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Domestics in the English comedy : 1660-1737

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Domestics in the English Comedy: 1660-1737

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor of
the University of Wales**

by

Hassan Al-Muhammad

University of Wales
Bangor, 1998



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Abstract

In this study I have sought to examine the portraiture of domestic servants in the comedies from the Restoration period to the earlier part of the eighteenth century. The examination is intended to evaluate the reliability of those comedies as a source of information on domestic service, and to consider to what extent the classical and Renaissance ancestry and the cultural shifts affected the representation of domestics on the stage, and how far away historical realities are from that representation.

This task made it necessary for me to investigate, in the first chapter, the representation of domestics in the classical literary inheritance of Greece and Rome to use it as a point of reference for further discussion. I also made a compact survey of the role and the portrayal of domestics in the Renaissance comedies of Italy, England and France, and in the Spanish comedy of the Golden Age.

In the second chapter I carried out an investigation of the historical realities of domestic service in the period in question. This allows for a corroborated judgement on the portraiture of servants in the comedies of the period and the representation of domestics on the stage. This judgement should establish the extent to which the comedies of the period 1660-1737 could be relied upon as sources of historical information.

In Chapter Three a number of comedies by the most notable playwrights of the Restoration period - like Sedley, Etherege, Wycherley, Dryden, Shadwell, Otway, Behn, and Crowne - were investigated to establish the facts about the stereotyped representation of servants regardless of the historical realities regarding the problems and dilemmas of the domestic servants. Some social facts and the literature of the reforming pamphleteers which affected the portraiture of domestics on stage have been taken into consideration.

In Chapter Four the same argument was further supported by comparing and contrasting the stage representation of domestics in a number of comedies - produced in the earlier part of the eighteenth century and written by Congreve, Burnaby, Centlivre, Addison, Cibber, Farquhar, and Steele - with the historical realities and with the portraiture of servants in the classical and Renaissance comedies. To support the historical evidence further, I endeavoured to examine the complaints of masters against their servants in The Tatler and The Spectator, and concluded the chapter with a statement of my findings.



Preface

In this study which I have carried out on a number of comedies produced in the Restoration and the earlier part of the eighteenth century I have examined a good number of the major comedies and a number of the minor ones produced in that period. I have tried to relate the major features of the representation of domestic service in these comedies to the main social and theatrical factors which affected its depiction in the comedy of the period in question. I also considered the stage representation of domestic servants in those comedies against a background of historical information in an attempt to establish the credibility in historical documentation of those comedies. Comparisons and contrasts between the main characteristics of domestics in these comedies and those of domestics in classical and Renaissance comedies have been carried out whenever necessary and helpful throughout this study. These contrasts and comparisons prove the repetitive modelling of the image of servants and the stereotyped representation of domestic servants in those comedies.

Critical comments on the domestics of the Restoration period and those of the eighteenth

century can be found scattered here and there in various books which deal with different topics and subject-matter, but a specialized and an individual study of domestic servants in the English comedies between 1660 and 1737 has not been carried out before.

Chapter I

**The Literary Inheritance: Greece,
Rome, Italy, Spain, England,
and France**

I. Introduction

Any practical study of the servant-character in comedy would be incomplete and even inconceivable if the classical literary legacy were ignored or missed out. This legacy not only established slaves and servants as comic types, but also continued to determine and shape their portraiture for ages to come.

II. Greece

The Greek New Comedy of Menander (342-291 B.C.) differed from the Old Comedy of Aristophanes in many aspects, the most significant of which is its keen interest in everyday life and family affairs. This fertile comedy provided a rich source of raw material and subject-matter for the Roman comedies known as palliatae. Through close adaptations from Menander and some of his contemporaries, Plautus and Terence transmitted the tradition of the New Comedy to the modern world. Renaissance comedy in many European countries drew heavily on Menander's comedy through the adaptations of Plautus and Terence.

Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors, for example, is a direct adaptation of Plautus' Menaechmi. Scenes and characters from the New Comedy abound in the Italian commedia dell'arte and the Spanish comedias. In the eighteenth century, the influence of the New Comedy is particularly apparent in the comedies which deal with family affairs especially those of

Goldsmith and Sheridan. The Restoration comedy of manners and the modern situation comedy are no exception. In fact, the influence of the New Comedy, not only from a thematic point of view, but also from a structural viewpoint, is so strong that one cannot help wondering how comedy would have looked had it not been shaped and moulded by the Greeks of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.

As a starting point to a fuller exploration of the nature of New Comedy, I should like to quote Philip Vellacott's differentiation between the Old Comedy of Aristophanes and the New Comedy of Menander:

Imagination gives place to observation, fantasy to realism. The predicament of humble obstinate humanity in the organised State, protesting against wars and taxes and regulations and the power of money, is replaced by the predicament of the ordinary husband, son or lover, who in a world complicated by multifarious divisions into hostile camps - rich and poor, slave and free, old and young, native and foreign, and above all male and female - struggles through mischance and bewilderment to be in some degree faithful both to himself and to his neighbour; in other words to achieve on the domestic level that same idea of dike which

the men and women of Tragedy sought on the heroic level.¹

Remarkably enough, one of the changes that featured prominently in Aristophanes' last surviving play, Wealth (388 B.C.), is the prominence of Chremylos' slave Karion. In structural significance his role goes beyond those of his predecessors in plays like The Frogs: when trivial and more mundane concerns move up the ladder of priorities, the components of the infra-structure of society, in which slaves and servants could be deemed an important segment, outstrip the more sublime components. In the opening lines of the play, Chremylos and Karion talk to each other almost as equals, and their relationship derives its importance from the fact that such a relationship signifies the emergence of a new and more realistic form which was to be developed and further emphasized in the New Comedy of Menander. This comparatively new shift and some others, like the "circumscribed scene"² in the later comedies of Aristophanes, show that this playwright "has moved from writing topical fantasies to depicting what Thornton Wilder, in his preface to Our Town, was to call 'the generalized occasion'."³

Despite the scanty heritage of Menander's plays that is available to us - one complete play which is the Dyskolos and sizable portions of five others -

"the hallmarks of a strong tradition are apparent on every page of Menander."⁴ Among these hallmarks three are of particular importance. The first is that the number of characters is restricted, and furthermore they appear in similar roles with the same names: "Smikrines will be an old, often miserly man. Moschion is a young lover, and Daos is a faithful slave. Sostratos, Gorgias, and Charisios are also young men, Demeas and Laches fathers, Getas and Parmenon slaves."⁵

Minor characters such as cooks and parasites appear infrequently as stock types, mainly for comic purposes. The second hallmark, and the most important one at least when the slave-character is the focus of attention, is the limited number of dramatic situations. In all the extant plays, the dramatic situation is represented either by the ordeal of a young man having difficulties in getting a girl or by the reunion of an estranged couple. The role the slaves play in bringing about a happy ending to the young man's ordeal or the couple's estrangement, though not as magnified and accentuated as it is in Plautus and Terence and even in Renaissance comedy, is very important. Their stereotyped unscrupulousness helps them a great deal in playing tricks that cannot be carried out by the afflicted characters for many reasons, the most important of which is the necessity of observing certain etiquette and norms of behaviour that are

associated with rank and social status. This is not to forget the dexterity and professionalism of slaves in the art of trickery, which is almost a part of their jobs. The third hallmark is structural. This is to say that all the plays conform to a five-act pattern, and the acts are separated by unrelated musical interludes unlike the commentary chorus of Aristophanes' comedy.

Dyskolos, though by no means the best of Menander's comedies, derives its importance from being the only complete one. It was discovered as recently as 1955. Slaves in this play are not as brilliant and quick-witted as Onesimos in Epitrepontes (The Arbitration). Nevertheless, their vivacity and sometimes rudeness provide a somewhat audacious fun and humour occasioned by the farcical tormenting of Cnemon by the boisterous Getas and Sicon. It can be argued that it is this very source of fun which, together with the well episode, convinces the grouch of not only the inevitability but also the necessity of mingling and making contact with others outside his household's residents, and this eventually leads to the redemption of the seemingly incorrigible misanthropist. Onesimos in Epitrepontes is not as he initially looks, a stock figure characterized by everlasting inclination to plotting, swearing, playing tricks, and speaking out of turn. He has "a quite personal selection of qualities to distinguish

him: an itch for meddling, a preoccupation with dodging trouble, a delight in philosophical discourse and psychological diagnosis."⁶ In Act 4 of Epitrepontes, this remarkable slave displays an extraordinary understanding of his position with overtones of regret and dissatisfaction:

Human life is all peril and uncertainty
Look at me: what's my city? my safeguard? my law?
My one judge of all right or wrong? My master is
All these to me. At his sole pleasure I must
live.⁷

In Act 5, he announces his ever-active appetite for knowing about others' affairs: "There's nothing I love more than finding everything out. . . ."⁸ In this he plays the spokesman of all ambitious slaves who know quite well that a close knowledge of their master's affairs and hang-ups gives them more credit and power, and in some cases more authority and freedom than is usually allowed to slaves. One remarkable dialogue is that in Act 5 between Smicrines and Onesimos, in which the slave explains to Smicrines how the gods care about them:

. . . They assign to each man his appropriate
Character, to command the garrison of his soul.
This inner force drives one man straight to
ruin; if ever

He has abused it; leads another to happiness.

Character is our god, which apportions to each man

Good luck or bad. Propitiate this god, by acting kindly and decently; and deserve a happy life.⁹

The subtlety of this speech consists in its appropriateness as a gimmick or as a part of the process of persuasion by which Onesimos tries to dissuade Smicrines from taking his daughter from Onesimos' master Charisios. It also represents one of the diplomatic ways in which slaves and servants try to secure a better treatment by their keepers. This style of dialogue, in which slaves play preachers in an entreatingly patronizing way, is also a precursor of an overall change of the attitudes of people towards each other. In other words, such allowances to minor characters to speak out about their own understanding of things are the beginnings of a human understanding of relations between people and a mild declaration of the need to replace the old system with a more realistic and enlightened one.

In Dyskolos, slaves are not as subtle and sophisticated as Onesimos. Daos, the old slave of Gorgias, is faithful and prone to passive attitudes. In other words, despite his long service in the household of Cnemon and despite his dissatisfaction with Cnemon's way of life and bad temper, he has

never taken any adventurous step against his master or to reclaim his master. He always seems to be intimidated by his master Cnemon. But even this seemingly complacent slave is not satisfied with his situation or with the situation of his younger master Gorgias, Cnemon's son.

Dissatisfaction with poverty and dependence on the mercy of superiors is shared by almost all slaves whether faithful or opportunist. This sense of frustration, it can be argued, creates in them a sort of aggressive tendency towards their superiors, at least those who are not their masters.

