloured pills and medicines whose curative properties were said to be infallible" (Hibbert 1987:426). In other words, these quacks could do almost anything for money without the slightest pang of conscience. Their malpractice has been the subject matter of some plays written during and after the Restoration period.[16]

When compared to the lawyers and doctors, the clergymen were perhaps one of the most privileged members of the gentlemen class. This was because many of them were either related to noblemen or had been chaplains or tutors in noble families. For instance, Frederick Cornwallis, Archbishop of Canterbury was a son of Lord Cornwallis (Hibbert 1987:310).

In the Middle Ages the bishops and all the other clergymen had been the king's civil servants, and had almost no time to fulfill their religious duties. Yet, throughout the seventeenth and the eighteenth-centuries the clergymen found more time to devote to their ecclesiastical duties (Trevelyan 1978:314). However, the

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[16]For instance, *The Country Wife* (1674?) by William Wycherley; *Sir Patient Fancy* (1677/78) by Aphra Behn.

bishops, for instance, still had few secular duties such as schoolmasters and fellows of colleges. In addition, they had a seat in the House of Lords, the advantage of which they must have used with pleasure.

Christopher Hibbert says that these bishops were also very highly paid; for example, at the beginning of the eighteenth century the Archbishop of Canterbury received as much as seven thousand pounds a year (Hibbert 1987:310). Nevertheless, there were still many poor clergymen who had to live upon one hundred pounds or fifty pounds a year or even less, and this situation had inevitably forced these poor people to earn money in other ways, such as teaching in schools or giving private lessons to the sons of the rich (Hibbert 1987:311).

The other members of the gentry were the knights and the baronets. Knighthoods were generally granted to people by the king for some achievement or service for one's country. It was an honorary but a non-hereditary rank below a baronet. On the other hand, baronetcies were invented in 1611 by James I who felt the need of filling the gap between the noblemen and the knights (Ashley 1963: 17). According to the statistician Gregory King, knights numbered about twelve thousand eight-hundred with incomes of eight-hundred and eighty pounds a year (Hibbert 1987:257).

At the pinnacle of the social pyramid, Wilson places the nobility which of course included the Royal family as well. During

the Interregnum, the nobility, the members of which were the dukes, the marquizes, the earls, the viscounts and the barons had considerably lost their prestige: "Under the rule of saints and soldiers, Lords [that used to fill the courts of kings] ceased to count for much in England" (Trevelyan 1978:214) but with the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 they undoubtedly regained their powers as leaders in social and political life. Trevelyan describes the "court" as the "throbbing heart of England" ever since the days of Alfred up to the times of Charles II. Charles II's court can be best described in the following words of George Macaulay Trevelyan:

> [it]... was not only the scene of much pleasure, liberty and scandal... [but] was also the centre of patronage for politics, fashion, literature, art, learning, invention, company promoting, and a hundred other activities of the King's... subjects seeking notoriety or reward (Trevelyan 1978:295).

However, this merry atmosphere was to grow dim as soon as William III and Mary II succeeded to the English throne. According to Trevelyan, henceforward the court became the dwelling place of a "... secluded royalty... difficult to access save on formal occasions of... dullness" (1978:295).

It is claimed that the families of the nobility in Charles II's reign lived on incomes of up to forty-thousand pounds a year which according to Gregory King's estimations was fifty times

greater than that of an army officer and a hundred and fifty times greater than that of an ordinary seaman (Hibbert 1987:289). As can be seen from their incomes, the noblemen were often immensely rich men but nevertheless all of them had costly obligations. For instance, "When the Earl of Bedford took his... retinue to the Tower of London to greet the returned Charles II he spent over £ 1,000 on his display of duty" (Ashley 1963:18; Hibbert 1987:289).

The nobility lived in London which was the most popular setting of many Restoration comedies of manners. The City proper was the dwelling place of the Court and town coterie who particularly preferred to live in Piccadilly, St. James' Square, the Strand or the Covent Garden (Wilson 1968:31). Together with the Mall all these places had become the centres of parade for the fashionables of the town who passed "sauntering" or in their sedan chairs and six-horse coaches either to display their latest appearance or in pursuit of the opposite sex or actually to get some fresh air.

Yet, London was a town that hosted people from every class. The port and the London market "... where the goods of England and the world were exchanged... [needed] not only the muscular efforts of unskilled labour, but a supervising army of foremen, clerks, shop-keepers and middlemen of every variety" (Trevelyan 1978:291). Moreover, London was a centre of manufactures, fishing and luxury trades which employed the most skilled workmen in England. The sons of some of the country gentlemen worked in the best shops of London as apprentices and accumulated wealth, and

when they were off duty they dressed as the fashion required. For the other hand, the rising importance of the Parliament also contributed to the popularity of London which subsequently became the town of many Cavalier politicians. Moreover, poets and painters, beautiful women and men of fashion, wit and intelligence lived in London (Ashley 1963:12). In other words, the capital of the Restoration society "... contained, alongside the most brutal ignorance, an immense and varied stock of skill and intellect" (Trevelyan 1978:291).

At the beginning of the seventeenth-centery, London, covering the City proper, the slum districts and Westminster, had a population of about two hundred thousand (Ashley 1963:12) but by the end of the century this figure doubled. The poor in London were mainly crowded outside the city proper in the slum districts, such as Westminster, Lambeth or Whitechapel. They had to live in overcrowded, unsanitary houses. Moreover, they could get little medical help. All this has been estimated by authorities as the reason for the outbreak of the plague in 1665.

The Great Fire that destroyed London (1666) and the subsequent rebuilding of the city by Wren did not improve the sanitary conditions of these slum areas as they were not burnt down; however, a change took place within the borders of the city proper where the merchants dwelt the most. The Fire had swept away their houses which were handsomely built with courtyards and with nice little back yards. After the Fire, these merchants "... took the opportunity to

rebuild their houses of brick..." (Trevelyan 1978:252) because only brick had resisted the flames.

Besides London, there was of course life going on in other towns in England. Towards the middle of the seventeenth-century, Middlesex became the richest county in England with its port, market and colourful life. Next in order of wealth came Surrey, Berks,... Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire (Trevelyan 1978:247). The reason for the development of these places was mainly due to their being near the London market. Thus, on the average, the counties in the centre were the richest while the west came the second and the north the third in the number of wealthy counties.

Besides the towns, some members of the Restoration society resided in villages or in the country. These people were either rich merchants or squires. The houses of these country gentlemen were generally filled "... with pictures from Italy, furniture from France, and editions of Italian, French or Latin authors which they not only collected but read" (Trevelyan 1978:270).

As for the education of the members of the Restoration society, it was very difficult for the poor to save enough money to pay for tuition. Although tuition in some schools varied in accordance with the status of parents, most of them were still extremely expensive. Infact, the attempt of educating the poor was often called into question; the piece of conversation that

Christopher Hibbert quoted from Victor Neuburg's *Popular Education in 18th Century Britain* (1971) is enough evidence to make the situation more clear:

> 'Certainly not... what ploughman who could read the ... history ... would be content to whistle up one furrow and down another from dawn... to the setting of the sun?' A Member of Parliament, Davies Giddy, agreed with him: 'Giving education to the labouring class of the poor... would teach them to despise their lot in life, instead of making them good servants in agriculture.....
> ..... Instead of teaching them subordination, it would render them fractious... (Hibbert 1987:450).

Thus, the "cottagers and paupers" and the "labouring people and outservants" of Gregory King mostly suffered from lack of education as well.

As the children of the poor were also put to work by their parents as chimney sweepers, coal miners, factory workers, and as farm labourers, at the cost of sparing their labour, there were still some schools to which the poor could send their sons for education. For instance, the parsons in the parish churches had been appointed since the previous century to give basic reading lessons and religious instruction to these poor sons. After completing this primary education, the sons of the poor could apply to a grammar school. Some of the grammar schools offered free places

for these poor boys or places in return for extra work, such as cleaning the classrooms. For instance, at Manchester Grammar School two poor undergraduates were admitted to the lessons in return for sweeping the whole school twice a week (Hibbert 1987:266). Also towards the end of the seventeenth-century, especially after the formation of the "Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge" whose objective was to teach the Bible and other religious literature, there was a great increase in the number of charity schools in all parts of England and Wales where the sons of the poor were informed about the Christian religion so that they would be saved from "profaneness and debauchery" (Hibbert 1987:267).

On the other hand, the sons of the merchants and the yeomen were undoubtedly luckier compared to the sons of the labourers. Their fathers were able to afford the tuition and so there was no need for them to do extra work either. All they had to do was to study their lessons. Thus, the sons of the merchants and the yeomen went to grammar schools in the neighbourhood where they could sit next to the sons of the squires together with whom they would join the clergy in the future.

Along with the charity schools, at the close of the century the "Dissenting Academies" also increased in number; they were founded by Puritan clergy dismissed from the Anglican Church. These academies had a modern curriculum; they gave more emphasis to science, mathematics, English and other modern languages rather than to classics and Latin as there was, in the middle of the

seventeenth-century, a general rejection of the classics as the dominating subject in a school's curriculum. For this reason, together with the merchants and yeomen who were mostly Puritans, some of the Anglican parents were also willing to send their sons to these academies which followed more modern curricula.

The son of a wealthier squire on the other hand, would generally be taught at home by a neighbouring parson or by a private chaplain with definitely a good knowledge of French because it was the fashionable language at that time. Otherwise, the son would be sent to the Inns of Court. There, he would study law with an annual tuition of at least thirteen pounds, six shillings and eight pennies (Hibbert 1987:137).

The children of the noble families, however, were the luckiest of all. Sometimes even the daughters of some of the enlightened nobility were given a chance by their parents to be educated. Yet, still women's education in the Restoration era was not a common practice. Among the lower classes, since everybody was uneducated, the lack of education in women was not as obvious as it was in the upper classes. However, in the upper classes most of the young ladies were apparently less educated than their young brothers. Hibbert (1987:274) notes that in the middle of the seventeenth-century there were a great number of gentlewomen in England who were not even barely literate. This was due to the fact that most of the young ladies were not sent to schools but were educated at home by their mothers. These young ladies learned from

their mothers how to read, write, sew and manage a household. Thus, the society practised a double standard in educating children: the sons were brought up in "good-learning" and the daughters in "virtuous and godly life" (Hibbert 1987:272).

Nevertheless, by the middle of the seventeenth-century several boarding schools and day academies for the daughters of the rich were opened in England. The parent paid approximately thirty-two pounds a year so that his daughter would be taught reading and writing together with how to put on make-up, curl her hair according to the fashion, dance, sing and do needlework (Hibbert 1987:274). In other words, the curricula of most of the girls' schools were also weighted in favour of subjects that might prove useful for the girls in their later lives when they were to undertake the roles of wife and mothers.

However, towards the end of the century, there appeared in the society some women of privilege who had had the chance of learning and speaking five or more languages including Greek and Latin. These women found as much pleasure in learning as did the men. Yet, according to King James I, for instance, such learning in a lady was unnecessary and even dangerous. Thus, "... refusing to have his daughters taught Latin, [King James I] expressed the belief that 'to make women learned and foxes tame had the same effect: to make them more cunning'" (Hibbert 1987:273). Therefore, if the King himself expressed such disagreement towards educating women, the rest obviously shared or at least seemed to share his

views. As a continuation of this negative attitude towards women's education, a learned lady, even after the restoration of a broad-minded king like Charles II, was still advised by her mother to hide her knowledge from her husband (Hibbert 1987:274) and from other men in the society. If she was not to take this advice the Restoration society or rather the seemingly gentlemen of "knowledge" of the period would mock her and out of jealousy they would knickname her pejoratively as a "blue-stocking", meaning a bookish, pedantic woman.

Trevelyan (1978:272) agrees with Hibbert (1987:274) in that the sons of the well-to-do were to receive better education than their sisters. The sons graduated from grammar schools of national reputation such as Repton or Shrewsbury where a noble parent (Lord) could be charged as much as ten shillings, a gentleman (knight or a squire) six shillings, eight pennies for the admission of their sons (Hibbert 1987:271). Once these young members of the nobility and genre were finished with their secondary education, they had two choices: the first was to attend the Inns of Court as did the sons of many of the rich squires and the second choice was to attend a university.

During the rule of the Stuart monarchs, the two famous universities, Oxford and Cambridge became the centres of attraction for the sons of the rich. The heavy tuitions asked by these universities had gradually discouraged the poor, leaving more and more space for the rich attendants. At these universities, subjects

like Latin, grammar, rhetoric logic, mathematics, music, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, ancient history and geometry were taught. However, among the undergraduates of noble birth only a few were able to take degrees from these universities because "... many troubled themselves little with what did not interest them" (Hibbert 1987: 278).

Other than formal education, the young gentlemen of seventeen or eighteen went on a "tour" abroad especially to France and Italy to gain some more knowledge. This tour, known as the "Grand Tour" was an aristocratic institution and it was considered an important part of a gentleman's education. Within three or four years, the young gentleman was expected to have been adorned with a highly developed taste and manner as well as a good command of several foreign languages and a considerable amount of knowledge about "... history, geography, trade, ... crops, minerals, food, clothes, customs, ... politics, laws, art and military fortifications of the district" (Hibbert 1987:464). However, having spent most of their time enjoying themselves in idleness, many young men returned from their Grand Tour with little improvement (Hibbert 1987:464-65). Yet, the influence of the Grand Tour on English taste was quite evident. The gentlemen who really benefited from their continental travels brought about a refinement to the country, especially in manners and in arts.

King Charles II contributed to the education of young minds, too. The King did this by sending for example Killigrew and

Davenant, the future directors of theatres in Restoration London, to France where he believed that they could learn the best new dramatic techniques used in the theatre. Similarly, the King sent the famous actor, Thomas Betterton, again to France so that he would be instructed on dramaturgy (Bozer 1981:2).

In the realm of thought, Restoration was an era of science, mathematics and physical experiment (Ashley 1963:155). When Charles II was restored to the throne, he supplied the scientists with the support that they had always needed to display their genius. Thus, there came about mathematicians like John Wallis and Seth Ward; the astronomer Dr. Edmund Halley; physicians like Francis Glisson and Robert Boyle; the economist John Locke and above all the well-known Sir Isaac Newton, the discoverer of the law of gravitation. The aim of all these men in general was to familiarize the minds of their countrymen with scientific methods of inquiry to discover truth. Therefore, in a way, "The impulse given at the beginning of the century by [Francis] Bacon [who had introduced scientific investigation] was strongly renewed on the return of... king [Charles II]"(Legouis 1966:173). However, this does not mean that the Commonwealth regime had rejected scientists; it was only that the "... work[s of these scientists] came into the limelight of fashion and favour at the court of the Restoration" (Trevelyan 1978:225).

As a matter of fact, some of the courtiers and even the King himself was interested in science and scientific research. For

instance, the King's cousin, Prince Rupert conducted chemical experiments (Trevelyan 1978:225) while the second Duke of Buckingham had a private laboratory. Similarly, King Charles II had his own laboratory and he was very much interested in astrology and in astronomy as well (Ashley 1963:155).

Moreover, it was also King Charles II himself and Prince Rupert who had founded the scientif association known as the Royal Society. Although its origin can be traced back to 1645 (Ashley 1963:156), the date of foundation of the society as a central association falls in the years of the Restoration era (15 July, 1662). In other words, the Restoration was no doubt an era of science, mathematics and physical experiment. However, it would have definitely not been so without the royal encouragement and support which in a way had also stimulated the Industrial Revolution of the following century (Trevelyan 1978:225).

In the Restoration society, social distinctions among the members of utmost significance were marked in all kinds of ways: in the way people behaved, in the way they dressed and even in the way they entertained themselves. In other words, the Restoration was a period in which a person's clothing or his conversation or his personal interests would inevitably rank him either with the upper or with the lower classes. Besides, it was a rule by convention that none of the members of the society were to do things in a way unsuited to their rank and calling.

During the Interregnum people had to live conforming to the strict rules of Puritan doctrine which was completely against worldly pleasures such as fashion and entertainment. Some of the fanatic Puritans were indeed happy living a secluded life in hope of achieving salvation. Thus, even after the restoration of a pleasure-seeking king, Charles II, Puritans continued to avoid, for example theatres, because they were "... dens of iniquity and vice" (Wilson 1968:32). These fanatic Puritans were also supported by some outstanding figures of literature of the period such as John Milton (1608-1674), John Bunyan (1628-1688) and later by a Puritan clergyman, Jeremy Collier (1650-1726). Bunyan's faith in Puritanism was reflected in his lifestyle as well. He was among the poor Baptist preachers who went all over the country in barefeet, making speeches while, beating the ecclesiastical drum "... with fist instead of a stick" (Butler 1979:1911). A preacher of such kind was usually poorly dressed and had his hair cut short which was completely out of fashion. For this reason the poor Puritan preacher was sometimes derisively called by his opposers, as a "round head".

Other than the Puritan way of living, there was the poor at the lowest end of the social scale with a living quite peculiar to their own. They obviously had little or no money which was sometimes barely enough for their food and they barely had the chance of "clothing" themselves. In other words, it was only a dream for the poor to follow the fashion. Moreover, since most of the poor had none or little education their manners on the whole were coarse. They enjoyed drinking beer and having affairs with women (Ashley

1963:22). Wrestling, boxing, various kinds of rough football, and hurling were also popular among them. Other than these, the poor usually watched with delight bull and bear-baiting which were mere sights of pain being inflicted upon animals.

For the country gentlemen, life was easier and more colourful. The country gentlemen or the squire had usually enough money to buy "... his horsehair periwig, his jockey belt and his old fashioned coat without sleeves" (Trevelyan 1978:269). The squire entertained himself mostly with his garden, with his pond, with his library (Trevelyan 1978:271) as well as with gambling (Trevelyan 1978:276) and with shooting partridges (Trevelyan 1978:243). However, at the peak of the social hierarchy, that is, for the upper classes life in the country and the entertainment that went with it were in general considered a bore. The upper classes despised and rejected the sight of the poor; likewise they could not stand the presence of a country gentleman. In the opinion of the upper classes, the country gentleman was not fit for sensible conversation; he was simple; he was rough and the most important of all he was generally unfamiliar with the rules of etiquette. Nevertheless, the country gentleman behaved as if he had an equal status with the uppermost classes. He tried imitating the upper class behaviour that naturally made him appear ridiculous both in actual life and in the Restoration comedy of manners of which he often was a stock type.

Manners, fashion and the modes of entertainment among

the upper-classes was a totally different issue. As Charles II and his court had spent many years in exile in France they were accustomed to the French ways of living. Thus, when they were restored as social and political leaders in England, Charles II and his court inevitably brought with themselves some kind of an admiration towards the French culture and way of life. Therefore, following the example of the restored nobility, the upper-classes began renewing themselves almost in every aspect of life.

Firstly etiquette became a very important aspect of upper class conduct. The gentlewomen of the Restoration society started demanding from the gentlemen of honour more respectful an attention and more civilly an addressing. The Restoration gentlemen were indeed ready to satisfy the needs of their ladies. The gentlemen were generally well-bred: "... they bowed, embraced each other, and 'saluted' [the] ladies [with respect and] with ceremonial kisses" (Wilson 1968:37). However, Wilson adds that some of the manners of these gentlemen "... would [even] shame a tramp" (1968:37). Contrary to their display of refinery, the so-called gentlemen of the Restoration society would eat with fingers and knives, drink excessively, spit on the floors and would even use the fire-places as privies" (Wilson 1968:37). Moreover, when married these gentlemen would become hypocrites and in public would play the role of attentive husbands to their wives while in private they would keep mistresses. Unfortunately, the noble King Charles II never did set a good example for his subjects either. Besides his Queen he openly kept several mistresses. Among them there was the famous actress,

Nell Gwyn and even a French Duchess, Louise Keroulle (Wilson 1959: 91).

As for the manners of the gentle ladies of the Restoration society, Wilson (1968:37) comments mockingly that they were "... a little better" compared to the gentlemen. These ladies, who were pretty and elegant, were, on the surface, very honourable and respectful members of the society. However, beneath the appearance of elegance, refinery and honour, there most often lay hypocrites. The seemingly "honourable" and "fine" ladies would also talk bawdy and spit on the floors. Moreover, most of the so-called gentle ladies would flirt with gallants, too, and would cuckold their husbands whenever they could get the chance.

So far, it is evident that the members of the Restoration aristocracy had a cynical attitude towards the institution of marriage. For this cynicism there seems to be an explanation which is as follows: in the Restoration society, aristocratic marriages were usually arranged by parents or guardians without taking into consideration the feelings of the bride and bridegroom but with sole regard to the increase of family fortune, rank and reputation (Hibbert 1987:391; Wilson 1968:36). This attitude naturally "... debased the institution to the level of a commercial alliance and [gradually] made a mockery of the sacrament" (Wilson 1968:36-37).

Another aspect of life in which the Restoration upper classes renewed themselves by following the example of the Merry

Monarch and his court, was fashion. The King especially set an example for the young English gentlemen of the times with his deborate clothing of the latest French fashion of the mid-seventeenth century. Thus, gentlemen more long periwigs, painted their faces, scented their clothes highly and were "... bedecked with ribbons of all colours" (Hibbert 1987:290). Towards the middle of Charles II's reign, the French style had completely entered the English gentlemen's wardrobe and men began wearing coats with buttons of gold and silver, shoes with diamond buckles and embroidered waist-coats which they would leave open to reveal their shirts which were made of fine linen. Furthermore, the gentlemen began wearing ties that had lace ends; they had "... silk handkerchiefs dangling from [their] huge pockets, gold fobs loaded with seals jingling by their stockinged legs and diamond hilted swords swinging at [their] waist" (Hibbert 1987:339) which they would use often and unhesitatingly to protect their honour and good name. Finally a fashionable wig worn over the hair would complete the dressing of a fine gentleman. This was quite an expensive habit because one wig at that time could cost as much as twenty pounds (Hibbert 1987:290) and also there was always the danger of these wigs being snatched from the head in crowded streets (Hibbert 1987:339). In the days of the Restoration, there were a variety of wigs for the gentlemen of fashion who could chose from bob wigs, busby wigs, riding wigs, periwigs and so many others that would be carefully tended "... by peruquiers who, before powdering them, dressed them with pomatum to keep the curls in place" (Hibbert 1987:339).

Other than dressing themselves in accordance with the French fashion and refinery, the gentlemen of the Restoration society were also interested in the newly introduced drinks of fashion which were coffee and tea. These fashionable new drinks were very expensive commodities at that time. Coffee, for instance, rose from three shillings six pennies a pound in 1689 to four shillings in 1690 and to six shillings in 1692 (Hibbert 1987:291). However, the well-to-do Londoners could afford it and they loved frequenting the coffee-houses to enjoy its taste. Around the 1660's there were over eighty coffee-houses in London "... charging 1d a dish for ... coffee and offering also tea - which had come to England via Holland from China" (Hibbert 1987:291). Infact, tea was much more expensive than coffee. The price of tea in 1687 could vary between three guineas and twenty-five shillings a pound (Hibbert 1987:291).

Smoking tobacco was another luxurious fashion among the aristocratic gentlemen. However, only gentlemen who were as rich as the fifth Earl of Bedford could afford buying Virginian tobacco at two shillings six pennies a pound or Spanish tobacco at up to nine shillings a pound (Hibbert 1989:291). Pipes were also purchased but for comparatively cheaper prices. For instance, an eligible pipe would cost a gentleman no more than a pound and four shillings in 1695 (Hibbert 1987:291).

As for the fashion among the fine ladies, the effect of the French was once again very obvious. Besides her elaborately

laced and ribboned dress the gentlelady would wear a high headgear. The hair would be piled up high and would be decorated with "... ribbons, blossoms, fruit, ostrich feathers and... [with] flowers" (Hibbert 1987:341). She would also carry a fan sometimes so large in size that it could even be compared to windmills (Hibbert 1987: 342). "The more expensive [fans] were mounted with diamonds and inlaid with jewels, and were painted [sometimes] with political emblems, verses from popular songs or extracts from books, pictures of fruit and flowers" (Hibbert 1987:342). Other than carrying a handsome fan, the lady of fashion would redden her cheeks slightly with a red leather imported from Brazil and colour her lips faintly with carmine or with lipsticks made from coloured plaster of Paris (Hibbert 1987:343). In order to follow the fashion of the times and to appear more beautiful, the lady of the upper-class Restoration society would almost try anything; for instance, she would not hesitate wearing false-buttocks or holding inside her mouth small cork balls to make her cheeks appear rounder, and therefore to appear more attractive (Hibbert 1987:343).

As the fashion required, the Restoration gentlewomen also enjoyed drinking tea or coffee. However, unlike the gentlemen it was improper for them to go to the coffee-houses. Thus, the ladies preferred to have these fashionable drinks at their lodgings while chatting politely with the other fine ladies of London.

Collecting chinaware was another fashionable passion of these fine ladies. Chinaware was brought to Europe and to England

by the Dutch and English East India Companies (Trevelyan 1978:269). Once this fine porcelain entered the country, it was bought by the rich to be used, most often as a decorative piece, in their mansions.

The refined tastes of the French were also partly reflected in the upper-class entertainment. The upper-class ladies and gentlemen both enjoyed attending balls and masks where they could see their friends, chat, have some drink and dance while listening to Henry Purcell who was an outstanding composer of the Restoration period.

However, contrary to their finery, some members of the upper-classes shared "... the brutal amusements of the uncouth mob" as well (Wilson 1968:37). First of all, they really were enthusiastic about witnessing executions that took place in public places such as Tyburn, Charing Cross and Tower Hill (Wilson 1968:37). For instance, on 13 October, 1660 Samuel Pepys especially went to Charing Cross "... to see Max. - Gen. Harrison hanged, drawn and quartered .... He was... cut down and his head and his heart shown to people, at which there was great shouts of joy" (Pepys 1985:86).

Cock and dog-fighting, bull and bear baiting were other vulgar interests of the upper-classes. Together with the people from lower classes the Restoration gentry and even the nobility wagered large sums of money especially on cock-fighting (Hibbert 1987:367). King Charles II had vulgar tastes, too. For instance, he enjoyed very much cock-fighting that took place at Newmarket

(Wilson 1968:38). Also during the early years of Charles II's reign annual bear-baitings were arranged in the Tiltyard at Whitehall, and in 1679 the King even "... entertained the Spanish Ambassador with a great bearbaiting in the Beargarden" (Wilson 1968:38). Dog-fights and bull-baitings also took place in the Beargarden and they had much the same attraction for the spectators from all classes.

King Charles II and the nobility also enjoyed horse-racing which was known as the sport of Kings. During the Restoration, annual races were run at the Newmarket and they were patronized by the King himself. In this period, however, the race horses were untrained and the jockeys felt free to knock their rivals off their saddles so that they would be the winners (Hibbert 1987:369).

King Charles II and his court also found pleasure in watching a wrestling match or a rope dancer. However, above all the other entertainment theatre - going was their favourite. The King and many of his young courtiers like Sir Charles Sedley, Sir George Etherege and William Wycherley were personally interested in the theatre. Sedley, Etherege and Wycherley wrote plays to display their wit and win favour at Charles II's court while the King encouraged them and the rest of the dramatists by suggesting to them themes and plots. For instance, the King gave some suggestions to John Crowne that resulted in *Sir Courtly Nice* (1685) and to Tom D'Urfey that resulted in *The Banditti* (1686) (Loftis et.al. 1976:7). Furthermore Charles II sometimes lent his own costumes to the actors to be used in plays. For instance, the King lent his coronation

costume to Thomas Betterton to be worn in William Davenant's *Love and Honour* (Loftis et.al. 1976:145).

As a consequence of such encouragement and patronage by the King, the upper-classes began to be interested more in drama. They started attending the theatres and theatre - going gradually became their major means of entertainment. Hence, the Restoration theatre began to be dominated by a "Court-and-Town coterie" (Wilson 1968:31). The most important member of this coterie was King Charles II himself. He went to the theatres very often. Taking with him a number of gentlemen of his court, sometimes his Queen (Loftis et.al. 1976:16) but usually a number of his mistresses, the King sat in the side-boxes facing the stage. Charles II's verdict on a play influenced very much the box-office sales (Wilson 1968:34). The Duke and the Duchess of York sometimes accompanied him to the plays as well, and they also sat in a side-box next to the King's (Loftis et.al. 1976:17; Wilson 1968:32). When these side-boxes were not occupied by royalty they were rented at a standard price of four shillings a seat (Wilson 1959:viii; Wilson 1968:32). Among other members of the theatre-going "court coterie" Sir Charles Sedley, Sir George Etherege, the Earl of Dorset, and the Duke of Buckingham may be stated (Avery and Scouten 1973:457).

The members of the "town coterie" were equally enthusiastic playgoers. Pepys and his friends were among this group. They would usually sit on backless benches in the pit which they would share with some politicians, clerks, Members of Parliament, country

gentlemen and their wives, doctors, university and law students on vacation and fashionable young gallants (Wilson 1968:31).

The court-and-town coterie used the theatres as private clubhouses. The ladies attended the plays to see and to be seen and to chat and to hear all about the latest news and gossip in town. The young gentlemen of fashion, on the other hand, frequented the playhouses either to make assignations or to meet their mistresses. In other words, the coterie went to the theatre with purposes other than the initial purpose of watching the performance. Even if they did watch the performance, the aim of this coterie was never to be edified or reformed but simply to be entertained (Wilson 1968:33).

In giving a description of the behaviour of the Restoration audience Gamini Salgado employs a very striking comparison. Salgado says that "The behaviour of the audience at the [Restoration] theatre was, by modern standards, more like the behaviour of a football crowd" (1980:136-37). However, until the 1670's the situation was not as bad as Salgado's description because "Although Mr. Pepys... was occasionally annoyed by talkers in the pit, he recorded no [real] brawls or disturbances" until the end of his *Diary* that closed on 31 May, 1669 (Wilson 1968:40). Thus, it was only in the later years of King Charles II's reign when the theatre-going coterie began to be dominated by rougher members. The emergence of this rough audience negatively affected the audience's theatrical manner which gradually deteriorated. Especially "... a generation of wild young bullies..." invaded the late Restoration

theatres (Wilson 1968:40). They came into the pit in groups and usually were drunk. During the performances, "They swore, talked bawdy at the tops of their voices" and sometimes quarreled with the orange wenches and with each other; chattered about a "lady" in mask, pulled people's periwigs, threw fruit and audibly commented on the play (Wilson 1968:41). Disorders would further increase when one spectator with a personal or political enmity against a playwright or player felt free to ruin a play with the help of his friends. He would spread his friends all over the playhouse, some in the pit, some in the side-boxes, others in the middle and upper galleries and the rest on the stage, and during the performance they would all together start coughing, sneezing, whistling, sometimes singing and sometimes talking until the others would be disturbed and get angry (Wilson 1968:42). Thus, swords would be drawn, the actors and the actresses would be interrupted and this would be the end of the play (Wilson 1968:42).

The writers of the prologues and epilogues, especially after the 1670's, reflected unflattering views about the Restoration audience. The "Prologue" _ *The Ordinary* (1670), for instance, reflects such an attitude (qtd. in Avery and Scouten 1973:461; Salgado 1980:138):

> Some come with lusty Burgundy half-drunk,
> T'eat China oranges, make love to punk;
> And briskly mount a bench when th'Act is done,
> And comb their much-loved prewigs to the tune
> And can sit out a play of three hours long,
> Minding no part of't but the dance or song.

Also Shadwell in his "Epilogue" to Maidwell's *The Loving Enemies* (1680) criticizes the ignorant attitude of the audience towards the plays:

> In none of these will the young sparks delight,
> They never read, and scorn all those that write
> They only come to the boxes to survey,
> Laugh, roar and bawl, but never hear the play;
> In monkey's tricks they pass the time away.

Thus, it is evident that King Charles II's death in 1685 marked the end of the "original coterie of sophisticated aristocrats" (Wilson 1968:41) which once dominated the theatres of the Merry Monarch. While James II shared his brother's liking for the theatre, his bigoted Catholicizing policy drew most of the Anglican gentlemen away from the court, to their country estates. Moreover, under William III and Marry II the theatre completely lost its special relationship with the court because King William III was totally disinterested in the theatre. Thus, the typical audience after 1689 was no longer a blend of the court and of the town; new spectators appeared in the theatres who were the "nouveaux-riches" of the London town and who in John Dennis'[17] words were "individuals 'who made their Fortunes in the late [Civil] War' and who had risen 'from a state of obscurity' to a 'condition of distinction and plenty'" (qtd. in Avery and Scouten 1973:459).

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[17]A dramatist and a critic of the Restoration era; he is famous for writing the book about the history of acting and actors which is called *Historia Histrionica* (1699).

Thus, it is evident that towards the end of the seventeenth-century theatres and theatre-going was no longer a means of entertainment peculiar to the upper-classes. Furthermore, the decadance of the spectators soon brought along a decadance in drama itself. Henceforward drama directed itself towards the "... foolish operas, sensational melodramas and pathetic tragedies" (Wilson 1968:42) of the early eighteenth-century. Thus Restoration drama, the second most significant period in drama after the Elizabethan period, came to an end.

C. LITERARY BACKGROUND OF THE RESTORATION PERIOD

Literature has always been related to society. In other words, works of literature are moulded after the specific historical, political, religious and social conditions of their time. Thus, the literature that developed in the Restoration period is no exception to this rule and it was affected by the historical, political, religious and social conditions mentioned in the previous sections of this study.

At the time of the Restoration of King Charles II in 1660, among the great literary figures of the earlier era only two Puritans were surviving. They were John Milton (1608-74) and John Bunyan (1628-88). Both of them belonged completely to the past but they were yet to produce their works that would later become their master-pieces.

During the Restoration Milton started working in isolation. As a consequence of this isolation as well as of poverty, blindness and leisure, rose Milton's chief works: *Paradise Lost* (1667) and *Samson Agonistes* (1671). Milton was "... a survivor of the lost Republican cause among the alien triumphant Royalists" (Legouis 1965:170) and thus his works were quite unsuitable to satisfy the tastes of the new age in which he was to live his later life. His two great epics, in fact, "... broke strangely on a dissolute and cynical..." (Legouis 1965:70) upper class society who were the supporters of literature.

Similarly, the works of John Bunyan received an unfavourable response in the Restoration world. Bunyan was a "gospel-trumpeter"[18] who was in opposition to the Restoration readers the majority of which were the Cavaliers. As a result, the Cavaliers were not at all interested in finding the means of salvation which Bunyan offered with Biblical references in his great allegory, the *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678).

The foremost man of letters who was productive during the Restoration was John Dryden (1631-1700). Dryden tried his hand at almost all the forms of literature. For this reason he is generally accepted as the representative of his age; many critics tend to name the Restoration after John Dryden, as the "Age of

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[18] Samuel Butler, in his famous *Hudibras* (1663) derisively calls the unlicenced Puritan preacher with this name.

Dryden". In the realm of prose Dryden came up with his single work of literary criticism, *Essay on Dramatic Poesie* (1668). Dryden, in this essay, which is in the form of a discussion between four characters, makes a comparison between French and English drama. Moreover, written in plain and simple English the essay happens to be the first attempt to evaluate the works of the Elizabethan writers, especially of Shakespeare.

Other than Dryden, some of the courtiers of Charles II produced literary works also in prose. For instance, Lord Halifax (1633-95), a supporter of the Exclusion Bill against James II wrote a small volume of political tracts called *Miscellanies*. Similarly, the fashionable courtier, Sir William Temple (1628-99) wrote *Miscellanea*, a group of essays on literary and general subjects.