Notwithstanding their impudence and audacity, the slaves, ironically enough, seem to be the preservers of good values and the upholders of common sense particularly when they help their young masters wriggle out of arranged marriages solely based on materialistic grounds into marriages based on love and sometimes motivated by charitable and humanistic considerations. At the same time slaves often look like efficient saviours, as is the case when they are dealing with Cnemon. They effectively help in saving their superiors from crises and dilemmas. T. B. L. Webster, in An Introduction to Menander, makes it clear that "What Menander tells us about slaves rings, on the whole, true to life."¹⁰ On the whole, he notices that the slaves in Menander's comedies are loyal to their masters. Webster draws attention in the same book to

Menander's treating a rather special case in the Aspis (The Shield). In this comedy Daos is serving in a rich household. He is remarkably intelligent and well-educated. He quotes Aeschylus and others and displays an astonishing ability and dexterity in plotting and making the best use of his talents in desperate situations. Examples of this are his clever psychological observations on Smicrines' state of mind and abominable greed, and his subtle exploitation of Smicrines' mean qualities to solve the problem of the desperate Chairestratos and his wife's son Chaireas. This versatile slave, though he seems to be trusted and loved by his masters - his master has given him the charge of all the prisoners of war and a substantial amount of gold and silver, and he is also the tutor of his young master - has from the outset of the play expressed his hope of manumission after a long period of loyal service. This hope of manumission is thought to have been held dear by almost all slaves and in all circumstances.

The policy which many slaves use to save their skins and to secure their safety is to "trim their sails to the prevailing wind."¹¹ Examples are Onesimos in Epitrepontes and Parmenon in the Samia. In the household where the slave is in the service of both father and son, the son may punish the slave, but the father is to be feared more. In such households, some slaves work as tutors to their

young masters, and almost always side with them to overcome their old masters and stop them obstructing their sons' love-affairs. Very few slaves choose to side with their old masters. Lydos in the Dis Exapaton is an example. This, of course, can be understood as a deliberate avowal by the playwright that the old has to be replaced by the new, and that no matter how hard the old tries to hang on, the new will find a way of taking over. After all, life is never at a standstill.

"From antiquity onwards, Menander has been much praised for his realism: the unaffected naturalness of his language, the likeness of his characters to real people, the true portrait he gives of life in fourth-century Athens."¹² Some historians regret the absence of evidence in him about the political events in which they are interested. But there are other scholars who believe that "political activity at Athens had dwindled away, and that Menander represents the predominant interests of an unpolitical, philistine bourgeoisie."¹³ It can be added that his analysis of his characters "does not go deep,"¹⁴ but that his characters are "credible, lifelike, and individual."¹⁵

III. Rome

The study of Menander would not be complete without an analytical approach to the Latin fabulae palliatae. These plays are Roman plays in Greek

dress. In other words, they are adaptations and translations from the Greek New Comedy and especially from Menander.

Titus Maccius Plautus (c.254-184 B.C.) adapted a few of Menander's plays: those commonly accepted as based on Menander are Aulularia, Bacchides, Cistellaria, and Stichus.

Publius Terentius Afer (185-159 B.C.), known in English as Terence, also made four adaptations from Menander: these were entitled Andria, Heauton Timorumenos, Eunuchus, and Adelphoe. In addition to these adaptations, Plautus and Terence based some of their plays on works by other New Comedy writers. Terence's Phormio and Hecyra, for example, are based on plays by Apollodorus; Plautus' Mercator, Mostellaria, and Trinummus are based on plays by Philemon; and Plautus' Rudens and Casina are from Diphilus.

These Roman plays vary in their relation to their originals. Some of them are literal translations, while others are free compositions based on the Greek sources. Terence's comedies seem to have retained the spirit of their originals more than those of Plautus. Usually close adaptations are not expected to be very different from the originals, and therefore it could be a waste of time to reconsider any aspect in the adaptations (the slave-character in our case) which has already been considered in the originals. But the unavailability

of the originals, except for titles and bits and pieces here and there, makes it sensible to examine the adaptations almost as if they were independent plays.

It was not until 240 B.C. that formal Latin literature began. It was around this time that the Greek Livius Andronicus "adapted a Greek tragedy and a Greek comedy for presentation on the Roman stage."¹⁶ The reason why the early Roman literature consists mainly of imitations and translations is, as Duckworth rightly puts it, that "the Greeks by the third century B.C. had already invented, developed, and brought to perfection almost every conceivable literary form."¹⁷

The Menandrian intriguing slave seems to have been relished and admired, and thought of as a successful comic type, attractive to the Roman audience who enjoyed and approved the tolerance of the masters towards their inferiors that had always existed in Greece. Trickery and deception performed by slaves are rife in Plautus' comedy: in fact, "trickery plays a prominent role in at least two thirds of the extant comedies"¹⁸ from ancient Rome. This, as Duckworth rightly observes, seems "an amazing proportion when one looks at the fragmentary plays of Menander where no intrigue of this type can be found."¹⁹ The type which Duckworth has in mind is the farcical one, which is more important than the love-affairs of the young lovers. This trickery,

which is prominent in eight of Plautus' plays, is performed and supervised by wily slaves, not all of them on the same level of cleverness and resourcefulness. The subordination of the love-theme results from the fact that "in many instances the plight of the young lover serves merely to motivate the activity of the intriguing slave."²⁰ This slave always manages, through creative trickery and intrigue, to help the young lover get what he is after, his beloved girl. This stereotyped character, the character of the trickster, was to be found also in the Atellan Farce. The most frequent characters in this popular improvisational native Italian comedy, which flourished in the Oscan-speaking Italian towns before the principal period of comedy at Rome, are Pappus, the old man; Maccus, the clown; Bucco, the braggart; and Dossennus, the trickster. "The origins of these characters and their kind of comedy are obscure . . . Some of the titles suggest the sort of situations that are found in all comic traditions."²¹ Some of the characters of the Italian commedia dell'arte are believed to have been derived from the Atellan Farce.

Plautus' originality appears unobtrusively in the development of his comic art. This development suggests that Plautus' handling of intrigue is better than that of the writers he adapted, and he seems to have approved of the idea of the clever slave as a comic device, and therefore enlarged his

role. Repetition, obscenity, absurdity, and particular types of exaggeration, are qualities which characterize Plautus' art and are less prominent in Menander's art. This is particularly evident when a comparison between Plautus' Aulularia and Menander's Dyskolos is drawn. On the social scale, Plautus' comedy contains specific social phenomena that are not to be found in Menander. As I mentioned earlier, Plautus' slaves are cleverer than Menander's and play larger parts. Women in Plautus' comedies tend to be threatening and revengeful. In emphasizing these situations, Plautus was quite aware that his Roman audience would appreciate them, and he was also fully aware that his audience would sympathize with a clever slave. Plautus must have been aware of the fact that his audience "was made up of all elements, including slaves";²² whereas the Greek audience consisted of middle and upper class people. What is more important is the peculiar Roman institution of Saturnalia, a holiday in which slaves enjoy unlimited freedom:

Many peoples have been used to observe an annual period of licence, when the customary restraints of law and morality are thrown aside, when the whole population give themselves up to extravagant mirth and jollity, and when the darker passions find a vent which would never be allowed them in the more staid and sober course

of ordinary life . . . of all these periods of license the one which is best known and which in modern languages has given its name to the rest, is the Saturnalia . . . no feature of the festival is more remarkable, nothing in it seems to have struck the ancients themselves more than the license granted to slaves at this time. The distinction between the free and the servile classes was temporarily abolished. The slave might rail at his master, intoxicate himself like his betters, sit down at table with them, and not even a word of reproof would be administered to him for conduct which at any other season might have been punished with stripes, imprisonment, or death. Nay, more, masters actually changed places with their slaves and waited on them at table; and not till the serf had done eating and drinking was the board cleared and dinner set for his master.²³

From this, one would easily understand why Plautus gave a prominent role to slaves in his plays. He seems to have been keen to cater for the masses, and to register in his comedies the endemic vivacity and evolutionary dynamism of life. Each one of his plays is almost a Saturnalia in itself, even though slaves are not always triumphant in the end. In Mostellaria Tranio fails in his tricks and circumvention, but escapes the punishment of his

master Theopropides. Another factor which must have made Plautus' audience enjoy the triumph of the clever slave is the undebatable authority of fathers in Roman society. Young men must have always been under the nightmare of paternal authority, which in many plays, not only of Plautus but also of Terence, obstructs the sons' attempts to fulfill their love-pursuits. In these plays, slaves work almost exclusively for their young masters to triumph over their old ones and ultimately get what they are after; not without a lot of swearing, threatening, scolding and sometimes whipping inflicted upon the slaves by their old masters. Slaves doing this were, beyond doubt, applauded by the Roman audience. To understand the situation better, we should know how far the Roman law exalted the pater familias. Fritz Schultz, in his book Principles of Roman Law, states quite clearly the authority of fathers in Roman society:

The life of the household was regulated by the paterfamilias with sovereign powers. He determined the private lives of its members, their education and their activities, he gave daughters in marriage and granted or refused at his discretion his consent to the marriages of sons. His disciplinary powers were unfettered, any chastisement was permitted, even capital punishment. The paterfamilias also determined

the distribution of property within the household; Roman law formulated this rule with Roman clarity and decision as follows: the members of the household are incapable of owning property, everything which they acquire belongs to their lord, who may dispose of the same inter vivos or mortis causa at his own discretion.²⁴

These authoritarian fathers or masters are often duped by the intriguing slaves of the adulescens; sometimes tricks are invented and carried out by parasites working on behalf of the adulescens. Some slaves devise their tricks hurriedly, and consequently discovery of the truth is inevitable. An example of this is Tranio in the Mostellaria, who manages to provide momentary answers to Theopropides' inquiries about his son's activities in his absence without carefully envisaging the consequences. Other slaves behave calmly and dauntlessly, and unhampered by difficulties, they carry their stratagems and tricks to a triumphant conclusion. Examples of this are Chrysalus in the Bacchides and Palaestrio in the Miles Gloriosus (The Braggart Warrior). All kinds of falsehood and deception, especially impersonation, are used by the tricksters to help their young masters:

In general, however, it must be admitted that in Plautus the devices of the slaves - their

fantastic falsehoods and ingenious impersonations - resemble each other rather closely, as do the reactions of their dupes - the willingness of slave dealers and parents, in spite of their professed shrewdness, to accept as truth the most amazing fiction.²⁵

In Plautus' comedy, slaves are in a hierarchical relationship to each other and to their owners. There is always the most important slave who is the slave of the old master, and whose work is almost exclusively confined to helping the young master - mostly the son of the old master - to get what he is after, whether a girl to marry or a courtesan to purchase. This top-ranking slave derives his importance from the fact of being needed by his usually stupid young master to solve his problems. Slaves of this type, who are usually intelligent, are aware of the source of their importance. They always try to make the most of it, but never forget their vulnerability when things go wrong. Their position entitles them to a luxurious life which is beyond the reach of low-ranking slaves. They quite often boast of their way of life before their less important fellow-slaves. Tranio in the Mostellaria, for example, looks down upon Grumio as an inferior slave who is only fit for activities on the farm in the country: "I court the ladies and you court the cows. I live on the fat of the land and you on the

lean."²⁶ What Tranio does is to "drink and make love and have wenches."²⁷ He seems to lead a care-free life, but this does not mean that he is not equipped for emergencies. His quick-wittedness and mental agility provide him with an effective weapon to confront misfortunes and deflect counterattacks. He never fails to recognize what is right and what is wrong, and when he is in the wrong, he knows perfectly well where he is: "There's nothing sicker than a guilty conscience - and I certainly have that, all right! Well, as the matter stands, I'll have to go on mixing things up."²⁸ Tranio and other slaves of this category always save their utmost mental ingenuity to protect their skin and get away unpunished when things go wrong.