In the category of prose writers of the Restoration period must be included the names of the two famous diarists of the time, Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) and John Evelyn (1620-1706). Pepys' *Diary* opens on 1 January, 1660 and closes on 31 May, 1669. It is mainly an account of Pepys' observations, thoughts and feelings recorded within a period of nine years. Pepys' *Diary* makes no pretentions to literary style (Albert 1965:177; Moody and Morss-Lovett 1964:183), but it is praised mostly for its naturalness, simplicity and narrative skill. Moreover the *Diary*, in our century serves as one of the best historical documents about life in Restoration London. On the other hand, John Evelyn's "... diary is

a more finished production in the matter of style" (Albert 1965: 177) and for this reason Evelyn is sometimes considered to have produced his *Diary* more with an eye on the public. His language is simple but less amusing than Pepys'. However, Evelyn gives a lot more accurate information, especially about the Great Fire that took place in 1666 (Albert 1965:177).

In the world of poetry, John Dryden was once again the leading figure of the Restoration era. He in fact started his poetic career in 1659 with *Heroic Stanzas* that was written on the death of Cromwell,however, it lacked literary merit. In celebration of the arrival of Charles II in 1660 Dryden wrote *Astrea Redux* which represented a complete reversal of the poet's political opinions, a frequent practice for which Dryden was criticized the most. *Astrea Redux* also "... marks the beginning of that adherence to the use of the [heroic] couplet [although not at its best] which was to be Dryden's lifelong habit, and which was to mark a new epoch in... [English] literature" (Albert 1965:159). *Annus Mirabilis* (1667) was the next poem Dryden wrote and it concluded the early period of his poetic life. The poem was mainly an account of the Great Fire and a commemoration of the naval victory of the English over the Dutch in a war that took place in the preceding year.

Moreover, later in his career, when the political controversies over the Exclusion Bills were at their height in England, Dryden wrote the first of his two famous political

satires in verse, *Absolom and Achitophel* (1681). Acting as a spokesman for monarchy, Dryden "... exposed [in heroic couplets] with merciless humor the relations of Monmouth, the prince, and Shaftesbury, the evil counsellor" (Moody and Morss-Lovett 1964: 178). Next year Dryden came up with his second political satire, *The Medal* (1682) in which he made another blow at Shaftesbury by employing once more, the heroic couplet.

Also in the same year Dryden wrote *Religio Laici* (1682), a religious poem in which he supports the Anglican Church. Nevertheless, in about three years' time Dryden became a Roman Catholic and he sat down to write another religious poem. This new work called *The Hind and the Panther* (1687) was a political-religious defense but this time of the Roman Catholic Church.

John Dryden was also the best of the lyrical poets of his time. *Song for St. Cecilia's Day* (1687) and *Alexander's Feast* (1697) are his best known lyrical pieces. Other than Dryden, there was a group of Charles II's courtiers, the Earl of Dorset (1638-1706), the Earl of Rochester (1648-80) and Sir Charles Sedley (1639-1701) who also wrote lyrical poetry. Their poems, infact, were of no great literary merit but the artificial manner in which they treated the theme of love was important as it reflected the attitude of the upper-classes.

Another well-known poet of the Restoration era is Samuel Butler (1612-80) who in 1663 wrote *Hudibras*, his most famous verse-

satire on the Puritans. The general outline of the poem resembles the story of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza who find their parallels in the characters of Sir Hudibras, a Puritan knight and his squire, Ralpho. Similar to his proto-type, Hudibras undergoes many absurd adventures with Ralpho that display more and more Hudibras' pedantry; in this way Butler infact satirized, Puritan pedantry.

Furthermore, the Restoration was undoubtedly a lively period especially with regard to the developments in drama. At the beginning of this period tragic drama was represented by the heroic play, written in heroic couplets, a form that was introduced by Sir William Davenant[19] and popularized by John Dryden (Albert 1965: 170). The subject matter of a heroic tragedy was almost always the same. There was usually "An impossibly idealistic love, in conflict with a strenuously proclaimed honour,... [that led] to exaggerated emotions and to stock characters, who... [were] psychologically unconvincing" (Albert 1965:170). In this respect as well as with regard to the use of rhyme, the heroic tragedy, though by no means an imitation, is said to owe something to the tragedies of Corneille (Albert 1965:170; Legouise 1965:185; Moody and Morss-Lovett 1964: 184; Salgado 1980:139; Wilson 1968:70).

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[19] Davenant introduced the heroic tragedy with *The Siege of Rhodes* which he wrote before the Restoration of Charles II, in 1656 (Legouise 1965:185; Moody and Morss-Lovett 1964:184).

In 1665 John Dryden wrote the first of his heroic tragedies called *The Indian Emperor*. It was not at all a success, however, Dryden was not discouraged. In 1670 Dryden wrote another heroic play, *The Conquest of Granada*. In both the plays Dryden pushed "... his characters into unnatural extravagance of passion; a fault which ... was caricatured in *The Rehersal* (1671), a famous mock-heroic drama by the Duke of Buckingham and others" (Moody and Morss- Lovett 1964:184). However, until the 1680's, in spite of all the criticism that they received, the heroic tragedies of Dryden and of Thomas Otway, who wrote *Don Carlos* (1676), kept on appealing to the people who were "... weary of the conceits of the meta-physical poets..." (Moody and Morss- Lovett 1964:180) and who "... considered war to be the noblest exercise... [and] love to be the noblest frailty of the mind..." of a gentleman (Wilson 1968:68).

In the year 1675 Dryden completed the writing of another heroic tragedy, *Aureng-zebe*. However, in the "Prologue" to this play Dryden confessed that he, too was "... weary of his long-loved mistress, Rhyme" (Dryden 1955:256). Thus, starting with his next play, *All For Love* (1678) Dryden abandoned the heroic couplet and began employing blank verse in his plays. Following the example of Dryden, Thomas Otway wrote his second important play, *Venice Preserv'd* (1682) in blank verse, too. The play in general "... is a moving study of passion and character against a background of history" (Legouis 1965:187) in which a Spanish ambassador to Venice hopes to destroy Venice and make the Spanish the supreme power in the Adriatic Sea. In comedy alone was Dryden surpassed by the

fashionable courtiers of King Charles II. However, his *Wild Gallant* (1663), *An Evening's Love* (1668) and *Marriage ā la Mode* (1672) are worth mentioning. In these plays Dryden tried his hand at the Restoration comedy of manners, a genre that became popular after the arrival of the Merry Monarch. Yet, the "... more typical [Restoration] comedy of manners" (Thompson 1980:60) appeared with *The Country Wife* (1674) in which William Wycherley, a poet and a "court wit", portrayed with a satirical touch the manners of the aristocratic world around him, of which he was a member himself. Two years later in 1676 the genre, Restoration comedy of manners found its real form in the hands of another court wit, Sir George Etherege (1634-1691). Etherege employed his noted talent through a portrayal of the same fashionable circle in *The Man of Mode* (1676) which in our century is generally considered to be "... the best comedy [of manners] of the early phase of the Restoration theatre" (Salgado 1980:147).

Apart from Dryden, Wycherley and Etherege and a number of other writers tried their hands at the same field. Among them can be named Thomas Shadwell (1642-? 1692) with *The Sullen Lovers* (1668) and Mrs. Aphra Behn (1640-1689), "England's first professional woman writer..." (Bozer 1981:9) with *The Rover* I, II (1677; 1681). Into this group may also be included Sir John Vanbrugh (1664-1726) who was praised for his *The Relapse* (1696). However, it was not until the close of the seventeenth-century when the Restoration comedy of manners reached perfection with William Congreve (1670-1729). Yet, paradoxically enough all of Congreve's

plays except for his masterpiece, *The Way of the World* (1700) received an immediate success in its age. Wilson blames this on the domination of the theatres by the 1700's by a middle class audience (1968:178). According to Wilson such an audience obviously "... had... little appetite for... [Congreve's] sophisticated .... wit..." (1968:178) and lacked the mental capability to realize and appreciate the greatest comedy that perfected the genre while ending the Restoration era.

As all of these plays were performed in playhouses, it is necessary to say a few words about the theatres of the Restoration period as well. On his return from exile in the year 1660, Charles II granted two playwrights Thomas Killigrew and Sir William Davenant two "patents", so that they could have the control and the monopoly of the theatrical affairs in Restoration London. However, while rewarding his two courtiers who had been faithful to him during his exile, the King wanted them to produce in England what he and his courtiers were used to in the theatre in France. After a very short time Killigrew and Davenant did what the King wanted.

To begin with, Killigrew and Davenant worked together, but soon in 1662 they formed two rival theatre companies called "The King's Servants" and "The Duke of York's Servants" (Mander and Mitchenson 1963:65). The former company was governed by Thomas Killigrew while the latter was headed by Sir William Davenant. In November, 1660 Killigrew's company obtained the sole right of

performing a large number of Elizabethan and Jacobean plays (Salgado 1980:135). Thus, nearly six months earlier than Davenant's company, Killigrew's Company opened its curtain's in Gibbon's Tennis Court in Vere Street (Loftis et.al. 1976:84; Wilson 1968:8). Adding onto this advantage Killigrew managed to gather most of the experienced actors in his company. They were "...actors in their thirties and forties - Hart, Mohun, Shatteral, Wintershall, Clun, Lacy and others, who had learned their trade in the public theatres before the civil wars" (Wilson 1968:20; Loftis et.al. 1976:122). Nevertheless, neither of these advantages enabled Killigrew to attract and retain his audience for long. This was because, "Killigrew had neither the ability nor the inclination for theatre management" (Salgado 1980:135).

In June 1661, Davenant's troupe opened its curtains also in a tennis court, Lisle's Tennis Court, in Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields (Loftis et.al. 1976:84; Wilson 1968:9). Having lost quite a considerable amount of time and having missed the opportunities that his rival colleague Killigrew had, Davenant was compelled to rely on innovation and spectacle to attract the audience. Thus, to act for his company Davenant chose mostly the young, promising actors such as Underhill, Nokes, Turner, Angel and Dixon (Wilson 1968:20). Furthermore, Davenant managed to include in his troupe the greatest actor of the age, Thomas Betterton. As time went by Davenant who was Shakespeare's godson and Ben Jonson's successor as "Poet Laureate" (Loftis et.al. 1976:120) proved to be a successful manager. The spectacular shows and movable scenery

that he employed (Loftis et.al. 1976:85) began filling Lisle's Tennis Court with spectators while leaving Killigrew's Gibbon's almost empty.

Forced by this public success of Davenants', Killigrews' Company or "The King's Company put all its money and energies into building... [the Theatre Royal] in Bridges Street, near Drury Lane" (Wilson 1968:9). The new theatre building was equipped with all the latest inventions in scenery and machinery and this cost the King's company about two thousand four hundred pounds (Mander and Mitchenson 1963:65; Wilson 1968:9,11). On 7 May, 1663 the Theatre Royal was opened.

In the meantime William Davenant was busy engaging the architect, Christopher Wren to plan and build a completely new kind of playhouse in Dorset Garden. Nevertheless, Davenant did not live long to see his achievement; he died in the year 1668. Three years later on 9 November, 1671 Wren completed the new playhouse and Davenant's company, now managed by Thomas Betterton, moved to the new Duke's Theatre in Dorset Garden, near the river Thames (Loftis et.al. 1976:85; Salgado 1980:135). In structure the Dorset Garden Theatre resembled the Theatre Royal of the King's troupe, yet the Duke's new building was larger and was "... equipped with the very latest stage machinery, details of which Betterton had brought back from a visit to Paris" (Salgado 1980:135).

In 1672, a year after the opening of the theatre in

Dorset Garden the unlucky King's Company lost its playhouse, the Theatre Royal, with all its equipment, costumes and property in a fire. Subsequently, the King's troupe moved into the theatre in the Lincoln's Inn Fields and stayed there until 26 March, 1674 when a new Theatre Royal was built in the place of the old one in Drury Lane. The design of this new building also belonged to Christopher Wren.

Until about the end of the century the two companies, the King's and the Duke's, remained as rivals; however, internal tensions and ill-luck tore the King's Company into pieces. "In 1682 the Duke's Company swallowed up the remnants of the failing King's players" (Wilson 1968:14) with Betterton the leading actor in charge. The resulting united company used the Dorset Garden theatre for spectacular tragedies and for operas and the Theatre Royal for comedies and for small-scale drama (Salgado 1980:136; Wilson 1968:14). Under Betterton's management a quiet and a settled atmosphere prevailed for a period of time but in 1695 Betterton quarreled with the lawyer, Christopher Rich, now the new owner of both the "patents". An angry Betterton set up another company at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre and left the united company. Thus, once again was revived the old rivalry of the previous theatre companies.

As far as the physical properties were concerned the Restoration theatre and the stage was a revolutionary departure from the Elizabethan. First of all, the Restoration theatre

buildings were smaller in size; they held about six-hundred people. Also instead of being half-roofed as the Elizabethan playhouse the Restoration playhouse was completely covered. Thus, in order to light up the stage and the auditorium there was a candelabra. However, since the candelabra was left lit until the end of the play darkness on stage would still be "... *indicated by bringing on* lighted candles, lanterns or torches" (Wilson 1968:15). As for the time of performances, a gradual change took place: earlier in the period, performances would begin at three o'clock in the afternoon but by 1695 performances started at four o'clock in the afternoon, and by the close of the century, in 1700, the time the performances started was six or six-thirty in the evening.

Another important change was in the shape of the stage. It was no longer hexagonal as The Globe but was rectangular with a proscenium arch that surrounded it at right angles from the top and "... acted as a kind of frame to a picture" (Bozer 1981:2-3). Moreover, attached to the proscenium arch there was a curtain. Although this curtain remained raised until the end of the play and proved nonfunctional,[20] it was something that Shakespeare's theatres never had.

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[20] Until late in the eighteenth-century (Styan 1983:30) the end of an act was not indicated by means of curtains but by the "... minuet, ... jig, ...coranto..." (Wilson 1968:11) that the musicians played or by the rhyming couplet that an actor uttered at the end (Bozer 1981:3).

In addition to all these developments, the Restoration stage was equipped with the latest machines to change scenery. For instance, at the first Theatre Royal four large pairs of flats slid in grooves across the stage on which different scenes were painted on canvas. Sometimes opened and sometimes closed these flats were used to represent different places such as houses, rooms, streets, landscapes in different scenes.

The costumes used by the Restoration players also reflected a departure from the Elizabethan times. Although they, too, were extremely lavish and elaborate, the costumes of the new period were drawn with realistic lines. They were historically and geographically accurate; that is, for instance, in a play which was set in the fifteenth-century Italy, the performances no longer wore contemporary English costumes but provided for themselves Italian costumes of that period (Loftis et.al. 1976:147). The materials used for costumes were usually "... colorful serges, silks and velvets, but for silver and gold lace the players had to substitute tinsel and copper-lace..." and all these materials looked incredibly rich by candlelight" (Wilson 1968:17).

The appearance of women was the last but perhaps the most important novelty that took place on the Restoration stage. With the Commonwealth the nurseries were closed down and young boys were no more trained to play the female roles. However, during the Restoration it seemed as if there was no need for these boys. The Cavalier audience did not want them; they "... had seen

and liked the acting of women on the French and Italian stages" (Wilson 1968:20). In this way Killigrew and Davenant were compelled to hire women to act in their playhouses. Thus appeared on the Restoration stage the first group of actresses in the English dramatic history. However, these actresses gradually became notorious for being the mistresses of either King Charles II or his courtiers. For instance, the actress Nell Gwyn, who was previously an orange-girl, had been a mistress to many of the courtiers besides King Charles II (Hibbert 1987:409). Elizabeth Barry, before becoming an actress was trained for the stage by her lover the Earl of Rochester. Similary Anne Oldfield was "discovered" at a tavern by George Farquhar before she took roles in plays (Loftis et.al. 1976:138). However, some of the actresses were exceptionally respectful; Betterton's wife Mary Sanderson was one of them.

The actresses also brought new problems to play-wrights and producers. In order to provide parts for these new-comers new formulas were found; even some of Shakespeare's play were altered. For instance, when Davenant adapted *Macbeth* he enlarged the roles of both Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff. Also in collaboration with John Dryden, Davenant provided Miranda in *The Tempest* with a sister and Ariel with a female spirit mate (Nicoll 1978:107-108). Moreover, the presence of actresses in a play became a factor that determined the number of spectators in a playhouse. Thus, in order to attract and maintain their audience the managers of the theatre companies began preferring plays in which some of the leading roles were given to pretty actresses.

It was in these theatres that the most popular genre of the Restoration period, that is, the comedies of manners were performed. A detailed analysis of the comedy of manners will be provided in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 1

THE RESTORATION COMEDY OF MANNERS

Comedy of manners, as the name suggests, is comedy dealing with manners. It holds up a mirror to the way people behave and the manners they employ in a social context, and while doing this it satirizes also certain types and certain manners. Thus, the Restoration comedy of manners is a dramatic genre that concentrates upon the satirical depiction of the society during the Restoration. However, not the manners of the whole society, but mainly the manners of the theatre-going court-and-town coterie were taken up as the subject matter of this satirical comedy.

The Restoration comedy of manners has been frequently categorized wrongly as to have its origins in France, especially in Molière's comedies. However, today in the light of some considerably strong evidence[21] this theory has become quite out-dated.

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[21] See V. Ogden Birdsall, *Wild Civility: The English Comic Spirit on the Restoration Stage* (London: Indiana University Press, 1970), pp.4-5; William Congreve, "Concerning Humour in Comedy" in *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century,* ed. J.E. Spingarn (London: Oxford University Press, 1957) pp.242-52; Bonamy Dobrée, *Restoration Comedy: 1660-1700* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp.39-57; John Dryden's dedication to *Marriage à la Mode* (1672); Thomas Shadwell's preface to *The Sullen Lovers* (1668) and epilogue to *The Humourists* (1671); Norman Suckling, "Molière and English Restoration Comedy" in *Restoration Theatre,* eds. John Russel Brown and Bernard Harris (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1965), pp.93-107; John Cargill Thompson, *A Reader's Guide to Fifty British Plays: 1660-1900* (London: Heinemann, 1980), pp.24-25.

Today the English "... contemporary criticism is well aware of the Restoration dramatists' debt to Ben Jonson... ['s comedy of humours] and the never really broken line of development extending to them from early and mid-seventeenth-century English comedy in general" (Suckling 1965:93). In other words, it is now thoroughly understood that although foreign sources were referred to, the Restoration comedy of manners remained essentially English (Dobrée 1966:52; Wilson 1968:126).

With particular regard to its satirical aim the Restoration comedy of manners is considered to be in the tradition of Jonsonian comedy (Hirst 1979:10). That is, just like the comedy of humours, the Restoration comedy of manners aimed at a criticism of the society; however, in the latter the criticism was rendered less biting (Styan 1983:63-64) and the social range of attack was limited to the upper-class theatre-going coterie. Nevertheless, ironically enough, through a realistic (Dobrée 1966:27-29; Loftis et.al. 1976:11-12) picturing of this coterie's social misdemeanours and professional malpractices their own criticism was made before their very eyes. Among the main targets of attack the following points may be stated: the artificial and libertine conduct of the fashionable of the town; the country gentleman's pretense to refined tastes and behaviour; arrangement of marriages forced by tyrannical fathers (Bozer 1983:6); the seemingly gentle ladies' habit of drinking at their toilets and the feigning of the quacks as doctors.

In its reflection of the seemingly polished and honourable manners of the upper-classes the Restoration comedy of manners became essentially urbane. It other words, the satirical depiction of the "... cultured veneer of a ... self-conscious group" (Nicoll 1978:22) made it necessary to employ the everrefined upper-class speech and manners in these comedies. Moreover, in accordance with the urbanity of the genre the action took place usually against an urban, London setting which was, during the Restoration, an acknowledged centre of such "refined" manners and colourful life.

Another common characteristic of the Restoration comedies of manners is the style. Through the use of devices of style, especially of wit and the *double entendre,* the comedy writers of the period achieved a full satiric effect. Wit, as defined by William Congreve, the greatest expert of the witty dialogues, is the art of making characters speak pleasantly (1957:243). However, Thomas Hobbes in *The Leviathan* in Part I, Chapter VIII makes a clearer definition. For Hobbes, wit is an intellectual virtue: it is the ability of discovering some sort of a relationship between images that are rarely imagined by others (1973:344-45). Furthermore, according to Hobbes wit "... is gotten by use only and experience without method, culture or instruction" (1973:344). However, the twentieth-century critic, John Harold Wilson (1968: 168) writes that wit cannot be acquired; one may only be born with it as wit is a gift from the gods. Yet, it is a common point in both Hobbes' and Wilson's works that the comic wit, which the writers employed in the Restoration comedies of manners entertained

the audience through the contriving of some unexpected but pertinent relationships between images that are apparently incongruous (Hobbes 1973:345; Wilson 1968:168).

Wit, in the Restoration comedy of manners finds its expression in the "clever 'turns'", similitudes, word-plays including puns, allusions, irony and the epigrams that are almost always present in these plays (Wilson 1968:168). However, in the expression of the Restoration comic wit, the *double entendre* was the most popular device. The employing of words or phrases with double meanings was for the playwrights firstly a means of displaying the characters', and therefore their own wit. Secondly, it was a means of avoiding the use of improper, bawdy language, and thirdly a means of underlining certain points mainly for an implicit criticism.

Except for the heroic couplets that are usually present at the end of scenes, the comedies of manners were generally written in prose, in simple English. In other words, the comedy writers of the period preferred to use clear and understandable language in their plays. However, the deeper meanings implied by the play-upon-words, that is pun and *double entendre* and by the play-upon ideas, that is wit, make the language seem more complex than it really is.

As for the characters in the Restoration comedy of manners, the dramatists employed in their plays a group of stereo-

types whose dispositions were already partly revealed through their names that were usually allegorical tags. At the head of this group is the couple known as the libertines or the gay couple. Both the male and the female libertines reject the oppression of sexual instincts; they seek pleasure in their daily lives and do almost anything in order to satisfy their aim. Moreover, both the libertines praise pleasure and the senses, individualism and liberty, egoism and impulse. Furthermore, they are not easily conditioned by the social code of the time. In other words, unlike the hypocritical members of the society who force themselves to act against their nature, that is against their true-selves, the gay couple behaves in accordance with their nature, their true-selves. Nevertheless, the female libertine rarely practises what she preaches. Moreover, it was fashionable particularly for the male libertine to appear cynical about love and marriage. Although in the end the male libertine would fall desperately in love with the female libertine, he would still continue being cynical. The final common practice of the gay couple is that they never reveal their emotions openly in public. However, their emotions were understood from the implications in their dialogues which are full of wit and *double entendre*.

Apart from the libertines, there is the sensible couple who in every way is exactly the opposite of the gay couple. This couple, for instance, is conditioned by the social conventions of the Restoration period, however, theirs is rather an adapting of the social code to the expression of their true-selves. In other

words, the sensible couple is always able to translate natural desires into a socially acceptable form (Holland 1959:82). Moreover, like their name suggests, this couple is sensible, praising virtue, reason, responsibility and discipline. Also, instead of a "rationalizing of sex" like the gay couple does (Bateson 1966:28-29), the sensible couple believes in an "idealization of love", that is, they practise restraint and keep their desires always under control (Birdsall 1970:137; Loftis et.al. 1976:198; Zimbardo 1973:526).

Other than two sets of couples, a discarded mistress is always present to undertake one of the leading roles in the Restoration comedy of manners. Having recently been discarded by the male libertine, she usually makes plots against him. She tries almost every way to win him back, however she can never manage. For this reason, she is most of the time very bitter in her dialogues and in her attitude towards life.

The fop is one of the most colourful figures in the Restoration comedy of manners. Having recently returned from France, the fop forces French words into his speech; he follows the fashion and yet his clothes are always too elaborate. He dances, sings and fences well but in general he is totally artificial. The fop is an imitator of the male libertine, however, he exaggerates everything and usually makes a fool of himself. Dryden in his "Epilogue" to George Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) draws a typical picture of the fop as a fool:

> ... when he [the fop] sings, talks loud,
> and cocks would cry,
> 'I vow, methinks he's pretty company!'
> So brisk, so gay, so traveled, so refined,
> As he took pains to graft upon his kind.
> True fops help nature's work and go to school,
> To file and finish God A'mighty's fool (1959:167).

Another stereotyped character of the Restoration comedy of manners is the country bumpkin who has recently come from the country to London town. Very much like the fop, the country bumpkin tries imitating the male libertine but he too fails and makes a fool of himself. The country bumpkin is usually very naive and for this reason it is either him or sometimes the fop who marries the male libertine's discarded mistress in the end.

In the category of fools the witwoud must be mentioned as the next character. He is also a pretender to libertinage. He wants women to run after him like they do after the male libertine. The witwoud wishes to appear as a witty person, however, since he lacks judgement he usually appears, instead, as a perfect fool.

The lecherous old man and the lecherous old woman is the third couple of the Restoration comedy of manners, however, they do not match during the course of events. Despite their old age both the lechers act as if they were young libertines, and as their names usually suggest both are lustful and in need of preferably a young companion from the opposite sex. However, it is ironical that the old lecherous couple always pretend to be virtuous.

Another gullible figure of the Restoration comedy of manners is the cuckolded husband. He is usually an old lecher but is a rich gentleman who has married a young and beautiful girl. During the course of events his wife is usually, somehow, seduced, making him a cuckold.

The orange-wench concludes the stereo-typed characters of the Restoration comedy of manners. She is a tough but clever person and usually she is a prostitute. The orange-wench sells fruit to the rich; and fruit and eating fruit at that time was equated with sex and sexual activity. Therefore her dialogues are full of *double entendres*. Although the orange woman acted as an intermediary by carrying letters between lovers, her real function in the plays may be connotatively to sell sex to the rich.

As for the themes used in the Restoration comedy of manners, it can be said that they are limited to a few subjects. The pursuit of the opposite sex practised by almost all of the characters except for the sensible couple, plus the pursuit of money at its every cost are the most common themes in these comedies. As another theme of the Restoration comedy of manners, the despising of the country and its values especially by the libertines and by the fop can be stated. Moreover, the male libertine's cynical attitude towards love and marriage is another theme. Finally, the old but rich lecher's marriage to a young country wife and consequently being cuckolded can be stated as well.

With respect to its structural framework, the Restoration comedy of manners also follow a very typical pattern. The plays are made up of five acts; the tradition of a "well-made" play in three acts was yet far ahead to become a common practice. Moreover, in the original manuscripts there were neither actual stage directions nor scene divisions; the later editors of these plays have supplied the texts with the necessary information for staging and with probable divisions by locating the rhymed couplets that were believed to mark the end of the scenes.

Another structural characteristic of the Restoration comedy of manners is that the plot always follows a chronological order and it depicts the action that develops around the witty libertines at the centre, "... a fatuous fop, a discarded mistress and a cuckolded citizen in the middle distance and assorted elderly lechers of both sexes in the background" (Salgado 1983:143). Moreover, the plots are of two kinds and are usually full of complications or intrigues "... of Byzantine complexity" (Salgado 1983:143). The first of the plots is the "lower plot" in which characters like the discarded mistress, the fop, the lechers and at the beginning the male libertine is part. In the lower plot relationships are usually deceptive; they are not based on honesty and truth.[22]

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[22]See, for instance, Norman Holland, *The First Modern Comedies: The Significance of Etherege, Wycherley and Congreve* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp.73-95).

However, towards the end of the plays the male libertine usually rises from the lower to the second, higher plot, (Holland 1959:94) which consists of the sensible couple and female libertine, of the Restoration comedy of manners. Actually, the following of his mistress, the female libertine, "... into the horrors of a country house [which was a symbol of returning to innocence] far removed from the dear delights of Town" (Nicoll 1978:123) gives the male libertine the chance to rise from the lower to the higher plot. The characters of this plot never feel the need of making vows; they base their relationships upon the principle of trust.

As for the next structural characteristic of the Restoration comedy of manners, the dramatists' employing of some technical devices in contribution to the plot may be mentioned. The use of letters, for instance, or the songs and dances reveal a lot about the characters or about the course of events. Disguise, misunderstandings or conversations overheard are other devices that usually connect the plots and characters (Loftis et.al. 1976: 180) or sometimes change the course of the action or lead the action to climactic situations. In Gamini Salgado's words these devices add "... spice to intrigue" (1980:145). Moreover, another device, *deux-ex-machina* is used by the dramatists. The *deux-ex-machina* is a sort of agent that helps to reveal some secret or plot that usually brings the action to an end by solving problems and settling matters.

With regard to its structural framework the final

characteristic of the Restoration comedy of manners is the presence of some set scenes in almost any of the plays. These common scenes are three in number. The first is the "lady and the maid scene" which usually takes place in act two, scene two. In this scene the lady, usually the discarded mistress or the lecherous old woman, appears before the audience as she really is without her manners, that is, without her social mask. Here, she is seen secretly sneaking a sip from a bottle, putting on make-up, swearing and making plans to capture the male libertine.

The second common scene, the "unmasking scene of the libertine" usually takes place towards the end of the plays. It is in this scene where the male libertine loses face. In other words, the women who are either in love with or in pursuit of the male libertine see his true face here. His plots, that is, his secret plans are then all revealed and exposed to the public.

The "proviso scene" is the third and the most famous of the set scenes in the Restoration comedy of manners. This scene also takes place towards the end and it passes in the form of a dialogue between the male and the female libertines who have just decided to get married. Since neither of them believe in the suppression of sexual instincts and in marriage the female libertine is afraid that the male libertine would prove unfaithful to her. Therefore, she wantes to be sure of the male libertine's love. She also seeks equality in marriage: she wishes to be able to write letters and to hold parties on her own. The male libertine, on the

other hand, also wantes to be sure that he would be free in his actions in marriage. Moreover, the male libertine, too, has his fears; he is afraid that the female libertine would behave in an unmannerly way by drinking secretly or attending cabal nights on her own. Thus, having decided to get married the gay couple reveal in this particular scene their provisos or their expectations from each other in marriage.

Along with the erroneous categorizing of the Restoration comedy of manners with seventeenth-century French comedies, another misconception has been frequently observed with regard to its aim. Although the aim of the Restoration comedy of manners is to satirize and even to reform the behaviour of the upper-classes in general, it was taken wrongly by certain critics at various times as to have aimed at a praise of the rakish manners of the male libertine and thus was blamed with immorality as well as with obscenity. The main reason for this misconception is in a way, the subtlety of the satire used in the Restoration comedy of manners because the writers of these comedies employ satire on double levels: on the first level of satire the gay couple makes fun of the manners of the fop, the country bumpkin, the witwoud, the old lechers and the cuckolded husband, and on the second level of satire the dramatists themselves criticize the male libertine (Birdsall 1970:136; Zimbardo 1973:523-24) who was believed to be held up as a model by critics against the Restoration comedy of manners. Thus, it is evident that the moralistic critics who have been accusing the Restoration comedy of manners with immorality were those who were not able to see this

second level of satire in these comedies.

Here it will be illustrative to make a brief survey of the criticism which were for and against the Restoration comedy of manners. In the final decade of the seventeenth-century the complaints about the licentiousness of the Restoration comedy of manners became very frequent and these complaints found their most prominent expression in A *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*[23] (1698) written by a Puritan clergyman, Jeremy Collier. Collier's work also marked the beginning of the debates about the morality of the Restoration comedy of manners, and these debates came to be known after his own name as the "Collier controversy". The main arguments of the controversy were made, in fact, especially after the end of the Restoration period and were even carried on into our century.

In his famous A *Short View* (1698) Collier acts as a moralist and accuses the dramatists of his time of making their protagonists vicious. Moreover, he advocates poetic justice and attacks the dramatists once more for their violations of it. For Collier:

> The business of plays is to recommend virtue and discountenance vice; to show the uncertainty

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[23] In the following sections of this study, this work will be referred to as *A Short View*.

> of human greatness, the sudden turns of fate, and the unhappy conclusions of violence and injustice; 'tis to expose the singularities of pride and fancy, to make folly and falsehood contemptible and to bring everything that is ill under infamy and neglect (Collier 1973:391).
>
> [Nevertheless, according to Collier] The [Restoration] Stage-Poets... [Made] Their Principal Persons Vicious and Reward[ed] Them at the End of the Play[s] (1973:397).

For the defenders of the Restoration comedy of manners Collier's criticism was pedantic and literal-minded criticism (Loftis et.al. 1976:54) because Collier insisted on an exact adherence to the arbitrary rules of morality. Furthermore, Collier's argument showed that he was not at all able to see the second level of criticism that lay under the surface of the gay atmosphere of the Restoration comedy of manners.

Among the first replies elicited by A *Short View* there came a rebuttal from John Dennis with *The Usefulness of the Stage* (1698). However, in this work Dennis does not defend "immorality and profaneness" of drama but instead he explains the function of the theatres in civilized societies. This, according to John Loftis et.al. (1976:54) was due to Dennis' recognition of Collier's prejudiced, Puritan hostility towards the theatre as an institution. For Loftis et.al., Dennis in this work shows "... an effort to counter a resurgance of the widespread hostility to the stage that

called to his mind the... [Puritan] ban on theatrical performances in the middle of the century" (1976:54).

To Collier's accusations one of the most famous writers of the Restoration comedy of manners, William Congreve also gave an immediate answer. Congreve, in his "Amendments of Mr. Collier's False and Imperfect Citations" (1698) defends himself by means of reference to classical authority:

> Comedy (says Aristotle) is an imitation of the worse sort of people.... He does not Mean the worse sort... in respect to their quality, but in respect to their manners.... [However, Congreve says that Aristotle] does not mean... relating to [(that is, referring to)] all kinds of vice.... But the vices most frequent, and which are the common practice of the looser sort of livers, are the subject matter of comedy. He [Aristotle] tells us farther, that they must be exposed after a ridiculous manner. For men are to be laughed out of their vices in comedy: the business of comedy is to delight as well as to instruct; and vicious people are made ashamed of their follies or faults by seeing them exposed in a ridiculous manner, so are good people at once both warned and diverted at their expense (1973:417-18).

In other words, the writers of the Restoration comedy of manners did aim at an instruction of their audience, and they achieved this through a realistic picturing of the audience's own vices

which worked firstly on their ill nature so that they were prompted to laugh, and secondly on their conscience that gave way to a shame of that laughter which was surely to teach them what was ridiculous in their manners (Wilson 1968:121). Therefore, it may be claimed that since laughter at an exposition of vice acted as an agent to correct manners (Salgado 1980:143-44) it was inevitable and in-fact even useful for the dramatists to "Make Their Principle Persons Vicious" (Collier 1973:397) because the greater the vice that was exposed the greater would be its "cure" (Dennis 1973:430).

In the "Preface" to *An Evening's Love* (1671) Dryden may be taken as to have answered in advance the accusation of Collier which was that the comedy writers did not employ poetic justice in their plays. Dryden in this "Preface" says that the principle of poetic justice cannot be applied to comedies and that he marries off his libertine characters at the end of a comedy to save them from vice, "... for then, employing what they desire in one, they cease to pursue the love of many" (qtd. in Wilson 1968:121).

In defense of the Restoration comedy of manners at a later date, John Farquhar also employed a similar commentary. In the "Preface" to the *Twin Rivals* (1702) Farquhar says "... that the business of comedy is chiefly to ridicule folly; and that the punishment of vice falls rather into the province of tragedy" (1949: 144-45).

In the year 1711 Collier received support from an

important man of letters, Sir Richard Steele. Steele, infact began his career and his support of Collier soon after the publication of A *Short View*. In defense of Collier's views about the Restoration comedy of manners Steele initiated in *The Spectator*, No.65 (1711) a "literary feud" (McMillin 1973:ix) between himself and John Dennis. Here, Steele makes the first of his attacks on Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) and on the Restoration comedy of manners in general. Steele calls these comedies immoral on the basis that the male libertine is a "low and mean" person who is held up as a model to be imitated (Steele 1973:421).