Because of their role in trickery and intrigue, and their role as suppliers of humour and sometimes buffoonery or slapstick, these slaves are called serui callidi. The most notable ones in Plautus' comedies are Milphio of the Poenulus (The Carthaginian), Toxilus of the Persa (The Girl from Persia), Chrysalus of the Bacchides (The Two Bacchides), Palaestrio of the Miles Gloriosus (The Braggart Warrior), Tranio of the Mostellaria (The Haunted House), Epidicus of the Epidicus, and Pseudolus of the Pseudolus.

The second group of slaves are those who do not engage in trickery. There is a considerable amount of realism in their portraiture. They mostly

represent the common sense of their time in terms of service. The most prominent characteristics of these slaves are scrupulousness, fear of failure in conducting their duties and offices, obsession with playing safe as consistently as possible, and difficult relations with their superior fellow-slaves arising either from jealousy or from a dislike for misconduct. Examples of this category are Grumio of the Mostellaria, who is "the rustic foil to the more corrupt Tranio";²⁹ Messenio of the Menaechmi; and, perhaps more prominently in terms of moralizing and theorizing, Phaniscus of the Mostellaria. In Act 4 Scene 1, Phaniscus, talking to himself, says:

Slaves who're scared of a licking, even when they aren't to blame, are likely to be useful to their masters, but those who aren't scared of anything take up silly notions, when they've earned a spanking. They go in for sprinting! but if they're caught, they get more from whipping than they ever got before. They start with a shoestring and end with a fortune. But I intend to avoid punishment before my back is sore. My hide is still whole, and I propose to keep it so. If I can rule my itching fingers, I'll keep a good roof over me; and when blows rain on others, they won't rain on me. For a master's usually what his slaves want him to be. If

they're good, he's good; if they are dishonest,
then he becomes harsh.³⁰

The members of this group are very much closer to reality than those of the first group simply because their actions and deeds are not exaggerated for comic purposes.

There is a remarkable group of slaves who are admirable in terms of trustworthiness and loyalty to their masters and whose importance derives not from supervising or assisting their masters in trickery, but from their emotional attachment to their masters. It is hard to place them on the hierarchy, but they do figure prominently in some plays. Some of them are famous for their whole-hearted care and concern for their masters' interests. The most prominent example of this category is the devoted slave Tyndarus of the Captivi (The Captives), who risks his life in the hope of freeing his master from captivity. Another example is Trachalio of the Rudens (The Rope), who shows a great concern for the interests of his master, as does Lampadio in Cistellaria (The Casket).

Like Plautus' slaves, Terence's slaves can also be divided hierarchically. There are subtle differences which are mainly due to the unconventional treatment of slaves - both those who belong to the intriguing category and also, though less obtrusively, those who belong to the second

unadventurous group. Davos, the slave of Simo in the Andria (The Girl of Andros), belongs to the first group. So do Syrus, the slave of Clitipho in Heauton Timorumenos (The Self-Tormentor), and Syrus, the slave of Micio, in the Adelphoe (The Brothers). Geta in Adelphoe and Geta in Phormio belong to this group of trustworthy and serious slaves. Geta, in Adelphoe, demonstrates a remarkable concern for the honour and welfare of his mistress Sostrata and her daughter Pamphila when he thinks that Aeschinus has deserted them to live with a girl from the bawdy house. Geta, in Phormio, staggers under the heavy burden of responsibility as a guardian to Antipho and Phaedra in their father's absence. It is only his compassion for Antipho which keeps him from running away: "I'm not only afraid for myself, I'm worried to death for Antipho - He's the trouble and worry, he's what's keeping me here."³¹

The trickery of Terence's slaves is directed, like that of Plautus' slaves, against the senes, but "their deception, with its admixture of truth and falsehood, is less effective."³² The "unconventional treatment of the intriguing slave of tradition,"³³ for which Terence has been praised, is primarily manifested in his slaves' relative unidentifiability with the serui callidi. Parmeno in the Eunuchus (The Eunuch), who is a slave and servant to Phaedria and Chaerea, tries to divert Chaerea from using trickery and deception; he disengages himself from deception,

and, ironically enough, gets deceived by Thais' maidservant Pythias. The irony of the situation is that it is Parmeno who has suggested the impersonation first, and later on he tries to dissuade Chaerea from carrying it out. This has perhaps been done by Terence to show clearly his deliberate intention to allocate an unconventional role to the traditionally intriguing slave. Parmeno in the Hecyra (The Mother-in-Law), who is a slave to Laches and servant to Pamphilus, is rarely on the stage. He contributes substantially to the exposition in the play, but, though he despatches many messages and plays the role of the errand-boy, he never discovers the truth. Gilbert Norwood, in his book The Art of Terence, says: "The Parmenos of The Mother-in-Law is merely pitiable: he is constantly ordered off the stage so as not to impede the action, and his being kept in the dark at the end is the exact negation of the role traditionally given to such characters."³⁴ Duckworth insists that Parmeno "should not be viewed as a new and negative type of intriguing slave; he and Parmeno (in the Eunuchus) are the result of Terence's desire to present comedies without the usual cunning architectus doli, and this is less exceptional than is often believed."³⁵ Parmeno in the Hecyra is very much closer to the group of loyal slaves in Plautus' comedies than to the group of traditional intriguing

slaves. He is rather like Messenio of the Menaechmi, who appears on the stage only when needed.

In both Plautus' and Terence's comedies there is a worthless group of slaves who occupy the bottom part of the hierarchy. This group includes cooks, some maidservants, and other slaves who sometimes provide humour, sometimes despatch messages and sometimes, unwittingly and unintentionally, contribute to the exposition through their gossip and talkativeness. More interesting are those who are used by the intriguing slaves for certain purposes the nature of which is totally unknown to them. A very interesting example of this is Mysis, in the Andria, who is cleverly used by the trickster Davos to let Chremes, Philumena's father, see and hear what he wants him to see and hear. When the bewildered Mysis indignantly protests against being thus used by Davos, who could have told her earlier on about the whole situation, Davos replies: "Can't you see the difference between spontaneous behaviour which is natural and a put-up job?"³⁶

Faithfulness to masters is typical of most of the groups of slaves, but sometimes this faithfulness is due to fear rather than devotion. The threats which the masters make are mainly for humour, however, and are seldom put into effect.

On the whole, the slaves in general "provide delightful comedy and several of them control much of the intrigue, but they are not as true to life as

are many husbands, wives, and courtesans."³⁷ Astonishingly enough, slaves in both Greek and Roman comedies are the most active and the most intelligent stratum of society. The free citizens are represented by mostly inert, ineffective love-sick young people, controlled and subjugated by a group of narrow-minded, money-loving and senile old men who also through the power of law dominate the female part of society. This female part consists of free voiceless women who have no right of possessing even themselves, and slave-courtesans or mistresses who are lively and vivacious and who, unlike the free women, have freer range of movement. These courtesans are mostly the love-targets of the young men. Because of the old men's domination of all the other members of society, life would have been unbearable without these lively slaves who strive, motivated by their loyalty and love to their young masters, to stop these old men from killing the joie de vivre and the drive of life in their sons and daughters. Slaves, on the whole, are the promoters of the natural tendencies in society, and the genuine motivators of change and evolution in a society where the reactionary forces have the upper hand.

IV. Italy

The preservation of the manuscripts of Plautus and Terence during the Middle Ages, and the rediscovery

in 1429 in Germany by Niccolo di Treviri of a codex containing twelve new Plautine comedies, after centuries of oblivion, brought about not only a resurrection of Greek and Roman comedies, but also a whole volume of European comedy through adaptation and imitation which is now known as Renaissance comedy.

In Italy, a great number of comedies were written and performed during the sixteenth century. Among the major figures of this period were Ludovico Ariosto, Pietro Aretino, and Nicolo Machiavelli. Hundreds of comedies were written by Italian playwrights deriving their inspiration from the twenty extant plays of Plautus and the six of Terence. Because of this, the Italian comedies of this period seem to be lacking in originality. This comedy is usually referred to as the Erudite Comedy or the Learned Comedy (commedia erudita) because of its derivation from the classical Roman comedy and to distinguish it from the unwritten commedia dell'arte and some other popular forms of theatre during that period. "Real critical evaluation of the Erudite Comedy was not to come until the eighteenth century";³⁸ but it is helpful for the understanding of the comedy of this period to know what early critics said about it. The defenders of the commedia erudita, like Giovanni Mario de' Crescimbeni and Francesco Saverio Quadrio, commend the Erudite Comedy as a polished theatre, and the latter praises

Ariosto and Bibbiena as excelling in imitating the Roman playwrights. The opponents of this comedy were not few. Girolamo Tiraboschi (1731-1794) attacked "the obscene language and the lascivious stage action"³⁹ of this comedy. He states that the plays are "cold, languid, and boring on account of antique imitation."⁴⁰ The Frenchman Pierre Louis Ginguené (1748-1816) who, early in the nineteenth century, publicized Italian comedy throughout Europe, attacks, in his Histoire Litteraire d'Italie, the Erudite Comedy as imperfect because of its obscenity. He also resents the emphasis on intrigue rather than on character in this comedy. The Italian critic Luigi Settembrini, in his Lezioni di Letteratura Italiana (1868-70), claims that "the authors of comedies wrote plays with lively action and well-portrayed characters."⁴¹ John Addington Symonds, in his book Renaissance in Italy: Italian Literature, "regards this comic theatre as overconventional and boring,"⁴² and thinks that the plays are "a hybrid form of art"⁴³ in which the Latin arguments of Plautus and Terence are imposed on Italian customs.

Douglas Radcliff-Umstead, in his book The Birth of Modern Comedy in Renaissance Italy (1969), states that "the transition from the Middle Ages to the creative height of the Renaissance"⁴⁴ was made possible by the Humanists who wrote comedies in Latin drawing their inspiration from folktales and

novelle. Among the big names of this period are Petrarch, Vergerio, Alberti and Bruni. With the exception of the last Petrarchan Philologia, the only humanistic play that belongs to the fourteenth century is the Paulus of Vergerio, composed probably in 1389 or 1390. This comedy reflects contemporary Italian university life. A great deal of originality is to be expected in such a comedy since it depicts an Italian fourteenth-century background. Nevertheless, it has particular exterior resemblances to the classical comedy. Because of the didacticism of Vergerio, the servant-character almost ceases to be funny or amusingly cunning. Vergerio tries to show "how bad servants can waste their masters' wealth and how greed can induce parents to lead their children to perdition."⁴⁵ The most modern character in the play is the servant Herotes. This servant is very different from the servant-character in the plays of antiquity. Describing his career to the servant Papis in the last act of the play, "he boasts of having dragged many men to infamy, and of causing others to become soldiers of adventure in distant lands or to hide themselves in monasteries."⁴⁶ Giving such a picture of the servant serves well the moral purpose of Vergerio who sought to teach morality to the students of the Italian universities. The same environment, which Vergerio found suitable to provide a setting for his play and ultimately to

teach morality, was later found by the authors of the Erudite Comedy to be a perfect setting for comic situations. The genuine significance of these Latin humanistic comedies is in their preparing the way for the Italian comedy of the sixteenth century.

Erudite Comedy generally adapted characters and plot situations from Plautus and Terence. The character of the intelligent servant Volpino, "foxy", in Ariosto's Cassaria has its antecedent in Terence's Andria, where the slave Davos assists his young master to gain his mistress against his old master's wish. Even Nebbia, the servant who is in favour of his old master in Cassaria, is almost a replica of Sosia in the Andria. In Ariosto's second comedy, I Suppositi, composed during 1508, one of the most remarkable characters is the servant boy Carpino. This character has a precedent in Plautus' Persa, but "is too natural to be a literary reconstruction."⁴⁷ In creating this likable character, Ariosto "had real-life models in mind more than ancient ones."⁴⁸ The closeness of this servant-boy to real life can be inferred from the description of this character made by the cook Dalio. Dalio describes him as "never carrying home a basket of intact eggs, and as a scamp chasing after a dog or playing with a bear - chains could not keep that boy from teasing a peasant or a porter."⁴⁹

The change in theatrical tastes by 1530 paved the way for a vernacular anti-traditional theatre.

Pietro Aretino is a "despiser of pedantry."⁵⁰ In his prologue to his comedy La Cortigiana, he defends "the author's right to be faithful to his own times, since sixteenth-century Rome is not ancient Athens."⁵¹ He "wished to be a modern author, and asserted that comedy had to be found in the life of his own times."⁵² A total rejection of traditionalism cannot be found in his comedy, however, especially in terms of structure where his comedies consist of five acts and obey the unities of time and place. As far as trickery is concerned, there is a touch of traditionalism in Il Marescalco, where a boy is substituted for the bride in a false wedding. This situation recalls Plautus' Casina. In fact, the boy Giannico, in Il Marescalco, is easily identifiable with the scamp Carpino in Ariosto's I Suppositi. Aretino makes this boy "representative of popular life and has him sing genuine folk songs."⁵³ There is in him a great deal of the slaves of Plautus and Terence - impertinence, vividness, and a tendency to enjoy teasing. Nevertheless, by singing Italian folk songs, Giannico sounds closer to the reality of the sixteenth-century Italian life than to the contriving slaves of Greek and Roman comedy.

"Aretino's servants are not direct heirs of the clever slaves of the Roman Comedy."⁵⁴ They are, in his comedy Lo Ipocrito, "background figures who comment on the action that develops around them."⁵⁵ In addition to that, they are "a crowd of clowns,

whose one weapon is slandering those they serve by creating verbal caricatures of their employers."⁵⁶

In short, Aretino's servants do not possess the cleverness of some of the servants of Ariosto and Bibbiena, simply because Ariosto and Bibbiena are very much closer to their Roman models.

Among the best and most influential learned comedies is Gl'Ingannati (The Deceived). This comedy was first performed at Siena in 1531, and written probably by a member of the Sienese Academy of the Intronati. The comedy has gained a resonant fame because of being a possible source of Shakespeare's Twelfth Night. This comedy owes some of its comic situations to Plautus' Menaechmi, but owes more to Bibbiena's Calandria. In Gl'Ingannati, the 'author' obviously tries to make his characters seem very close to real life not to characters in the ancient models. The servants here do not engage in trickery; rather they serve as background figures who, like Aretino's servants, comment on the action and personalities of their masters. Nevertheless, their masters do consult them about many affairs. Gherardo asks his manservant, Spela, if it is a good idea to get married to Lelia. The servant's answer can be regarded as an outspoken protest against the injustice of the old masters of society, and it reflects the unenviable situation of domestics in sixteenth-century Italy:

It'd be an even better idea, sir, since you ask me, if you did something for your nieces and nephews, who are nearly starving, or for me, since I've served you for many years and haven't been able to put aside so much as the price of a pair of shoes.⁵⁷

Stragualcia, Fabrizio's manservant, is very much a traditional stereotype in the sense that he represents the servants' justifiable and everlasting concern about filling their bellies and enjoying their time. He decides not to leave the kitchen of the inn until he gratifies all his instincts: "I won't leave this kitchen till I've tasted everything I can see; and then I'll have a snooze by that beautiful fire. And to hell with everyone who puts things by for a rainy day!"⁵⁸ He also, like most servants when insulted, repays the insolence in kind. When Messer Piero treats him snobbishly, he reacts: "how can you ever be anything but the son of a mule driver? Don't I come of a better family than you?"⁵⁹ There is a possibility here that the author of this comedy is no admirer of snobs, particularly those who come from humble social backgrounds, or those who have recently risen to fame and fortune due to certain changes on different levels in society. Pasquella, Gherardo's maidservant, is also traditionally portrayed. She tells lies about the behaviour and pursuits of

Gherardo's daughter, Isabella, in an attempt to keep Gherardo and Virginio away from reality.

Gl'Ingannati is, structurally, built on a series of deceptions; but the main trick, the disguise trick, is not conducted by a servant as it was in Roman comedy. The traditional elements in the play include not only the identical twins but also the oppressed young people struggling against the obstructing agents of happiness, the elderly parents

The Erudite Comedy never catered for a wide audience in Renaissance Italy. The reason is that "it was confined to the larger towns and even within these larger towns to a limited audience of educated people who could relish a literary performance as well as slapstick."⁶⁰ The declining popularity of the Erudite Comedy gave rise to the emergence of a popular improvised theatre in the second half of the sixteenth century, the commedia dell'arte. The origin of this popular theatre is debatable. Some critics believe that it was "an outgrowth of the Italian farce which flourished at the close of the fifteenth century and during the first half of the sixteenth."⁶¹ Other scholars have tried to find its origin in the ancient Roman theatre, and more specifically in the fabula Atellana. The ancestry of Arlecchino and the Zanni of the commedia dell'arte can be traced back to the jugglers, mimes and tumblers of the medieval period. Another theory

traces them back to the comic figures in ancient Roman drama.

The commedia dell'arte is very closely connected with the Erudite Comedy: the plots and the stock characters of the commedia dell'arte are mostly taken from Plautus, Terence, and the Italian authors of the Erudite Comedy. The servant-character in the commedia dell'arte seems to be closer to the clownish Bergamasks of the Erudite Comedy than to the intriguing slave of the Roman comedy. The Arlecchino or Brighella of the commedia dell'arte "was originally from Bergamo."⁶² In a popular unwritten comedy, one would not expect to find a sophisticated and elaborately scheming servant. One would rather expect to find servants tending to be performers of laughter-evoking buffoonery and slapstick. That is, perhaps, why the servants, the Zanni, were given humorous names like Pedrolino (saucy), Burattino (puppet), Trappola (pitfall), and Grillo (cricket).

The actors and actresses of the commedia dell'arte published some of the plays of this popular theatre. In Lombardi's L'alchimista (1583), there is a clever servant called Vulpino (fox). This servant, in terms of trickery, belongs to the lineage of the intriguing Roman slaves.

As is the case with almost all popular theatres, acting and pantomime come first in the commedia dell'arte and literature comes second. Apart from

this, the relationship between the Erudite Comedy and the commedia dell'arte is so close that it is difficult to "determine whether or not it was the commedia dell'arte or the commedia erudita or both that influenced this or that French or English play of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries."⁶³ The exceptions to this are the clear-cut translations or adaptations.

V. Spain

The influence of the Italian comedy on the French and English comedy of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is great. In Spain, the strong national tradition kept the Spanish playwrights away from outside influences to a greater extent. The Golden Age theatre in Spain, which roughly started about 1592 with the literary career of Lope de Vega and ended with the death of Calderón de la Barca in 1681, is comparatively free from the influence of the Italian Erudite Comedy.

The literature of Renaissance Italy triggered experimentation in Spain during the sixteenth century. The pioneer of this experimentation period is Juan del Encina "who has come to be known as the father of the Spanish drama."⁶⁴ The Spanish Renaissance literature is traditional in the sense that it is not a different literature altogether. It retained affinities with the national and religious roots. This is clearly evident in Encina's work.

Torres Naharro, another Renaissance playwright, "learned to handle the dramatic form in Italy."⁶⁵ The role the servants play in his comedies, and the use of love intrigues, "owe something to Latin comedy." But this "should not be overstressed," because "at the time when [Naharro] was writing (1513?-17) the Italian theatre was scarcely in existence."⁶⁶ Encina, Naharro, and the Portuguese dramatist Gil Vicente, like the Italian writers of the Erudite comedy, wrote for private patrons. Their literature did not reach a wide public. Hence came the need for a more popular theatre. This popular theatre was started by Lope de Rueda who based his four extant plays on Italian originals. With this fertile popular theatre came the "reinvigoration of the mime tradition in the form of the commedia dell'Arte."⁶⁷ In the second half of the sixteenth century, companies of Italian players regularly toured Spain, England, and France. These tours contributed to the perfecting of the Spanish popular theatre in the hands of Lope de Vega (1562-1635). Lope de Vega is the founder of the "highly successful, if un-Aristotelian, dramatic genre known as the comedia."⁶⁸ The comedia won the long-fought battle between those who advocated the didactic and classical type of drama, and those, headed by Lope de Vega, who sought to cater for the entertainment of the public, regardless of imitation or didacticism. The main features of the comedia are

abandonment of the Unities; replacement of classical division into five acts with a division into three acts; using a variety of verse forms; mixing noble and base characters; using puns and mistaken identities; admitting a variety of themes; and using "fixed types such as the galan, viejo, and the gracioso, an invention of Lope and a very useful stereotype."⁶⁹ The evolution of the gracioso is traceable through the pastor of Encina, the babo of Rueda, and the parvo of Vicente. This type was copied later by the Italian and French theatres. "The gracioso appeared as a nobleman's servant and served in Lope's drama as the antithesis of his master for comic relief, parodying his master's actions on a lower level."⁷⁰ In Juan Ruiz de Alarcón (1581?-1639) the gracioso is "often a confidant and adviser."⁷¹ In Tirso de Molina (1583-1648) the gracioso Catalinon is used to a remarkable comic effect. Tirso had the privilege of inventing the character of Don Juan, who made his debut on the stage in Tirso's El Burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra (1630). In Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1600-1681), the gracioso is a comparatively well-educated servant with a considerable knowledge of classics and philosophy. Cosme, the clownish servant of Don Manuel in Calderón's La Dama Duende (The Phantom Lady), is a good example. This remarkable knowledge of classics and proverbial quotations, one would think, is essential to the servant because, in the

comedia, he is usually an escort and confidant to the noblemen of the court. There is also here a case for suggesting that these resilient and knowledgeable servants might have originated from some Arabic folktales, which must have been known to the Spanish playwrights of that time, in which servants always proved to be well-versed in the philosophy of life, and most often displayed a better knowledge of the chemistry of life than their presumptuous masters.