To Steele's argument Dennis' first reply came eleven years later.[24] In A *Defense of Sir Fopling Flutter* (1722) Dennis says:

> How little do they know of the nature of true comedy, who believe that its proper business is to set us patterns for imitation.... 'Tis its proper business to expose persons to our view whose view we may shun and whose follies we may despise; and by showing us what is done upon the comic stage, to show us what ought never to be done upon the stage of the world (1973:429).

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[24] As a matter of fact, the feud between Steele and Dennis continued outside of these two works, however, since the main points of their arguments are summarized in these two, the remaining works on the feud will not be taken into consideration.

Furthermore, Charles Lamb's essay called "On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century" (1822) is also very important. According to Lamb the Restoration comedy of manners portray "a utopia of gallantry" (1973:479). In other words, it depicts "... a fantasy land having no close relationship to any society that ever existed" (Loftis et.al. 1976:34). As a matter of fact, Lamb aimed here at a defense of the genre; however, his depiction of the Restoration comedy of manners as a world of fantasy supplied his opposers, instead, or the followers of Collier, with new material. Thus, although Lamb's was, "An attractive argument" it was definitely "... an unsatisfactory defense, for it surrenders too much... the claim of the comedy to be taken seriously as a commentary on human affairs, something the... [defenders of the Restoration comedy of manners] themselves never would have done" (Loftis et.al. 1976:ix).

In the twentieth-century, the diversity of opinion continues. At the beginning of the twentieth-century John Palmer came up with more sound criticism and defense. In his work called *The Comedy of Manners* (1913) Palmer defends the Restoration comedy of manners on moralistic grounds. He says that it is not at all the aim of comedy to improve the world because Palmer says, the comedy writer is firstly to be concerned with beautifully expressing something he has felt or seen; the artist is never a moralist to improve the world.

> [Moreover,] Art is not primarily concerned with morality, but morality is the stuff of the poet's art.... [In other words] Morality is his subject though it is not his object. [Thus,] the critics of Collier's generation... invariably confuse the subject with the object - worse... [Palmer continues with an effective comparison, that these critics] mistake the subject of a picture or a poem for the work itself (Palmer 1973:485).

For Palmer the Restoration comedy of manners is realistic; it is a true reflection of the Restoration contemporary life which the dramatists felt, saw and found a means to express in their works (1973:487).

Also in the modern defense of the Restoration comedy of manners, another critic, Guy Montgomery came up with "The Challenge of Restoration Comedy" (1929). In this article Montgomery begins his defense with a reference to Bonamy Dobrée's *Restoration Comedy: 1660-1720* (1924). According to Montgomery, Dobrée with this work has also unfortunately stumbled "... into the traditional trap" (1966:33) by saying that these comedies deal with impurities which were to be "... handled [by dramatists] with sufficient skill" so as to make the audience "... indifferent to the subject-matter" (Dobrée 1966:25). Here, Dobrée's attempt, "To obscure the subject matter," Montgomery writes, "... is much like trying to visualise a painting... [of an artist] by reading his essay on the technique of drawing" (Montgomery 1966:34). In other words, Montgomery states that by drawing attention to the technique of these comedies,

Dobrée also falls into the error of undermining the seriousness of the subject-matter of the Restoration comedy of manners which once again offered material to Collier's followers.

Further in his essay Montgomery writes that the Restoration comedy of manners is a reflection of its time; it is a sincere picturing of its society as true-to-life, and this "frankness" Montgomery claims, "... has often been turned to the disadvantage of... [the genre's] moral tone" (1966:38). Montgomery concludes his defense by reminding that "[since the] ... wicked conduct" of "... Falstaff... Romeo... Iago, [and] Macbeth" is never accepted as immorality, the behaviour of the characters of the Restoration comedy of manners should also be exempt from such erroneous judgements (1966:39-40).

The case against the Restoration comedy of manners is probably most significantly stated in the twentieth-century by the critic, L.C. Knights. In his article called "Restoration Comedy: The Reality and the Myth" (1946) Knights, in a way, did what Collier had done in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth-centuries (Loftis 1966:ix). Just like Collier, Knights denied the significance of the Restoration comedy of manners (Loftis 1966:ix). In his article Knights writes that the central fault of the Restoration comedy of manners is more on intellectual grounds and that it "... represents contemporary culture so inadequately [that] it has no significant relation with the best thought of the time" (1966:5) and therefore, Knights states that, "The Criticism the

defenders of Restoration comedy need to answer is not only that the comedies are 'immoral', but that they are trivial, gross and dull" (1966:18-19). In other words, Knights claims that nothing serious is being said or implied in these comedies.

F.W. Bateson answers Knights' accusations eleven years later. According to Bateson in his article called "L.C. Knights and Restoration Comedy" (1957)

> Knight ... misses the essential critical point about Restoration comedy. Etherege, Wycherley, and Congreve ... are not, of course, among world's greatest dramatists.... But these dramatists in the best scenes of *The Man of Mode, The Country Wife* and *The Way of the World,* the three masterpieces of the genre.... are serious... though naturally it is in the paradoxical modes of seriousness appropriate to comedy (1966:23).

Furthermore, in this article Bateson claims that in these comedies every scene, every character and every joke has a serious function; they all are brought together on purpose by the dramatists to criticize society (1966:25-27).

In the year 1965 with his article "The Dialect of Those Fanatic Times" Bernard Harris, too, defends the Restoration comedies of manners. In this article Harris writes that the Restoration comedies are not depictions of an imaginary world as Lamb ingeniously suggested but are a close picturing of the Restoration upper-class

life(Harris 1965:15).Furthermore, as Harris sees in Wycherley's and Congreve's skillful employing of the witty language in their plays a talent that he equates with Shakespeare's, he calls Knights' accusations "a modern naiveté" and concludes that the Restoration comedy of manners "...need [not]... our approval"(1965:17).

Five years later in 1970 George Parfitt attempts to find answers in his article, "The Case Against Congreve", to all the questions raised about the Restoration comedy of manners until his time. Some of these questions are :"Is it artificial comedy...? Does it reflect a world of escapism [an unreal world,]or the society of the second half of the seventeenth century? Is it a brilliant but... amoral creation?..."(1972:30).

It seems that Parfitt's reply to the first two questions condemns Congreve, as well as the other writers of this type of comedy, almost in Knights' terms. Parfitt writes that since Restoration comedies of manners reflect "...a very narrow spectrum of Restoration society...omit[ting] so much of Man's activity...", they can never be defended as realistic life experiences(1972:33-34). He concludes that Congreve's "...plays present...[a nonsatisfying] way of life,...[which] is thin, mechanical, and tedious..."(1972:33).

To the last question, however, that is, to Collier's accusations, Parfitt gives a defensive answer. He calls Congreve -and presumably all the other writers of Restoration comedies- "...a satirist...[for] attacking the societies...[that are] present...[ed], and a moralist...[for] attacking [the evil while] upholding the...[good]"(1972:34).

In his article called "*The Way of the World* and the Mor-

ally Serious Comedy"(1975) it seems that Brian Corman also partly falls into Collier's error. Although he can see Congreve's aim in satirizing the follies of people in *The Way of the World*, he somehow does not seem to perceive the double level of satire that Wycherley and Etherege also employed in their major comedies. Thus, Corman develops his defensive argument on *The Way of the World* and convinces the reader that this play, indeed, is a morally serious comedy (1975:210-11) and that its characters are not unworldly figures of Lamb's "utopia of gallantry" (1975:206).

Finally in 1987, Julie Stone Peters provides the critical world with another defense of the Restoration comedies of manners: "Things Govern'd By Words':Late 17th Century Comedy and the Reformers". In this article, Peters accuses Collier and his followers in general for not being able to see the complex satire that lies beneath the surface meaning in these comedies (1987:149).

With regard to the arguments that have been mentioned it can be stated that since its first appearance in the mid-seventeenth-century, the Restoration comedy of manners has always busied the minds of the critics from almost every generation. Most of these critics, by blaming this genre with immorality, even at the times of its prosperity, caused its decline. Montgomery writes that at this point the dramatists themselves "...rebelled but it was too late, for the current against them was over strong" (1966: 43); the new current which had come about in the religious and moral climate of the country by the end of the seventeenth-century

had compelled the writers of the Restoration comedy of manners to reform themselves. However, most of these dramatists preferred retirement, leaving space for a new generation of playwrights who found the means of "purifying" both the society and its comedy in the realm of sentiment.

In the following chapters of this thesis, the focus will be on William Wycherley's *The Counry Wife* (1674?), Sir George Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) and William Congreve's *The Way of the World* (1700) as these plays are usually considered to be the best representatives of the Restoration comedy of manners.

CHAPTER 2

A. WILLIAM WYCHERLEY: BIOGRAPHY AND CAREER

In the year 1640, William Wycherley, one of the most successful writers of Restoration comedies, was born in Clive, near Shrewsbury. Until early in his youth when he was sent to France, Wycherley was brought up as a Protestant, but in France he became a Roman Catholic. On his return to his homeland, Wycherley entered Queen's College, Oxford but left it without receiving a degree. Also, in the meantime Wycherley again changed his religion and once more became a Protestant.

Although Wycherley is claimed to have started and finished the writing of his first play, *Love in a Wood*, at the age of nineteen (Dobrée 1966:78), he had it performed only after twelve years (1671) when he was thirty-one. The first performance of *Love in a Wood* was successful indeed. Moreover, the success of this play brought Wycherley to the attention of the Duchess of Cleveland, one of the King's cast-off mistresses (Dobrée 1966:78), who

> ... secured ... [Wycherley's] position among the select group of leading writers and wits who moved within the court circle; gained him the friendship of ... John Wilmot, second Earl of Rochester, ... George Villiers, duke of Buckingham; and eventually led to the favor and patronage of King Charles II himself (Vernon 1979:308).

Then with the exception of his next play *The Gentleman Dancing Master* (1672), Wycherley's following two plays, *The Country Wife* (1674?) and *The Plain Dealer* (1676?) almost met with similar success. After 1676 Wycherley wrote no more plays.

Later in the year 1679 he married a member of the court-coterie, a young widow, the Countess of Drogheda with whom he lived quite an unhappy life. On her death, which was only a few years later, the Countess left all her fortune to Wycherley. This situation, however, involved him in a law-suit, as a result of which he was reduced to poverty and even sent to the Fleet prison for seven years (Wilson 1959:2). Finally, James II, having seen and very much appreciated a performance of Wycherley's last play, *The Plain Dealer*, paid the latter's debts and relieved him with a pension of two hundred pounds a year (Thorne and Collocot 1978:1385). Nevertheless, Wycherley henceforward "... wasted the remainder of his life writing bad verse" (Wilson 1959:2).

At the age of sixty-four Wycherley became acquainted with Alexander Pope who was sixteen at the time and to Pope he gave the duty of revising a number of his verses. The result was a quarrel which ended in an apologizing on part of Wycherley. For, Wycherley was not at first able to bear the fact that a youth of Pope's age could change his poems so much and for the better (Thorne and Collocot 1978:1385; Vernon 1979:308-9).

At seventy-five Wycherley married a young woman. However,

after this marriage he lived only for eleven days. He died in 1715 and in the Catholic faith (Thorne and Collocot 1978:1385). Moreover, on his death-bed Wycherley is claimed to have "... made his young bride swear never again to marry an old man [like himself]" (Dobrée 1966:79).

With regard to his dramatic career Wycherley cannot be considered productive. In about six years' time he wrote four plays all together and then gave up writing for the stage for the rest of his life. "His first three plays, counting *The Plain Dealer* as his third...", Dobrée writes, "reveal all his ... revulsions against the [values of the upper-class] society" (1966:80). As a matter of fact Wycherley had recently become a member of this society, however, among them he was not quite at ease (Dobrée 1966:78). For Wycherley, it was "... a society he now hated, now loved" and for this reason he "... could not forbear reviling even himself" (Dobrée 1966:81). Thus, in all four of his plays Wycherley "... like a scorpion surrounded by a ring of fire, turned his sting upon himself" (Dobrée 1966:81).

In spite of the fact that Wycherley's first play, *Love in a Wood* (1671) or *St. James' Park* has been a stage success in its age, some critics of our century consider it a weak play. They criticise the play for "... wanting in unity [of structure]" (Stephen and Lee 1937038:1111), lacking "joyousness" (Dobrée 1966: 81-82) and "comic focus" (Birdsall 1970:110). In other words, today the play is not considered to be one of Wycherley's best plays.

Love in Wood was first produced at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane by the King's Company.[25] The subject matter of the play was topical. In fact, St. James' Park which was the sub-title of the play had only recently been opened to the public (Vernon 1979: 313). Previously, the park was a royal game reserve but, "Gone are the old deer hunts; and instead [as in Wycherley's play] men and women are now chasing one another in the park" (Vernon 1979:313). Michael Stapleton writes that *Love in a Wood* is based on the intrigues of "... a coarse-grained group whose only aim is the satisfaction of their appetites" (1983:982).

As for the leading characters of the play there are two fashionable young men of the town, Ranger and Valentine. Although they are very much suspicious and distrustful about the opposite sex, they continuously pursue them. Thus, during the course of events, Ranger-Lydia and Valentine-Christina pair off so as to form the gay and the sensible couples.

Towards the middle of the play, Wycherley contrives a night scene in St. James' Park. As men are in pursuit of women and as the hypocritical Lady Flippant is in pursuit of a husband,

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[25] Among the performers, there were great actors and actress of the Restoration era, such as Charles Hart who played the part of the male libertine, Ranger; Michael Mohun, played the part of the witwoud; Dapperwit and Mrs. Knep, played the part of the lecherous old woman, Lady Flippant (Stephen and Lee 1937-38:1111).

confusions occur and the characters keep mistaking one another in the dark (Loftis et.al. 1976:195). As the scene continues "... Wycherley keeps devising new situations... [disconcerting more and more] the anticipations of the characters in their devious and greedy quest for money and sex" (Loftis et.al. 1976:195). In the end, especially the ones that work the hardest at this quest get the least (Loftis et.al. 1976:196). Wycherley, in this play as well as in his remaining three plays, advises people "... to accept and acknowledge themselves for the natural, physical creatures they are and to live accordingly... [without] setting themselves up as better than they are, [and] become thereby a good deal worse" (Birdsall 1970:107-8).

Compared to *Love in a Wood*, Wycherley's second play, *The Gentleman Dancing Master* (1672) is today considered to be a better play especially with regard to its unified structure. On this point Virginia Ogden Birdsall claims that Wycherley in this play comes "... a good deal closer to *The Country Wife* than has generally been realized" (1970:121). However, Birdsall agrees with John Loftis et.al. (1976:196-7) that the factor of unity does not save the play from being a weak production.

The Gentleman Dancing Master was first produced by the DUke's Company in January 1672 at their new theatre in Dorset Garden. Although Wycherley seems to have admitted the play's failure on stage in the "Prologue" to his next play *The Country Wife*, some critics claim quite the opposite. According to Sir Leslie Stephen

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and Sir Sidney Lee (1937-38:1111). *The Gentleman Dancing Master* was received with delight in its time.

Despite its title, the leading character of the play is no doubt Hippolyta, "... the sexually precocious heroine of fourteen" (Hirst 1979:12) who in the main plot contrives every trick to get rid of her fiancé, the "... Frenchified Monsieur de Paris" (Drabble 1985:386) and to get hold of Gerrard, a close friend of de Paris, with whom she has truly fallen in love. Fortunately, the attraction is mutual and when her father Mr. Formal catches them together, Hippolyta introduces Gerrard to him as her new dancing master. Nevertheless, Mrs. Caution, the aunt who is taking care of Hippolyta, sees through the lovers' deception. Yet when she tries to inform the father about the matter, Mr. Formal does not believe Mrs. Caution. Finally a parson arrives to marry Hippolyta to de Paris but is tricked by the lovers into marrying her to Gerrard instead.

In this play Wycherley gives two of the recurring messages of his plays: that marriage should be based on true and mutual emotion rather than on pretension. Also, that there is a "... gap between reality and appearance, between selfish motive and smooth professions of cordiality" (Hirst 1979:10), something Wycherley has discovered about the human nature and has depicted in Gerrard's stealing of his friend's mistress.

Moreover, with regard to the use of language

The Gentleman Dancing Master seems to reveal the steps Wycherley has taken toward *The Country Wife*. The employing of wit by means of double entendres is already present in this play. However, David L. Hirst writes that, "The bawdy, rather clumsy and repetitive in this early play, is [yet to be] refined in the celebrated 'china' scene of *The Country Wife*" (1979:13).

Wycherley's next and most celebrated play is *The Country Wife* (1674?) in which he is said to have reached the height of his abilities as a playwright. However, as this play will later be examined in full, now a glimpse at Wycherley's last play, *The Plain Dealer* will be provided.

The Plain Dealer was produced in December 1676 by the King's Company at Lincoln's Inn Fields. The play has been very successful in its time and was performed until the end of the nineteenth century. Even in 1325 it was revived by the Renaissance Society of London but is now rarely seen in the modern theatre (Stapleton 1983:701).

The plain-dealer of the title is a misanthropic sea-captain, Manly[26] who believes in the sincerity of only two people in this world: his close friend Vernish and his mistress Olivia.

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[26]From him the playwright received the nickname "Manly Wycherley".

However, on his return from his "... heroic exploits at sea" (Salgado 1980:150), Manly discovers that his fiancée Olivia has married his bosom friend Vernish and that she has no intention of returning the money Manly had left in her care. After this discovery Manly's character changes completely. He decides to take revenge but his means of avenging does not at all suit the conduct of a plain-dealer. Manly uses the faithful Fidelia, who is disguised as a man, to trap his former mistress, Olivia and when he does, he rapes her for revenge.[27] In the end Manly gets his money back and finds out that Fidelia, his page is a woman who has always loved him with faith. Touched by her devotion, Manly sees the worthlessness of Olivia and thus Fidelia wins her lover.

In *The Plain Dealer* Wycherley seems to have aimed at satirizing mainly "... the hypocrisy and commercialism of the fashionable female world" (Salgado 1980:150) of which Olivia is a true representative. Therefore, especially in a scene that he was to add to the play in a later revision, Wycherley depicts Olivia at her worst as a true hypocrite (Hirst 1979:16). According to Hirst (1976:16), Olivia's hypocritical conduct in this scene also provides Wycherley, through a satirical portrayal, with the chance to defend his plays which are criticised for moral impropriety.

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[27] For this particular behaviour Gamini Salgado (1980:51) claims that if the play's title is to be applied to Manly, it can only be done with the heaviest irony because Manly's "... directness is nothing but a cloak for brutality", and that Fidelia may more justly be called the play's plain-dealer.

In complete contrast to Olivia, Wycherley portrays the character of Fidelia, the symbol of fidelity, truth and innocence. Thus, in a way, he tries to express his hopes about "... the possibility of an ideal love" and even marriage based on mutual honesty and trust (Birdsall 1970:109); a message Wycherley conducted the best in *The Country Wife* his previous play.

B. THE COUNTRY WIFE

The Country Wife which was presented at the Theatre Royal on Bridges Street in January, 1674? is today considered by many criticis as the best of Wycherley's four comedies. Among its first performers there were leading actors and actresses of the King's Company. For instance, Charles Hart played the role of Horner, the witty libertine; "Blonde, blue-eyed" Elizabeth Boutell played Margery Pinchwife, the country-wife; "... short, square-built actor" Major Michael Mohun, Mr. Pinchwife; "... an excellent singer", Mrs. Mary Knep, Lady Fidget and "... a natural farceur", Joe Haines played Sparkish (Wilson 1959:3).

The Country Wife was published in the same year of its first performance, in 1685. In spite of the attacks made against its indecency and obscenity, the play was a real success in its time (Loftis et.al. 1976:197). After an interval of six years, in 1709 *The Country Wife* was revived. However, the criticisms against its indecency continued even with additional fervour on the part of

Collier's defenders like Sir Richard Steele (Holland 1959:74; Stephen and Lee 1937-38:1112).

Thus, in an attempt "... to remove the original's 'immorality' and 'obscenity' (Drabble 1985:233), in 1766 David Garrick brought out an adaptation of *The Country Wife*. The play in its new form was performed at Drury Lane under the title of *The Country Girl* (Hartnoll 1967:1017). Nevertheless, although Garrick had rendered the play very "insipid" (Stephen and Lee 1937-38: 112) by removing the "indecent" character of Horner, a central figure of the plot, the play in its new form was successful enough. As a matter of fact, the original version was not seen in London again until revived by the Phoenix Society in 1924 (Hartnoll 1967: 1017; Stapleton 1983:199). Also in the 1930's *The Country Wife* was produced once more at the Old Vic Theatre and proved to be a great success (Stapleton 1983:199).

The Country Wife is not Wycherley's original creation. In the first place, to create the character of Horner, who declares himself impotent so as to gain access to the favours of women, Wycherley took a hint from Terence's *Eunuchus* (Dobrée 1966:94; Holland 1959:75; Salgado 1980:151). Also, for his idea of Mr. Pinchwife, the jealous husband who tries to protect his ignorant wife from the dangers of a corrupt society, Wycherley referred to Molière's *L'Ecole des Femmes*. Moreover, Wycherley borrowed a situation or two from Molière's *L'Ecole des Maris* (Dobrée 1966:94; Salgado 1980:151; Wilson 1968:160) which together with the former

play of Molière deal with the theme of forced marriage (Salgado 1980:151). However, whatever Wycherley borrowed he no doubt transformed and reproduced with an ingenuity peculiar to him (Hartnoll 1967:1016; Salgado 1980:151; Stephen and Lee 1937-38:1112).

The Country Wife is set in London and is about the false eunuch, the libertine Horner's sexual conquests of the fashionable group of town ladies among whom finally is included a country-wife, Margery, despite the efforts of her old, jealous husband, Mr. Pinchwife. The plot of the play is in fact made up of "... three closely woven lines of intrigue" (Holland 1959:73). According to Norman Holland two of these plots depict a "wrong-way" and the last, a "right-way" which is there to be contrasted with the other two (1959:73). Thus, it can be said that Wycherley develops *The Country Wife* out of two lower plots set in complete contrast to one higher plot.

The main plot which concerns Mr. Pinchwife[28] illustrates one of the "wrong-ways" and therefore, is one of the lower plots in the play. Mr. Pinchwife, a middle-aged rake has chosen as his wife a naive country girl, Margery thinking that her simplicity and naiveté would keep her submissive and faithful to himself. However, his calculations do not prove practical. Every effort that he makes to retain Margery's naiveté ironically help him to teach her what

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[28] In the following sections of this study this plot will be referred to as the Pinchwife plot.

he wishes to conceal. As the action proceeds the situation becomes even more ironical: it is Margery's very simplicity and naiveté, the qualities for which Pinchwife married her, that render him completely helpless and move him closer to being cuckolded as in the following scene:

> Pinchwife: ... ask me no more to go to a play.
> Mrs. Pinchwife: Nay, why love?....
> . . . .
> Pinchwife: First, you like the actors; and the gallants may like you.
> Mrs. Pinchwife: What, a homely country girl! No bud, nobody will like me.
> Pinchwife: I tell you yes, they may.
> Mrs. Pinchwife: No, no, you jest __ I won't believe; I will go.
> Pinchwife: I tell you then, that one of the lewdest fellows in town, who saw you there, told me he was in love with you.
> Mrs. Pinchwife: Indeed! who, who, pray who wasn't? (II.i. 19).[29]

Moreover, Pinchwife's excessive boastings about being an expert of the ways of the town, infact, prompts his rakish friends and especially Horner into cuckolding him. Thus, on the

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[29]All references hereafter will be the edition of *The Country Wife* in John Harold Wilson's collection of *Six Restoration Plays* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1959), pp.4-86.

next occasion at the theatre when Horner recognizes Margery, who is disguised out of jealousy by Pinchwife as a boy, he tries his luck and indeed makes use of the situation. He flirts with Margery and even kisses her. Princhwife is left helpless and therefore, is once more forced into a situation he actually intended to avoid.

However, ironically enough Pinchwife continues to do things that cause his own destruction. He forces and actually threatens Margery with a penknife to write a rude letter to Horner, but the innocent country-wife, somehow, contrives to substitute, instead, a love letter which Pinchwife takes to Horner personally. Yet, the irony reaches its peak in the concluding scene of the Pinchwife plot. In this last scene Pinchwife unawaringly hands over to Horner his own wife disguised as his very sister, Alithea so as to bribe Horner into giving up Margery. Thus, this final action of Pinchwife harms him the most and makes him the cuckold that he was always afraid of being.

Alongside the Pinchwife plot, there is the lower plot of Horner[30] which can be considered as an illustration of one of the "wrong-ways". The Horner plot, infact, begins the action in the play. Horner, with the help of a friend, Dr. Quack, has spread

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[30] This plot will be referred to in the following sections of this study as the Horner plot.

about the town the rumour that since his recent visit to France he has been suffering from impotence as a result of syphilis and the malpractise of "... an English-French chirurgeon" (I.i. 6). From then on, Horner begins to enjoy the privileges of the reputation of a eunuch.

Sir Jasper Fidget, an old man of business who has no time at all to spend with his young wife welcomes Horner immediately thinking that he has found "... an innocent play-fellow" (II.i. 29) for his wife. Thus, although their ways are different, like Pinchwife, Sir Jasper, too, ironically pushes his wife into Horner's hands, making himself a cuckold. Consequently, his wife Lady Fidget and his sister Mrs. Dainty Fidget and their friend, Mrs. Squeamish soon find out, in turns, that Horner is "... perfectly the same man as before... going into France..." (II.i. 29) and has suffered himself as impotent only to protect their "honour" and good names. Starved for love already, each accepts Horner and "... believes herself [for a long time] to be his only lover" (Wilson 1968:156). The famous "China scene" of Act IV, in fact, adds to the irony of this situation. In this scene Lady Fidget and Mrs. Squeamish exchange a dialogue with Horner's contributions, believing that each alone is Horner's mistress. Yet, a crucial moment comes: Lady Fidget confides in her friends and finds out to her amazement and wrath "... that Horner has also shared 'the dear secret' with them" (Holland 1959:75).

In the final scene of this plot and of the play, Margery,

who has been brought to Horner's lodgings by Pinchwife disguised as Alithea, is seen. Although Horner wants her to go, Margery refuses and tells him that she hates Pinchwife and thus will divorce him and have Horner as her next husband. Bold and sincere, Margery declares her decision also in the presence of everybody including her husband, Pinchwife. The news obviously upsets the old jealous cuckolds who have trusted Horner with their wives. Thus, both Pinchwife and Sir Jasper begin to worry about their reputation. However, at this climatic point Alithea's maid, Lucy and the three ladies compel Margery to lie and say that Horner cannot actually become a husband because he is impotent. In this way, after a significant dance of cuckolds the curtain comes down.

Finally, presented in complete contrast to the Pinchwife and Horner plots there is the illustration of the only "right-way" in the higher plot involving Harcourt and Alithea.[31] Alithea's brother, Pinchwife has betrothed his sister to Sparkish, a fop whose intention, infact, is to marry her estate and to have a pretty wife to show off to his friends. Alithea, on the other hand, consents to this match out of obedience and also because Sparkish is never jealous, an attitude which she believes to be an outcome of trust and faith in herself. As the action proceeds, Sparkish - like the other members of the foolish group, that is,

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[31] This plot will be referred to in the following sections of this study as the Harcourt-Alithea plot.

Pinchwife and Sir Jasper - does things that ironically render him ridiculous. In an effort to show off his pretty fiancée to his friend Harcourt and also to prove to Alithea that he is not jealous "... like a country bumpkin" (II.i. 22), Sparkish, provides the two with the milieu to fall in love with one another. However, despite her feelings towards Harcourt and despite Harcourt's efforts to break off her match with Sparkish, Alithea remains faithful to her fiancée all the way. Nevertheless, there comes a time when Alithea finally sees Sparkish's true face. As a result of the complications rising from Margery's disguise as Alithea, Sparkish accuses Alithea of betrayal, and "... shows himself in his true colours as a petty, jealous fool" (Wilson 1968:159) who has no faith at all in his fiancée's innocence. Thus, Alithea immediately breaks off her match with Sparkish and accepts the hand offered by Harcourt who believes in her and even promises "... to love too, without being jealous" (V.iv. 81). In this way, "Unlike most Restoration comedies, *The Country Wife* ends with only one marriage in prospect: that of Alithea and Harcourt" (Wilson 1968:159).

Despite the title of the play which seems to suggest Margery as the major character in *The Country Wife,* Horner will firstly be discussed as he is the prototype of the libertine figure in Restoration comedies. To begin with, Horner indeed rejects the oppression of sexual instincts. In order to provide himself with sexual freedom and therefore to satisfy and be true to his pleasure-seeking nature, Horner exploits "... the hypocrisy of social manners to the utmost" (Hirst 1979:9) and becomes a

hypocrite himself. Moreover, as he takes "pleasure" to be his only motto, he commits almost any kind of vice to satisfy his aim.

In *The Country Wife* Wycherley seems to have used the libertine Horner as his means for achieving double satire. It is true that Wycherley satirises in the first place, the follies of others which the libertine brings out and exposes. However, Wycherley's criticisms do not end there; during these exposures he also satirises the libertine's behaviour. For instance, Horner's conduct throughout the play helps Wycherley to bring out and "... satirise... the importance of pretense in the [upper-class society], particularly the conventional and convenient pretense on society's part that sexual desires do not exist" (Holland 1959:75). However, Horner, as being Wycherley's mouth-piece, knows that the society is full of hypocrites; he knows that "... she that shows an aversion ... loves the sport,... [and] that ... women of honor, as you call'em are only chary of their reputations, not their persons; and 'tis scandal they would avoid, not men" (I.i. 9). In addition, with his irresponsible conduct in pursuit of excessive sex Horner himself is satirised. So in conclusion Horner's "... very being ... [may be taken as Wycherley's] comment on the lusts of a sex-ridden society" (Knight 1962:137).

Apart from satirising the behaviour of Horner, Wycherley seems also to have punished him through ridiculing. This punishment starts in the drinking scene (V.iv. 75-79) when Wycherley presents Horner as a helpless creature among the three town ladies. In this

drinking scene the women even make a fool of Horner without his perception. According to Derek Cohen (1983:31) here the ladies "... treat him rather like the spaniel whose docility he had earlier mocked in likening that species of dog to womankind [(II.i. 27)]". Also since Horner is unusually silent in this scene, he appears like an object, "... the very plaything of a gang of female gallants" (Cohen 1983:31):

Lady Fidget: Let us sit then.

. . . .

Mrs. Squeamish: And, for want of a gallant, the butler lovely in our eyes. -Drink, eunuch.

Lady Fidget: Drink, thou representative of a husband....

Mrs. Dainty Fidget: And, as it were a husband, an old keeper.

. . . .

The filthy toads choose mistresses now as they do stuffs, for having been fancied and worn by others.

Mrs. Squeamish: For being common and cheap.

Lady Fidget: Whilst women of quality, like the richest stuffs, lie untumbled, and unasked for.

Horner: Ay, neat, and cheap, and new, often they think best.

Mrs. Dainty Fidget: No sir, the beasts will be known by a mistress longer than by a suit (V.iv. 75-77).

In addition to this major failure, although Horner "... aims by women to be prized" (V.iv. 86), he is actually despised

by them. In the very drinking scene, for instance, the ladies treat Horner

> ... like a male prostitute: when they speak to each other it is as though he were not present, and when they do acknowledge him - even after the revelation of his "infidelity" - their tone is such as to remind him... of his servile station (Cohen 1983:24).

For them, Horner is a "eunuch", a "filthy toad" and a "beast" whom they neither fear nor respect (Cohen 1983:35). In other words, Horner, in a way, has been hoist with his own petard (Cohen 1983: 32) because in this drinking scene especially Wycherley implies that Horner is forever to be despised and disrespected by women whom he thinks will be grateful to him both for satisfying them and for preserving their pretended honour.

As for another occasion of the ridiculing of the male libertine, Wycherley seems to have employed the last scene in which Margery brings the action to a climax. Here, Horner the manipulator, is once more helpless. He cannot control the action and is left to the mercy of the very womankind he had previously despised: Margery, because she insists on telling the truth about Horner and then Lucy, who says that she can change things in favour of Horner.

Furthermore, towards the end of the play Wycherley implies that Horner has not at all been successful in his plans and that his major strategy to provide himself with sexual freedom,

ironically has captivated him. Especially his ruse seems to have thrown him "... into the centre of an ever-widening maelstrom of sexual entanglement ... he is not equipped to control" (Cohen 1983: 32). For instance, in the "China scene" Horner admits: "Upon my honor, I have none left now.... I cannot make china for you all ..." (IV.iii. 60). Thus, Horner is not triumphant as Dobrée sees him (1968:94); it is only a false triumph because although Horner's trick helps him to seduce the "honourable" ladies more easily, "... [his] plenty appears to be more than he bargained for" (Cohen 1983:35-36).

Finally, Horner realises the last of his punishments: "And, I, alas! can't be... [a husband]" (V.iv. 85). In other words, Horner realises with "... a half-regretful longing" that he will never be able to find "... the real and permanent happiness represented by the exuberant union of Harcourt and Alithea" (Holland 1959:83). Thus, Horner, as long as he is capable of coping with such a life is condemned to practise and have love merely as sex.

Moreover, as the action proceeds Horner's hypocrisy and his practise of vice, which seem rather comic at the beginning, become more and more serious (Zimbardo 1973:523) as he rather turns into "... a grotesque exaggeration of vice ..., and [the plain-dealing country-wives like Margery and the virtuous young ladies like Alithea are implicitly warned by Wycherley] to watch for [their honour]" (Birdsall 1970:136; Zimbardo 1973:522). Nevertheless,

Margery becomes Horner's first victim. With her unilateral decision for marriage Margery easily gives herself up to Horner. In Alithea's case, however, the situation is somehow worse. This time, Horner sacrifices even "... Alithea's true honor to the preservation of his false disguise" (Zimbardo 1973:525), from the unfair results of which Alithea can only be saved by Harcourt's faith in her honesty.

As for Margery's character, Wilson says that, "By nature and breeding she is as much a natural woman as by conviction ... [Horner] is a natural man" and that although they do not get married in the end, they could have been a fair match (1968:158). First of all, similar to Horner, Margery seems to be against the oppression of sexual instincts. Infact, when she is forced to suppress them she actually feels physically sick. For suppression is something that Margery cannot bear by nature:

> Mrs. Pinchwife: .... I am sick of my husband, and for my gallant. I have heard this distemper called a fever, but methinks 'tis liker an ague; for when I think of my husband, I tremble and am in a cold sweat, and have inclinations to vomit; but when I think of my gallant, dear Mr. Horner, my hot fit comes, and I am all in a fever indeed; and, is in other fevers, my own chamber is tedious to me, and I would fain be removed to his, and then methinks I should be well..." (IV.iv. 65-66).

Moreover, Margery's method for achieving her goal is reminiscent of that of Horner's. Margery contrives almost every trick to get hold of her lover, Horner and she, too, begins to practise vice. By disguising herself as Alithea, for instance, Margery risks Alithea's honour just like Horner did. Nevertheless, Birdsall justifies Margery's behaviour in the following sentences:

> Greeting every town experience with open-hearted delight, she [Margery] is the complete child of nature, with no nagging 'reason' to tell her that she ought not to follow wherever her inclinations may lead her. Wholly free of inhibitations, she is also free of any feeling of guilt or recognition of the necessity for it (1970:148).