Tristan, Teodoro's servant in Lope de Vega's El Perro del Hortelano (The Dog in the Manger), is a remarkably quick-witted and sophisticated gracioso, who has much in common with the Plautine intriguing slaves. His instantaneous wriggling out of ordeals and embarrassments is reminiscent of Tranio in the Mostellaria. He manages in no time to concoct a story to get himself out of trouble, together with his master Teodoro, when he discovers that the Countess Diana knows all about the hat and the lamp. He is also very much like a Plautine slave when he fools Marquis Ricardo and Count Federico by pretending to be working on their behalf for the killing of his master Teodoro. Instead of killing his master, he fabricates a story to assure Countess Diana and other characters of the noble origin and background of Teodoro; and consequently Teodoro gets married to Diana, to whom he divulges the secret of the trick before their wedding.

Tristan always quotes philosophers and poets to support his arguments. Even Countess Diana listens to him putting forward arguments and offering advice. He states to her that "it ill becomes a gentleman to allow his servant to appear badly dressed, since the servant is the mirror and the façade by which observers judge the master."⁷² The less important servants in the play are vivid, talkative, and very down-to-earth. Jealousy and preferential treatment incite their anger and indignation. Commenting on the relationship between servants in the same household, Diana's maid Marcela says: "never believe that there is friendship between those who serve together, though it should seem so."⁷³

One major difference between some of the Italian learned comedies and the Spanish comedia is that, unlike the Italian comedy, the Spanish comedia never treats love carelessly and disrespectably. Adultery is never a joke in the comedia, and marriage should always be the target of love. The code of Honour is "intimately related with class structure."⁷⁴ And though honour "is the prerogative of noblemen, acquired by virtue of their birth,"⁷⁵ no ordinary person in the society would bargain with or easily forgive an injury to his honour. In other words, honour is not a plaything as it was in the Italian plays. It should be respected and cared for. This accounts for the absence, in the comedia, of the

fully

equivalent to those depraved slaves and servants - not only in Italian Renaissance comedy, but also in Plautus and Terence - who, like Tranio in the Mostellaria, boast of their licentiousness and love-making. The code of honour is more obvious in Calderón than in Lope de Vega. As a matter of fact, the Golden Age codes of honour are remarkably close to the Arabic ones, especially those which relate to women and keeping them closely guarded by their parents or brothers. This does not seem strange when one remembers that the Arabs stayed in Spain for eight centuries; it was hardly possible to eliminate overnight the influence which the Arabs had on Spanish life during such a long time.

The three major motifs in the comedy of the Golden Age are religion, love, and honour. The relationship between masters and servants in the plays is worked out and determined in such a way as to make the promotion of these motifs easy and effective. Servants' demeanour and conduct are also modified so as to help promote the motif in question. The Spanish servant cannot be separated from the comic heritage that is traditionally connected with servants; in other words, he is a materialist principally concerned with food, drink, vails, and keeping his skin safe. In addition to that, he provides humour through his naivety. This is particularly important in the case of the servant who comes from the country.

The highest-ranking servant in the comedy of the Golden Age is the hero's lackey or companion. This servant, like Tristan in El Perro del Hortelano, and Cosme in La Dama Duende, is not a mere factotum who does as he is told by his master. Rather, he offers advice and guidance and effectively assists his master in all his adventures, aided for that purpose by the traditional talents of the slick and quick-witted Greek and Roman slaves.

In the Spain of the Golden Age, servants used to work as educators to their young masters as slaves had done in Greece and Rome. The sophisticated gracioso is derived from the clever slaves of Plautus and Terence via Torres Naharro and the Italian comedy, but for "the ancestors of the comic rustic we can look back to the Nativity plays and the early shepherd farces, and beyond them to the mime tradition; then forward again along a different line of development to the zanni of the commedia dell'arte."⁷⁶

One interesting type of servant is that which, though not altogether new, was effectively created by Tirso de Molina in his comedy El Burlador de Sevilla (The Trickster of Seville). Don Juan's servant Catalinon, though timorous, acts as a foil to his master, and "unlike the typical gracioso, tries to restrain"⁷⁷ him. What is more, this servant "aligns himself with Tisbea and the libertine's father in reminding him of the reckoning to come,

and is taunted for being a preacher."⁷⁸ This servant is a sibling to Sganarelle, Don Juan's valet de chambre, in Molière's Le Festin de Pierre (Don Juan or the Feast with the Statue). Sganarelle, given permission by Don Juan to speak his mind frankly, says: "In that case, Monsieur, I will tell you frankly I do not approve of your goings on, and I think it a very base thing to make love on all sides as you do."⁷⁹

Calderón followed the models and forms established by Lope de Vega. He, in terms of structure, remained loyal to the tradition of the comedia. But as far as content is concerned, Calderón is more profound and philosophical than Lope. "He was an aristocratic poet, and unlike Lope, did not cater slavishly to the demands of the public."⁸⁰ In other words, "Lope was the improviser, Calderón was the planner."⁸¹ The closest link between Calderón's mythological plays and the comedias of Lope de Vega is the character of the comic servant, the gracioso. The gracioso's humorous and funny role is a direct result of his incongruity in plays whose settings are mythological. A good example of this is Merlin of La estatua de Prometes (Prometheus' Statue), who "steps right outside mythology to make quips about coachmen and grumble like a typical Golden Age servant about his wages and his inadequate meals."⁸²

In his most productive period, roughly from 1625 to 1640, Calderón wrote his best works like The

Phantom Lady (1629), Devotion to the Cross (1633), and The Mayor of Zalamea (1640-44). The honour theme predominates in these plays. It is this preoccupation with the honour theme which gives the Spanish drama of the Golden Age its national character. In The Phantom Lady, a cape-and-sword comedy, Don Manuel's clownish servant Cosme is a typical gracioso, especially when he expresses his dissatisfaction with his situation in a comic way. Addressing his master he says:

You get sweetmeats brought to you which
like a monk you gobble up
while I, who cannot touch them, stand by,
grow thin and suffer like a pimp
.
. . . . You, sir,
get all the pleasure and the profit.
I get all the punishment and pain.⁸³

Cosme is obsessed with ghosts. This provides humour for the audience, and tends to make him look like a laughable clown. But, despite his vividness, Cosme is different from the sophisticated clowns of Shakespeare. His pursuit of pleasure, food and drink, makes him sometimes forget about his master's business to attend to his own. In such a case Cosme tends to look like a rebel, but his rebellion lasts only as long as his master is absent.

On the whole, the servant of the Golden Age comedy is primarily a literary creation, but his traditional character is tinged with more than touches of originality occasioned by the structures and themes which the playwrights dealt with. The drama of the Golden Age, though it owes a lot to the classical drama of Greece and Rome, reflects "the tastes, ideas, and preoccupations of a nation who rose swiftly to a position of immense power and wealth as the possessor of a vast empire in the Americas, the Low Countries, and Italy and to enjoy, for a spell, political primacy in Europe."⁸⁴

VI. England

Because of the fact that Elizabethan stage techniques did not conform to the classical three unities, with the exception of Jonson to a certain degree, the mature Spanish drama bears "a closer resemblance to the English drama of the times than to the French."⁸⁵ But the indebtedness of the Elizabethan playwrights to the Italian theatre is greater than their indebtedness to the Spanish. "The plots of intrigue, the devices of disguises and mistaken identities, and the witty dialogue in the Italian comedies fascinated English playwrights."⁸⁶ Disguise plots, the exchange of roles between master and servant, and the disguises of the "girl-page" and the "boy-bride" travelled by various routes from Italy to Elizabethan England.

George Gascoigne's The Supposes (1556) is a translation of Ariosto's I Suppositi. It is "the first English comedy in prose."⁸⁷ The characters in it include the cunning servant. In other words, English originality was yet to be claimed when Gascoigne wrote this comedy. Shakespeare makes a traditional use of the disguise technique in Twelfth Night (1601), but, generally speaking, his drama "heightens the romantic element, moving from disguise and intrigue to place emphasis on character and ethical overtones."⁸⁸

In The Comedy of Errors (1591-2), which is based on Plautus' Menaechmi, the two lackeys, Dromio of Syracuse and his twin brother Dromio of Ephesus, are not "fools" or clowns in the same way as Feste, the sophisticated fool of Twelfth Night; but they do provide humour for their masters. Antipholus of Syracuse, describing his factotum to a merchant says: "A trusty villain, sir, that very oft,/ When I am dull with care and melancholy,/ Lightens my humour with his merry jests."⁸⁹ The Antipholuses and the Dromios engage in a series of confusions of identity which, as someone said, outplautuses Plautus. This is brought about by the identity of the twin Antipholus brothers and the twin Dromio brothers. The twin Dromios, like their twin masters, get lost in the confusion. They do not seem to have this remarkable ability which the Greek and Roman slaves have - Sosia in the Amphitruo is a good

example - that is to say, the ability to be all the time fully aware of what is going on around them and never be at a loss when everybody else is. When his master gets arrested by an officer, Dromio of Syracuse looks as if he knew nothing about the charges and the whole case.

The Italian comedy Gl'Ingannati is a definite source of Shakespeare's Twelfth Night whose less certain sources include Niccolo Secchi's Gl'Inganni and L'Interesse and Della Porta's La Cintia. The disguise plot of Lelia masquerading as a boy to play the proxy between Flamminio, the man she loves, and her rival Isabella, is reproduced in the story of Viola disguised as a boy acting as messenger between Duke Orsino and the woman he romantically loves, the Countess Olivia. Shakespeare's emphasis on the drama of Viola and the sentimental force of love overshadows the traditional role of the servants. The trick of disguise is Viola's own creation, and the elaborate help of servants is here out of the question. The astute intriguing servants of classical comedy are relegated to the characters of the "fools" in Shakespeare's comedy. These "fools" play the commentators who, in various degrees, possess sharp insight and acute discernment.

Feste in Twelfth Night is one of the most philosophical of Shakespeare's clowns. He is, in many ways, the controller of Twelfth Night. He is never at a loss, and he is always in command of his

senses. All the other characters are caught up in various entanglements, and are being tossed up and down by the hands of fate and fortune, but Feste is always steady, standing on the ground with strong feet and uttering bits and pieces of philosophy in all directions. Although he finally gets dismissed into the cold, he is in control all the time. His ideology and philosophy are always there to help him overcome his ordeals and problems.

Shakespeare seems to have stripped off the traditional role from the servants - supervision of trickery and intrigue - and left to them the sole privilege of being free to comment on and perhaps to protest against their superiors' actions and activities. Shakespeare's clowns share with the intriguing slaves of antiquity the element of sound common sense which is usually evident in their comments and their viewpoints. Their vulnerability is their protective shield.