The above information seems also to explain the reasons behind Margery's venturesome behaviour in the end. That, for the very same reasons, Margery could feel bold enough to declare in public that she is ready to divorce her first husband so as to find satisfaction in the second. However, Margery does not realise that her declaration is something that the conventions do not yet tolerate.

Nevertheless, Margery's ultimate decision to lie in the final scene is very significant for her decision, no doubt, finally rank her with the group of hypocrites of the town society. Also in this very scene it seems as if Margery does what Horner did at the

beginning. Having learnt now from Horner that hypocrisy is the only outlet to satisfy her pleasure-seeking nature, Margery has decided to lie and become a hypocrite herself.

As Birdsall puts it, Margery is not merely "... one more example of immorality in an immoral world.... [but is also a means with which Wycherley] challenges the morality, the tyranny, and the hypocrisy of the world to which he belongs" (1970:147). By means of contrast, Margery's honesty (plain-dealing) serves to bring forth the hypocrisy (double-dealing) of the town ladies. Unlike the town ladies, Margery has no pretense. For instance, when she is determined to have Horner, she lets him know: "... you shall be my husband now" (V.iv. 80). However, the fashionable Lady Fidget of the town conceals her inner, lecherous nature by "... adopt ... [ing] the outward appearance of a precise woman of honor" (Holland 1959:80).

As for the criticism of the behaviour of Margery, Wycherley seems to have employed satire with a method similar to that in Horner's case. Wycherley depicts Margery's behaviour at the beginning rather as comic but to be replaced gradually by the satiric. Thus, Margery initially appears as a naive and innocent country wife who has no idea at all about the ways of the town. However, as the action proceeds Margery begins to learn and develop cunning. When Margery contrives, for instance, to substitute a love letter instead of a rude one to Horner, she is no more innocent; she has learnt to trick her husband. Moreover, the contents of her

letter may even suggest that she is not at all innocent in the beginning either but is hiding her passion under a cover of innocence:

> Mrs. Pinchwife: ".... I'm sure if you and I were in the country at cards together ... I could not help treading on your toe under the table ... or rubbing knees with you, and staring in your face, till you saw me ... but I must make haste before my husband come ... (IV.ii. 55).

Nevertheless, whether Margery's innocence is at first genuine or not, once she falls in love with Horner, "... she develops guile, and [henceforward] she feigns innocence to disguise her passion from Pinchwife in the hope that she will thereby find the freedom to satisfy it" (Zimbardo 1973:523). Moreover, when she tricks her husband by disguising herself as Alithea, her conduct even becomes harmful. For now she has risked the reputation of a person that does not deserve it at all. For all this she is satirised.

However, for the development of cunning in Margery, there seems to be an explanation: the growing of artless innocence into cunning and role playing may have been a response to growing oppression (Birdsall 1970:138; Salgado 1980:152; Vernon 1979:315). As Lucy remarks: "... any wild thing grows but the more fierce and hungry for being kept up and more dangerous to the keeper" (V.iv. 85).

Alongside the criticisms that Wycherley directs upon Margery, he, in a way, punishes her as well and this punishment takes place particularly at the end. When about to make her climactic decision Margery realises: "... I must be a country wife still too, I find; for I can't, like a city one, be rid of my musty husband, and do what I list" (V.iv. 85). In other words, Wycherley condemns Margery to live forever with a husband whom she does not love at all.

Although Harcourt and Alithea are the exemplary sensible couple of the play, in them Wycherley seems to have also criticised a few points. First of all, in Harcourt's disposition Wycherley implicitly satirises the duplicity in bosom friendship (Hirst 1979: 9-10). No matter whether the foolish and vain fop Sparkish deserves being cheated or not, Wycherley shows that Sparkish indeed does trust his friend Harcourt even more than he trusts his fiancée, Alithea. For instance, when Sparkish introduces Harcourt to Alithea he expresses his trust in his friend with the following words: "... by the universe, madam, ... he is the honestest, worthiest, true-hearted gentleman - a man of such perfect honor...." (II.i. 20). Nevertheless, in addition to his stealing of his friend's mistress, Alithea, Harcourt sees Sparkish as "... a bubble, a coward, a senseless idiot, a wretch so contemptible to all the world ..." (II.i. 23) and yet is friends with him. However, although Harcourt's hypocritical pretense to friendship is reminiscent of Horner's methods in achieving his goals, Harcourt seems to have been saved from Wycherley's severe criticism for it is clear that Harcourt's

aim in pretense is for a nobler reason like marriage.

As for Alithea's disposition and conduct in the play, it may be claimed that Wycherley has made her appear somewhat ridiculous (Loftis et.al. 1976:198). First of all, although Alithea is expected to be "sensible" she foolishly thinks that Sparkish genuinely believes in her honesty. Moreover, considering Sparkish's real intentions in wanting to marry her, Alithea's faithfulness to Sparkish, despite her love towards Harcourt, seems rather ridiculous and exaggerated. Although, as in the next scene, there is always Alithea's maid, Lucy to warn her about the realistic world that is far from appreciating her idealistic restraints, Alithea ironically does not understand:

> Alithea: ... I would see him (Harcourt) no more because I love him.
> Lucy: Hey day, a very pretty reason!
> Alithea: You do not understand me.
> Lucy: I wish you may yourself.
> Alithea: I was engaged to marry, you see, another man, whom my justice will not suffer me to deceive or injure.
> Lucy: Can there be a greater cheat or wrong done to a man than to give him person without your heart? I should make e conscious of it.
> Alithea: I'll retrieve it for him after I am married a while.
> Lucy: The woman that marries to love better will be as much mistaken as the wencher that marries to live better. No, madam, marrying to increase love

> is like gaming to become rich; alas! you only lose what little stock you had before.
>
> . . . .
>
> You will marry him then?
>
> Alithea: Certainly; I have given him [Sparkish] already my word, and I will my hand too, to make it good, when he comes (IV.i. 47).

Nevertheless, when finally Alithea understands Lucy's warnings "... the action of the play makes it quite clear that ... [it is] through no plan of her own [either]" (Birdsall 1970:140).

However, despite the criticisms and irony that Wycherley employs for the behaviour of the sensible couple, he does indeed portray their relationship as a constant reminder to all, of the possibility of honest love and marriage. Thus, as Rose Zimbardo puts it Harcourt and Alithea may be taken as "twin virtues" whose practise of virtue is there to be contrasted with the others' practise of vice (1973:525-26). As it is illustrated by the following instance, throughout the play Wycherley contrasts Alithea's truthfulness with hypocrisy and Harcourt's true feelings of romantic love with the lusts of others (Zimbardo 1973:526):

> Lady Fidget's and Horner's 'perfectly, perfectly' exchange , for instance, is immediately followed by a scene in which Harcourt tries to express... his honorable passion for Alithea. Even though Harcourt's romantic love is exact opposite of Horner's

> and Fidget's animal sexuality, Alithea .... exposes Harcourt again and again to Sparkish. Again the scene in which Margery disguises herself, at the risk of Alithea's reputation, to satisfy her passion for Horner is balanced by the scene in which Alithea tries to unmask Harcourt, who has come, disguised as a parson to prevent her marriage to Sparkish (Zimbardo 1973:526).

As for the town ladies, Lady Fidget, Mrs. Dainty Fidget and Mrs. Squeamish, their very presence in the play is in fact a satire on "... the hypocristy of the pretensions to 'honour' and 'reputation' which ... were rife among the ladies of fashion of the time " (Salgado 1980:151). At the beginning of the play all three seem respectable and virtuous ladies but as the action proceeds the audience is gradually acquainted with their true nature; none of them is virtuous and their apparent virtue is only a disguise for their indulgence in lust. In the following scene, for instance, Lady Fidget reveals her hidden lust as well as her false honour which until then were only suspected:

> Lady Fidget: But poor gentleman, could you be so generous, so truly a man of honor, as for the sakes of us women of honor, to cause yourself to be reported no man? No man! and to suffer yourself the greatest shame that could fall upon a man, that none might fall upon us women by your conversation? But, indeed, sir, as perfectly, perfectly the same man as before your going into France,

> sir? as perfectly, perfectly sir?
> Horner: As perfectly, perfectly madam.
> . . . .
> Lady Fidget: .... But I have so strong faith in your honor, dear, dear, noble sir, that I'd forfeit mine for yours, at any time, dear sir (II.i. 29).

Moreover, in the drinking scene of Act V, scene iv, Wycherley shows that the other town ladies, Mrs. Squeamish and Mrs. Dainty Fidget are no exception to the rule: their honour underneath which they hide their lustful natures is as false as Lady Fidget's:

> Lady Fidget: .... Come here to our gallants in waiting, whom we must name, and I'll begin. This is my false rogue. (Claps ... [Horner] on the back).
> Mrs. Squeamish: How!
> . . . .
> (Aside to Horner) Did you not tell me 'twas for my sake only you reported yourself no man?
> Mrs. Dainty Fidget: (Aside to Horner) Oh, wretch! did you not swear to me, 'twas for my love and honor you passed for that thing you do?
> . . . .
> Lady Fidget: Come speak, ladies, this is my false villain.
> Mrs. Squeamish: And mine, too.
> Mrs. Dainty Fidget: And mine (V.iv. 79).

Furthermore, in the above scene Wycherley underlines and satirises once more the importance of pretense to honour among

some upper-class ladies. When these would-be ladies find out about Horner's infidelity, Lady Fidget consoles her friends with this comment:

> Lady Fidget: Well then, there's no remedy; sister sharers let us not fall out, but have a care of our honor. Though we get no presents, no jewels of him, we are savers of our honor, the jewel of most value and use, which shines yet to the world unsuspected, though it be counterfeit (V.iv. 79).

Thus, in these words of Lady Fidget, Wycherley criticises the system of values prevailing in his society which can recklessly accept a woman of Lady Fidget's kind as an honourable personage. In other words, Wycherley criticises the fact that "... honor, like beauty now, only depends on the opinion of others" (V.iv. 79).

However, in spite of his criticisms of these women, Wycherley seems to have felt a certain kind of sympathy towards them as well (Vernon 1979:317). In other words, it looks as if Wycherley does not hold these ladies completely responsible for their false behaviour, especially towards their husbands; Wycherley blames the husbands, too. He blames, for instance, husbands like Sir Jasper who are always to busy to spare some time for their young wives. Thus, through Lady Fidget's words, Wycherley comments: "Who for his business from his wife will run,/Takes the best care to have her business done" (II.i. 30). Consequently, since Wycherley does not ultimately blame these women for their

false behaviour, he leaves them unpunished at the end of the play (Vernon 1979:319). That is, although the women cannot find happiness like the true lovers, Alithea and Harcourt (Vernon 1979: 317), they can still preserve their false reputation in society.

Moreover, in the following song of Lady Fidget, Wycherley almost justifies even the drinking habit of such women:

1

Why should our damned tyrants oblige us to live
Only the pittance of pleasure which they only give?
We must not rejoice
With wine and with noise;
In vain we must wake in a dull bed alone,
Whilst to our warm rival, the bottle, they're gone
Then lay aside charms,
And take up these arms.

2

'Tis wine only gives 'em their courage and wit;
Because we live sober, to men we submit.
If for beauties you'd pass,
Take a lick of the glass,
'Twill mend your complexions, and when they are gone.
The best red we have is the red of the grape.
Then, sisters, lay't on,
And damn a good shape (V.iv. 76).

The above song seems to suggest that in a society which is dominated by men the women's happiness is somehow "... dependent upon the men's willingness to allow it [happiness]" (Cohen 1983:32). Therefore, women who are tired of waiting for their husbands' attention naturally become addicted to the bottle which enables

them to forget their problems and make living easier to cope with (Cohen 1983:32).

With regard to their disposition and behaviour, these three ladies resemble most the discarded mistresses of the Restoration comedy of manners. For quite a long time in the play each in her turn enjoys Horner without being aware of the others' presence. However, once they find out the truth, they realise that, in a way, each has been discarded for the sake of the other. Moreover, in the last scene when they further find out that Horner has also shared his secret with Margery, they fall more into the position of discarded mistresses because this time the male libertine has got rid of them all for the sake of another.

Another important figure and another target of Wycherley's satire in *The Country Wife* is Sparkish, the fop. In Sparkish's character Wycherley satirises mostly the people who see marriage as a materialistic and commercial arrangement (Zimbardo 1973:526). In the play, although he does neither love nor trust Alithea, he wants the marriage to take place because he is simply after Alithea's estate. However, towards the end Sparkish incautiously reveals his true intentions: "'Tis true, I might have married your [Alithea's] portion, as other men of parts of the town do sometimes" (V.iii. 75).

Moreover, for Zimbardo (1973:525) Sparkish is the male counterpart of Lady Fidget, in whom Wycherley also satirises

hypocrisy: Sparkish is a would-be gentleman as Lady Fidget is a would-be lady, and while her disguise is false modesty, his is false wit and civility. Thus, in Sparkish's pretension to a witty and civilized personality, Wycherley for the third time underlines the importance of pretense in the society. Wycherley shows that by working upon others' prejudices such hypocrites like Horner, Lady Fidget and now Sparkish can easily persuade others to take them to be what they are not. Even such a sensible character like Alithea, Wycherley underlines, may mistake a fool for a man of civilized and honourable personage.

Lastly, in Sparkish's character Wycherley seems to have satirised the common attitude of men who see woman as mere objects. Infact, since Sparkish considers marriage as a commercial arrangement, it is natural for him to overlook the personality of women. Therefore, in addition to seeing Alithea as his financial source, Sparkish presents her to his friends "... as a beautiful possession" (Vernon 1979:315). Moreover, as in the scene below, Sparkish all the time pushes his friend Harcourt into appreciating the good quality of his "property" of which Harcourt, in fact, is already truly aware:

> Sparkish: Here, Harcourt, do you approve my choice?...
>
> . . . .
>
> This is one of those, my pretty rogue [addresses Alithea] that are to dance at your wedding tomorrow; and him you must bid welcome ever, to what you and I have.

> . . . .
> Harcourt, how dost thou like her, faith? Nay, dear do not look down; I should have a wife of mine out of countenance at anything.
> . . . .
> Tell me, I say, Harcourt, how dost thou like her? Thou hast stared upon her enough to resolve me.
> . . . .
> but by the world, she has wit too, as well as beauty. [Addresses Harcourt:] Go, go with her into a corner and try if she has wit; talk to her anything; she is bashful before me (II.i. 20-21).

With respect to his behaviour and name Sparkish is a true representative of the fop figure of the Restoration comedies. He is totally artificial and he tries to imitate Horner but since he exaggerates everything, he makes a fool of himself. Moreover, the following conversation among Sparkish, Harcourt and Alithea shows that in him there is also the signs of the witwoud. For on this particular occasion Sparkish indeed struggles to appear witty but since he lacks common sense and judgement, he becomes ridiculous and makes a fool of himself:

> Alithea: [Addresses Sparkish] Is it for your honor, or mine, to suffer a man to make love to me, who am to marry you to-morrow?
> . . . .
> 'tis your honor... I am concerned for.
> Harcourt: But why, dearest madam, will you be more concerned for his honor than he is

> himself? Let his honor alone, for my sake
> and his. He! has no honor -
> Sparkish: How's that?
> . . . .
> Harcourt: [Addresses Alithea] Your care of
> his honor argues his neglect of it, which
> is no honor to my dear friend here.
> Sparkish: Ay, ay....
> . . . .
> Harcourt: [Addresses Alithea] ... I confess,
> I say, I love you, that I would not have
> you miserable, and cast yourself away upon
> so unworthy and inconsiderable a thing as
> what you see here. (Clapping his hand on his
> breast, Harcourt points at Sparkish)
> Sparkish: No, faith, I believe thou wouldst
> not; now his meaning is plain; but I knew ...
> thou wouldst not wrong me....
> Harcourt: No, no, Heavens forbid the glory of
> her sex should fall so low, as into the
> embraces of such a contemptible wretch, the
> last of mankind - my dear friend here - ....
> (Embracing Sparkish)
> . . . .
> Sparkish: .... how modestly he speaks of him-
> self, poor fellow! (III.ii. 38-39).

As for the next important object of Wycherley's satire, there is Mr. Pinchwife. In the first place Wycherley satirises him for marrying a young country wife upon the assumption that a country woman's simplicity and naivete will render her faithful to him. This marriage, according to Zimbardo (1973:522) is merely a disguise on part of Pinchwife for his indulgence in lust because

Pinchwife's conduct proves that he has no sincere feelings like love, trust or esteem for his wife. He acts not like a loving husband but more like an old lecher and "... the keeper of a whore, a piece of property that he is anxious to preserve to his exclusive enjoyment" (Zimbardo 1973:523). The following conversation seems to illustrate Pinchwife's real intentions in marrying and thus Zimbardo's argument:

> Horner: But prithee, was not the way you were [that is, unmarried state] in better? Is not keeping better than marriage?
> Mr. Pinchwife: A pox on't! the jades would jilt me, I could never keep a whore to myself.
> Horner: So, then, you only married to keep a whore to yourself (II.i. 16).

For Wycherley, a man with such opinion even about his own wife was nauseous and would naturally perceive love merely as sex and as something appetative. This point is illustrated in Pinchwife's words as follows: "... a woman masked, [is] like a covered dish, [that] gives a man curiosity and appetite; when, it may be, uncovered, 'twould turn his stomach" (II.i. 33).

Another target of Wycherley's attack in Pinchwife's character is his jealousy of his wife. This jealousy stems mainly from his distrust of women in general. Although he is sure that, "A fool [like Margery who comes from the country] cannot contrive to make her husband a cuckold.... [Pinchwife] ... understand[s] the town" (I.i. 15) and therefore takes additional "measures" to

prevent his wife from making him a cuckold. In the scene where Horner and Dorilant - another libertine figure and a friend of Horner - tease Pinchwife about his marriage, the audience is informed about the first of Pinchwife's measures for preserving his "own freehold" (II.i. 24) for himself. Pinchwife has taken his wife to the theatre to the "... eighteen-penny place" so "... that she might not be seen" but the "devil", the cuckold-maker, Horner has seen them and now even calls his wife "... a pretty country wench" (I.i. 16). Thus, Pinchwife decides: "But she shall never go to a play again" (I.i. 16).

Then after the scene in which Pinchwife unintentionally prompts Margery about going to the theatre, there comes the next scene in which Margery is allowed to go to the theatre but disguised as her own brother, "... little Sir James" (III.i. 32). According to Birdsall (1970:147) Pinchwife at this point seems to confirm the "... unnaturalness of the repression he imposes on Margery, ... [by dressing her up] as a boy before allowing her out into the town". Nevertheless, despite its unnaturalness Pinchwife's treatment of his wife appears to be comic until this moment. Yet, from then onwards Pinchwife begins to act like a boorish, cruel old fool. Besides his locking Margery up in her room, he threatens her on three different occasions during the remaining course of events. On the first occasion, Pinchwife asks Margery to write a rude letter to Horner but when she refuses, he loses his self-control and threatens his wife with a penknife into making her do what he wants. Pinchwife's second fit comes in the scene where he discovers Margery

writing a love letter to Horner. At the moment of discovery Pinchwife loses his control once more and draws his sword immediately to take revenge. However, Margery contrives to save herself by saying that she has written it in the name of Alithea. The next occasion in which Pinchwife practises violence is the very last scene and it proves to be the most dangerous one for Margery. Here Zimbardo depicts Pinchwife as a cruel sadist attempting actually to murder Margery, "... a disaster that is averted only when his reputation as a husband is rescued by the public assurance of Horner's eunuchry" (1973:525). In this crucial final scene Pinchwife does not seem to be completely satisfied: "(Aside) Well, if this were true - but my wife -" (V.iv. 85). The incomplete sentence reveals Pinchwife's doubts about the situation; however, he decides: "For my own sake fain I would all believe; / Cuckolds like lovers, should themselves deceive" (V.iv. 85). In other words, Pinchwife "... values the reputation of husband alone. It is part of the public image of which he is so careful (Zimbardo 1973:525).

Thus, with respect to his manners and his "jealous humour" symbolised by his name (Wilson 1968:158), the old lecher, Pinchwife can be considered a typical cuckolded husband of the Restoration comedy of manners. He is foolish; he fails in his plans and is helpless most of the time. The audience laughs at him; however, towards the end of the play the laughter fades away because Pinchwife becomes violent.

Another elderly who is an object of Wycherley's satire

as cuckolded husband is Sir Jasper Fidget. Wycherley seems to have satirised him first for being neglectful of his duties as a husband. Sir Jasper has a young wife who naturally is in need of affection. Nevertheless, although quite conscious of her need Sir Jasper cannot give his wife what she wants because for him business is above everything else. For this very reason, like Pinchwife, Sir Jasper, too, is afraid that his wife will make him a cuckold. Therefore, he, too, takes his "measures": he ironically finds for his wife "innocent" gamesters like Horner and in a way he confines Lady Fidget "... to trivial social life among safe companions of his own choosing" (Vernon 1979:315).

Furthermore, Wycherley no doubt ridicules Sir Jasper for his imprudent opinion about women. Sir Jasper seems to think that women cannot be as intelligent as men (Vernon 1979:316). For him, a woman is nothing but a "... sweet, soft, gentle, tame... creature, ... made for man's companion [and control]" (II.i. 27). Nevertheless, ironically it seems that it is his wife, Lady Fidget who has the full control of Sir Jasper. For instance, in spite of Sir Jasper's having taken "measures", Lady Fidget can freely do what she pleases and contrive still to remain an "honourable" lady at least in the eyes of her husband.

As for Alithea's maid, Lucy's disposition and manners in the play, it can be said that she resembles the orange wench of the Restoration comedy of manners. Although she is a minor character, she has an important functional role. Lucy is a very clever woman

who with her realistic and down-to-earth advice to her lady, Alithea seems to act as a match-maker between her and Harcourt. In the end, it even seems as if it were Lucy alone to contrive the breaking off between Alithea and Sparkish for just before Alithea sees Sparkish as "... the unfeeling, mercenary fop that he is" (Birdsall 1970:140), Lucy remarks in an aside: "... So, 'twill work, I see" (V.iii. 74). Moreover, when further in the play Horner lies, risking the true honour of Alithea, Lucy says: "(Aside) Now, I could speak, if I durst, and solve the riddle, who am the author of it" (V.iv. 81).

The last of the characters, Dr. Quack is a minor character, yet his presence in the play seems not without a purpose on part of Wycherley. As can be understood from Dr. Quack's name Wycherley satirises through him the pretenders to the medical profession that have newly emerged in the Restoration society. By displaying Dr. Quack's practise of agreeing to spread a false report about Horner's impotence, Wycherley, in a way, warns the audience about the presence of such swindlers in society.

As a contribution to his satirising in *The Country Wife*, it seems that Wycherley has made use of the language as well. For instance, he displays Sir Jasper's foolishness by using Horner's genuine wit. Through the *double entendres* that Wycherley provides for Horner he brings out Sir Jasper's lack of judgment into the open. Throughout the play, as in the scene that follows, Sir Jasper ridiculously cannot perceive what Horner implies by his seemingly

innocent words:

> Sir Jasper: [To Lady Fidget] Come, come, here's a gamester for you; let him be a little familiar sometimes; nay, what if a little rude? Gamesters may be rude with ladies, you know.
> Lady Fidget: Yes, losing gamesters have a privilege with women.
> Horner: I always thought the contrary, that the winning gamester had most privilege with women; for when you have lost your money to a man, you'll lose anything you have - all you have, they say - and he may use you as he pleases.
> Sir Jasper Fidget: He! he! he! well, win or lose, you shall have your liberty with her.
> . . . .
> Horner: All sorts of freedom...?
> Sir Jasper: Ay, ay, ay, all sorts of freedom thou canst take. And so go to her, begin thy new employment; wheedle her, jest with her, and be better acquainted one with another (II.i. 28-30).

Moreover, as Birdsall (1970:148-49) points out, "... Margery's innocent speeches [at the beginning of the play] with heavily ironic double meanings of which the speaker herself is wholly unaware.... further represent a standard against which to measure ..." inevitably the hypocritical exchanges of the towns-people who use *double entendres* deliberately. This can be best observed in the following two speeches, the second of which is the famous "China scene".

Alithea: Did he [Mr. Pinchwife] not carry
you yesterday to a play?
Mrs. Pinchwife: Ay; but we sat amongst ugly
people. He would not let me come near the
gentry, who sat under us, so that I could
not see 'em. He told me none but naughty
women sat there, whom they toused and moused.
But I would have ventured, for all that.
Alithea: Buh how did you like the play?
Mrs. Pinchwife: Indeed I was a-weary of the
play, but I liked hugeously the actors....
Alithea: Oh, but you must not like the actors,
sister.
Mrs. Pinchwife: Ay, how should I help it,
sister? Pray, sister, when my husband comes in,
will you ask leave for me to go a-walking?
. . . .
He says he won't let me go abroad for fear of
catching the pox.
Alithea: Fy! the small-pox you should say.
(II.i. 17-18).

* * * * *

[Surprised by Lady Squeamish and others at
Horner's lodgings] Enter Lady Fidget with a
piece of china in her hand, and Horner
following.
Lady Fidget: And I have been toiling and
moiling for the prettiest china, my dear.
Horner: Nay, she has been too hard for me,
do what I could.
Mrs. Squeamish: O Lord, I'll have some china
too. Good Mr. Horner, don't think to give
other people china, and me none; come in with
me too.
Horner: Upon my honor, I have none left now.

> Mrs. Squeamish: Nay, nay, I have known you deny your china before now, but you shan't put me off so. Come.
> Horner: This lady had the last there.
> Lady Fidget: Yes, indeed, madam, to my certain knowledge, he has no more left.
> Mrs. Squeamish: Oh, but it may be he may have some you could not find.
> Lady Fidget: What, d'ye think if he had had any left, I would not have had it too? for we women of quality never think we have china enough.
> Horner: Do not take it ill, I cannot make china for you all, but I will have a roll-waggon for you too, another time.
> Mrs. Squeamish: Thank you, dear toad (IV.iii. 60).

However, in the next appearance of these three women in the drinking scene of the next act, Wycherley attributes to them a more explicit language which this time reveals quite openly their true identities. In this particular scene, as Zimbardo (1973:524) puts it, the women abandon elevated diction as well as manner. In other words, they drop their masks both literally and figuratively (Zimbardo 1973:524). Their tone of speech coarsens like that of prostitutes and "The stylistic tension between diction and character no longer claims our attention. Instead, [Wycherley's] satire darkens and damns more directly" (Zimbardo 1973:524).

With regard to its structural framework *The Country Wife* is made up of five major acts. In the first two acts, no scene

divisions can be observed. However, in the third act there are two scenes, and in the fourth and the fifth acts there are four scenes in each.

As for plot construction in *The Country Wife* it can first of all be said that the events follow a chronological order; that is, the action moves forward. Moreover, in the play there can be observed the lower and the higher plots of the Restoration comedies. According to Holland's classification (1959:73) the Pinchwife and the Horner plots illustrate the lower plots while the Harcourt-Alithea plot illustrates the higher plot.

The relationships in both of the lower plots are based on deception and distrust. For instance, Horner's lie to be able to pursue women more freely, Sparkish's attitude towards his fiancée, Pinchwife's and Sir Jasper's treatment of their wives all illustrate this point. On the other hand, however, the sensible couple of the exemplary higher plot base their relationship upon mutual honesty and trust. For instance, "When the test of Alithea's virtue comes, Harcourt is willing to ignore reputation and thereby proves that his faith [in Alithea's honesty] matches Alithea's virtue" (Zimbardo 1973:526). Although all the characters maintain their places in their own plots throughout the play, Margery is seen to move from one to the other. For her genuine innocence at the beginning, if Margery can ever be placed for a while among the two members (Alithea and Harcourt) of the higher plot, she, no doubt, falls from there to the lower plot by the end of the play

because by then she loses her innocence and becomes deceitful.

With the obvious aim of contributing to the plot of *The Country Wife*, Wycherley has also made use of some technical devices. For instance, the rude letter that Pinchwife forces Margery into writing and his later disguising of Margery as a boy informs the audience about the extremity of Pinchwife's jealousy. Also, the letter that Margery substitutes for this rude one brings into mind some doubts about Margery's innocence, and therefore creates suspense in the play. Moreover, the song that Lady Fidget sings in the drinking scene of Act V gives additional information to the audience about the town ladies; the song explains the reasons for these ladies' habit of drinking.

Among the three common scenes of the Restoration comedies, only the unmasking scene of the libertine can be observed in *The Country Wife*. This particular scene takes place in the very drinking scene of Act V., scene iv (79). As can be understood from the name attributed to this scene the libertine, Horner loses face: three women find out that Horner has made them each his mistress in turns.

As for the themes that Wycherley has worked upon in *The Country Wife*, it seems that they are eight all together. The first theme being the pursuit of the opposite sex is practised by most of the characters in the play except for Alithea. Horner, in the first place, is in pursuit of the three townswomen and then of

Margery. Fortunately for Horner, these women have similar intentions: the country wife, Margery and the three town wives, Lady Fidget, Mrs. Dainty Fidget and Mrs. Squeamish are all in pursuit of Horner as well. Moreover, Harcourt, throughout the play, is in pursuit of Alithea. Sparkish, too, is in pursuit of a young and beautiful member of the opposite sex to make for his wife, which in this case is Alithea.

Furthermore, as can be observed in the scene that follows, Wycherley illustrates this theme even through the conduct of a very minor character like old Lady Squeamish:

> Old Lady Squeamish: Poor Mr. Horner! he has enough to do to please you all, I see.... Poor gentleman, I pity you.
> . . . .
> Mrs. Squeamish: Come, come, beast, and go dine with us.... (Pulls him by the cravat)
> Old Lady Squeamish: Alas, poor man, how she tugs him! Kiss, kiss her; that's the way to make such women quiet....
> . . . .
> Prithee kiss her, and I'll give you her picture in little, that you admired so last night; prithee do.... ([Horner] Kisses Mrs. Squeamish)
> ... Ha! ha! ha!... (IV.iii. 61).

Here through Old Lody Squeamish's overzealous behaviour Wycherley seems to suggest that Old Lady Squeamish herself was one of those women that she talked of, who could only be made quiet by being

kissed. That is, Wycherley, in a way, implies that at least in the past, Old Lady Squeamish has been in pursuit of handsome, young libertines like Horner; however, today she is old and it is no more in her power to continue to do so.

The pursuit of money seems to be the next major theme in *The Country Wife* because it is conveyed to the audience once more, through the conduct of almost all of the characters but four: Alithea, Harcourt, Pinchwife and Sir Jasper. At the beginning of the play Horner implies that if he had to, he could have married a woman on the condition that she be beautiful or witty or rich (I.i. 15). In other words, Horner admits that he is in pursuit of money as well as sex. As for the country wife, Margery, her marriage to Pinchwife is already the proof of her very pursuit of money. It does not seem to be the love of her husband but love of money and perhaps love of town life which have persuaded her into marrying Pinchwife. Similarly, judging her conduct towards Horner, it seems that Lady Fidget has taken up marriage for no noble reason like love but mainly for fortune as well as to provide herself with a respectable stand in the eyes of the society.

However, among all the other main characters Sparkish, the fop seems to be the most easily detected pursuer of money in the play. For, at the very beginning Wycherley hints with the following words of Pinchwife that Sparkish takes up even marriage for money: "... I must give Sparkish to-morrow five thousand pound to lie with my sister" (I.i. 14). In other words, throughout the

play Sparkish takes "Fortune to be [the] mistress of his pursue" (V.iii. 75).

As for a minor character like Dr. Quack it seems that he also is in pursuit of money. At the beginning of the play he admits to Horner: ".... I have been hired by young gallants to belie 'em t'other way, but you are the first would be taught a man unfit for women" (I.i. 6). In other words, it is obvious that Dr. Quack has made it his profession to tell lies in the name of young gallants, no doubt, in return for considerable amounts of money.

Another theme in *The Country Wife* seems to be conveyed by the very title of the play which is the contrast of the country and the town values (Hirst 1979:8). As for a representation of the country values Wycherley, no doubt, uses Margery and to represent the town values he uses the rest of the characters but especially the town ladies. Throughout the play all of the characters except for the country wife Margery look down on the country and despise its values. For instance, when Horner and Pinchwife meet for the first time in the play, Horner asks the latter if it is his ".... long absence from the town [that causes] the grumness [that is, surliness] of ... [his] countenance, and the slovenliness of ... [his] habit [that is, dress]" (I.i. 14). To this question Pinchwife gives an affirmative answer: "My long stay in the country will excuse my dress ..." (I.i. 14). Also, when Margery asks Alithea to get permission in her name from Pinchwife so that she

could go for a walk, Alithea as well shows her contempt towards the country values in an aside: "... A-walking! ha! ha! Lord, a country gentlewoman's pleasure is the drudgery of a footpast and she requires as much airing as her husband's horses..." (II.i. 17-18). Moreover, for Alithea living in the country is as bad as losing one's honour or even life (IV.i. 48). Furthermore, Sparkish reveals his contempt for the country by saying to Pinchwife that he can never "... seem to be jealous; like a country bumpkin" (II.i. 22). Also, it seems that even for a simple maid like Lucy, the country wife Margery can only be a creature, a "wild thing" to be despised of (V.iv. 85).

As for the next theme in *The Country Wife*, Wycherley seems to work upon the cynical attitude towards marriage and love. For instance, throughout the play Horner reveals that he cherishes neither esteem nor any belief for the institution of marriage. Upon hearing Pinchwife's marriage, for instance, Horner tells him: ".... I heard thou wert married ... the next thing that is to be heard is thou'rt a cuckold" (I.i. 14). Then Horner directs a question to Pinchwife: "... has marriage cured thee of whoring ...?.... [for according to Horner] a marriage vow is like a penitant gamester's oath, and entering into bonds and penalties to stint himself to such a particular small sum at play for the future, ... makes him but the more eager" (I.i. 15-16). In other words, Horner does not believe that a marriage could be based on mutual trust and faithfulness. Therefore, Horner thinks that rather than becoming a cuckolded husband, keeping a mistress is always better (I.i. 16).

Also, when Margery insists that she will be honest and therefore reveals her true love for Horner in front of her husband, Horner's response is again one of distrust: ".... she betrays her husband first to her gallant, and then her gallant to her husband" (V.iv. 81).

The cynical attitude of the two cuckolded husbands and of the fop towards marriage and love are other illustrations of Wycherley's theme. Although, for instance, Pinchwife teaches his naive country wife that in marriage the wife's duty is to love her husband, his excessive display of jealousy seems to reveal his distrust in love. On part of Sir Jasper the situation is not different either. By confining Lady Fidget into a group of his own choosing, Sir Jasper, too, displays his distrust in a marriage that is based upon trust and honesty.

In the case of Sparkish, the situation is slightly different. Throughout the play he pretends to be on the side of marriage which is based on mutual trust and therefore, love, too. For instance in Act III, scene ii (38) when Alithea tries to warn Sparkish about Harcourt's pursuing of herself Sparkish says: "... were it for my honor to marry a woman whose virtue I suspected, and could not trust her in a friend's hands?... I have that noble value for ... [you] that I cannot be jealous of ... [you]" (III.ii. 38). However, towards the end he reveals his distrust and cynicism about the possibility of such a marriage, and he even blames Alithea with infidelity although she does not deserve it.

Another theme of the Restoration comedies and of Wycherley's *The Country Wife* is the old male lecher's marriage to a country wife and his getting cuckolded. Wycherley satirises this practise like other Restoration comedy of manners' writers by punishing the foolish old husband who believes that he can keep a young wife. This point is illustrated in the Pinchwife plot where the old male lecher Pinchwife is seen married to a country wife, Margery for her youth and especially for her naiveté which he thought to be a guarantee for her fidelity. However, he soon finds out that he was mistaken when the country wife that he wanted to keep ignorant ironically learns the ways of the town and makes him finally a real cuckold.

Aport from the common themes of the Restoration comedies, Wycherley in *The Country Wife* conveys three other themes. The first of these themes can be stated as the two extremes of jealousy in matters of love. As for an illustration of this theme Wycherley refers to the relationship of two different couples. Thus, throughout the play he presents at one extreme the marriage of Pinchwife and Margery dominated by Pinchwife's obsessional jealousy and at the other extreme the relationship of Sparkish and Alithea, dominated by Sparkish's "want of jealousy" (V.i. 48). In this way, Wycherley implies that a healthy relationship can be based on balancing these two extremes.

Another theme in *The Country Wife* is a study of the difference between appearance and reality. Wycherley's very

presentation of a hypocritical society with its pseudo gentlemen and ladies, for instance, is the major illustration of this theme. Except for Alithea and Margery, throughout the play, all the characters including even Harcourt pretend to be something that they are not. For instance, Horner pretends to be a man of honour who has been the victim of the malpractise of a French surgeon but in reality, the situation is quite the opposite; Harcourt pretends to be a close friend of Sparkish, however he continuously makes plans to steal Sparkish's mistress (Hirst 1979:9-10); Lady Fidget and her friends act like honourable ladies but in fact they are not honourable at all; Sparkish pretends to love and trust Alithea while Sir Jasper and Pinchwife pretend to care about their wives, however all three care only about their own reputations in the society.

The last of Wycherley's themes in *The Country Wife* is "... the subjugation of men to women in a world which they ... think they control" (Cohen 1983:33). For instance, Horner's pretense to provide himself with sexual domination over the ladies of "honour" fails as they find out that he has lied to them all. Thus, they despise him and reject him completely. Also in the end Horner once more becomes dependent upon women and this time for the preservation of his false reputation. As a matter of fact, with this last scene Wycherley seems to make a final underlining of Horner's servile station to women.

Another illustration of the same theme is presented in

the conduct of the two cucolded husbands as well. Throughout the play the more Sir Jasper and Pinchwife try to control their wives, the more their wives ironically gain control over them. Thus, towards the end, beyond Sir Jasper and Pinchwife's perception, the wives acquire full control of their husbands because by then they have made them "... what they most fear to be - cuckolds" (Cohen 1983:33).

Finally in the light of the themes that have been observed, Wycherley has conveyed through *The Country Wife* certain messages. The first of these messages is that if relationships, mainly marriages, should be based on mutual trust, honesty and freedom, as Harcourt and Alithea will do, sexual promiscuity can be prevented (Birdsall 1976:138). Therefore, through the examples of Pinchwife and Margery, Sir Jasper and Lady Fidget, and Alithea and Sparkish, as the last couple was expected to get married, Wycherley shows that the contemporary marriage arrangements of his society, which were organised by parents usually to increase family fortune, rank and reputation, do fail in real life (Vernon 1979: 314-15).

As for Wycherley's second message, he says that people should never deny their true natures "... and hide them behind false social and moral façades" (Birdsall 1976:138). This point is reflected in Horner's words: "A pox on ... all that force nature, and would be still what she forbids 'em! Affectation is her greatest monster" (I.i. 12). In this way Wycherley points out that

the opposite of this practise will bring uneasiness and unhappiness as it is the case with the town ladies especially.

Wycherley gives his third message through the dramatic depiction of husband-and-wife relationships in the marriages of the two old lechers, Pinchwife and Sir Jasper. Throughout the play Wycherley implicitly suggests that an old man's marriage to a young woman is very unnatural and that it is soon to prove a failure with a result that is almost always inevitable, that is, cuckoldry. In other words, as it has been the case in his real life, Wycherley advises young girls not to marry an old man and condemn themselves into unhappiness.

Wycherley gives a fourth message through his illustration of the two extremes of jealousy in matters of love. By a presentation of the failure of the relationships based either on excessive jealousy which limits the couple's freedom, or on lack of jealousy which, this time, brings into mind doubts about the truth of love, Wycherley suggests that in true love there should only be a fair amount of jealousy to keep the relationship going as a total lack of it will also prove lack of interest in the lover.

As for Wycherley's final message conveyed through *The Country Wife,* Lucy's comment upon Margery's behaviour in the end may be referred to. Here, Lucy implies that if people are prevented continuously from doing something, they will grow unhappy and infact be prompted into doing it (V.iv. 85). For instance, when

Pinchwife forbids Margery to go to the theatre she admits sincerely that "... I did not care for going; but when you forbid me, you make me, as 'twere, desire it" (II.i. 19). In other words, Wycherley finally says that in any sort of relationship people can be prevented from committing an undesirable act only through self-will and not through being forced by others.

CHAPTER 3

A. SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE: BIOGRAPHY AND CAREER

The details about the life of Sir George Etherege, until the production of his very first play in 1664, are not very well known. The autobiographists even have doubts about the year of Etherege's birth. Relying upon a poem written by Dryden in early 1686 and addressed to Etherege in which Etherege is said to be fifty one, Stephen and Lee (1937-38:908) presume that George Etherege was born either in 1634 or in the beginning of 1635. About the origins of Etherege's family there is the assumption that he was the son of a modest Oxfordshire family (Stapleton 1983:288; Stephen and Lee 1937-38:908) and that his father was a planter who had been resident in the Bermudas for a while (Brown and Harris 1965:42; Scott-Kilvert 1979:266; Stapleton 1983:288). On the family's return to England, father Etherege is said to hold a small appointment at Charles I's court, though, not for a long period of time. For, after the Royalist defeat in 1649 the Etherege family went to France on self-exile. The same year father Etherege died and left the young George Etherege in the care of his grand-father who was an inn-keeper at Maidenhead (Scott-Kilvert 1979:266). With regard to Etherege's extensive knowledge of French language and literature as well as his knowledge of the "... graces and manners of a true Parisian" (Wilson 1968:169), the majority of the autobiographists agree that Etherege must have spent his youth in

Paris. However, they cannot arrive at a compromise about the year of Etherege's arrival at London. On one hand Ian Scott-Kilvert writes that "... the young George Etherege ... was apprenticed by his grandfather to a London attorney [when eighteen]" (1979:266), while on the other hand Wilson (1968:169) claims that Etherege was to return to London only at the age of twenty-eight, three years after the restoration of Charles II (1663).

However, the details of Etherege's life after the year 1664 are more accurate. Probably as having won fame in that year through the successful first performance of his first play, *The Comical Revenge,* Etherege attracted many people into taking notice of him and his career. Hence, Etherege also won the acquaintance of Lord Buckhurst (Dorset) who later presented him to the "merry gang", a group of Court Wits such as Rochester, Buckingham, Sir Charles Sedley, Henry Killigrew and William Wycherley (Scott-Kilvert 1979:266; Wilson 1968:169).

In the year 1668 Etherege brought out his second play, *She Wou'd if She Cou'd* and later in the same year was appointed as secretary to the English ambassador Daniel Harvey in Constantinople, Turkey where he was to remain for three years (Stapleton 1983:288). Despite the fact that Etherege's return to England afterwards was mainly because of ill-health (Brown and Harris 1965:42), upon his home-coming Etherege unhesitatingly returned to his former life among the "merry gang". As usual, he got "... involved in tavern brawls and ... [behaved quite]

outrageously [especially towards women]" (Stapleton 1983:288). In other words, Etherege indeed lived like the rakish heroes of his own plays: "... a cultured gentleman, a courtier and a diplomat [by breeding][32]; a hedonist by disposition, ... [and] a bibertine by practice..." (Wilson 1968:169).

In the meantime, Etherege tried his hand in poetry as well. He wrote, for instance, some verses among which his "... prologue for the opening of the Dorset Garden Theatre..." (Brown and Harris 1965:42) may be mentioned. Moreover, he wrote some lyrics and lampoons; and in some of his lampoons he is claimed to have railed implicitly at women (Scott-Kilvert 1979:258).

Hence eight years passed and Etherege finally produced his third play, *The Man of Mode* (1676). Although *The Man of Mode* was indeed a master-piece which seemed to promise more and new productions, it unfortunately marked the end of Etherege's short dramatic career.

In the year 1680 two crucial events took place in Etherege's life. Firstly, he married a rich widow and secured his life financially, and secondly he was knighted. However, "... according to the scandal of the time, he had to buy ... [this] honour in order to persuade ... [the] rich widow to marry him" (Stephen and Lee 1937-38:908).

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[32] It is probable that Etherege came to be known as "Gentle George" through these qualities.

Five years later in 1685 Etherege was appointed by James II as Envoy to Ratisbon, in Germany; however, in Wilson's opinion the nomination was one of Etherege's contrivances to escape from his wife (1959:88). At Ratisbon Etherege did his best indeed to remain a true member of the "merry gang" and to "misbehave ... in a gentlemanly manner" (Holland 1959:20); that is, he spent most of his time "... gambling, reporting gossip in his despatches [and letters], getting into scrapes by projecting an actress in spite of the social prejudices of the Germans, keeping musicians in his house, and begging for stage news from home" (Stephen and Lee 1937-38:908). Thus, Etherege lived in Ratisbon for three and a half years but when James II fled to France in 1689 he, too, left for Paris. From then on he lived in Europe, especially in France. Finally in 1691(?) Etherege was reported to have died in Paris (Stephen and Lee 1937-38:908). However, the date or the place of his death is unknown today (Holland 1959:20).

Etherege's dramatic career began in March 1664 when he wrote and produced the first of his plays, *The Comical Revenge* or *Love in a Tub*. The play was acted by the Duke's Men in Lincoln's Inn Fields and was a stage success in its time. However, in their evaluations of the play's merits today, the twentieth-century critics do not seem to agree with each other. H.F.B. Brett-Smith (1966:45-46) and Pavell (1965:45), for instance, defend *The Comical Revenge* and consider it still a successful play. Brett-Smith is especially impressed by the skill with which Etherege

achieves unity in his dialogues and his beautiful use of prose in the non-heroic scenes (1966:45-46) while Powell admires Etherege for creating, by means of this play, "... a highly original conception executed with tremendous vitality and great sense of fun" (1965:45). As for Dobrée and Salgado, however, *The Comical Revenge* cannot be considered a successful play at all. For the former, it is "... not [even] comedy but [a] roaring, [and] rollicking farce" (1966:62-63) while for the latter it is merely "... a clumsy hotch-potch" (1980:145).

In *The Comical Revenge* Etherege "... cater...[s] for the taste of the audience in many dramatic forms" (Salgado 1980: 145) and combines through his four plots, comedy with the heroic play. Thus, Etherege presents the only serious high plot in the play in heroic couplets and dramatises in it the rivalry of Lord Beaufort and Colonel Bruce for Graciana's hand. At the end of this plot Beaufort wins Graciana and Bruce finds comfort with Graciana's sister Aurelia. As for the remaining three lower plots which are sometimes farcical, Etherege employs prose and interprets in plain language the wooing of a rich widow by Sir Frederick and their following marriage, the confining of the French valet Dufoy in a tub by his friends[33] and the cheating of a country knight, Sir Nicholas Cully by two swindlers, Palmer and Wheadle.

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[33] It is from this minor plot that the play receives its sub-title, *Love in a Tub*.

In fact, Etherege's play is successful indeed in presenting the audience with two opposing views about human nature which are still a matter of controversy even in the twentieth-century. "... One is based on abstract ideals - on a belief in human nobility; the other ... based on concrete realities - on a view of man as by nature animalistic and a view of human relationships as a combat between aggressors" (Birdsall 1970:44). However, Etherege does not seem to be on the side of either view. He merely presents his character in action and leaves the audience free to decide about the true nature of human beings.

In spite of the fact that Etherege's first play was a stage success in its age, his second play *She Wou'd if She Cou'd* did not receive similar applause from the audience when it was first acted[34] by the Duke's Company in 1678 (?) (Brown and Harris 1965:42). At this point, Dobrée (1966:65) and Salgado (1980:147) both refer to Samuel Pepys' *Diary* which notes that Etherege himself blamed the play's failure on stage on the actors for not playing their parts properly. However Dobrée and Salgado think that the failure of *She Wou'd if She Cou'd* was only due to Etherege's own fault (1966:65; 1980:147). For, this time Etherege did not "... provide for the actors as bountifully as he did in his first comedy" (Salgado 1980:147).

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[34] According to Stephen and Lee, however, the play was a stage success in its time (1937-38:908).

Nevertheless, today a majority of critics consider this second play by Etherege a successful one. For instance for Brett-Smith (1966:46) Etherege's renouncing of the heroical and forcical language; for Nicoll (1978:123) and Stapleton (1983:805) Etherege's creation of the two witty ladies, Ariana and Gatty, are the qualities that render *She Wou'd if She Cou'd* a far better play than *The Comical Revenge.*

The main plot of *She Wou'd if She Cou'd* deals with the activities of these noted young women, Ariana and Gatty. They have, infact, come to town from the country to enjoy themselves with one or two innocent flirtations. Accompanied by the hypocritical Lady Cockwood who is after less innocent pleasures and who actually gives the play its title, Ariana and Gatty meet Mr. Courtall and Mr. Freeman, the two young gallants of the town. Together they go to the Bear in Drury Lane for a dance. However, Sir Oliver Cockwood, Lady Cockwood's husband also comes there together with his friend, Sir Joslin, and with an intention similar to that of his wife's. As a natural consequence confusions occur. Yet, towards the end everything is sorted out: the two young ladies from the country accept the hands offered by the young men; Sir Oliver and Sir Jeslin decide that they have had enough of the town and its pleasures, and Lady Cockwood makes up her mind that from then on she will busy herself with the affairs of her own family.

In *She Wou'd if She Cou'd* Etherege seems to have aimed at a criticism of the hypocrites in the upper-class society. For

instance, through the conduct of Lady Cockwood especially, who seems to resemble the Lady Fidget of Wycherley's *The Country Wife* with her insistance on false honour (Brett-Smith 1966:47), Etherege achieves a criticism of all the hypocritical women of his society. Moreover, the depiction of the behaviour of the old lechers like Sir Oliver and Sir Jeslin, plus the unscrupulous young men like Courtall and Freeman seem to provide Etherege with grounds for further criticism (Powell 1965:57).

B. THE MAN OF MODE

The Man of Mode or *Sir Fopling Flutter*, the play which Drabble calls "... a classic of the Restoration period" (1985:615), was produced for the first time at the Duke's Theatre, Dorset Garden on 11 March, 1676 (Barnard 1984:286). The play in its time "... got a great deal of money" which according to Wilson (1959:89) was mainly due to its being well-acted. The leading actor of the Duke's Company, Thomas Betterton, especially with "His deep 'grumbling' voice and impressive manner gave strength and dignity to the role of Dorimant [and to the play as a whole]" (Wilson 1959:88). As for the role of Harriet, the female libertine, Elizabeth Currer, and for the role of Bellinda, a discarded mistress, Betterton's wife Mary Betterton were thought suitable. Moreover, Sir Fopling Flutter was acted by William Smith while Old Bellair and Lady Woodvill by Anthony Leigh and his wife Elinor Leigh. Finally, although Mrs. Elizabeth Barry was listed at the Dorset

Garden as Mrs. Loveit, Wilson claims that she was to take up this particular role in 1685 most probably after the resignation of Mrs. Mary Leech who was "... noted for her success in passionate roles" (1959:89).

The Man of Mode which is said to have been frequently revived (Wilson 1959:89), is, infact, one of Etherege's original creations. Although Salgado (1980:147) refers to Ovid's *Art of Love,* Dale Underwood (1966:57,78) partly to Wycherley's first three plays and George Wilson Knight (1962:132) to Molière's *Le Festin de Pièrre* for the origins of this play, the great majority of critics seem to think that *The Man of Mode* is almost an original, true-to-life presentation of Etherege's own environment. They write, for instance, that Dorimant is modelled on Etherege's friend, the Earl of Rochester (Dennis 1973:430-31; Fujimura 1973: 505; Loftis et.al. 1976:184; Powell 1965:66; Stephen and Lee 1937-38:908; Wilson 1959:88) for, in Dorimant "... several of the qualities of... Rochester, [such] as wit, ... his amorous temper, the charms that he had for the fair sex, his falsehood and his inconsistancy... and lastly, his repeating on every occasion the verses of Waller..." (Dennis 1973:430) can be observed. Moreover, according to Stephen and Lee (1937-38:908) and Wilson (1959:88), Sir Fopling Flutter is a portrait of Sir George Hewitt or the "Bean Hewitt" while Medley, a portrait of Sir Charles Sedley.

According to Loftis et.al. *The Man of Male* is simply a "... comedy about a group of self-centred people engaged in passing

time by role-playing" (1976:182). Set against the background of the Restoration London the play depicts the efforts of a libertine, Dorimant to practise power over women, and

> The passionate Mrs. Loveit, who cannot control her emotions; the indiscreet Bellinda, who surrenders too easily; the heiress Harriet, who retains complete control of herself; and a whore, Molly, who wants opera tickets (Loftis et.al. 1976:182).

Although Stapleton claims that *The Man of Mode* has no real plot (1983:559), the play is infact made up of one lower and one higher plot (Holland 1939:86) which are "... neatly intervowen" (Drabble 1985:615). According to Holland (1959:86) these two plots are set up parallel to one another: each deals with men who get involved with two women one of which he loves and the other he does not. In the lowerplot there is Dorimant, the libertine who wants Bellinda but is pursued by Mrs. Loveit whom he accuses of being interested in Sir Fopling, another member of the low plot; and in the higher plot there is YoungBellair who wants Emilia but is expected by his elders to marry Harriet (Holland 1959:86), the young heiress that causes Dorimant's rising up to the higher plot at the end.

At the beginning of the lower plot and of the play, the audience meets Dorimant in action who with the help of his young and new mistress Bellinda is trying to get rid of an old

mistress, Mrs. Loveit. That is, while Bellinda tells Mrs. Loveit about Dorimant's interest in a masked lady at the theatre the previous night - who in fact was Bellinda herself - and makes her jealous, Dorimant accuses Mrs. Loveit of flirting with Sir Fopling Flutter who is the fop and the man of mode of the title.

In the meantime, however, Dorimant also falls in love with Harriet; an attractive, witty heiress who has recently come to town from the country. Fortunately for Dorimant, the attraction is mutual. Yet, in the higher plot of the play Harriet seems at first to consent to her mother's will and accept to marry Young Bellair. Yet, as the action proceeds Young Bellair couples with his real beloved, Emilia while Dorimant, having consummated his new relationship with Bellinda, "... succumbs to Harriet's charms and agrees to go off to the country... to court her" (Holland 1959:87) with a promise of marriage in the near future.

In *The Man of Mode* the main character of the play is Dorimant, the libertine. First of all, as being a major characteristic of his pleasure-seeking, libertine nature Dorimant proves throughout the play that he is a follower of his senses and impulses, and that he can neither restrict his sexual instincts nor can he lose his independence through marriage. At the beginning of the play, for instance, the audience finds out from Molly's letter that Dorimant has already enjoyed and discarded one mistress (II.i. 103) and now is making plans to discard his next mistress, Mrs. Loveit for the sake of pleasing himself yet with

a third one, Bellinda who, infact, is a close friend of Mrs. Loveit. Moreover, as the action proceeds the audience witnesses that Dorimant "... is [even] prepared to put... [Bellinda] off without any scruples when a new object of sexual interest [Harries, a beautiful heiress] presents itself" (Salgado 1980:147). Also, in accordance with this particular conduct Dorimant once reveals to Mrs. Loveit that: "Youth has a long journey to go, madam; should I have set up my rest at the first inn I lodged at, I should never have arrived at the happiness I now enjoy" (II.ii. 112). Therefore, it becomes obvious to the audience that for Dorimant, "... the first requirement of the game of life is freedom to follow [to the extent of recklessness] one's own inclinations" (Birdsall 1970:90) which "... daily alter" (II.ii. 111).

Furthermore, Dorimant's need of satisfying his "sexual gluttony" (Wilson 1968:71) is so strong that the feeling pushes him even into a paradoxical situation. That is, although Dorimant is an admirer of naturalness and of the true-self as this feeling is typical of the libertine, he becomes a hypocrite himself, for, he knows that hypocrisy is the only way to be true to his natural-self and to satisfy his sexual desires. For instance, Dorimant keeps making false vows to women throughout the play: firstly to Molly which is implied in her letter, and then to Mrs. Loveit and Bellinda in turns. Moreover, although in the end he seems to be sincere about his love towards Harriet, his final efforts to arrange further assignations with Bellinda may suggest that he still is a hypocrite and is consenting to give up his liberty only

because "... he cannot have Harriet on any terms other than marriage" (Salgado 1980:147; Wilson 1968:175-76).

Moreover, Dorimant shows through his conduct in the play that he egoistically wants to be the dominant power and that in order to retain this particular position - which he considers to be a superiority and which gives him an additional delight - he may even become cruel. Thus, he naturally complains to Medley, a fellow libertine that: "There has been such a calm in my affairs of late, I have not had the pleasure of making a woman so much as break her fan,[35] to be sullen or forswear herself, these three days" (I.i. 96). Nevertheless, soon enough Dorimant actually provides himself with the opportunity to be satisfied with such a "pleasure". After the scene in which Bellinda informs Mrs. Loveit about Dorimant's behaviour in the theatre as part of their intrigue with the libertine, Dorimant himself comes into the foreground. Feeling confident and triumphant as he knows Mrs. Loveit's interest in himself, Dorimant treats her very ruthlessly and he does this through an additional show of his genius and wit. However, as will be seen below, Etherege does not give here a pleasant picture of Dorimant; his image is one of a tyrant who indeed is taking pleasure from another's despair:

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[35] It was the fashion among the Restoration gentlewomen to tear their fans when they got nervous or angry.

> Mrs. Loveit: Faithless, inhuman, barbarous man -
> Dorimant: Good! Now the alarm strikes. -
> Mrs. Loveit: - without sense of love, of honor, or of gratitude, tell me, for I will know, what devil masked she was you were with at the play yesterday?
> . . . .
> Dorimant: The truth is, I did all I could to know.
> Mrs. Loveit: And dare you own it to my face? Hell and furies! (Tears her fan in pieces)
> Dorimant: Spare your fan, madam; you are growing hot and will want it to cool you.
> Mrs. Loveit: Horror and distraction seize you...
> (Weeps)
> Dorimant: So thinder breaks the cloud in twain
> And makes a passage for the rain
> (II.ii. 111).

Dorimant's egoistic cruelty does not end here. He prepares another intrigue in which he aims at ridiculing Mrs. Loveit by pushing Sir Fopling Flutter into her pursuit. Yet, although this second plotting is too much persecution even for Bellinda (III.ii. 120-21), Etherege gives Dorimant the power to tempt her into helping him with this new plan against Mrs. Loveit. However, when Mrs. Loveit pretends to be really interested in Sir Fopling, Dorimant's plan seems to fail. He realizes to his amazement that he is jealous, which is a feeling that he cannot endure by nature, for it is contradictory with his libertinism. Therefore, until he reassearts his power and dominance over Mrs. Loveit, which he can manage

almost by the end of the play (V.i. 157), Dorimant struggles continuously.

As being another characteristic of the libertine figures of the Restoration comedies Dorimant does not let the polite society dictate to him its own rules and demands (Birdsall 1970: 79) neither in his attire nor in his behaviour. For instance, when dressing up at the beginning of the play Dorimant refuses Handy's offer to put on the essence of orange flower (I.i. 100) which, the audience later learns from Sir Fopling, is the fashion (III.ii. 124). Moreover, Dorimant's general conduct shows that he refuses to submit to conventional behaviour; for throughout the play he appears as a "... merciless mocker ... of both the Joppish and the *précieux* ... [behaviour that] surround... [him]" (Birdsall 1970:91). For instance, for quite a long period of time in the play Lady Woodvill talks of Dorimant in an unfavourable way because of his ungentlemanly conduct. She calls him the "devil" or even "plague" (III.iii. 128) from which her daughter Harriet should protect herself. However, when Lady Woodvill meets Dorimant in disguise as Mr. Courtage who shows her the proper respect which the conventions of gentility require, she feels very much attracted to this "perfect gentleman". At this point Dorimant's mockery reaches its peak: with his successful acting in the conventional way Dorimant even makes Lady Woodvill say ironically to his face that his very presence "... would be enough to atone for that wicked Dorimant and all the under debauchees of the town" (IV.i. 135).

As part of his criticisms which Etherege employs throughout *The Man of Mode,* it can be said that apart from exposing and satirizing through Dorimant the follies of others especially in the lower plot, he satirizes in the meantime the follies of the libertine as well. That is, by using a method almost similar to that of Wycherley's in *Th Country Wife,* Etherege, too, uses his libertine for achieving double satire. By disguising Dorimant, for instance, as Mrs. Courtage, Etherege brings out and satirizes, firstly the lecherous nature of the seemingly respectable Lady Woodvill and secondly the hypocrisy of Dorimant. Moreover, as Dorimant exposes and satirizes another would-be lady's, Mrs. Loveit's passion "... that lies panting under" (III.iii. 133), Etherege also makes sure that Dorimant's cruelty is exposed and, therefore, satirized, too.

Furthermore, it seems that Etherege does not leave his libertine without punishment either. He punishes Dorimant through ridiculing him in two major instances. The first of these instances takes place when Mrs. Loveit makes Dorimant jealous and disturbs his reputation as a libertine with her seemingly genuine interest in Sir Fopling (III.iii. 133). Thus, in this same manner, as long as Mrs. Loveit can manage to keep her passion under control, she retains her superior position over Dorimant and acts, as his manipulator or rather as the manipulator of a helpless man in love:

> Mrs. Loveit: The man who loves above his
> quality does not suffer more from the
> insolent impertinence of his mistress than

> the woman who loves above her understanding does from the arrogant presumptions of her friend.
>
> Dorimant: You mistake the use of fools; they are designed for properties and not for friends.
>
> . . . .
>
> Mrs. Loveit: The old and the ill-favored are only fit for properties, indeed, but the young and handsome fools have met with kinder fortunes.
>
> Doriment: They have - to the shame of your sex be it spoken!...
>
> . . . .
>
> Mrs. Loveit: .... the town... (as unreasonably as yourself) expects that I... must love you still.
>
> Dorimant: I am so far from expecting that you should, I begin to think you never did love me.
>
> Mrs. Loveit: Would the memory of it were so wholly worn out in me that I did doubt it, too!...
>
> . . . .
>
> Dorimant: Are you so indifferent grown?
>
> Mrs. Loveit: I am (V.i. 153-54).

Here, as Hirst (1979:19) points out Mrs. Loveit's power over Dorimant is also evident from the contrast between the savagery of Dorimant's jealous comments and the calculated tone of Mrs. Loveit's replies.

As for the second instance of Dorimant's being ridiculed and consequently punished, his consenting to go to the country

may be mentioned. That is, although Dorimant despires throughout the play the country and its values, and although going to the country is actually "... a fate worse than death to the town gallant" (Salgado 1980:147) - for, as Harriet points out, "... all beyond Hyde Park's a desert to you" (V.ii. 160) - Dorimant accepts to take the trip to the country-side. Thus, it may be said that although Dorimant seems to be rewarded by winning Harriet's heart in the end, he, in fact, is not rewarded at all. Instead, he is punished by being confined to the country so that he may presumably one day deserve to live in the heavenly world of the higher plot next to Harriet, the girl he loves.

As for Harriet's character and conduct it can be said that she is a very typical female libertine who resembles Dorimant in every way except she does not practise the libertinism which she preaches. First of all, Harriet has something of the male libertine's "... wild and wandering... passions" (IV.i. 137) which she herself once admits to Dorimant and which suggests that her true nature, like Dorimant's is against the oppression of sexual instincts. Infact, according to Holland, Harriet "... is hardly passionless: [but] she simply does not allow her wildness any unfitting expression" (1959:89) which additionally marks one of the major differences between her and Mangery Pinchwife in *The Country Wife*. It other words, through the employing of especially her wit, Harriet displays, during the course of the play a certain kind of restraint. For instance, although Harriet "... feel[s]... great change within" (III.ii. 127), that is, she feels to have

fallen in love with Dorimant, she makes up her mind that "... he shall never know it" (III.iii. 127). For, since "... her attraction to Dorimant insists on marriage" (Thompson 1980:88), Harriet knows better than Margery that she has to control herself.

Moreover, similar to Dorimant, Harriet is an admirer of naturalness as well. As Fujimura puts it, Harriet is an enemy of all that is affected (1973:510). For instance, she once tells Young Bellair that she hates Hyde Park for she hates to see there "... formal bows, the affected smiles, the silly by-words and amorous tweers [of the gallants] in passing" (III.iii. 126). Moreover, a little later in the same scene Harriet, once more emphasises her repulsion for insincere manners: she accuses Dorimant for behaving in a similar, artificial way (IV.iii. 128).

Again like Dorimant, Harriet rejects the social code of the time. This can be observed in the mock-row scene of Act III (i.116) which she shares with Young Bellair. Moreover, Harriet, too, like Young Bellair, is completely against a marriage that is arranged by their parents. So, they react as follows:

> Harriet: .... Here I, Harriet -
> Young Bellair: And I, Harry -
> Harriet: Do solemnly protest -
> Young Bellair: And vow -
> Harriet: That I with you -
> Young Bellair: And I with you -
> Both: Will never marry (III.i. 116).

Another characteristic of Harriet's libertine nature is that she shares with Dorimant the desire to practise egoistic cruelty, "... the pleasure of conquest and power" (Underwood 1965: 64). For instance, although Mrs. Loveit does not deserve, as Dobrée (1966:70) points out "... to be told in public ... that: '... Mr. Dorimant has been your God Almighty enough; 'tis time to think of another'" (V.ii. 165), Harriet does commit such harshness. However, Etherege obviously does not depict Harriet here any better than Dorimant. Harriet's picture at this moment is of another tyrant's who takes delight from another's despair.

Furthermore, Birdsall rightfully expresses at this point, her doubts about Harriet's success at the end of the play (1970:102). Although by means of her wit and sensitivity (Hirst 1979:18) Harriet succeeds in her aim which was to save herself from the horrors of the country by securing herself "... the husband of her choice" (Wilson 1968:176), Etherege does not seem to reward her either. For, Etherege offers her Dorimant as a husband, who because of his libertine nature, already proves before the end of the play that he can never make a good husband like Young Bellair.

Alongside the passionate and at times hypocritical gay couple of the intrigues, Etherege presents in the higher plot of *The Man of Mode*, the sensible couple, Young Bellair and Emilia. This couple who is in complete contrast to the gay couple in their conduct, set an example for the audience by which to judge the

behaviour of the other characters in the play. As for Young Bellair, for instance, it can be said that throughout the play he appears generally as a frank, good-natured young man (Powell 1965: 61), who very unlike most of the characters, never yields to hypocrisy. His love towards Emilia is comparatively more sincere than Dorimant's love towards Harriet for he firstly wants to marry her and secondly remains true to her until the end.

Moreover, unlike the cynical Dorimant, Young Bellair has faith in marriage and therefore, in women:

> Medley: You have a good strong faith, and that may contribute much towards your salvation.... Were I so near marriage, I should cry out by fits as I ride in my coach, "Cuckold, cuckold!"" with no less fury than the mad fanatic does "glory!" in Betlehom.
> Young Bellair: Because religion makes some run mad, must I live an atheist?
> . . . .
> Preach no more on this text. I am determined, and there is no hope of my conversion (I.i.99).

Finally, in accordance with this particular faith, Young Bellair performs in the end still a nobler action. Although he knows that Emilia is not an heiress like Harriet and although he knows that there is the risk of being disinherited by his father, Young Bellair choses Emilia as his wife. For, by nature Young Bellair is sensible enough to know that marriages can only be

successful if based on love and not on fortune.

Nevertheless, although an exemplary figure Young Bellair is not perfect either. Etherege seems to have criticised him as well, though only for one particular behaviour. That is, when confronted with the danger of being disinherited by his father, he seems to have been tempted at first by the prince of the devils, Dorimant, into saying that he can "... resolve not to marry [Emilia] at all" (I.i. 102).

As for the sensible female, Emilia's character and conduct in the play it can be said that she is portrayed no differently than her counterpart, Young Bellair. Similar to Young Bellair, Emilia sets an example to the other characters with her unaffected, natural self which she expresses through the filter of sensibility, reason and restraint. In Medley's eyes Emilia "... has the best reputation of any young woman about the town.... Her carriage is unaffected, her discourse modest - not at all ... pretending, like the counterfeits of the age" (I.i. 102).

Moreover, Emilia trusts her lover, Young Bellair as much as he trusts her. For instance, even after she learns Old Bellair's intensions to marry his son to the heiress, Harriet, she can say to Young Bellair that: "The knowledge I have of my rival gives me a little cause to fear your constancy" (II.i. 104). Also, since Emilia knows that the feeling of love alone is enough to keep the lovers constant, she refuses to have Young Bellair make

vows to her (II.i. 104).

However, although Etherege does not employ any criticisms against Emilia's character or conduct in the play, he manages to display his own cynicism about marriage and women, using her. Through Dorimant's speech at the beginning of the play the audience receives the cynical implication from Etherege that Emilia is not different than the rest of the women in the play's world. That, she is "... a discreet maid,... [whom] nothing can corrupt ... but a husband.... [For] many a woman make a difficulty of losing a maidenhead, who have afterwards made none of making a cuckold" (I.i. 102).

Another major character in *The Man of Mode* is Mrs. Loveit who together with Dorimant at the beginning of the play determines the major action in the lower plot. About Mrs. Loveit's disposition the audience is informed as soon as the curtain rises: she is soon to become one of Dorimant's discarded mistresses. However, once Mrs. Loveit finds this out herself she becomes very much disappointed and henceforward starts making plots against Dorimant to win him back and to "... reduce him to the submissiveness of fools like Sir Fopling who, ... she says with satisfaction,..." (Birdsall 1970:93) "... are ever offering us... service, and always waiting on our will" (V.i. 153). Nevertheless, the proceeding action of the play shows that she indeed "... fails in her counter-intrigue against... [Dorimant]" (Underwood 1966:60).

Throughout *The Man of Mode* Mrs. Loveit's major frailty seems to be that she has too much passion and that she cannot have a full control over her feelings (Birdsall 1970:87; Underwood 1966:60). For instance, although she manages to control her passions and take over, for a while, the role of the manipulator from Dorimant, she soon hands it back to him. For, her passionate nature cannot for a long time prevent Mrs. Loveit from calling Sir Fopling a fool and revealing her interest in Dorimant to Dorimant's face (V.i. 155). With this revelation, however, Etherege seems to have punished Mrs. Loveit; as through her own words Mrs. Loveit ridiculously fulfills the libertine's intrigue against herself.

After Mrs. Loveit, Bellinda comes in the line as Dorimant's next mistress whom he also discards and this time, for the sake of Harriet, the female libertine. In Bellinda the audience can immediately observe the triumph of passion over reason (Underwood 1966:63). For, although Bellinda witnesses in Dorimant's ill-treatment of Mrs. Loveit that: "... Dorimant may be/ One day as faithless and unkind to... [her]" (III.iii. 114), she still cannot control herself from "... contributing to her own undoing" by believing in Dorimant's promises (Underwood 1966:63). At this point Wilson claims that Bellinda's "fall" is because of believing in "... the extravagant promises that... [Dorimant] make[s] in love" (1968:176). Therefore, as Powell writes Bellinda's disillusionment hurts her, for she actually does love Dorimant, "... but it was [, in a way,] expected and is accepted" (1965:63).