The episode of Maria's trick on the self-centred Malvolio makes Twelfth Night a feast of mirth, and reminds us of many comic scenes in classical and Renaissance comedies. Maria, like many slaves in classical comedy, seems to enjoy playing tricks on her superiors. In this she is different from the maidservants of classical comedy whose role is mainly to provide a suitable background and down-to-earth humour. Maria's enjoyment is probably due to the fact that servants tend to prefer a relaxed way

of life in the household in which they work rather than discipline and organization. Malvolio, Olivia's house-steward, tries all the time to preserve discipline in Olivia's household, but his weakness is in his making himself a judge of others, and in his being "an incarnation of the abstract Puritan's besetting foible - that of self-righteousness."⁹⁰ He suffers a lot because of his complacent arrogance, which immediately crumbles and disintegrates as soon as Maria's trick comes into effect. His disintegration provides unprecedented comic scenes. This character is a remarkable Shakespearean creation which has no real precedent in classical comedy.

The Shakespearean clowns and servants do have ancient ancestry, but they do not seem to be keen on retaining many of the characteristics and mannerisms of this ancestry. The Elizabethan belief in the power of man to determine his own fate by his own hands is probably the reason behind the shrinking of the archetypal intriguing servants in Shakespeare's comedies. This, of course, does not apply to all the comedies of the Elizabethan period, since the intriguing servant is ubiquitous in Chapman. Deprived of this ingratiating prerogative - the supervision of trickery - servants, in Shakespeare's comedy, shrank to mere clowns who knew a lot about life and human follies through long experience, and

who had an admirable skill in commenting and chattering.

Ben Jonson's servants are almost entirely different from Shakespeare's. This is because his comedies, especially Volpone (1606) and The Alchemist (1610), are mainly social satires. "The skill that Machiavelli and Aretino both possessed at portraying human eccentricities captured the imagination of Jonson and other English writers."⁹¹ Jonson's view of man is "as gloomy as his view of the world."⁹² His main object was to show how life was in his own time. His comedies are worlds plagued with disfigured and corrupt creatures, and the servants in these worlds are no exception. All are equal as far as corruption is concerned. The social distinctions disappear and fade away when everybody is competing for the one ultimate aim of wealth and fame. The top-ranking servants in Jonsonian comedy are not perpetrators of felonies and intrigues for the sole benefit of their masters. Rather, they are accomplices and partners in deception and trickery. The most obvious example is Face in The Alchemist.

The relationship between Face and Subtle in The Alchemist is similar to the relationship between Mosca and Volpone in Volpone. The difference between Face and Mosca in terms of trickery is hardly recognizable. Mosca is also a master of intrigue, but he is not a servant. He is a parasite.

The other minor servants in Volpone's household are Nano the dwarf, Castrone the Eunuch, Androgyno the hermaphrodite, and Servitore. They populate the world of the play to give a dramatic dimension to the tragic scale of corruption in Jonson's time. Beneath the lively and bright surface of Volpone lies a nightmare. Mosca displays an amazing skill in taking quick actions, concocting fake stories, and swiftly wriggling out of difficult and tricky situations. Like some of the major slaves of antiquity, Mosca enjoys outwitting and duping others and relishes demonstrating superiority.

The minor servants in Volpone hardly play any role. They are kept in the household for the entertainment of Volpone and Mosca. On the whole, Jonson's major servants sound a little bit closer to reality and more down-to-earth than Shakespeare's. They represent a segment of the society of Renaissance England, and they engage in activities and deeds which are readily identifiable with real life.

In The Alchemist, Subtle, who is a petty cheat and pickpocket, the butler Jeremy, who has transformed himself into Captain Face, and the whore Doll Common, form a terrible cheating gang and use Lovewit's house as a laboratory, not for making gold, as their duped customers believe, but for swindling and cheating. The relationship between Face and Subtle is unprecedented. What brings them

together is their reciprocal benefit. The social barrier which separates servants from masters or those who are not servants collapses in The Alchemist. In a society where everybody is competing to rise quickly in fortune and status, the thing that matters most is money, and in a feverish race for money all participants are equal. When corruption plagues the minds of people, all of them become slaves. Bion, a freedman and a cynic philosopher, "called slaves who were morally good 'free' and freemen who were morally bad 'slaves.'"⁹³ That is why we cannot tell Subtle from Face in the opening scene of The Alchemist:

[Face] Believe't, I will.

Sub. Thy worst. I fart at thee.

Doll. Ha' you your wits? Why, gentlemen! For
love -

Face. Sirrah, I'll strip you -

Sub. What to do? Lick figs

Out at my -

Face. Rogue, rogue, out of all your sleights.

Doll. Nay, look ye! Sovereign, General, are you
madmen?

Sub. O' let the wild sheep loose. I'll gum your
silks

With good strong water, and you come.

Doll. Will you have

The neighbour hear you? Will you betray
all?

Hark, I hear somebody.

Face. Sirrah -

Sub. I shall mar

All that the tailor has made, if you
approach.

Face. You most notorious whelp, you insolent
slave.

Dare you do this?⁹⁴

Face, in many ways, is the real master of the cheating gang. His skill in inventing and supervising trickery and cheating is typical of the traditional classical slave. Face never forgets to remind Subtle of his indebtedness to him, and never forgets to teach Doll how to make full use of her feminine appeal. In the ending, which recalls many Greek and Roman comedies, the servant Face manages to save his skin, escape chastisement, and ironically enough be inundated with praise by the indulgent master for whom he has procured a young widow.

VII. France

In France, the business of adaptation, translation, and originality is not very different from that of the other European countries. At first, the French comic playwrights "drew upon Roman comedy only indi-

rectly through their imitations of the plays of the sixteenth-century Italian dramatists."⁹⁵ Later in the sixteenth century, some French playwrights turned directly to Plautus and Terence and adapted and imitated their comedies. "In the early seventeenth century French dramatists derived their plays not only from Italian sources but also from the more complex and romantic plots of Spanish comedy."⁹⁶ In Scarron's first play Jodelet ou le maitre valet (1645), the principal character "comes ultimately from the clever slave of Roman comedy and anticipates the many valets of later French comedy, such as Mascarille and Scapin."⁹⁷ The servant Jodelet in this play disguises himself as the hero of the play, and in doing so he "creates an almost burlesque comedy reminiscent . . . of other creations by Scarron . . . such as the Virgile and the Typhon."⁹⁸ This play established Jodelet as a famous valet, so Scarron wrote another comedy called Jodelet soufflé (1647). Unfortunately this comedy was a failure, probably because of the complicated plot situations and the complicated intrigue. In writing Jodelet soufflé, Scarron depended on two Spanish sources - Tirso's No hay peor sordo, and Rojas Zorrilla's La traición busca el castigo. "Even though the play was a failure, the character of Jodelet, already present in his first play, became a stock character for many such comedies and was thus immortalized."⁹⁹ Jodelet's character inspired Molière who, in Les Pré-

cieuses ridicules (The Affected Ladies), first acted in 1659, had two of the servants - the Marquis de Mascarille, valet to La Grange; and the Viscount de Jodelet, valet to Du Croisy - disguised as their masters to seduce the two affected ladies, Magdelon and Cathos. In L'Amant Indiscret ou le Maître Etourdi (1654), Quinault drew upon an Italian model, perhaps Barbieri's L'Inavvertito, "in which the schemes of the intriguing slave are upset by the stupidity of the master."¹⁰⁰ This theme is found in Plautus' Bacchides and Epidicus.

Molière, the most celebrated French playwright, made excellent use of the plots and characters of the Roman comedy, and added a successful emphasis on specific follies and vices to come up with remarkable comedies. In his L'Etourdi ou les Contretemps (1653), in which he is indebted to Plautus through Barbieri's L'Inavvertito, Mascarille, Léli's valet, proves to be an inexhaustible source of tricks and plots devised to enable Léli to gain the slave-girl Célie whom he loves. Mascarille's resourcefulness is a prime characteristic of the intriguing slave of Roman comedy. Every time Mascarille makes a clever recovery from a nerve-racking failure, and devises a new ingenious scheme to win for his master the girl he loves, the blundering Léli foolishly but unwittingly steps forward to mar all that has been so far achieved by Mascarille.

Mascarille knows his position quite well and knows the source of his significance to his master: "When anybody has need of us poor devils we are called invaluable and made much of; while at other times, on the least excuse, we are called rascals and well hided."¹⁰¹ When Mascarille feels that he is getting too much on his master's nerves, especially when he preaches, he switches quickly to playing the obedient servant. But when L  lie is told by Mascarille how he foolishly spoils his schemes, L  lie puts up with the most outrageous vituperation from Mascarille. The examples of this are numerous. Many times does he call his master "idiot," "fool," "brainless idiot," and sometimes he says to him: "Off with you then, the sight of you makes me wild."¹⁰² As with many of the clever slaves of the Roman comedy, what matters most to Mascarille is success in his schemes. But his frustration over his master's spoiling of his intrigues sometimes reaches such a level that he indignantly announces that "it does not matter a fig to [him] whether C  lie be free or a captive, whether L  andre buys her or she stays where she is."¹⁰³ On the other hand, his vituperative speeches get severer and more poignant. Lampooning his master he says:

you will ever be, no matter what happens, the same that you have been all your life, namely a man wedded to a cross-grained wit, whose reason

is unbalanced and always runs riot, whose common sense is deranged and judgement inept, a scatterbrain, an ass, a fool, a blunderer - what else can I tell you? ...a hundred times worse than anything I have yet said. This is an epitome of your panegyric.¹⁰⁴

The overall impression one gets from reading the play and visualizing Mascarille's behaviour is that valets were well-educated servants and men of the world. They understood their superiors and their inferiors, and accurately worked out how to obtain a secure position in society. In terms of clothes, they were in real life "better off than the working poor, for they might be provided with their master's livery."¹⁰⁵

In the high comedies of Molière, valets act "as catalysts to bring out the full force of the manias and idiosyncrasies of their masters."¹⁰⁶ An example of this is Cléante's valet La Flèche, who through his tricks provokes the miser Harpagon into a comical disclosure of his selfishness and meanness. In some other plays, the servants are ever-interested in the family affairs of the households in which they work, and actively committed to assisting members of the family.

One major difference between the servants in the commedia dell'arte and Molière's servants - even though Molière's valets and maidservants have a great deal in

common with the servants of the commedia dell'arte - is that, when the servants of the commedia dell'arte are judged as representatives of a social group, they "tend for the most part to be easily classifiable as either fools or knaves."¹⁰⁷ Molière's servants, apart from Alain and Georgette, have, on the whole, sharp wit and fertile imagination. They use their imaginativeness for finding ways of circumventing authority, and use their wit and ingenuity to protect themselves. But when a harsh punishment is expected their social vulnerability makes them play the role society expects and make the proper gestures of subservience.

One particular case among Molière's servant characters is Sganarelle in Dom Juan. In Dom Juan, Molière "seems most clearly interested in juxtaposing the social classes of his day."¹⁰⁸ This strategic juxtaposing of the nobility on the one hand and servants and peasants on the other has significant bearings on the relationship of Dom Juan and Sganarelle as master and servant. By contrasting them Molière manages to show that worthiness is not a monopoly of the nobility and unworthiness is not necessarily linked with low rank on the hierarchical social scale. "In one sense at any rate, Sganarelle is 'good' whereas his master, Dom Juan, is 'bad.'"¹⁰⁹ In the first scene of the play, Sganarelle voices his real judgement of his master to Gusman:

in Don Juan my master, you behold the greatest scoundrel who ever walked the earth; a madman, a dog, a devil, a Turk, a heretic who does not believe in heaven, hell or demon, who passes his life like a veritable brute-beast, an Epicurean hog; a regular Sardanapalus, who shuts his ears against every remonstrance which is made him, and regards everything we believe as old wives' tales.¹¹⁰

But Sganarelle's care for his personal safety and for his pocket is overriding. This is typical of almost all the clever slaves of antiquity as well as the Renaissance. When his safety and his pocket are threatened, "fine principles and fine feelings fly out of the window."¹¹¹ This is understandable, since the Dom Juan who ravishes women and engages in dangerous fights for the sake of chivalry could, perhaps for the sake of chivalry as well, strike off Sganarelle's head in an instant.

Molière's servant characters do not stand on an equal footing with each other in terms of their boldness and frankness in expressing their opinions about their masters in their masters' presence. Some are very bold and audacious, and others are reserved and timorous. The maidservants are, generally speaking, bolder than the male servants. This is probably because of the fact that the big brunt of

punishment usually falls upon the male servants, whereas the maidservants usually get away with a slight, probably verbal, punishment. Toinette, the maidservant in Le Malade imaginaire (The Hypochondriac), engages in funny exchanges with the imaginary invalid Argan. Her audacity is sometimes outrageous. Even so, the punishment she usually receives is an ineffective reprimand, and when things get hotter she nimbly manages to evade Argan's blows. Dorine, Mariane's maid in Le Tartuffe, ou L'Imposteur (Tartuffe, or The Hypocrite), is as impertinent and self-assured as Toinette. She teases her master Orgon, gives herself the liberty of calling him names, and even skilfully manages to make an impact on his relationship with Tartuffe.

Molière's servants are not improbable creatures. They have so much of France in them, and their roots are traceable via the commedia dell'arte and the commedia erudita, back to the slaves of Latin comedy. This is not only applicable to Molière's servants, but also to the domestic servants of the Golden Age Spanish comedia, and the English Elizabethan comedy.

VIII. Conclusion

All the servants of the European Renaissance comedy have a great deal in common with the slaves of Greek and Roman comedy. This is, probably, because the

social context in which they were still living had not yet changed much in terms of essentials and fundamentals. But the Spanish servants have much of Spain in them, as the Italian, French, and English servants have in them much of Italy, France, and England. Their common characteristics are begotten by the very nature of domestic service itself in all societies. It is this feeling of being not only underprivileged and victimized but also prevented from enjoying life and self-esteem as others do that makes the domestic servant unscrupulous about wrongdoing, indiscretion, impropriety, dishonesty, and misbehaviour. Such unscrupulousness is skilfully manipulated by the playwrights to produce comedies that not only attack human follies but also satisfy the audience's expectation of a relaxing experience and a good outing.

The portraiture of servants in this chapter is intended to be used by the reader as a reference point for contrast and comparison with the representation of domestic servants in the comedy of the Restoration period and the first half of the eighteenth century. It is also supposed to help the reader build up a more comprehensive picture of the character of the domestic servant in the comedy of different ages. This is supposed to make our understanding of this character and its development throughout the history of comedy sharper and more solid.

More important, this chapter is intended to support the thesis that no matter how similar or different the portraiture of servants is in the comedy of the Restoration period and the first half of the eighteenth century, it can be looked at as a repetitive pattern of earlier models and ancient ones. This fact seems to account for and keep the relevance of the representation of servants, in the comedy of the period in question, to historical realities and to the details of contemporary historical developments of domestic service to a minimum.

IX. Notes

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Chapter II

**Domestic Service in the Second Half
of the Seventeenth and the First Half
of the Eighteenth Centuries**

I. Introduction

Despite their important role in the historical evolution of English Society, Domestic servants feature only in a very limited fashion in historical documentation. In his essay "Ubiquitous but Invisible: Female Domestic Servants in Mid-Eighteenth Century London," D. A. Kent maintains that the

significance of service as an 'institution' is well established yet detailed studies are so scarce that as recently as 1986 Franklin Mendels could write that it offered 'a promising area for future research' into 'the history of youth and children, the history of women, the history of the family, migration, social mobility, the working classes and population'.¹

D. A. Kent rightly observes that up to 1989, the year in which his essay was published, little progress has been made in terms of specialised research on domestic servants as an "occupational group". This led D. A. Kent to conclude that "English servants have been relatively neglected,"² and that despite the fact that some historians have increased and contributed to our knowledge of domestic service, this particular area of English history remains, in the words of Olivia Harris, "almost a ghost in the . . . study of (the) household . . . acknowledged in one breath and denied

in the next."³ The limited existence of recent published work relating to domestic service offered me limited choices, and made me depend on essays published in periodicals and books and on a very limited number of monographs to glean as much relevant material as possible. J. J. Hecht's book, which is, as Kent rightly observes, "the only substantial account of domestic service in the eighteenth century"⁴, proved to be quite helpful, but the problem is that Kent thinks that this book is "imprecise," like some other sources particularly in concentrating on information and documents associated with servants who served in large establishments, and in the working out of some of his statistics.

The relative scarcity of documentary material relating to domestic service, the nature of this material (mainly associated with servants who were lucky enough to work in prosperous and wealthy households) has discouraged extensive historical research in this field. The social situation of the majority of servants as illiterate and mobile left them unable to create records of their profession and circumstances, which might have also contributed to diminishing of the attraction of this area as a promising field of research. What is more is the fact that "the craftsmen, artisans and retailers who employed the majority of domestic servants, have left almost no record of the part which servants played in

their family economies."⁵ On the whole, early domestic service is a controversial though undeveloped area for research.

Despite all the afore-mentioned difficulties and complexities, I have set an aim for this chapter which is to provide the reader with an overall picture of what domestic service looked like in the second half of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century. Historical facts, gleaned from books, articles, and diaries, are meant to provide reference points for the analytical literary arguments which will be made in the ensuing chapters. Some tentative inferences are based on factual information gleaned from the diaries of some of the gossips of the second half of the seventeenth century. References to events, persons, stories or any other happenings, associated with earlier or later periods, are employed when deemed contributive and serviceable to a historical relevance, or when thought of as being conducive to a tenable assumption.

II. Origins of Domestic Service

In her book, The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant (1975) Pamela Horn introduces a useful survey of the origins of domestic service. Horn rightly observes that for as long as "there have been rich and poor in society there have been domestic servants to minister to the wants of the well-to-do."⁶ But in

ancient Greece and Rome the word "'servant' was often synonymous with that of 'slave', since few free men or women were willing to perform the menial labour which domestic service entailed."⁷

The origins of domestic service in England can be traced back to medieval times. Broadly speaking, the domestic servants of medieval England were young men of "gentle birth" who had to work as servants for a limited period of time in big manor-houses or castles not so much to get money as to learn how to enter social life and get themselves properly educated. Another reason for the presence of men of gentle birth among the upper servants in the households of the noble families is the fact that "convention still decreed that young men of good social standing should receive part of their training by attending on nobles of recognized power and reputation."⁸ Upon the completion of their service these young men would qualify for political careers or service at court, and some would remain in the same household and get promoted to a better position.

It is self-evident to say that domestic service started on an altogether narrower scale in the early days of domestic life in England. In medieval England, historians believe that assistance in domestic life must have been confined to parishes, manor houses, castles, and households of substantial merchants and clothiers. As wealth and trade began to bring about

higher standards of domestic comfort and more leisurely styles of life, demand for domestics began to rise.

The households in medieval England, which had young men of good birth, also had lower domestics, presumably not of gentle birth, whose job was to wash the pans, clean the rooms, and do the laundry. These domestics were kept in horrible conditions in terms of food and accommodation. Probably the most miserable were those who took care of the horses, the grooms, and the boy attendants. The servant-keeping households were limited in number. They belonged mainly to the nobility and the gentry. Priests in most villages employed house-keepers. Rich merchants and clothiers who lived in the town needed some domestics to assist them in their trades.

III. Outline of Domestic Service in the 16th Century

By the sixteenth century, a gradual increase in the number of households which could employ domestics began to take place. An "increasing proportion of servants were now employed in families of moderate means - a trend which was to persist and intensify up to the early twentieth century."⁹ The remarkable thing is that female domestics substantially outnumbered male domestics in the new servant-keeping households. This was because women were "cheaper to employ and easier to discipline than men."¹⁰ In terms of food and

accommodation, there was a general improvement, but this improvement varied considerably according to the type of the household.

IV. Outline of Domestic Service in the 17th Century

During the seventeenth century, the "middling orders of society" started to become more and more prominent. This obviously entailed a growing demand for domestic service. At this stage a household of moderate standing would employ "a cook maid, a chamber maid or house maid, possibly a waiting woman, a man servant and an odd boy."¹¹ There were smaller and bigger households as well, and accordingly smaller and bigger numbers of domestics. Apprentices started to figure prominently among the domestics, because small businesses started to appear. In the countryside employees worked "on the land as servants in husbandry rather than domestic servants."¹² Their conditions were appalling. The employment of male servants in the households of the nobility prospered, and female servants were greatly outnumbered by the male ones. In the 1620s, the Countess of Dorset employed a male staff of ninety-three, and a female staff of only twenty-one. The later part of the seventeenth century witnessed rapid rises in wages, and a new "spirit of independence and insubordination"¹³ began to appear among the male servants.

The medieval practice of sending young men of gentle birth into noble service came to an end in the seventeenth century as a consequence of the Civil War. The domestic service had its share from the legacy of the Cromwell years. A change of attitude towards domestic service started to take root, which probably was one of the results of the sense of victory and the proud feeling of the glorious bouncing back into prominence and limelight of the great families of the time. One of the manifestations or the embodiments of the relatively new attitude towards the service is the decrease in the dissociation of domestic service from the sense of social inferiority. After the Civil War, Dorothy Marshall wrote: "it was no longer customary to send young gentlemen into a noble service for a short time".¹⁴ Sending young gentlemen into serving noble families had been in fashion in the past, and it had been an essential part of training for the initiation of young gentlemen into the noble society of his elders. One of the results of the new tendency, Dorothy Marshall argues, is the fact that "the servants as a body became a more homogeneous collection."¹⁵ Another new development in the structure of domestic service is the fact that women "who seem to have played a comparatively small part in the Tudor household of any size, were, from the mid-seventeenth century onwards, much more extensively employed."¹⁶

V. Outline of Domestic Service in the 18th Century

By the eighteenth century the "domestic menage of the great house had been completely altered . . . even the upper servants were in the majority of cases the sons of labourers, artisans or small farmers rather than recruits from the ranks of reduced gentlemen."¹⁷

As of 1660, Ron Becker says, "feudal serfdom was legally a thing of the past, and all Englishmen were free men."¹⁸ In his essay "The Ideological Commitment of Locke: Freeman and Servants in The Two Treatises of Government," Becker clarifies Locke's distinction between free men and freemen. A freeman is a man "not dependent on any other, one who was not a servant or a slave and, generally a man with political rights."¹⁹ Servants are free men, but because they were dependent on others for their living, they did not have the privilege of being freemen. Generally speaking, "any man dependent on another for a living, a servant or a wage earner, was not a freeman."²⁰

The word servant in its broad meaning meant a person who worked for another person, but after the abolition of vail-giving it began to represent a "particular kind of worker, one who wore his master's clothes, slept in his master's house, and waited on his master's needs."²¹ This type of worker is the one which continued to have a progeny in the ensuing decades, and which still exists; with some new

legislation, uniforms or otherwise, and new attitudes towards the concept of domestic service, in our days.