Finally, it can be stated that Bellinda in the end learns from her experiences. However, Etherege makes her learning complete with one last instance of her being ridiculed. This particular instance takes place towards the end when Dorimant hides from Mrs. Loveit the real identity of the masked lady that is, Bellinda, at the theatre. Here, Bellinda ironically thinks that, "He's tender of my honor..." (V.ii. 163). Nevertheless, a few minutes after this particular scene Bellinda seems to come to the realization that it is his "... own 'honor' and vanity of which... [Dorimant is] tender (Underwood 1966:75) and not of her own. Thus, in this instance Bellinda rejects Dorimant and proves that she is now beginning to learn and that her reason is beginning to overwhelm her passion.

With regard to the extravagance of his dress and affected manners, which is evident also from his very name, Sir Fopling Flutter can be considered to be one of the most colourful figures in *The Man of Mode*. Despite his being the title character, the audience does not meet Sir Fopling until the second scene of the third act, but learns from others' comments about his appearance and conduct that he is an embodiment of foolish and foppish artificiality. This indeed is a quality that makes him a target for the raillery of almost all of the characters in the play. For instance, Medley ironically calls Sir Fopling a great critic of fashion who having "... lately arrived piping hot from Paris .... behold ...[s] to his education for making him so eminent a coxcomb" (I.i. 100). Besides, for Dorimant Sir Fopling "... is indeed the

pattern of modern foppery" (I.i. 100), and for Lady Townley he is "... the freshest fool in town" (III.ii. 122).

As it was the fashion of the bean world, Sir Fopling looks down on the English attire and conduct throughout the play. He carries with him his fashionable *gallesh*, wears Paris-labelled clothes and lisps, and sometimes forces French words into his speech "... in imitation of the people of quality of France" (I.i. 100). Moreover, as in the scene that follows, when "Soothe[d] ... up in his extravagance according to Dorimant's instructions (III.ii. 122), Sir Fopling indeed makes a fool of himself:

> Sir Fopling: .... Have you taken notice of the *gallesh* I brought over?... 'Tis as easily known from an English tumbril as an Inns-of-court man is from one of us.
> Dorimant: True; there is a *bel air* in *galleshes* as wall as men.
> . . . .
> Sir Fopling: A slight suit I made to appear in my first arrival - not worthy of your consideration, ladies.
> Dorimant: The pantaloon is very well mounted.
> Sir Fopling: The tassels are new and pretty.
> . . . .
> Lady Townley: His gloves are well fringed, large and graceful.
> Sir Fopling: I was always eminent for being *bien ganté*.
> Emilia: He wears nothing but what are originals of the most famous hands in Paris.
> . . . .

Lady Townley: The suit?
Sir Fopling: Barroy.
Emilia: The garniture?
Sir Fopling: Le Gras.
. . . .
Lady Townley
Emilia : The gloves?
Sir Fopling : Orengerie!.. (III.ii. 123-24).

Besides being a proof of Sir Fopling's extravagance and foolishness, the above scene is also an illustration of the fact that "... every piece of clothing donned by Sir Fopling and every move he makes is dictated by his conception of what polite society demands [from him]" (Birdsall 1970:79). Thus, unlike the libertines, for instance, Sir Fopling has no true personality to help him determine his own style of dressing and behaviour. Moreover, as Underwood points out, his attempts to enter into a relationship with Mrs. Loveit seems to be only a desire "... to conform to the ritual of the 'mode'. [For] He... [seems] incapable of either 'heroic' appetite [like Dorimant] or love [like Young Bellair]" (1966:69).

Furthermore, apart from being the fop figure in *The Man of Mode*, Fujimura observes in Sir Fopling the signs of a witwoud as well (1973:511-12). As it is typical of the witwoud characters, Sir Fopling is indeed a pretender to libertinage while tries to appear as witty as Dorimant. In the scene that follows, for instance, he talks to Dorimant as his equal and instead of displaying his wit - which he considers to have a possession of -

he ironically displays his vanity and foolishness:

> Sir Fopling: .... Dorimant, let me embrace three! Without lying, I have not met with any of my acquaintance who retain so much of Paris as than dost - ....
> Dorimant: I would fain wear in fashion as long as I can, sir; 'tis a thing to be valued in men as well as baubles.
> Sir Fopling: Thou art a man of wit and understands[t] the town. Prithee, let thee and I be intimate (III.ii. 122).

As a matter of fact, in spite of all the mockery that Etherege employs for Sir Fopling it seems that he has also rendered him sympathetic (Dobrée 1966:73; Underwood 1966:69-70). Etherege shows that, "The ludicrious excesses of Sir Fopling look more to the manners and values of the honest man (Underwood 1966: 69) than to the conduct of the libertine. For, Sir Fopling's "... open pride and vanity, unlike those covert traits in... [Dorimant], are both innocuous and free of guile. [Moreover,] in his nature there is no drive for power and no... cunning" (Underwood 1966:70).

Another target of Etherege's criticism and ridiculing in *The Man of Mode* is Old Bellair who is representative of the lecherous old man figure of the Restoration comedies. Throughout the play, Old Bellair acts as a lecher, an elderly libertine who makes a fool of himself. Regardless of his old age, he tries to impose his old-fashioned self upon Emilia, a girl of fifteen or sixteen (Wilson 1968:173) who infact is his son's fiancée (Holland

1959:90). Moreover, he even goes as far as making plans to marry Emilia. However, when in the end Old Bellair foolishly makes public his intentions about Emilia, Etherege punishes this old lecher by making him find out to his bewilderment that the girl he loves is already married to his son, Young Bellair.

However, despite his lack of self-control and his lecherous nature, Etherege portrays Old Bellair as a genuinely honest and good natured man (Underwood 1966:66). His pursuit of Emilia, for instance, is not without an honourable purpose of marriage. Also, it is because of this very honesty that he becomes a dupe in the hands of his son and Harriet. For, as there is no discrepancy between appearance and reality in his old-fashioned world, he cannot perceive the reality behind the mock courtship of the two young people (Underwood 1966:65). Moreover, when he is actually informed about this reality, which is that Young Bellair is in love with Emilia instead of Harriet, and that he and Emilia have got married, it does not take long for his "... impetious nature" to forgive his son and give the couple his blessings: "... Rise, and God bless you both! Make much of her [Emilia], Harry; she deserves thy kindness" (V.ii. 164).

With regard to some of Lady Woodvill's behaviour and conduct in the play one may presume that she has in her character the traces of the lecherous old woman of the Restoration comedies. For, it seems that, similar to Old Bellair's conduct, she, too, tries her chance with a young member of the opposite sex, that is,

Dorimant. When, for instance, she meets Dorimant disguised as Mr. Courtage, flattering her according to "... the forms and civility of the last age" (I.i. 95) of which she is an admirer, Lady Woodvill acts as if "... she'll dance a kissing dance with ... [Dorimant] anon" (IV.i. 135). Thus, although not too obvious, it seems that Lody Woodvill drops her mask of respectability here and shows that she, too, has her passions.

It is also for this very reason, that is for her hypocrisy, that Etherege punishes her. By rendering Lady Woodvill unable to see the discrepancy between appearance and reality Etherege makes a fool of her on two major occasions: firstly, Lady Woodvill discovers that Mr. Courtage is the very Dorimant that she has been despising and secondly that her daughter Harriet and Young Bellair have only been pretending to be in love with each other. Thus, she can only make the following comment with regret: "... lewdness is the business now; [but] love was the business in my time" (IV.i. 135).

Although with regard to his conduct Medley is another libertiné figure in *The Man of Mode,* Etherege seems to have created him more with the purpose of contributing to the development of his plot. For throughout the play he acts as Dorimant's confidant (Birdsall 1970:83; Holland 1959:87), and as in the scene that follows, reveals to the audience through his dialogues Dorimant's plots and values:

> Medley: .... Dorimant, when did you see your pissaller, as you call her - Mrs. Loveit?
> Dorimant: Not these two days.
> Medley: And how stand affairs between you?
> Dorimant: There has been great patching of late, much ado; we make a shift to hang together.
> . . . .
> Medley: .... What note is that?
> Dorimant: An excuse... for the neglect I am guilty of.
> Medley: (Reads [the note that Dorimant has written for Mrs. Loveit])
> "I never was a lover of business, but now I have a ... reason to hate it, since it has kept me these two days from seeing you...". This business of yours, Dorimant, has been with a vizard at the playhouse... (I.i. 96).

Moreover, it seems that Medley serves Etherege as his chorus (Birdsall 1970:83) by making comments and critcizing people or events throughout the play. For instance, he mocks mentioning the ladies' conduct in the Restoration society by *The Art of Affectation*, a book "...teaching... [the ladies] how to draw up ...[their] breasts, stretch ...[their] neck, ... to play with ...[their] head, ... [and] to speak in a silly, soft tone of a voice..." (II.i. 107). Also, as in his following advice to the shoemaker Medley criticises in Etherege's name the libertines' habit of whoring and swearing. He ironically says to the shoemaker that: "I advise you like a friend-reform your life. You have brought the envy of the world upon you by living above yourself.

Whoring and swearing are vices too genteel for a shoemaker" (I.i. 98).

In short, as Lady Townley puts it, Medley is "... a very necessary man [to]... us women" and to Etherege. For women Medley "... knows all the little news o' the town" which Emilia "... love[s] to hear [from] him" (II.i. 105-106). Yet for Etherege he knows and criticises throughout the play the follies of his contemporary society.

Nevertheless, it seems that Etherege has not overlooked Medley's own faults either. For with regard to what can be observed from his depiction, Medley is no better than Dorimant. He is Dorimant's confidant and best friend who in a way supports the libertine to continue behaving outrageously towards women. Moreover, as the action proceeds Etherege brings out the fact that Medley is "... as willing to be amused at... [Dorimant's] expense as in ... [his] company" (Powell 1965:61).

With regard to her disposition and conduct Lady Townley stands apart from all the intrigues and from all the characters in the play. Etherege portrays her as an elderly stateswoman (Holland 1959:90), whom the audience learns, as the action proceeds, to be Emilia's confidante (II.i. 103-104). However, more than her personality her house has an important function in the play. As she herself puts it: "... my house is the general *rendezvous* and... is the common refuge of all the young, idle people" (III.ii. 121-22).

In other words, Lady Townley's house is one of Etherege's principle devices which he uses as a setting to bring together the two worlds of the play (Underwood 1966:65).

As for the Orange-woman in *The Man of Mode* it can be said that she indeed fullfils her functions that are attributed to her stereo-type in the Restoration comedies. That in the play she sells fruit to Dorimant and at the same time brings the current news about women to the libertine's knowledge. In this, she employs the *double entendre*. For instance, in the scene that follows, the orange-wench talks about women in terms of fruit which, according to Dorimant, taste good only when fresh:

> Dorimant: How now, double-tripe, what news do you bring?
> Orange woman: News! Here's the best fruit has come to town t'year; god, I was up before four o'clock this morning and bought all the choice i' the market.
> Dorimant: The nasty refuse of your shop.
> Orange woman: You need not make mouths at it; I assure you, 'tis all culled ware.
> Dorimant: The citizens buy better on a holiday in their walk to Totnam.
> . . . .
> Orange woman: .... Lord! would the ladies had heard you talk of 'em as I have done! (I.i. 93).

Finally, although a minor character the very being of the shoemaker is not without a purpose on part of Etherege. Despite

his status, with his pretense to "gentlemanly" behaviour, the shoemaker is portrayed as a lower class copy of Dorimant through whom Etherege displays and satirizes certain habits of the young idle men of the "genteel" society like Dorimant:

> Dorimant: How now, you drunket sot?
> Shoemaker: '2bud, you have no reason to talk; I have not had a bottle of sack of yours in my belly this fortnight .... our journeymen
> . . . .
> nowadays, ... sing nothing but your damned lampoons.
> Dorimant: Our lampoons, you rogue?
> . . . .
> Go, get you home and govern your family better! Do not let your wife follow you to the alehouse, beat your whore, and lead you home in triumph.
> Shoemaker: '2bud, there's never a man i' the town lives more like a gentleman with his wife than I do. I never mind her motions, she never inquires into mine; we speak to one another civilly, hate one another heartily, and because 'tis vulgar to lie and soak together, we have each of us our several settle-bed (I.i. 97-99).

As compared to the language used in Wycherley's *The Country Wife*, the language in *The Man of Mode* is much more refined. For, in *The Man of Mode* there is neither a Margery to speak with innocent but heavily ironic double meanings, nor a Lady Fidget to reveal her coarseness after having a few glasses of drink. Instead,

there is a Dorimant and a Harriet in *The Man of the Mode* who by means of their intellectual distruction (Fujimura 1973:513) display a certain kind of refinement. In other words, it can be said that Dorimant and Harriet are masters of language: ... they play with language as they play with life, [and] control... it with a masterful skill ... [to] put ... it to use for their own purposes of challenge and aggression" (Birdsall 1970:102).

Moreover, the following scene serves as an illustration of the fact that unlike in the case of Margery Pinchwife, Harriet is "... fully a match for ... [the libertine] in any trial of wits" (Brett-Smith 1966:49) and that she can handle with similar spontaneity and sophistication the play upon words as well as the play upon ideas:

> Dorimant: You were talking of play, madam. Pray, what may be your stint?
> Harriet: A little harmless discourse in public walks, or at most an appointment in a box, bare faced at the playhouse. You are for masks and private meetings, ... I hear.
> Dorimant: I have been used to deep play, but I can make one at small game when I like my gamester well ... Where there is a considerable sum to be won, the hope of drawing people in makes every triffle considerable .... we despair not but at some time or other they may be willing.
> Harriet: To men who have fared in this town like you, 'twould be a great mortification to live on hope....

> Dorimant: ... think of forty days well lost to gain your favor.... flattery will not ensue, though I know you're greedy of the praises.... I observed how you were pleased when the fops cried, "She's handsome - ... and whispered aloud your name. The thousand several forms you put your face into, then.... How wantonly you played with your head, flung back your locks, and looked smilingly over your shoulder at 'em!
> Harriet: I do not go begging the men's, as you do the ladies', good liking, with a sly softness in your looks and a gentle slowness in your bow as you pass 'em - as thus, sir. (Acts him) Is not this like you? (III.iii. 127-28).

According to Wilson, Etherege's style in *The Man of Mode* is "'superfine with words correct in every line'" (1968:176). For, especially the language that Etherege attributes to his characters is a perfect medium by which the audience may decide about their natures as well as their class or rank. For instance, as Wilson (1968:177) points out Mrs. Loveit uses throughout the play the language of a passionate and discarded woman: "damned dissembler!... False.... Perjured man!... Oh, impious!... Horrid and ingrateful!... never see me more!" (II.ii. 112). The same thing can be said also about Bellinda's language which is a reminder of her indecisive character: "... I sha' not .... I dare not .... I am glad I've sworn. I vow, I think I should ha' failed you else!" (III.ii. 120-21). Moreover, as can be observed in the following instance Sir Fopling's speeches are full of trivial and aimless remarks which

are also in accordance with his artificial and ignorant self: "... In Paris the mode is to flatter the prudé [the prudish], laugh at the *faux-prudé* [pseudo-prudish], make serious love to the *demi-prudé* [half-prudish], and only rally with the *coquetté*... (IV.i. 139).[36]

As for Dorimant, however, the same rule cannot be applied. For, as Mr. Courtage especially, Dorimant uses the high language of a "gentleman" with which he even manages to impress Lady Woodvill. However, as can be observed from his dialogues at the beginning of the play with the orange-wench and then with the shoemaker, he obviously has a "... wide range of low language [,too] (Barnard 1984:302). Thus, with his powers "... to shift language levels and move between classes with ease..." it seems that Dorimant proves to be the dominant character in *The Man of Mode* in terms of language also (Barnard 1984:302).

With regard to its structural construction *The Man of Mode* is made up of five acts with several scene divisions provided by its later editors. Yet, the play Barnard (1984:306) writes, cannot be considered as complete without John Dryden's "Epilogue" at the end. For firstly "... it returns the audience from the fictive world of the play to the realities of actual life... [and

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[36] Wilson (1959:139) notes here that Sir Fopling ignorantly thinks it necessary to accent every final "e" of the French words he uses.

secondly] unifies the audience in ... [a final rejection of] Sir Fopling [and his kind]" (Barnard 1984:306).

As for the play's basic framework it can be said that it is made up of one low and one high plot which constitutes of respective characters according to their conduct. For instance, by placing passion over reason Mrs. Loveit, Old Bellair and Sir Fopling can immediately be placed in the lower plot. On the other hand, Emilia, Harriet and Young Bellair, who practise restraint, can be placed in the higher plot. As for Bellinda, however, the same rule cannot be applied: the co-existance of passion and self-control in her character places her somewhere in between the two plots. Dorimant, in this respect, is not in a different position. In his pursuit of the opposite sex he seems to be ruled by his passion most of the time. However, in the scene where he comes to the realization of his love for Harriet, he does not reveal this to her (IV.i. 138). For, here his reason tells him that this is not the right moment and that he may fall into a ridiculous situation. In other words, with regard to his on and off exercising of control over his passion Dorimant can be placed somewhere in between the two plots, which perhaps eventually makes it easier for him to rise, with the help of the female libertine, to the heavenly world (Holland 1959:91) of the higher plot.

Another criterion that determines the members of the lower and the higher plots seems to be the characters' concept of love which Etherege gives through a series of contrasting images.

For the characters of the lower plot, love is like a dangerous sickness. For instance, for Mrs. Loveit love can grow into a fever and can make one restless (V.i. 157) and according to Dorimant should then only be "... put ... to a violent death" (II.i. 113). On the other hand, for the characters in the higher plot love is almost a religious concept. This is evident from such terms like "sin" or "repentance" or "devout" or "fanatic" used by them with reference to love. Moreover, it is with this particular attitude towards love that Harriet, like a preacher, brings out the angel (II.ii. 108) in Dorimant and by making him "repent" for his "sins", raises him to the "heaven" of the higher plot.

Furthermore, the characters in the lower plot feel the need of reinforcing their relationships with vows, though they know or find out in the course of the play that they are false vows. For instance, when Mrs. Loveit finds out about Dorimant's inconsistancy she immediately accuses him of breaking his vow (II. ii. 112). Moreover, Bellinda, though she knows that she cannot trust Dorimant, somehow feels more comfortable by making him vow:

> Bellinda: I dare not trust your promise.
> . . . .
> This does not satisfy me. You shall swear
> you never will see her [Mrs. Loveit] more.
> Dorimant: I will, a thousand .... I will
> swear! (IV.ii. 145).

However, in complete contrast to the above attitude of the members of the lower plot. Emilia and Harriet are against the

idea of making vows. On part of Emilia this rejection stems mainly from her trust in her lover (II.i. 104). Yet, on part of Harriet the case seems to be slightly different. Alongside her wish to trust her lover, Dorimant, the rejection seems to have its roots in her libertine nature; in her belief that the natural self should be expressed without any restrictions (V.ii. 160).

In contribution to his satirizing the practises in the lower plot in *The Man of Mode,* Etherege makes use of contrasts and parallelisms. For instance, he presents the audience with a mock-vow scene in the higher plot which is reminiscent of such scenes in the lower plot. In this particular scene Young Bellair and Harriet vow, as the tradition required but never to love each other or to get married. Thus, it can be said that through the vows of loyality and love in the lower plot which find their ironical equivalent in the higher plot, in Young Bellair's and Harriet's example, Etherege achieves a criticism of the false vows that are made by the characters in the lower plot.

A parallelism in the play that also serves Etherege with his satirizing seems to be his starting Act I, Act II (ii) and Act III with similar action. He depicts in turns Dorimant, Mrs. Loveit and Harriet dressing up in their rooms and behaving as they naturally are. In this way Etherege enables the evil natures of both the members of the lower plot, Dorimant and Mrs. Loveit, to be contrasted by the audience with the wild but genuinely good nature of the one representative of the higher plot,

Harriet.

As a matter of fact, Etherege makes use of certain other devices to criticize the conduct and values of some of his characters. He uses disguise, for instance and dresses Dorimant as Mr. Courtage to make a fool of people like Lady Woodvill who give importance to appearances and are hypocrites themselves. Moreover, by means of letters, that is, for instance, Molly's letter, Etherege criticises the would-be-ladies' (infact prostitutes') attending the theatres in the side boxes (Barnard 1984:288).

In *The Man of Mode* almost all three of the set scenes of the Restoration comedies can be observed. In Act II, scene ii, for instance, there is the lady and the maid scene in which, in accordance with the standards, the audience witnesses a dialogue between a discarded mistress of the libertine, Mrs. Loveit, and her maid, Pert. However, despite the traditional course of the Restoration comedies Mrs. Loveit talks at the beginning of this scene in favour of the libertine, Dorimant. Yet, with Dorimant's sudden intrusion, the scene seems to become complete. For by angering Mrs. Loveit with his inconsistancy, he leads the discarded mistress into making plots against him for revenge.

As for the unmasking scene of the libertine Act V, scene i (155-56) may be referred to. In this scene the libertine's plans are exposed both to Mrs. Loveit and to Bellinda, his two mistresses. On one hand, Mrs. Loveit comes to the realization that

Dorimant's jealousy is only a "... device to make... [her] more ridiculous" (V.i. 155), while on the other hand, Bellinda witnesses him breaking his secret vow that he has made to her to never see Mrs. Loveit again.

Finally, although there is not a true contract scene in *The Man of Mode,* the exchange between Harriet and Dorimant in Act V, scene ii (160-61) seems to be the closest to the proviso scene of the Restoration comedies. Dorimant's promises, for instance, are reminiscent of the provises that a female libertine would ask from a male libertine to fullfil:

> Harriet: In men who have been long hardened in sin, we have reason to mistrust the first signs of repentance.
> Dorimant: The prospect of such a heaven will make me persevere and give you marks that are infallible.
> Harriet: What are those?
> Dorimant: I will renounce all the joy I have in friendship and in wine, sacrifice to you all the interest I have in other women -
> Harriet: .... Could you neglect these a while and make a journey into the country? (V.ii. 160).

With regard to the general affairs and conduct of the characters in *The Man of Mode* it can be said that the pursuit of sex and money are the two major themes that Etherege deals with in his play. Dorimant, for instance, is after both women and money.

In pursuit of the opposite sex he finds himself a lot of mistresses whose number is "... more ... than the most eminent lawyer has causes" (II.i. 106). However, still when Dorimant hears about another female, Harriet who is beautiful and additionally rich, he unhesitatingly falls into her pursuit; he discards all of his mistresses and even resolves to be her husband. Yet, it seems that it was not only the knowledge of Harriet's beauty but her estate as well that made his resolution easier.

Also, in the conduct of both the Bellairs an interest for both money and sex can be observed. For instance, although Young Bellair is genuinely interested in Emilia, his temporary resolution to give up his lover instead of being disinherited by his father, suggests that he is not altogether careless about money. On part of Old Bellair the situation is not different. By forcing Young Bellair into a marriage with an heiress he shows at the beginning of the play that he is in pursuit of money, and at least for the wellfare of his son.

In addition to Dorimant and the Bellairs, with the exception of Emilia, the rest of the characters in the play seem to be only after the opposite sex. Mrs. Loveit and Bellinda, for instance, pursue Dorimant in need of satisfying their lustful natures. Harriet, too, is in pursuit of Dorimant, though with a noble intention like marriage in mind. Even Sir Fopling, whom Birdsall calls "effeminate" (1970:88), pursues Mrs. Loveit "... to have gallantry with... [her]" (III.ii. 124) as the fashion of the

times required.

Etherege seems to work upon his next theme, which is town versus country, by taking his two characters Lady Townley and Lady Woodvill as his starting points. For, while the allegorical implication behind Lady Townley's name places her on the side of the town values, the same rule places Lady Woodvill on the side of the country values. Lady Townley conforms to the fashion of the new age: she loves to play the refuge for young people and she loves wit (III.ii. 122). On the contrary, Lady Woodvill tries to impose upon the young her out-moded self and at the same time fears wit as she sees it personified in Dorimant (Wilson 1968:174).

Moreover, it seems that Etherege displays this very theme also from another point of view. He displays the contrast between the values of the town and of the country by making his towns-people look down on the values of the country and everything that is related to it. For instance, when the orange-woman informs Dorimant about Harriet's arrival from the country his prejudice forces him to make this following comment:

> Dorimant: This fine woman, I'll lay my life, is some awkward, ill-fashioned country toad who, ... has adorned her baldness with a large, white fruz, that she may look sparkishly in the forefront of the King's box at an old play (I.i. 93).

Moreover, when Harriet explains to Young Bellair with horror and

contempt that her mother may send her back to the country if she does not consent to her will, Young Bellair answers with a similar contemptuous fright: "What a dreadful thing 'twoud be to be hurried back to Hampshire!" (III.i. 117). Furthermore, Bellinda and Mrs. Loveit carry on this negative attitude towards the country. While Bellinda, for instance, states that one needs energy to endure conversation with country gentlewomen, Mrs. Loveit adds that one also needs patience (II.ii. 109).

Another of Etherege's themes in *The Man of Mode* is obviously the cynicism in matters of love and marriage and women, the very attitude of the playwright in his real life towards such matters. First of all, through Dorimant's words Etherege displays his cynicism about love: "Love gilds us over and makes us show fine things to one another for a time, but soon the gold wears off and then again the native brass appears" (II.i. 112). Moreover, about women Etherege, and therefore Dorimant, has no better an opinion: Dorimant says that, "There is an inbred falsehood in women, which inclines 'em still to them whom they may most easily deceive" (V.i. 153). At this point, Etherege's cynicism about women and marriage seems to be so strong that he can even let Dorimant attempt to discredit the constancy of his most virtuous character, Emilia by believing that she, too, will in the future cuckold her husband when given a chance (I.i. 102).

Furthermore, it seems that Etherege does not see any hope in men either. He does not believe that the love of a good

woman can reform the rakish hero. Thus, by making Dorimant try to arrange a future appointment with Bellinda, even after his promise towards constancy to Harriet (V.ii. 164), Etherege displays his cynicism once more. Bellinda further supports this theme by "Do all men break their words thus?" (V.ii. 164). Moreover, Mrs. Loveit arrives at a conclusion: "There's nothing but falsehood and impertinence in this world! All men are villains or fools..." (V.ii. 165).

As for the next theme that Etherege has worked upon in his play, the difference between appearance and reality can be stated. For instance, although Dorimant acts throughout the play very much like a villain (Underwood 1966:58), Lady Townley believes that, "He's a very well-bred man... [and] a very pleasant acquaintance..." (III.ii. 119-20). In other words, Dorimant is a perfect hypocrite who dissembles well to make people like Lady Townley believe something that he is not.

Furthermore, it seems that another illustration of the same theme lies in the relationship of close friends in the play. That is, for instance, although Bellinda seems to be a close friend of Mrs. Loveit, she joins with Mrs. Loveit's lover in making plans from behind her back. Also, in Doriman's relationship with Young Bellair such a duplicity on part of the libertine is evident. In the first place Dorimant sees their friendship as a result of mutual benefit, because "it makes the women think better of his understanding, and judge more favorably on my reputation; it makes

him pass upon some for a man of very good sense and I upon others for a very civil person" (I.i. 101). Secondly, Dorimant makes it clear through his conversation with Medley (II.i. 102) that he wants Young Bellair to marry Emilia because he thinks that marriage "... will make possible attempts upon the lady that are ineffective while she is a virgin" (Powell 1965:61).

Another theme developed by Etherege in *The Man of Mode* is passion versus self-control. For instance, at one extreme Etherege places and shows through the conduct of the passionate Mrs. Loveit, Sir Fopling, Old Bellair, Lady Woodvill and Dorimant, the disadvantages of lack of self-control. On the other extreme Etherege presents the sensible Emilia, Young Bellair and Harriet, and reflects the advantages of practising restraint in their success. However, finally in Bellinda's character Etherege seems to balance the two extremes, for Bellinda has both passion and self-control.

The last theme that Etherege conveys through *The Man of Mode* is, according to Birdsall "... the English versus the French, ... [or] Dorimant versus Sir Fopling" (1970:84) or even the false man of mode versus the "true" man of mode (Barnard 1984: 303). For instance, in the words of Young Bellair: "No man in town has a better fancy in his clothes" (I.i. 100) than Dorimant who has the style of a true man of mode and "... whose English manners are informed by a real knowledge of [the] French" (Barnard 1984:303). On the other hand, Sir Fopling is always depicted as an artificial

imitator of the noted French manners; his clothes are elaborate and even woman-like (Birdsall 1970:88): "He was yesterday at the play, with a pair of gloves upto his elbows, and a periwig more exactly curled than a lady's head newly dressed for a ball" (I.i. 100).

Finally, in order to have a better understanding of *The Man of Mode,* a brief look at the messages that Etherege conveys will be provided. First of all, through a presentation of the love relationships between Dorimant - Mrs. Loveit, Dorimant-Bellinda, Dorimant-Harriet and Emilia-Young Bellair, Etherege suggests that the couples should behave in accordance to their nature, that is, their true-selves; however, he adds, nature should be controlled by reason. Moreover, by making Emilia and Harriet from the higher plot reject making vows, Etherege gives the message that if there is love, trust and understanding between the couples they will feel no need for making vows in order to maintain a healthy relationship.

Etherege further illustrates the message through Sir Fopling's disposition. He presents the fop totally as an artificial personality who has a particular pretense to the French culture and manners and shows through his conduct the results of forcing one's nature too much. He shows that the person in the end becomes an object of ridicule. In the following words of Dennis (1973:432), which also reveal some patriotism, this particular message gains more clarity. Dennis writes that if people like Sir Fopling

> ... foolish[ly] ... [ape] foreign customs and manners, ... [to the point of forgetting] the love of their country... [and] prefer France... to Great Britain,... they must justly expect to be the just and the scorn of their own countrymen (1973:432).

The other two messages by Etherege in *The Man of Mode* can be said to reflect the playwright's own pessimism and cynicism about the way of the world and about mankind in general. Firstly, by presenting the audience with relationships of friends like Dorimant-Young Bellair, Dorimant-Medlay and Bellinda-Mrs. Loveit, Etherege shows his disbelief in the existance of true friendship. In other words, he warns people by giving the message that there are no true friends but only those who base their relationships on nothing but falsity and mutual benefits. Secondly, by questioning even Emilia's virtue and by ending his play with Dorimant's enthusiasm in arranging himself with a further assignation with Bellinda, Etherege gives, through Mrs. Loveit's final remark (V.ii. 165), his own final possimistic message, too: that the world is based on deception and that no human being in this corrupt world deserves to be trusted.

CHAPTER 4

A. WILLIAM CONGREVE: BIOGRAPHY AND CAREER

William Congreve was born at Bardsey in Yorkshire in 1670. As his father was the commander of the Garrison at Youghal in Ireland, Congreve received his education first at Kilkenny School (1682) and then at Trinity College (1686), Dublin.[37] About the middle of the year 1689 Congreve is said to have arrived at London where he began studying law at the Middle Temple (1690?); however, he soon gave up law for literature.

In the meantime, Congreve gained the attention and friendship of John Dryden who was then sixty years old (Gibbons 1971:xi). It was, no doubt, Congreve's "personel charm ... his wit ... [and] his literary talent" which affected Dryden and which led the Poet Laureate into publishing his own translation of Persius (1692) with Congreve's commendatory verses as preface (Gibbons 1971:xi). Hence, Congreve was also admitted into the select group of friends of Dryden and to Will's Coffee House in Covent Garden where many of the literary figures of the last decade met (Gibbons 1971:xv).

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[37] In both schools Jonathan Swift was a fellow student (Drabble 1985:224; Gibbons 1971:xi; Stapleton 1983:189).

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During his lifetime Congreve never married. However, he is believed to have had an affair with Anne Bracegirdle and then with the young Duchess of Marlborough; from the latter Congreve is even said to have had a child. His leaving, indirectly, his estate to the Duchess' daughter, Mary Godolphin, seems to prove the truth of the gossip that Congreve was the father (Gibbons 1971:xvi).

With regard to what Wycherley and Etherege have produced during their life times, Congreve proved to be the most productive of the three. First of all, in the year 1692 Congreve brought about his short prose-romance *Incognita* to which some critics refer today as a novel (Drabble 1985:224; Stapleton 1983: 189; Thompson 1980:111). Then followed his first comedy, *The Old Bachelor* (1693). This play was a stage success in its time and established Congreve's position as a leading playwright of the Restoration period. The very same year, Congreve came up with another comedy, *The Double Dealer* (1693) but its performance had somewhat a disappointing reception (Gibbons 1971:xii). Then, after three years, in 1695, Congreve produced his third comedy, *Love for Love* and re-established, indeed, his fame as a playwright.

During the five years' of interval which separated the first productions of *Love for Love* and *The Way of the World*, Congreve tried his hand also in Restoration tragedy. He wrote in blank verse, *The Mourning Bride* (1697) which according to John Cargill Thompson was a play of significance in its time most

probably for creating something in between tragedy and heroic play (1980:130). Eventhough the play is neither widely read nor produced today (Salgado 1980:154), Brown and Harris (1965:220) and Stapleton (1983:189) confirm the success of *The Mourning Bride* in its time. They write that the audience at the Lincoln's Inn Fields received the play with strong applause.

Henceforward, Congreve started to enjoy friendship of literary figures like Jonathan swift, Sir Richard Steele and Alexander Pope (Drabble 1985:224). He also enjoyed the privileges of the several posts that he was then offered by the government.[38]

Moreover when in the following year Congreve was criticised in Collier's famous *A Short View* (1689), he defended himself immediately in a reply: he produced his *Amandments of Mr. Collier's False and Imperfect Citations* (1698).

Finally at the close of the seventeenth-century Congreve wrote *The Way of the World* (1700) which is today considered to be the greatest of all his works and of the plays produced in that period of English comedy. Nevertheless, *The Way of the World* proved to be a failure on stage in its time (Leech 1966:140). Thus,

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[38] Through a careful management of his salaries Congreve has accumulated a fortune of ten thousand pounds (Gibbons 1971:xvi).

Congreve was discouraged[39] and *The Way of the World* which was the final example of the culmination of the Restoration comedies marked also the end of his dramatic career.

Congreve's first comedy *The Old Bachelor* was produced on 9 March, 1693 when he was barely twenty-three (Loftis et.al. 1976:214). The play, having been polished for the stage by John Dryden, Thomas Southerne and Arthur Manwarying (Loftis et.al. 1976: 214) was a success in its time. However, according to Salgado (1980:154) and Stapleton (1983:649) its success was also partly due to its cast; particularly to the presence of Anne Bracegirdle and Thomas Betterton as the leading characters.

Today critics have controversial views on the play: they either praise or find fault with the plot. For instance, Loftis et.al. praise Congreve for "... his ability in making the several actions and numerous characters functional to the main design [of the play]" (1976:214) and claim that *The Old Bachelor* indeed carries the "... sing[s] of the arrival of a major playwright" (1976:215). Salgado agrees with Loftis et.al. in his second

[39] Salgado (1980:158) assumes that Congreve's abandonment of drama may have been due to some other factors as well: his health or the effect of Collier's attack or even his estrangement from the actress Anne Brace-Firdle who was suspected to be Congreve's mistress and for whom the playwright is said to have particularly written the roles of his leading female characters.

argument, yet, still he does not hesitate to depict the play as "... two hackneyed plots clumsily soldered together" (1980:154). Allardyce Nicoll shares almost the same view point with Salgado, however, he seems to express himself with more of a compassion towards the young Congreve. Nicoll writes that although the play can be considered as the best comedy ever produced until that time, it still carries some defects like the plot being confusing and some of the characters being out of place (1978:124-25). Moreover, while Dobrée similarly finds defects in the plot construction (1966:127) and Kenneth Muir tends to find for these defects, an excuse that they are natural consequences of Congreve's youth and immaturity (1965:222), William Myers unjustly devaluates the play by referring to some parts as Lambs' "Utopia of Gallantry" or Knights' "barnyard" (1972:78).

The plot of *The Old Bachelor* concentrates on the depiction of the behaviour of the libertine figure, Vainlove who throughout the play despises the opposite sex after winning each-time a satisfactory triumpth over one of them (Muir 1965:223). However, naturally enough, Congreve adds onto his depiction of Vainlove's behaviour and conduct a satirical touch. As Muir points out, Vainlove's very name is already a criticism of his character and conduct (1965:222).

Despite the fact that Dryden has equaled Congreve with Shakespeare for the literary craftsmanship, what the latter displayed through his second comedy, *The Double Dealer* (1693), was

not as successful as his first (Salgado 1980:154; Stapleton 1983: 248). Moreover, the play is also noted for not having been revived very often (Muir 1965:225; Stapleton 1983:248). Today, although the play is accepted to have marked a crucial stage in Congreve's artistic development (Gibbons 1971:xii; Muir 1965:225) and is praised for the suspense that Congreve creates through the plot (Muir 1965:225-26), the defects of *The Double Dealer* are not undermined either. According to Nicoll, for instance, Congreve has rendered the play unsuccessful by letting emotions disturb the subtlety of this wit (1978:125); something that he definately does not allow to happen in *The Way of the World*. For Gibbons the play fails for a similar reason: for "... its melodramatic portrayals of villany and innocence" (1971:xii). For Muir, the above points of Nicoll and Gibbons are true, however, he adds that *The Double Dealer* lack also in plausibility (1965:225). On this point, Myers, too, condemns Congreve that he produced a total piece of vanity (1972:78).

The Double Dealer was first produced in October 1693 and was published the next year with the previously noted, complementary epistle by Dryden. The title of the play is reminiscent of Wycherley's *The Plain Dealer* and is, no doubt, designed with an aim of satirizing. In very general terms, the play seems to aim at a criticism of the behaviour of the villain-like Maskwell or the double dealer of the title, and the hypocritical Lady Touchwood. Having previously been rejected by Mellefont, Lady Touchwood contrives a plan against Mellefont, and

with the help of Maskwell who has previously been her lover, struggles to prevent throughout the play Mellefont's match with Cynthia. Nevertheless, Lady Touchwood cannot succeed in her plans and neither can Maskwell. For, when Lady Touchwood finds out that Maskwell had further plans to deceive her and marry Cynthia she exposes him and therefore fails in her own plans as well. Finally, as for the major message that Congreve conveys through *The Double Dealer,* it can be stated with the following words of Leech that "... mischief will always destroy the villain that gives it birth" (1966:131).

With regard to the fact that Congreve's third comedy, *Love for Love* has remained on stage for thirteen successive nights, it is considered today to have been the most popular of all of Congreve's plays during his life time (Loftis et.al. 1976:216). Today, some critics note that Congreve's control of the dialogue has increased in this play (Loftis 1976:217) and that he has also managed to bring together, in harmony, a variety of strong characters without causing any problems in the plot construction of the play (Thompson 1980:117-18). Also, it seems for this second reason particularly that Salgado considers the plot of *Love for Love* far more superior than the plot of *The Way of World* (1980:153). On the contrary, however, Nicoll is disturbed that in the play Congreve has reflected bold reality instead of refined reality (1978:125). Similarly, Dobrée (1966:132-33) finds fault with *Love for Love,* too. He writes in a comparison of this work with *The Way of the World* that the former is a little tedious and repetitive and that it lacks the delicacy of expression that one expects to

find in Congreve (1966:135).

Love for Love which Leech defines as the most vigorous and entertaining of all of Congreve's plays (1966:138), was staged in April 1695 on the occasion of the opening of a new company at Lincoln's Inn Fields (Gibbons 1971:xvii; Salgado 1980:155). As for the basic framework of the plot of the play it can be said that it depicts the reformation of the libertine, Valentine from a "... position of complete selfishness to a man able to sign away his inheritance under the purifying influence of love" (Thompson 1980: 117). In other words, Congreve does in *Love for Love* what he had done in his previous comedy, *The Double Dealer*: with the exception of excluding "... examples of monstrous wickedness... [he] concentrates on a [satirical portrayal] of his characters" (Muir 1965:227-28) and also ends the play with a touch of sentiment that was peculiar to the century in view (Leech 1966:139; Salgado 1980: 156; Thompson 1980:118).

B. THE WAY OF THE WORLD (1700)

Although *The Way of the World*, presented at the New Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields in March 1700 (Gibbons 1971:xiv; Wilson 1959:320) was received with strong repulsion by the

audience of the Glorious Revolution,[40] a great majority of the critics today consider it as the best and the last of the Restoration comedies that was ever to be produced. Moreover, it can even be claimed that *The Way of the World* marks "... the end and summation of an age [Restoration]" (Leech 1966:131). For, Leech writes that Congreve includes in his play, "... elements from the comic drama of the forty years, deriving much from Etherge but something too from the newest [sentimental] comedy of his time.

As for the play's presentation on stage, it was performed with the following cast: the aging Thomas Betterton handed the leading role of Mirabell to a young, "... dashing Jack Verbruggen" and acted himself the role of Fainall (Wilson 1959: 320; Wilson 1968:177). Moreover, the role of Millamant was given to Anne Bracegirdle which seems to have been a natural consequence of her relation with Congreve (Gibbons 1971:xvii; Salgado 1980: 158). Also, as Lady Wishfort, Elinor Leigh was listed in the cast who is said to have reached with this role the climax of her profession (Wilson 1959:321). Among other famous performers Elizabeth Barry was listed as Mrs. Marwood and Mr. Underhill as

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[40] The repulsion of the play by this particular audience was a consequence of historical and social factors which were previously explained in the introductory section of this study. For more information see, for instance, Emmet L. Avery and Arthur H. Scouten, "[The Audience]" in *Restoration and the Eighteenth Century Comedy*, ed. Scott McMillin (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1973) pp.455-63; Norman Holland, *The First Modern Comedies: The Significance of Etherege, Wycherley and Congreve* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959) pp.175, 199-209.

Sir Wilfull Witwoud (Gibbons 1971:xviii; Wilson 1959:321-22; Wilson 1968:177).

The Way of the World was not revived very often during the two centuries that followed its first performance; however, it was frequently revived in the twentieth century.[41] The Stage Society, for instance, has produced a few performances of *The Way of the World* in 1904. Yet, the most popular of all the productions took place in the 1920's: it was a Nigel Playfair production and was staged on 7 February, 1924 with a tremendous success (Muir 1972:133-35) and it is most probably the success of this production that Hirst had in mind when writing about a production of the play around the 1920's as having very much appealed to the taste of the cynical post-war audience (1979:35). As for the other performances of *The Way of the World* on the modern stage Muir makes note of the following: Ashley Dukes' production in 1942 and then in October 1948; John Gielgud's production on February 1953; John Clement's production in December 1956 and finally a production by Michael Langham in 1969 (1972:138-151).

In an attempt to identify the origins of Congreve's masterpiece, *The Way of the World*, one must, as Gibbons writes,

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[41]For an argumentative account of the twentieth-century productions of Congreve's plays, see Kenneth Muir's, "Congreve on the Modern Stage" in *William Congreve,* ed. Brian Morris (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1972) pp.133-153.

refer to a wide range of sources (1971:xxxi). Among the sources that Congreve is indebted to, Gibbons mentions *The Devil Is an Ass* (1616) by Ben Jonson in which can be detected a relationship that is similar to the Fainalls', and *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) another play by Jonson in which there appears also a black box in the end to solve and settle the matters (1971:xxxi). Moreover, in creating a "... complex romantic intrigue and subtlety of character and dialogue" Gibbons mentions Congreve's indebtedness to Terence, which the playwright himself admits in his dedicatory letter to the play(1971:xxxi). As for Congreve's other possible sources: Gibbons names the following: Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, Dryden's *Secret Love*, *Marriage ã la Mode*, *The Wild Gallant*; Etherege's *The Man of Mode* and finally Moliēre's *L'Ecole des Femmes* (1971:32).

The Way of the World which Holland honours by defining as "... the triumphant quintessence of Restoration comedy" (1959: 175) is basically an examination of "... the way in which authority is asserted and the human emotions expressed within its ... bounds" (Birdsall 1970:229). In other words, it is the dramatization of Mirabell and Millamant's attempts of freeing themselves from their conventional environment and expressing themselves without being outcasts (Roberts 1972:42). Salgado interprets the subject matter of *The Way of the World* in a similar statement; he states that the play is a serious "... investigation of the relation between passion and society, the turbulent surging of emotion and the restraining disciples... [,that is, rules in the society]" (1980:158).

Similar to most of the Restoration comedies, the action of *The Way of the World* takes place against a London background. The plot, in fact, has one main action, that is, the marriage of Mirabell and Millamant. Everything else is related to this plot (Corman 1975:200). Yet, during the course of the play there appears a counter-action - the prevention of the noted marriage - which leads astray the course of the main action. Finally, the tension that these two opposites create, carries the play towards a denoument with the help of quite a number of reversals and discoveries that demand, indeed, too much of the audience:[42]

The plot of *The Way of the World* has a *medias-res* beginning. That is, the proceeding action reveals further in the play that certain important events have already taken place before the action of the play begins. First of all, that although Mirabell is now in love with Millamant, the niece and ward of Lady Wishfort, to the extent of wanting marriage, he has, in the past, had an affair with Lady Wishfort's daughter, Arabella (Mrs. Fainall) and has married her off to Fainall when she was pregnant (Holland 1959:177). Secondly, that Fainall has accepted the match because of the young Arabella's estate with which he was planning to finance his affair with Mrs. Marwood who is a close friend of Lady Wishfort and who actually is yearning for Mirabell. Thirdly,

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[42] This may be why such a critic like Nicoll falls into the error of claiming that *The Way of the World* had no plot (1978:125).

that Wirabell, who has offended Lady Wishfort by the exposal of his pretended love for her which he did, in fact, to cover his wooing of Millamant, has recently been busy with arranging a new scheme against Lady Wishfort. He has this time disguised his valet, Waitwell as his uncle Sir Rowland to woo and "persuade" Lady Wishfort into marriage. Mirabell then intends to reveal the disguise and the real status of Waitwell and promise to rescue Lady Wishfort on the condition that she will consent to Millamant's marriage to himself rather than to Sir Wilfull Witwoud, her choice for her niece (Holland 1959:177). Moreover, Mirabell wants Waitwell to marry Foible, Lady Wishfort's maid, before the masquerade takes place, so that he can secure himself against a double cross (Wilson 1968:179).

Finally, with these noted events which took place before the play begins and which are to be gradually revealed to the audience, *The Way of the World* opens; the audience sees Mirabell and Faniall playing cards and receives from their conversation the hints that there is a certain kind of tension between the two. Then when a servant brings news of the secret marriage having just taken place between Waitwell and Foible, the plan of Mirabell or the main action of the play begins. On part of Mirabell everything goes well until the third act. Unfortunately, just over the third act Mrs. Marwood overhears from Mrs. Fainall and Foible about this new plan of Mirabell and about Mirabell's and Mrs. Fainall's earlier love affair, plus some insulting comments of Mirabell about herself. Thus, she decides to take

revenge. She tells this secret plan to Fainall and informs him also about his wife's previlous affair with Mirabell. In this way, she very cleverly prompts Fainall into setting up a counter-intrigue against Mirabell's to ruin both Mirabell and the Wishfort family.

Now, having been fully equipped with information about Mirabell, Faniall obviously becomes the dominant power in the play. He unmasks Sir Rowland and threatens Lady Wishfort with her daughter's disgrace unless she consents to hand over half of Mrs. Millamant's fortune of which she is in control and intends to turn over to Millamant if she marries a suitor of her approval. Moreover, Fainall demands that his wife's fortune be in his sole control. He also wants assurance that Lady Wishfort will not marry without his consent, so that Mrs. Fainall is to remain definitely as the only heir. At this climactic point, however, Mirabell comes out and rescues Lady Wishfort from this difficult position. He, first of all, exposes the relationship between Fainall and Marwood and then when Fainall ignores the accusation, Mirabell this time brings out documents showing that when Mrs. Fainall was left a widow after her first marriage, she had appointed her lover Mirabell as the trustee of her fortune. Thus, seeing that he is left without a claim to make, for Mrs. Fainall does not have the control of her own money, Fainall retreats, yet with a final note of vengeance, and so does Mrs. Marwood. In this way, with Lady Wishfort's forgiving of the servants and after her consenting to the marriage of Mirabell and Millamant, the play ends happily with

a dance which is peculiar to almost all of the Restoration comodies.

As for Congreve's characterization in *The Way of the World* it can be said that he has employed a method that also demands much of the audience. In other words, "... Congreve [seems to] assume... that the audience can distinguish between good and bad, even when the distinctions are not [so] obvious" (Loftis et. al. 1976:218). Therefore, in spite of two common practice of his predecessors Congreve has not divided his characters in *The Way of the World* into the perfect, heavenly figures of the higher plot and the villains and fools of the lower plot. (Loftis et.al. 1976: 218). He has combined in Mirabell, for instance, the libertine of the lower plot and the sensible male of the higher plot.

With regard to Mirabell's behaviour and conduct in the play it can be said that he is a reformed nake-hero or at least a nominee for becoming one. For, the play reveals that although Mirabell retains still some of the characteristics of a libertine, he acts also like the sensible male. However, in order to judge his character correctly, Mirabell's past' must also be taken into consideration. For it seems that his past defines, still, from time to time, some of his present behaviour and conduct.

Congreve hints that in the past, before the play opens Mirabell was a successful woman-chaser, a true libertine figure who had added Arabella onto his list of mistresses. However, soon

afterwards when he naturally got tired of Arabella, who was then about to have a baby, he married her off to Fainall who was presumably, a close friend. In other words, Mirabell in the past was able to do almost anything that his pleasure-seeking libertine nature dictated him to do, to achieve his goals.

Nevertheless, although it seems that Mirabell's "... libertinism is already behind him as the play opens" Birdsall notes that he "... is not above making use of his seductive powers [and even becoming egoistical and cruel in this way] when the occasion demands" (1970:228). In other words, in order to retain his position as the manipulator of the action in a way that coincides with his personal benefits, Mirabell doesnot hesitate to make use of his power which, according to Birdsall (1970:228) and Holland (1959:177) stems from his knowledge of the ways of the world or the discrepancy between appearance and reality. For instance, in order to make the vengeful Lady Wishfort consent to his match with Millamant, her ward, Mirabell immediately makes use of his knowledge of the appetative nature of Lady Wishfort which he himself has recently discovered. He then turns this discovery into "a case of bare-faced black-mail, undertaken with that same ruthlessness and optimistic confidence of success which are the familiar attributes of ... [a Horner or of a Dorimant]" (Birdsall 1970:230). However, Birdsall writes that since Mirabell sees his love for Millamant indeed as a life-and-death matter, such an unprincipled behaviour can still be expected (1970:230) from a reformed - rake if he has such a libertine background.

As for another instant of Mirabell's practice of cruelty and egoism is the unemotional way in which he explains to Arabella the reasons for which he made her marry Fainall instead of himself (Hirst 1979:32):

> Mirabell: Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous actions? To save that idol, reputation. If the familiarities of our loves had produced that consequence of which you were apprehensive, where could you have fixed a father's name with credit but on a husband? I knew Fainall to be a man lavish of his morals, an interested and professing friend, a false and a designing lover, yet one whose wit and outward fair behavior have gained reputation with the town enough to make that woman stand excused who has suffered herself to be won by his addresses. A better man ought not to have been sacrificed to the occasion, a worse had not answered to the purpose... (II.i. 340-41).

However, to this question Wilson seems to offer a more crude answer: "A gentleman never thought of marrying his mistress.... His choice for a wife must be a lady of unquestioned virtue" (1968:181).

Although it is not as obvious as in the previous comedies of Wycherley and Etherege, it must be noted that Congreve does indeed use Mirabell as his means for achieving double satire. For instance, Congreve uses Mirabell in the opening scene of the play to bring out and expose in a satirical manner, the cynicism

and the evil nature of the libertine figure, Fainall. However, since at the same time he employs hints about the fact that Fainall has already been tricked by Mirabell into marrying Mirabell's former pregnant lover, Congreve shows that Mirabell is no better than Fainall or was so, at least in the past.

Another instance of double criticism on part of Congreve takes place in the depiction of Mirabells two plots that he sets up against Lady Wishfort. Both of the plots, infact, provide Congreve with the chance to satirize the hypocrisy of would-be ladies like Lady Wishfort. In addition, however, although these plots both fail - one before and one after the opening of the play - they satirically display how far Mirabell's cruel nature can carry him in achieving his goals. Therefore, it can be claimed that although Congreve does not underline his criticisms of Mirabell by making his plans fail and therefore avoids their cruel consequences, he definately does not leave him without a blame.

Moreover, it seems that the exposal of both of Mirabell's plans are Congreve's means to render his hero ridiculous and, in a way, to punish him for his past and present misconduct. After the exposal of his second plan especially, Mirabell indeed seems helpless, for, the plan that he had set up to make his match with Millamant possible, has made it, infact, impossible. Furthermore, despite the fact that Mirabell in the end achieves his goal and manages to persuade Lady Wishfort into accepting his match with her niece, Millamant, the action of the play makes it clear that it is through no design of Mirabell's (Barnard

1972:106-107). In other words, Congreve makes it clear that henceforward Mirabell is no more the triumphant manipulator but a helpless person who depends upon chances and coincidences for achieving his goals.

Also when Mirabell's libertine background is taken into consideration, his falling in love and his very desire to marry Millamant can be regarded as out of line with his nature. Mirabell's speech at the opening of the play shows that he himself is also aware of his awkward situation:

> Mirabell: .... I studied ... [Millamant's failings], and got 'em by rote. The catalogue was so large that I was not without hopes one day or other to hate her heartily; to which end I so used myself to think of 'em that at length, contrary to my design and expectation, they gave me every hour less disturbance, till in a few days it became habitual to me to remember 'em without being displeased. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own frailties, and, in all probability, in a little time longer I shall like 'em as well (I.i. 327).

With regard to Mirabell's behaviour and conduct throughout the play it becomes obvious that he is not merely a libertine figure. Some of his conduct reveal to the audience that he additionally is on the side of the social code, virtue and honesty, and can also practise reason and self-control. In other words,

Mirabell also possesses the qualities of the sensible male of the Restoration comedies.

This peculiarity of Mirabell is evident firstly from the fact that although he cannot endure by nature to be conditioned by the social code, he does not completely reject it either. For, different than his predecessors, Mirabell has his reason to tell him that he must discover an individual means to express himself within the social code if he is to continue living in this society without being ridiculed. This is exactly what he tries to do with his provisos in the contract scene. He will neither "... beyond measure enlarged into a husband..." nor will he let Millamant "dwindle" (IV.i. 367) too much into a wife. In other words, Mirabell shows that if he is ever to take up the role of a husband that the society demands from him, he will not let his and his wife's roles become ordinary ones. That is, unlike the rest of the marriages of his society Mirabell will have his marriage based on honourable manners and conduct, and will definately reject the intervention of the intrigues and hypocrisy that surround him (Myers 1972:85; Price 1973:546). Therefore, as part of his provisos, Mirabell demands his future wife to avoid the following: the "... she-confidantes..., masks, cosmetics, house-to-house saleswoman who are really bamds, corseting unborn children, and tea-tables that hide carousing" (Holland 1959:189).

As for other characteristics of Mirabell's sensible-part of his nature it can be said that he is also compassionate.

Even during his past, rakish life, for instance, Mirabell has compassionately taken care of his discarded mistress, Arabella sharply and favourably in contrast to what Horner or Dorimant would have done Mirabell has provided at length for all the needs of his mitress: he has fristly arranged for her a marriage of convenience and then has taken care that she will not lose her money if this husband turns out badly (Corman 1975:201; Salgado: 157).

Moreover, it seems that Mirabell possesses some sort of an honesty as well (Wilson 1968:179-80). For, he claims at the beginning of the play that it was his virtue and conscience which kept him from seducing Lady Wishfort any further than "... the very last act of flattery (I.i. 325). Also, it is noteworthy that Mirabell did not answer Mrs. Marwood's advances either as he is in love with Millamant.

Furthermore, with regard to what Mirabell thinks and says about Millamant, his love for her seems, indeed, sincere. This open-hearted revealing of emotions is unlike the typical libertine and brings Mirabell closer to the sensible male. At the beginning of the play Mirabell frankly admits that: "... I like her [Millamant] with all her faults - nay, like her for her faults. Her follies are so natural or so artful, that they become her; and those affectations which in another woman would be odious, serve but to make her more agreeable" (I.i. 327). Lastly, what is also noteworthy about the speech quoted is that Mirabell's liking

of Millamant "with" all her faults seems to be the expression of a sensible male while his loving her "for" her faults, the expression of a libertine. Thus, Mirabell is indeed a fine combination of the libertine and the sensible man.

With regard to her behaviour and conduct in *The Way of the World*, Millamant, whom Wilson (1968:180) calls as "one of the most delightful heroines in all English comedy", seems to be a true counterpart of Mirabell. For, in her, Congreve has also created a character who is partly libertine and partly sensible. As for the first of Millamant's libertine characteristics, her very name[43] may be referred to. Thus, the name reveals already her passionate and restless nature (Birdsall 1970:234). Infact, he once admits to Mrs. Fainall, her restlessness herself: "I find I love him [Mirabell] violently" (IV.i. 369). Moreover, it seems that Mirabell also confirms this fact; he says of her: "... Think of you? To think of a whirlwind, though 'twere, in a whirl-mind, were a case of more steady contemplation - a very tranquility of mind..." (II.i. 345).

Furthermore, similar to Mirabell's, there can be observed in Millamant's conduct a certain kind of aggressiveness and cruelty. Throughout the play it seems that she delights

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[43]Millamant, in French, means a thousand lovers.

exercising power over people, and at times may even become cruel. Millamant thinks that "... one's cruelty is one's power; and when one parts with one's cruelty, one parts with one's power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly" (II.i. 343).

For instance, when Millamant realizes that Mrs. Marwood is in love with Mirabell, she jeers at her in a way that is reminiscent of Harriet's cruel treatment of Mrs. Loveit at the end of *The Man of Mode*. Martin Price (1973:545-46) sees in this scene the obvious cruelty of Millamant's words in playing upon Marwood's jealousy:

> Mrs. Marwood: ... I detest ... [Mirabell], hate him, madam.
> Mrs. Millamant: O, madam! why, so do I - and yet the creature loves me - ha, ha, ha! How can one forbear laughing to think of it. I am a sibyl if I am not amazed to think what he can see in me. I'll take my death, I think you are handsomer - and within a year or two as young; if you could but stay for me, I should overtake you - but that cannot be. Well, that thought makes me melancholic. Now I'll be sad (II.354).

Moreover, as R.A. Foakes (1972:65) points out, the song that she starts singing immediately following her above comment is another evidence of her triumphant cruelty:

2

'Tis not to wound a wanton boy
  Or amorous youth, that gives the joy [in matters of love]
But 'tis the glory to have pierced a swain,
For whom inferior beauties sighed in vain.

3

Then I alone the conquest prize,
  When I insult a rival's eyes:
If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see
That heart, which others bleed for, bleed for me
(III.i. 355).

Furthermore, along with the libertine nature, Millamant does not find it appropriate to reveal her love for Mirabell. For, this would mean her giving up her superior position in the game of love, and would also mean to be "... freed from the agreeable fatigues of solicitation" and therefore to be "... reduced to an inglorious ease" (IV.i. 366), a state which neither the society nor herself would approve.

With regard to the way in which Millamant takes up a conventional deed like marriage, she stands very much in between the libertine and the sensible females of the Restoration comedies. She accepts to sign the contract of marriage, however, she also shows especially through her provises that: "... [she will] never marry unless... [she is] first made sure of... [her] will and pleasure" (IV.i. 366). In other words, although Millamant conforms to the social code by accepting marriage, she also insists upon retaining her dignity and individuality. For, unlike the rest of the women in her society Millamant feels by nature that she must

always have some kind of freedom to express her real self or must always be given the chance to be her real self.

Moreover, in this noted behaviour of Millamant the first of her sensible female characteristics can be detected. Similar to Mirabell she, too, adapts the social code to the expression of her true nature or true self. In her following conversation with Mirabell it can be observed that "... Millamant's behaviour is never indecorous; she always retains within the bounds of the social code dictated by her society. But she never [really] allows herself to be ruled by them" (Corman 1975:205):

> Mirabell: .... Do you lock yourself up from me to make my search more curious, or is this ... that here the chase must end, ... For you can fly no further.
> Millamant: Vanity! No - I'll fly and be followed to the last moment. Though I am upon the very verge of matrimony, I expect you should solicit me as much as if I were wavering at the grate of a monastery, with one foot over the threshold. I'll be solicited to the very last - nay, and afterwards.
> Mirabell: I do not know that when favors are conferred upon instant and tedious solicitation, that they diminish in their value, and that both the giver loses frace, and the receiver lessens his pleasure?
> Mrs. Millamant: It may be things of common application; but never, sure, in love. Oh, I hate a lover that can dare to think he

> draws a moment's air, independent of the bounty of his mistress. There is not so impudent a thing in nature as the sancy look of an assured man, confident of success... (IV.i. 366).

As for the second of Millamant's sensible female characteristics, her very honesty may be mentioned. She is, infact, surrounded by intrigue and together with her estate, she is actually the center of much of it. However, throughout the play, she does not get involved in any of the intrigues; that is, she is not seen plotting against anyone.

With regard to the way in which Congreve draws Millamant's character, one can observe his using of her, together with Mirabell, as his means for achieving double satire. Firstly, although less obviously than in Mirabell's case, Millamant helps Congreve to criticise the follies of others. It is true that she, too, is a commentator on the play's world (Roberts 1972:46). She criticises through her provises, for instance, some of the common practices of the Restoration upper-class society, such as the habit of the married couples' calling each other names like "joy", "jewel" or "love", which seem to reflect insincerity rather than sincerity; and the habit of an ordinary husband's imposing himself upon his wife so much that she would in the end lose her dignity.

Nevertheless, Congreve does not draw Millamant as a completely ideal figure either. She, too, is criticized by the

writer. Mirabell makes it clear at the opening of the play that he likes Millamant for her faults (I.i. 327). Congreve's major criticism against Millamant is that she may become egoistically cruel as can be seen in her despising of Sir Willful's rusticity (IV.i. 365) and especially in her light-hearted playing with Mrs. Marwood's jealousy. Congreve does not seem to leave Millamant blameless; yet, since Congreve does not punish Millamant for this particular conduct, it seems that he does not emphasize his criticisms either.

As for Fainall's character it can be said that his general conduct places him as the next important figure in *The Way of the World* after Mirabell and Millamant. For it is Fainall's infidel and trecherous libertine world of the previous decades which Mirabell and Millamant defeat by use of the honesty and reason of the new age (Thompson 1980:137). As a matter of fact, "... Fainall might have been 'quite at home beside Dorimant'" (Corman 1975:201). For "... what passed for conventional manoeuvrings in a play such as *The Man of Mode* ... surface [in contrast with the honest and sincere world of the heroes of] *The Way of the World* as outright wickedness" (Roberts 1972:48).

With regard to some of his character traits, Fainall appears as a typical libertine. Firstly, he is very much cynical about love and marriage. For instance, when at the beginning of the play Mirabell openly declares his love towards Millamant, Fainall answers with the following bitter comment that marriage changes

everything: "Marry her, marry her! Be half as well acquainted with her charms as you are with her defects, ... I have experience: I hava a wife, and so forth" (I.i. 327). Moreover, Fainall trusts neither of the women that he is in relation with: he suspects his wife for having had an affair with Mirabell, and his mistress, for being in love with the same man (II.i. 337-39).

Another of Fainall's libertine characteristics is that he can be hypocritical at times to achieve his goals. In other words, Fainall is a man who, very much like Dorimant, can adjust to circumstances easily for personal benefits. It seems, for instance, that his marriage is a result of his making use of such a circumstance. For he tells Mrs. Marwood, his mistress that: "... I [did] marry but to make a lawful prize of a rich widow's wealth and squander it on love and you" (II.i. 339). A similar attitude can also be detected in Fainall's advice to Mirabell at the beginning of the play. When Mirabell talks about the failure of his first plan against Lady Wishfort, Fainall says: "... had you dissembled better, things might have continued in the state of nature" (I.i. 325), that is, in the way that Mirabell wanted them to be.

Moreover, it seems that Fainall can become at times, as Lady Wishfort puts it: "... most inhumanly savage" (V.i. 381). For instance, when Fainall hears about his wife's previous affair with Mirabell, he immediately joins with Mrs. Marwood and prepares an intrigue-though not without a reason - against Mirabell and

Mrs. Fainall for revenge. However, his blackmailing Lady Wishfort by bringing up her daughter's reputation and even his running at Mrs. Fainall, as Birdsall claims (1970:247-48), with a drawn sword,[44] do really seem to be barbarous (Myers 1972:84). For this reason mainly, that is, for his malicious conduct, Fainall is exposed, and as Myers (1972:84) puts it, is finally punished by being excluded from the civilized world of Mirabell and Millamant.

Furthermore, with regard to how Fainall defines himself and his very position after hearing about his wife's previous affair with Mirabell, he can as well be considered as a cuckolded husband. In this moment of realization Fainall says spitefully:

> ... I, it seems, am a husband, a rank husband; and my wife a very errant, rank wife - .... 'sdeath, to be an anticipated cuckold, a cuckold in embryo! Sure, I was born with budding, antlers, like a young satyr or a citizen's child. 'Sdeath! to be... out-matrimony'd! (III.i. 360).

However, as Corman writes, Fainall is no Pinchwife to try to avoid or ignore the issue; he is a man to accept, instead, his condition philosophically, and a man-through the use of his malicious wit - to put into use this very knowledge for his own advantage (1975: 207-208).

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[44]Wilson's edition of *The Way of the World,* which is the text used in this study, does not mention in this scene the presence of a sword in Fainall's hand.

With regard to her behaviour and conduct in the play, Mrs. Morwood does not fit into any of the categories of the stereo-types of the Restoration comedies. She appears as the next important character in the play after Fainall. First of all, the course of the action reveals that since the past of the play Mrs. Marwood has always been in love and in pursuit of Mirabell, and that her affair with Fainall has merely been a substitute for an imaginary relationship with the latter (Corman 1975:208). Secondly, it seems to be her very disguised love for Mirabell that causes the counter-action of the play. For, at the beginning Mrs. Marwood appears merely as a woman in love who has not yet lost her hopes about getting hold of Mirabell. However, when she hears from Foible, Lady Wishfort's maid, that "... Mr. Mirabell can't abide her [self]" (III.i. 351), her love towards him turns into hatred and Mirabell into her enemy. As Corman (1975:208) notes, Mrs. Marwood shows here the typical reaction of a woman who is rejected by the man she loves, for, "Women do not easily forgive omissions of that nature" (I.i. 325). Therefore, Mrs. Marwood unites with Fainall and prepares a counter-plot in the play for revenge.

As her excuses are strong, Leech writes that Mrs. Marwood cannot be considered a villain (1966:138) and that she appears more like an envious person (1966:130). One cannot,however, overlook her Iago-like method in taking her revenge or in achieving her goal (Birdsall 1970:231). As Birdsall puts it, "Working on Fainall's passions of greed and jealousy, ... [Mrs. Morwood] turns ... [Fainall] with cold calculation into an instrument for carrying

out the destructive designs born of her own hatred [towards Mirabell]" (1970:231-32). In other words, by depicting Mrs. Marwood's practice of vice even worse than Fainall's, as she is Fainall's manipulator, it seems that Congreve employs a more bitter satire on the former's conduct. Yet, their punishment is the same: Congreve exposes, condemns and expells them together out of the world of the play.

In a comparison of the behaviour of the couples Fainall-Mrs. Marwood and Mirabell-Millamant, Wilson seems to explain more clearly, the reasons for the former couples' failure and punishment in the world of the latter couple (1968:185-86). Wilson writes that the witty but unscrupulous Dorimant and Harriet of *The Man of Mode* have become Fainall and Mrs. Marwood in *The Way of the World,* "... who are rejected because of the very qualities which would have made them the top wits of the coterie, a generation earlier" (1968:185). However, Wilson continues that "The coterie has gone, taking its standards [which Fainall and Mrs. Marwood still represent] along into limbo [,and has left its place for the new top wits like Mirabell and Millamant who] are as clever in their ways as Dorimant and Harriet, but who are [additionally] good natured, ... [decent and honourable]" (1968:185-86).

Another important figure of Congreve's *The Way of the World* is Mrs. Fainall, a mistress that Mirabell had discarded and had made to marry Fainall in his libertine past. As the action proceeds, the audience finds out that she had committed vice in

her past. That is, although it seems that she is on the way to her reformation today (Holland 1959:192), she had committed vice by marrying Fainall under false pretenses (Holland 1959:190). However, by attributing her a name that reflects her eagerness in entering into relationships with men and therefore implicity satirizes Arabella's past behaviour, Congreve shows that he does not overlook this fact at all. Yet, Congreve's criticism of Mrs. Fainall's past behaviour becomes more obvious at the end, for then he punishes her by exposing her past affair with Mirabell.

With regard to her past and present conduct and her feelings towards Mirabell the libertine in the past, Mrs. Fainall cannot be considered as a typical discarded mistress. First of all, unlike her proto-types, Mrs. Fainall retains "... her self-respect and [evidently] the respect of her ex-lover, Mirabell" (Barnard 1972:108) who throughout the play approaches her as kindly as possible with an air of a loving brother. Secondly, she does not at all make plans against Mirabell either to win him back or to ruin him. For her, it seems that even "... a liaison with a Mirabell courting Millamant is out of the question" (Barnard 1972: 108). Moreover, although it was in her power to ruin Mirabell before Mrs. Marwood actually did - for she knew Mirabell's plans in advance - Mrs. Fainall does not do it, as she is still fond of her ex-lover. Thirdly, once more very unlike her predecessors, it seems that Mrs. Fainall trusts Mirabell. In the past she had trusted him with her fortune and now at present she trusts him with her reputation. In short, she somehow feels that harm can

come from everyone but Mirabell.

As for the only bumpkinly figure of *The Way of the World,* Sir Willful Witwoud, Lady Wishfort's nephew, can be mentioned. In Birdsall's terms Sir Willful "... represents honest human vitality at its pre-social best" (1970:247). That is, although Sir Willful is genuinely honest (Gibbons 1971:xxvii), his manners seem odd when compared to the manners of other characters in the play. Since he has recently arrived from the country, Sir Willful shows country manners which, in the world of the play, are considered to be vulgarity. For instance, Sir Willful may ask for slippers (III.i. 360); drink too heavily (IV.i. 370) and therefore, smell (IV.i. 371) and may act very shy when talking to a town lady like Mrs. Millamant (IV.i. 364-65) who looks down on him as in her following comment: "Ah, rustic, ruder than Gothic!" (IV.i. 365).

Moreover, although he is at the age of forty, the audience learns that Sir Willful is planning to take up, soon, the Grand Tour. However, as the tour was usually made by young men to complete their education, he sincerely professes to Millamant, only to be mocked at, that he has the enthusiasm to "... understand ... [the] lingo [of the town] one of these days,..." (IV.i. 365). At this point, Wilson (1968:184) rightfully calls Millamant's treatment of Sir Willful as unkind, for the action of the play makes it clear that he is indeed a harmless and an honest bumpkin who lacks only the refinement of decorous manners.

However, during the course of the action in the play Sir Willful proves that he may at times act civilly and sensibly. For instance, his following words reveal that if Millamant does not want to marry him, he definately does not think of imposing himself upon her. He seems to know that forcing would be of no help: "... cousin .... if you have a mind to be married, say the word, and send for the piper; Willful will do't. If not, dust it away, and let's have t'other round" (IV.i. 371). Also, when Millamant declares to vengeful Lady Wishfort that she has already signed the contract of marriage with Mirabell, instead of with Sir Willful, Sir Willful immediately defends Mirabell and persuades Lady Wishfort into consenting to this match. Thus, by accepting the whole situation with ease and understanding, Sir Willful shows that he, too, can act in a civilized manner.

With respect to her manners and her very name Lady Wishfort is a typical representative of the lecherous old woman of the Restoration comedies. Moreover, at the opening of the play, the audience receives a hint from Mirabell that Lady Wishfort has started acting the discarded mistress as well. That is, after having misinterpreted Mirabell's flattery as an interest or love towards herself, and especially after having found out the unpleasing truth about this matter, Lady Wishfort has turned into an enemy of Mirabell. Moreover, she has also started to set up, from then onwards, plans, at least to ruin Mirabell, because she knew by then that it was useless to cherish any hope for winning Mirabell for herself.

Furthermore, it seems that Congreve does not at all leave Lady Wishfort without punishment either. Her major punishment takes place at the end when she finds out that she has been duped three times: twice by Mirabell and once by Mrs. Marwood, whom Lady Wishfort thought until the very last moment to be her close friend.

Another of the stereotyped characters in *The Way of the World* is Witwoud who is a half-brother to Sir Willful. Throughout the play Witwoud proves that he is a follower of Sir Fopling especially in his close pursuit of the mode of the times; yet, Witmoud is somehow less pompous. For instance, similar to Sir Fopling's pursuit of Mrs. Loveit, it seems that Witmoud pursues Millamant also for she is the fashionable *belle* of the day.

Moreover, the implications behind Witmoud's name, plus some of his dialogues in the play show that despite his unsound judgement he is very anxious to appear witty. However, as he is so self-satisfied and as he "... so passionately affects the reputation of understanding raillery, that he will construe an affront into a jest, and call downright rudeness and ill language, satire and fire" (I.i. 328). For instance, although Mirabell and Fainall insult Witmoud in their following conversation, Witmoud's self-satisfaction is so much that he simply does not understand them:

> Witmoud: .... A messanger,... has brought me a letter from the fool my brother [Sir Willful],...

Mirabell: A fool, - and your brother,
Witwoud!
Witwoud: Aye, aye, my half-brother. My
half-brother he is, no nearer, upon honor.
Mirabell: Then 'tis possible he may be
but half a fool.
Witwoud: Good, good, Mirabell, *le drôle!*
[the comic] Good, good; hang him, don't
lets talk of him....
. . . .
Mirabell!
. . . .
My dear, I ask ten thousand pardons -
gad, I have forgot what I was going to
say to you!
Mirabell: I thank you heartily, heartily.
Witwoud : No, but prithee, excuse me - my
memory is such a memory.
Mirabell: Have a care of such apologies,
Witwoud; for I never knew a fool but he
affected to complain either of the spleen
or his memory.
Fainall: What have you done with Petulant?
Witwoud: He's reckoning his money - my
money it was. I have no luck to-day.
Fainall: You may allow him to win of you
at play, for you are sure to be too hard
for him at repartee. Since you monopolize
the wit that is between you, the fortune
must be his, of course (I.i. 329-30).

However, as Holland (1959:190), Muir (1965:229) and Price (1973:543) point out, Witwoud displays in his speeches some sparks of wit from time to time. Yet, Mirabell knows that Witwoud

".... is a fool with a good memory and some few scraps of other folks' with..." (I.i. 328). Also, as Millamant notices that "... Witwoud's wit amounts only to extravagant similies that... establish connections... [which] are not particularly meaningful" (Holland 1959:190), she wants him to have "... truce with ... [his] similitudes for ... [she feels that she is] sick of 'em - " (II.i. 342).

Apart from his making a fool of Witwoud, Congreve seems to satirize him bitterly particularly for one main reason, that is, his ill-treatment of his brother. Thus, when Witmoud meets his half-brother Sir Willful and pretends as if he does not recognize him, Congreve seems to scold Witwoud through the following words of the latter. Congreve makes it clear in this scene that it is not at all a gentlemanly behaviour to deny a brother: "... sir! and you be so cold and so courtly .... 'Sheart, sir, but there is, ... much offence! - A pox, is this your Inns o'Court breeding, not to know your friends and your relations, your elders, and your betters?" (III.i. 358).

Another foppish follower of Millamant is Petulant who can be best characterized by his very name which is suggestive of an ill-nature and therefore, of ill-manners. Thus, in accordance with his evil-nature Petulant is very much pleased to have "... a humor to be cruel" (I.i. 332). For, he seems to think that "... wit lies in impudence, insolence, and bad manners" (Wilson 1968:182), which are, infact, three of the things that

Congreve satirizes in Petulant's character.

Moreover, Congreve criticises Petulant for his hypocrisy (Price 1973:543). That is, although a pretender to chivalrous manners, Petulant's conduct shows that he may at times become as vulgar as Sir Willful. When, for instance, Petulant gets drunk, his real identity comes out to the surface; he speaks to Millamant in an ungentlemanly manner as seen in the speech that follows:

> Petulant: If I have a humor to quarrel,
> I can make less matters conclude premises.-
> If you are not handsome, what then, if I
> have a humor to prove it? If I shall have
> my reward, say so; if not, fight for your
> face next time yourself. I'll go to sleep.
> I'll go to bed to my maid (IV.i. 370).

As Price (1973:544) points out Mirabell's couplet at this point sums up best what Petulant, as well as Witwoud, dramatize in *The Way of the World*: "Where modesty's ill manners, 'tis but fit/ That impudence and malice pass for wit" (I.i. 335).

With regard to the behaviour and conduct of Waitwell, Mirabell's valet, it can be said that he is an awkward model of his master, the libertine, and that Congreve has created him with an aim of displaying and satirizing the manners of both the would-be ladies and of the libertines of the Restoration society. Firstly, in disguise of Sir Rowland, Congreve makes Waitwell woo Wishfort and brings out consequently her lecherous nature for

criticism. Secondly, once more through Waitwell as Sir Rowland, the playwright mocks at the libertine manners by presenting him as a pretender to libertinage:

> Waitwell: Married, knighted, and attended all in one day! 'tis enough to make a man forget himself.... Nay, I shan't be quite the same Waitwell neither; for now I remember me, I'm married and can't be my own man again.
> Aye, there's the grief; that's the sad change of life,
> To lose my title, and yet keep my wife.

As for the character of Foible, it can be said that she is a cunning typical maid of the Restoration comedies who usually play the go-between. Although she is Lady Wishfort's maid, she does not remain loyal to her. She helps Mirabell for money and functions as a match-maker between him and Millamant, and yet, does not remain loyal to him either. Thus, it seems that Congreve satirizes Foible mainly for her double-dealing because she remains loyal to no one but to herself.

Although Mincing is a very minor character in *The Way of the World*, it seems that Congreve has not created her without reason. Congreve criticises in her the typical desire of the maids to behave and act like their ladies. As Mincing's name also suggests, she has a pretense to elegant manners and speech which are displayed in the play by her lady, Millamant. She pronounces, for instance, the words "packet" and "miscallaneous poems" as

"pecquet" (II.i. 342) and "Messalina's poems" (V.i. 386) as Wilson (1959:342) notes. Thus, as she actually is an ignorant girl, her efforts to appear refined prove quite helpless and make her appear, instead, quite ridiculous.

However, with regard to her behaviour towards her lady, Millamant, Congreve seems to have attributed Mincing a positive quality. Although she, too, is bribed like Foible into cheating Lady Wishfort which she herself admits (V.i. 386), she somehow remains loyal to her lady Millamant. That is, unlike Foible, she neither speaks nor makes plans against Millamant; she is honest towards her lady.

With regard to the way in which Congreve uses the language in *The Way of the World* it can be said that he does achieve decorum of speech; that is, the personalities or the class that Congreve's characters belong to are revealed by the way they speak. For instance, Congreve shows in Sir Willful's incapability of understanding Millamant's "lingo" (IV.i. 365) that he belongs to the country and that he is no equal of the heroine. However, as Congreve makes Mirabell complete the couplet that she utters immediately after this scene, he seems to suggest in terms of language that it is Mirabell who belongs to Millamant's "poetic world" not Sir Willful (Birdsall 1970:242):

> Mrs. Millamant: I swear it will not do its part,
> Though thou dost time,
> employs't thy power and art.

> Natural, easy Suckling!
> Sir Willful: Anan? Suckling? No such
> suckling neither, cousin, nor stripling;
> I thank heaven, I'm no minor.
> . . . .
> Mrs. Millamant: Aye, aye; ha, ha, ha!
> Like Phoebus sung the no
> less amorous boy.
> ENTER MIRABELL
> Mirabell: "Like Daphne she, as lovely and
> as coy" (IV.i. 364-66).

As for another instance in which Congreve couples Mirabell and Millamant linguistically, the following exchange may be more illustrative. The verbal fencing in this particular scene reveals that Mirabell and Millamant are speaking the same language and therefore can be a perfect match:

> Mirabell: .... you are no longer handsome
> when you've lost your lover; your beauty
> dies upon the instant, for beauty is the
> lover's gift. 'Tis he bestows your charms-
> your glass is all a cheat. The ugly and the
> old, whom the looking-glass mortifies, yet
> after commendation can be flattered by it
> and discover beauties in it; for that
> reflects our praises, rather than your face.
> Mrs. Millamant: Oh, the vanity of these men!
> .... If they did not commend us, we are not
> handsome!... they could not commend one, if
> one was not handsome. Beauty the lover's gift!
> - Lord, what is a lover, that it can give?
> Why one makes lovers as fast as one pleases,

> and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases: and then, if one pleases, one makes more (II.i. 343).

Lastly, it can be said that Congreve makes use of the language used by his characters to satirize them. For instance, Congreve exposes and satirizes Petulant's hypocrisy by attributing him, when drunk, the language of a vulgar person that would not suit his gentlemanly appearance (IV.i. 370). He also exposes and satirizes Lady Wishfort's hypocrisy by making her, as in the scene that follows, forget about the formalities of speech when in a state of anger:

> Lady Wishfort: [Addressing Sir Willful upon seeing him drunk].... Go lie down and sleep, you sot! - or, as I'm a person, I'll have you bastinadoed with broom-sticks....
>
> . . . .
>
> Dear Cousin Witmoud, get him [Sir Willful] away, and you will bind me to you, inviolably. I have an affair of moment that invades me with some precipitation. You will oblige me to all futurity (IV.i. 372).

With regard to its structural framework, *The Way of the World* is made up of three scenes presented in five acts. That is, the scene in Act III continues onto the last two acts of the play. Thus, starting from the third act, the action of the play takes place in a room in Lady Wishfort's house.

As for the plot construction of the play, it seems that Congreve has achieved in *The Way of the World* something different than his predecessors. First of all Congreve's plot begins somewhat in *medias res* or in the middle of the action which the playwright reveals gradually to create suspense and therefore, to guarantee the plot's success (Holland 1959:178; Roberts 1972:51).[45] For instance, at the opening scene of the play when Fainall and Mirabell are playing cards, Congreve hints through Mirabell's happiness over the marriage of his servant to Foible that he is moving towards the completion of some design. Yet Congreve manages to conceal this design until the end with such great skill that it keeps the audience almost always in anticipation (Gibbons 1971: xix; Roberts 1972:52).

Another hidden fact which Congreve implies initially in the first act but reveals openly in the second, is that there is an illicit affair going on between Fainall and Mrs. Marwood. Moreover, while the audience is given the hint of Mrs. Marwood's interest in Mirabell in the second act, the truth is only to be revealed in the third. Furthermore, by contriving Frainall's

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[45] However, at this point Barnard points to the fact that "... the root cause of the charge that *The Way of the World*'s plot is incomprehensible" has also been this very attempt of Congreve "... to manipulate suspense in this way" (1972:107). Infact, it is true that the plot has some defects: firstly that it leads the audience to some loose ends (Corman 1975:210-11) and leaves some problems unsolved or some questions unanswered, and secondly that almost all of the intrigues are crowded into the last act to be exposed or solved (Leech 1966:140).

exit after his black-mailing Lady Wishfort, Congreve manages to create suspense even in this climactic scene. For during this time Congreve manages to keep the audience in anticipation of a favourable solution to be offered at any time by any of the characters that Lady Wishfort talks to.

In the Way of the World one cannot observe the common higher and lower plots of the Restoration comedies. For, it seems that Congreve's characters all line in the same world where the good of the higher and the evil of the lower plots commingle. Hence, since Congreve's characters, and especially Mirabell and Millamant, combine in their personalities both the good and the evil of their world, Congreve seems to have let them live, together with the other characters in the one and only plot of *The Way of the World.*

Furthermore, it seems that Congreve makes use of some technical devices in contribution to both his characterisation and his satirizing of certain practices in his society. For instance, Congreve reveals and satirizes Millamant's cruel nature, through her very own song which she sings after playing upon Mrs. Marwood's jealousy (III.i. 355). Moreover, in the following song of Sir Wilfull, which he sings when completely drunk, Congreve achieves, firstly, an exposition of Sir Wilfull's vulgar nature and secondly an attack on the "gentlemen's" habit of drinking:

Sir Wilfull: .... To drink is a Christian diversion,
Unknown to the Turk or the Persian;
Let Mahometan fools
Live by heathenish rules,
And he damned over tea-cups and coffee
But let British lads sing;
Crown a health to the king,
And a fig for your sultan and sophy!
(IV.i. 372).

Apart from these noted songs, it seems that Congreve makes use of particularly two other devices of technique, which are disguise and overheard conversations, in contribution to the development of plot in *The Way of the World*. In fact, it seems that the play's plot is dependant almost entirely on these devices. For, it is through Waitwell's disguise that Mirabell hopes to succeed in marrying Millamant which constitutes the main action of the play. Furthermore, it is also a consequence of an overheard conversation that Mrs. Marwood's hatred is aroused into setting up, with the help of Fainall, the counter-action in *The Way of the World*.

Furthermore, Congreve uses *deux-ex-machina* for the denoument of his play, *The Way of the World*. However, he employs the *deux-ex-machina* almost as a natural outcome of the events of the plot. Congreve gives, for instance, the hint at the beginning of the play that Mirabell is ready with a "remedy" for Mrs. Fainall, "When you are weary of him [Fainall]" (II.i. 341). Thus, it seems that when Fainall proves trecherous, as Mirabell had already guessed, the box which contains offical papers will come out to

the open and save Mrs. Fainall from this difficult situation.

Lastly, as for Congreve's employing of dance at the close of *The Way of the World*, it can be said that it functions almost as a celebration of the emancipation of some of the characters from Lady Wishfort's control (Holland 1959:182). As Lady Wishfort gives up dancing after saying that, "As I am a person, I can hold out no longer" (V.i. 388-89), it seems that she also gives up her powerful position over people like her daughter Mrs. Fainall, her niece Millamant and her nephew, Sir Willful. In fact, although Mrs. Fainall's emancipation takes place as a natural consequence of the events of the plot, for Lady Wishfort no longer has the control of her daughter's estate, the latter two still need to receive their aunt's consent for freedom. However, when finally Lady Wishfort consents to Millamant and Mirabell's marriage, she automatically frees and saves Sir Willful, too, from taking up a marriage of "convenience" with Millamant.

Among the set scenes of the Restoration comedies, the lady and the maid scene can be observed in *The Way of the World* (III.i. 347-50). Congreve presents in this scene the hypocritical Lady Wishfort at her toilet. As Lady Wishfort knows in this scene that she and Peg, and Foible her maids, are alone, she easily drops her mask of civilized manners. That is, while her maids help her with her make-up and dressing-up, Lady Wishfort swears, drinks cherry-brandy and makes plans to ruin Mirabell:

> Peg: .... I cannot come at the paint, madam; Mrs. Foible has locked it up and carried the key with her.
> Lady Wishfort: A pox take you both! Fetch me the cherry-brandy then. (Exit Peg) I'm as pale and as faint,.... Wench! Come, come, Wench, what art than doing? Sipping? Tasting? Save thee., dost thou not know the bottle?
> Enter Peg with a bottle and china cup
> Peg: Madam, I was looking for a cup.
> Lady Wishfort: A cup, save thee! and what a cup hast thou brought!... Why didst thou not bring thy thimble?
> .... I warrant thee. Come, fill, fill!-
> So - again - (One knocks) - See' who that is. Set down the bottle first. Here, here, under the table....
> . . . .
> Odds my life, ... I'll have him [Mirabell] murdered! I'll have him poisoned!...
> Audacious villain!.... Was there ever such a foul-mouthed fellow? I'll be married to-morrow; I'll be contracted to-night [to Sir Rowland, the "uncle" of Mirabell and, therefore get him disinherited]" (II.i. 347-49).

In *The Way of the World* these seems to be two unmasking scenes of the "libertine" both of which are expositions in front of Lady Wishfort of all of Mirabell's secret plans. From what Mirabell and Fainall converse at the opening scene of the play, it becomes clear that Lady Wishfort had already made a discovery of Mirabell's recent "sham addresses to her" (I.i. 325). In other

words, it seems that the first of these unmasking scenes had already taken place before the play began.

As for the second of these expositions, however, Act V. scene i (377) may be referred to. In this particular scene Foible unmasks Mirabell in his absence and makes Lady Wishfort see his true face once more. She reveals to Lady Wishfort that "Sir Rowland" is actually Mirabell's servant and he "... could not marry your ladyship,.... for he was married to me first" (V.i. 377).

In *The Way of the World* the last of the common scenes of the Restoration comedies, that is, the proviso scene can also be observed. In this scene, using highly witty language, the two protagonists do indeed fullfil what the audience expects from them in such contract scenes. As can be seen from their following conversation, Millamant, the heroine lists her provises mainly in demand of freedom and equality even within the bonds of marriage, while Mirabell[46] is in demand of an honest and respectful relationship:

> Mrs. Millamant: .... My dear liberty, shall
> I leave thee? my faithful solitude, ...
> must I bid you then adieu? Ay-h adieu-my
> morning thoughts agreeable walkings,
> indolent slumbers, all *ye douceurs, ye*

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[46]At this point Roberts (1972:45) refers to an interesting point that Mirabell's provisos further provide the audience with "... a catalogue of structural props and variations upon which much of the intrigue in Restoration comedy is based".

sommeils du matin [sweetness, morning
slumbers[, *adieu*. - I can't do't, 'tis
more than impossible.

. . . .

Trifles - as liberty to pay and receive
visits to and from whom I please; to
write and receive letters, without inter-
rogatories or wry faces on your part;
to wear what I please, and choose con-
versation with regard only to my own taste....
come to dinner when I please.... To have
my closet inviolate; to be sole empress
of my tea-table....

. . . .

Mirabell: .... *Imprimis* then, I covenant
that your acquaintance be general; that
you admit no sworn confidante or intimate
of your own sex - no she-friend to screen
her affairs under your countenance, and
tempt you to make trial of a mutual secrecy....

. . . .

Item I article that you continue to like
your own face.... that you endeavour not to
new-coin it. To which end, ... I prohibit
all masks for the night, made of oiled -
skins and I know not what .... I forbid
all commerce with the gentlewoman in what-
d'ye-call-it Court. *Item*. I shut my doors
against all bawds with basket ... etc....
Item, when you shall be breeding.... I
denounce ... squeezing for a shape ....
Lastly to the dominion of the tea-table
I sumbit but with proviso, that you ...
restrain yourself to native and simple tea-
table drinks... as likewise to genuine...
tea-table talk... but on no account you

> enroach upon the men's prerogative, and
> presume to drink healths or toast fellows
> (IV.i. 366-68).

In *The Way of the World* Congreve deals more or less with the common themes of the Restoration comedies. For instance, he conveys through his play firstly, the theme of the pursuit of the opposite sex and money. With the exception of Millamant, Mrs. Fainall and Sir Willful, Congreve depicts almost all of the characters either in pursuit of sex or of money or of both.

As for Mirabell, the hero of the play, it can be said that he is mainly after Millamant. However, his struggling throughout the play to receive Lady Wishfort's consent for marrying Millamant, proves that Mirabell is not at all careless about money as this would win Millamant the rest of her fortune. With Fainall, the situation is quite similar. However, unlike Mirabell, Fainall's major interest throughout the play seems to be to get a hold of The Wishfort family fortune (Corman 1975:207). Yet, some of his conduct prove that he, too, is not at all careless about the opposite sex either. One may even presume at this point that Fainall still loves and pursues Mrs. Marwood, his mistress.

With regard to their conduct and behaviour in *The Way of the World* it can be said that among the remaining characters, the members of the *beau monde* are mainly in pursuit of the opposite sex while the servants, in pursuit of money. Hence, on one hand

Mrs. Marwood and Lady Wishfort are both seen in pursuit of Mirabell (however, the latter is additionally in pursuit of "Sir Rowland"), and Witmond and Petulant, in pursuit of Millamant. On the other hand, the servants, Waitwell and Foible, are detected in pursuit of fortune as Mirabell makes it clear at the beginning of the play that he had bribed them into marriage (II.i. 346).

As being the next common theme of the Restoration comedies and of *The Way of the World*, Congreve works upon the contrast of the country and the town values. In an attempt to convey his theme, Congreve presents Sir Willful Witwoud, the only representative of the country, in opposition to the rest of the characters who, with the exception of the servants, are the represantatives of the town. As a natural consequence of this clash of values Congreve makes some members of the town circle despise and look down on the country and everything that is related to it. For instance, Millamant "nauseate[s] walking; [because] 'tis a country diversion " (IV.i. 365). Also, Witmoud pretends not to have recognized his half brother, Sir Willful because "... I tell you... to know relations... [or] kiss one another when they meet... [is] not the fashion here [in town]" (III.i. 358). Moreover, once Lady Wishfort asks for Mrs. Marwood's pardon for Sir Willful's indecorus manner because having recently arrived from the country, she finds him "a little unbred..." (III.i. 360).

Another common theme in *The Way of the World* is, the cynicism about love and marriage. In relation to the development

of this theme, it seems that Congreve places Fainall or the cynical libertine of the previous decades at the negative end and at the positive end, Mirabell or the optimistic, reformed rake hero of the new times. Infact, Congreve displays the clash of these values right at the beginning of the play where he makes Fainall and Mirabell exchange a dialogue on marriage (I.i. 327). In this particular scene, while Mirabell's speech reveals that he has faith in marriage and in Millamant, the woman he loves, Fainall's speech reveals quite the opposite. That, he neither trusts women nor has faith in marriage (I.i. 327).

The title *The Way of the World* which Congreve had attributed to his comedy, serves, infact, as a means to convey his next theme in the play: the discrepancy between appearance and nature (Holland 1959:193). With the exception of Millamant and Sir Willful, it seems that Congreve supports this theme with the help of all of his characters in the play. That is, Congreve makes them act in the way of the world or in accordance with "... the blend of behavior patterns [which are insincere but which are nevertheless] approved by the polite society (Wilson 1968:178). For instance, Mirabell's wooing of Lady Wishfort is actually a cover-up for his real intentions; that is, in order to achieve his aims Mirabell makes use of his knowledge of the discrepancy between appearanca and nature or the ways of the world. Also, it seems that the marriage relationship of the Fainalls' is based on a similar kind of knowledge. That is, Arabella marries Fainall to cover up the product of her affair with Mirabell while Fainall,

to finance his illicit affair with Mrs. Marwood. Moreover, while Mrs. Marwood proves through her conduct that she is a hypocrite with regard to her double-dealing towards her friend, Lady Wishfort, the latter proves through the discrepany between her appearance and real self that she, too, is no better.

As for the remaining characters like Witwoud and Petulant plus the servants like Waitwell, Foible and Mincing, it can be said that they, too, help Congreve illustrate his theme of the difference between appearance and reality. For instance, although neither Witwoud nor Petulant are in love with Millamant, for they feel that they "... can never break ... [their] heart[s] for [her]" (I.i. 333), they still pursue her and they do this only for the sake of conforming to the fashion of the times as well as to retain their reputation as "libertines". Lastly, especially through Foible's conduct among the servants, Congreve underlines this theme once more. By depicting Foible as a true double-dealer in the play, Congreve suggests that there is in this world a discrepancy between the appearances and natures of the masters and the servants alike.

As for Congreve's next and last theme in *The Way of the World*, it can be said that he works upon destructive forces versus creative forces or a degeneration versus a reformation process (Birdsall 1970:245-46). That is, the play demonstrates, in a way, the reformation process of Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall, the

representatives of creative forces[47] in constrast to the degeneration process of Fainall and Mrs. Marwood, the representatives of destructive forces (Gibbons 1971:xxv). For instance, some of Mirabell's conduct in the play prove that he is at least on his way to reformation. Firstly, he is not cynical: he has faith in marriage and in his mistress, Millamant; secondly, he is honest and loyal to the woman he loves which is evident from his rejection of both Lady Wishfort and Mrs. Marwood; thirdly it is clear that he provides for the well-fare of Mrs. Fainall, though a discarded mistress.

A similar development can be observed in Mrs. Fainall's conduct. She never thinks, for instance, of taking revenge from Mirabell for having discarded her in the past. Infact, she even takes sides with him as his confidante and helps, in a way, Mirabell to carry out his plans.

However, in complete contrast to the positive change in Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall's conduct, Fainall and Mrs. Marwood display a change in the negative sense. As the action proceeds they come into the realization of things that do not at all please them. Mrs. Marwood understands that Mirabell, the man whom she

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[47] Millamant can also be included among creative forces.

always loved, actually hates her; and Fainall, finds out that his wife had once been Mirabell's mistress. Thus, Fainall and Mrs. Marwood immediately turn into enemies and provide with their conduct henceforward, antitheses to Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall: they set up plans throughout the play to make life difficult for the latter two.

Finally, it seems that there are four key words to the messages that Congreve conveys through *The Way of the World*: honesty, freedom, reason and self-control. For instance, by satirizing false relationships of couples both in and outside marriage, like Fainall-Mrs. Fainall, Fainall-Mrs. Marwood and Millamant-Sir Willful, Congreve seems to suggest that such relationships should actually be based on mutual love, honesty, respect and self-control. On the other hand, however, Congreve presents the audience with an ideal couple, Mirabell and Millamant or the future husband and wife of the play, and suggests through their conduct, especially in the proviso scene, that marriages can only be successful if the couples can turn the institution of marriage into a harmonious discipline where love, honesty, respect and dignity are combined.

Also, it seems that Congreve tries to convey through *The Way of the World* his belief in the necessity of exercising reason and self-control in the expressing of the true-self. In other words, Congreve reflects in the play that genuine feelings or manners of a person ought to go through the filter of decorum

before revealed openly in public (Holland 1959:195). Hence, since too much adherence to decorum results in hypocrisy as in the case of Fainall, Mrs. Marwood and Lady Wishfort, and since too little adherence, in vulgarity or foolishness as in the case of Sir Willful, Congreve suggests through the examples of Mirabell and Millamant that one should express one's self through balancing the two.

CONCLUSION

In the three representative Restoration comedies of manners that are examined in this study, there can be observed a gradual development in technique; that is, in characterization, style and structure.

With regard to Wycherley's, Etherege's and Congreve's characterization in *The Country Wife,* in *The Man of Mode* and in *The Way of the World* respectively, it can be said that flat types have gradually been replaced almost by round characters. The most significant change, however, takes place in the presentation of the libertine figures.

Wycherley's Horner, to begin with, displays the characteristics of a true libertine whose only aim is to pursue and satisfy his sexual desires. During the course of the play there is no change whatsoever in him.He remains at the end of the play the same as what he was at the beginning, that is, as a "horner" or a cuckold-maker.

However, in Etherege's Dorimant a certain kind of development of character can be detected. Dorimant's name, in the first place, is an illustration of this argument: unlike Horner's, it is no more an allegorical tag which defines only one character trait, but a real name. Moreover, although Dorimant, too, is a

follower of his natural instincts like Horner, his final consenting to the country for the sake of the woman he loves, may lead one into presuming that he is on his way of reformation and most likely will have reformed by the end of the trip.

As for Mirabell it can be said that Congreve depicts him almost like a round character. In other words, it seems that Mirabell has individuality and that he is not merely an egoistical, pleasure-seeking libertine like his prototypes. It is true that his past conduct reveals his libertinism; yet Mirabell is additionally sensitive and compassionate. Moreover, unlike Horner and Dorimant he is not at all cynical about love and marriage. He is a combination of the libertine and sensible man. Hence, despite Horner's and even Dorimant's disbelief in the possibility of an ideal relationship with the opposite sex, Mirabell proves that he has extra sensibility to have faith in the possibility of maintaining a healthy relationship with his lover Millamant whom he loves and trusts with all his heart. Hence, it can be concluded that the depiction of Horner merely as a "black" character in *The Country Wife* gradually leaves its place, through Dorimant of *The Man of Mode*, to a gray, a more true-to-life, individual-like presentation of Mirabell in *The Way of the World*.

In order to trace the line of development in the characterization of the female libertines, one must not overlook the country-wife Margery in Wycherley's play. For, although Margery cannot at all be considered a female libertine like Harriet or Millamant she

she seems to have been drawn very close to the type. Compared to the two libertines Harriet and Millamant, the country-wife Margery is naive and ignorant and therefore she lacks the refined manners and wit of the other two. Moreover Margery acts rather like the male libertine: she displays no self-control and does almost anything to satisfy her pleasure-seeking nature. In other words unlike the the female libertines of Wycherley's and Etherege,s comedies, Margery practises indeed what she preaches.

At this point, however, it must be noted that Millamant is not merely a female libertine like Harriet. She combines in her personality the qualities of a sensible female as well. Although she rejects the oppression of sexual instincts and the natural self like a female libertine, she uses, for instance, her reason, practises restraint and expresses her feelings and self within the social code.

Hence, along with the development from type to round character, it seems that a major development in characterization is present in the libertine couple of the Restoration comedies. What wcherley and Etherege portrayed as the libertine couple in their comedies becomes one with the sensible couple in Congreve's *The Way of the World*. That the libertines Mirabell-Millamant are also as sensible as Harcourt-Alithea or Young Bellair-Emilia.

Also, among the discarded mistresses in these three representative Restoration comedies, Congreve's Mrs Fainall seems

to divert from the standard. Different from a discarded Lady Fidget or Mrs Loveit, Mrs Fainall is on her way towards reformation through past experience. Although her previous affair with Mirabell and her marriage to Fainall prove that she has committed vice in the past, she no more has such intensions. Moreover, again unlike her prototypes, Mrs Fainall is not spiteful towards the man who has discarded her. Instead she displays an attitude that makes her more that merely a stereo-typed discarded mistress :she shows love and respect towards her ex-lover.

Finally with regard to Wycherley's, Etherege's and Congreve's treatment of the sewant characters in their comedies it can be said that the servants gradually gain importance and even personality. The comparatively insignificant servant figures of Wycherley's and Etherege's comedies became so important personalities in Congreve's *The Way of the World* that they actually contribute to the plot development. It is through Waitwell's disguise, for instance that the main action of *The Way of the World* is carried out, and it is through Foible's conversation with Mrs Fainall that Mrs marwood lerns about Mirabell's plottings and prepares her counterplot. Furthermore, it seems that Foible and Waitwell gain so much personality with Congreve's treatment that they not only contribute to the plot development and also to the satirizing of others' follies but are satirized for their own misconduct as well.

There cn also be observed a gradual change in the language and style employed by these playwrights. In *The Country Wife*

to begin with, Wycherley attributes to his characters such a language that helps him mainly with his satirizing in the play. His language is simple and clear but is, at the same time, bitter and, at times, biting. Wycherley expresses emotions mainly through the use of the *double entendre* and pun , and thus without the refinement of wit that is dominant especially in Congreve's play.

In Etherege's *The Man of Mode*, however, the libertine Dorimant is not only witty himself but finds a true counterpart who equates and challenges him in any competition of wit. Thus naturally enough, Dorimant and Harriet do bring into Etherege's play an air of refinement. Although the orange-wench and even Dorimant still use the *double entendre* or pun in their speeches , it seems that the play-upon-ideas holds a larger space in *The Man of Mode* than they do in *The Country Wife*.

In *The Way of the World* it seems that Congreve brings the language, as well as everything else, into perfection; and he does this by means of a very skillful employing and handling of wit throughout his comedy. Unlike Wycherley or Etherege, Congreve does not let the *double entendre* and pun disturb the subtlety of his wit which, though naturally limited in a witwoud, for instance, is possessed almost by all of his characters in *The Way of the World*. In fact, it is mainly this artful employing of wit that renders Congreve's style and his comedy the best among the three major Restoration comedies that are examined in this study.

In *The Way of the World* Congreve's satirizing of his characters is the most refined compared to the other two writers'. Congreve does not at all damn his characters for their follies like Wycherley does, and he is not cynical about human perfection like Etherege is. Instead, there seems to lie beneath Congreve's criticisms, a sort of tenderness and understanding towards human frailties (Wilson 1968) and a hope that a favourable change can always take place.

Among the structural characteristics of the Restoration comedies of manners there can be observed in the first place , a change in the lower and higher plots. These two plots which distinguish the good from the bad characters almost with clear-cut lines in *The Country Wife* and in *The Man of Mode* disappear in *The Way of the World*. Thus, even though these two plots are combined into one whole plot in Congreve's comedy, the growing complexity of the relationships between characters give way to more intrigue and therefore render the plot more intricate.

Likewise, it seems that a gradual development takes place in two of the set scenes of the Restoration comedies. The lady and the maid scene is the first of these scenes and it does not even take place in Wycherley's *The Country Wife*. However Etherege presents this scene almost in its full terms in *The Man of Mode*. Yet in Congreve's *The Way of the World* the "discarded" Lady Wishfort fulfills the necessities of this scene more colourfully and superbly as she drinks secretly, talks bawdy and contrives plots

against the libertine who has "discarded" her.

The second and perhaps a more significant set scene which gradually develops and forms a standard for the Restoration comedies is the proviso scene. However, this scene is not present in Wycherley's play either. Moreover, even Etherege in *The Man of Mode* does not yet introduce the audience with such a scene in its fullest terms. Thus, it is only with Congreve's *The Way of the World* , or the century's final example of a Restoration comedy that a true contract scene can be observed.

As a matter of fact, despite all the developments in technique which are studied in *The Country Wife*, *The Man of Mode* and *The Way of the World* in this thesis no significant change could be observed in the themes that are developed in these comedies. That is, all three of the Restoration comedies of manners deal mainly with current themes like the pursuit of sex and money or being cynical about love and marriage or looking down on the country or the difference between appearance and reality or passion versus self-control. The dramatists' handling of these serious themes in their comedies indeed free the genre of the repeated charge of superfluousness and obscenity. Thatis, in the light of the messages which are drawn from these themes and which advise people true love, honesty, plain-dealing, trust and respect in relationships leading to a marriage it can be stated that the Restoration comedy of manners is a satirical type of comedy with serious messages and therefore aims.

As a matter of fact, Restoration comedy of manners shows a never-ending line of development since the Restoration of Charles II when this type of comedy actually came into being. Thus, after Wycherley, Etherege and Congreve whose major comedies are examined in this study one can look for further developments in this genre in Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773) and Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* (1777), in the eighteenth, Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895) in the nineteenth, Noel Coward's *Private Lives* (1930) and Alan Ayckbourn's *How the Other Half Loves* (1969) in the twentieth centuries.

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T. C.
Yükseköğretim Kurulu
Dokümantasyon Merkezi