The custom of vail-giving and its abolishing early in the second half of the eighteenth century, which occasioned drastic reactions on the part of the servants, might be used in an argument that the delineation of domestic servants as being more disciplined, less unruly, less opportunist, and more respectful in the comedies of the sentimental writers of the first half of the eighteenth century than their siblings in the comedies of the Restoration writers is misleading. The abolition of vail-giving must have been a desperate and a last-ditch measure to discipline and bring to an end the unacceptable behaviour of servants which had been plaguing masters for decades before that. Vail-giving continued to be in fashion throughout the Restoration and the first half of the eighteenth century; and its abolishing, which was reported to have caused big problems, and which is supposed to have had a negative impact on the relationship between masters and servants, did not occur in the time of the so-called sentimental comedies. What might account, only partially, for the changed character of the domestic servant in the comedies of Addison and Steele and the rest of the Sentimental writers is the comparatively new moral atmosphere created by the moral reformists of the age.

Obviously, the changes in lifestyles and the organisation of the great houses and castles entailed an inevitable increase in the employment of domestics, and so did the changes in the means of transport and the state of roads. "As the coach gradually superseded horseback as a method of conveyance, their [the servants'] assistance was frequently required to restart a coach which had stuck in the mud or been partly overturned in a ditch or a rut."²² The instability and readjustments which marked the years of Cromwell and his parliaments occasioned or necessitated numerous changes in the households of the great families, and as a result brought about a temporary decline in the employment of domestics.

VI. Early Legislation on Domestic Service

Laws concerning the employment of domestics started to appear under the Tudors and, more specifically, in the early sixteenth century. An act which came into effect in 1504 prohibited "the employment of male retainers other than household servants."²³ This led to a reduction in the size of the private armies which the nobility had established in the previous century. Another law - the Statute of Artificers (1563) - "laid down that hirings were to be for a year, unless an explicit statement to the contrary were made, and neither party could break the contract on his own initiative."²⁴ This law applied to the ordinary

servants, who were liable to imprisonment in the House of Correction should they breach it; whereas, if the breach was done by the master, only a fine would be imposed. Law allowed the masters to chastise and fine their servants for swearing, laziness, unpunctuality, and absence from family prayers. Employers differed in the application of these fines and punishments.

VII. Service in Moral and Religious Treatises

The moral and religious treatises of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century contained plenty of instructions and guidance for masters as well as servants. Obviously, the origins and sources of these instructions and preaching go back to earlier traditions and mainly to "the Christian humanists to whom treatise authors turned in search of guidance, justification, and authority."²⁵ Biblical texts and Classical theorists were another source of guidance and authority. Interestingly enough, in spite of all the rhetorical, enthusiastic, and religious instructions levelled at both masters and servants to follow guidelines preached by the clergy and inspired by Biblical teaching, unruly and dissenting human nature, at least in some circumstances, ruled supreme. Servants' wild spiritedness and irresponsibility pushed them into negligence, laziness, nonconformity and disagreeable behaviour. Religious observance and

Church services were frequently missed and deliberately ignored by servants.

Masters wronged their servants, defrauded them of their wages and even kicked them out to the street to fend for themselves for no justifiable reasons:

Cases of servants being cheated or denied their wages are a recurrent feature of quarter sessions records, masters being summoned before magistrates for not reimbursing regularly or for trying to defraud their employees of salaries altogether.²⁶

Instances of cruelty towards servants are not in short supply. Mark Thornton Burnett's essay "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 1580-c. 1642" contains enough examples to support the argument. He mentions that in 1631, a Somerset servant called Christopher Gould served William Atwell for five years and was sacked when he demanded his wages. Moreover, despite the fact that the religious authors argued that "the master was bound to take on the responsibility of arranging medical care that would lead to his dependant's recovery,"²⁷ some masters displayed unspeakable cruelty and lack of care and concern. Some ill servants were thrown out of their masters' doors.

Although masters were given the authority to use physical punishment as a way of correcting their

servants, yet they were "directed not to overstep the bounds of lawful correction, and to realize that gentle words were often preferable to physical castigation."²⁸ Unfortunately, this message went unheeded by some masters, and many servants were unlucky enough to be excessively beaten and cruelly abused by their masters. If physical punishment led to maiming and being unfit for service, the parish, usually, would take care of the servant.

Puritan divines "exhorted servants to be faithful and obedient, and to recognize that serving well was a commendable virtue."²⁹ Masters were equated with God in the puritan writings. He "was a priest in his own household and invested with divine authority."³⁰ There is some evidence to the effect that good relationships must have developed between masters and their servants, but the more obvious cases were the ones in which servants showed discontent with their lot. Mark Thornton Burnett quotes Carter who, in 1627, echoed this discontent and wrote that servants "seeke to free themselues from the estate of seruitude when they are therein, to the end they may be Masters and gouerners themselues."³¹ This discontent, ambition for social advancement, and sexual harassment to maidservants, kept some servants on the move. Some of these circumstances reduced servants to vagrancy, for which they were held responsible, "and the master's role in

this coming about [was] barely acknowledged"³² in the theories and writings of conduct literature.

Moral treatises and conduct books warned servants against stealing and instructed them to take good care of their masters' belongings and possessions, but servants were always feared as potential 'pickers'. Examples of servants abusing their employers' trust are not few, and stealing proved to be disastrous to a servant's future if detected. It meant arrest and, in many cases, turning out of service.

Divines warned against servants as being potential corrupters. "The servant, it was thought, would almost certainly commit sexual misdemeanours and, governed by a licentious temperament, would lead the other members of the household into corruption and depravity."³³ This prejudiced and logically untenable view might have been adopted as a result of the fact that an "examination of bastardy cases regularly reveals the culpability of servants living in the same household."³⁴ Yet there is ample evidence that "maidservants were more likely to be impregnated by their employers than by fellow servants."³⁵ In 1655, a Sussex maidservant called Lydia Prynne became pregnant by her master Francis Haddon, who violently tried to abort the child after she had refused to name one of her fellow servants as its father.

This bleak picture of the treatment of servants by their masters is counteracted by some other

evidence and stories in diaries and wills which suggest that "some masters and servants did come to share intimacy and attachment."³⁶ There is also evidence that a certain measure of tolerance and kindness was exercised by some masters towards their servants. Loyalty and honesty seem to have been profusely rewarded, and hard work and discipline earned some servants respectable positions in the households of their masters.

VIII. Service as Depicted in Some Contemporary Diaries

Dorothy Marshall points out the fact that, in the seventeenth century, in "all but wealthy households the cook was always a woman".³⁷ A careful check of the diary of Samuel Pepys shows that hiring a cook, male or female, was not always easy, and that Samuel Pepys whose income and fortune fluctuated at certain intervals employed both men and women cooks. In March 1668, Pepys "was at a mighty loss what in the world to do for a Cooke,"³⁸ after he had made few attempts to find a man cook. These attempts give us an idea about some of the means through which Pepys and other people of his calibre managed to hire domestic servants, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis. One of those means is seeking the help of domestics in the service of acquaintances, and sometimes depending on the direction and advice of the acquaintances themselves.

In the previous five or six years, Pepys employed many 'cook maids'. In March 1662, Pepys' wife employed Jane, the cook maid, at '3l' a year. The next March they employed a new cook maid at '4l' a year. What was expected from the cook to do was the ability to perform all the culinary duties; dressing all sorts of meat, garnishing diverse dishes, and making pickles. After all, the expertise of cooks varied according to the diversities of food, drink, and pastry in the larders and pantries of the well-to-do. Their wages varied accordingly. On the whole, Pepys seemed to have preferred women cooks, and so did many of the employers of domestics in the second half of the seventeenth century. This accounts for the general increase in the employment of women cooks during that period.

In many cases, the households of the 'middling' orders employed, in addition to the cook, another maid who attended to the needs of the lady of the house. In October 1666, the Pepys family listened to the singing of a gentlewoman upon the recommendation of a Lady Pen, but the Pepys were not impressed by her style of singing.³⁹ The Pepys family experienced all sorts of problems associated with employing domestics. These problems ranged from having a cook maid neglecting her duties, and another stealing a 'Gorgett', to having a too attractive maid, Deb Willet, to be resisted by Pepys, who was caught by his wife embracing her.

Obviously Pepys seems to have been interested in employing pretty maidservants, probably in the hope of having some of their 'favours' bestowed on him. Few years later, Pepys' penchant to employ attractive maids was still in full swing, but to his utter disappointment, their new chamber-maid, whom his wife thought of as handsome, was "a very ordinary wench", which made him "mightily disappointed."⁴⁰ Pepys' wife seems to have been suspicious of his instincts and his fragile defences against the forces of feminine temptations. This might be justified in the light of the fact that the time was growing more tolerant of sexual freedom and sensual indulgence. It might be argued, in this connection, that Pepys' sexual exploitation of some of his pretty chamber-maids is likely to have been on a much wider scale than what has been declared in his diary. The more serious cases of abuse are more likely to have been kept as a secret, particularly those which, if disclosed, would have caused him a great deal of trouble if not prosecution. On the other hand, Pepys' exploitation of his female employees is probably a miniature of the real problem; in the sense that what might have happened in the privacy of the homes of other employers, who were not known and watched as much as Pepys was, is much more appalling.

Keeping more than one or two domestics was not only a financial burden, but also a recipe for more

trouble. One could imagine how difficult it is to keep a house in check when the number of servants exceeds two or three, and the division of duties is not very clear-cut. Pepys tells us in his diary of a particular cook-maid who was made into a lady companion or a chamber-maid to his wife. In October 1661, Pepys was sorry to come home to find his wife displeased with her maid Doll, "whose fault is that she cannot keep her peace, but will alway[s] be talking in an angry manner, though it be without any reason and to no purpose." This made him feel sorry and "see the inconvenience that doth attend the increase of a man's fortune, by being forced to keep more servants, which brings trouble."⁴¹

The picture becomes more revealing when we learn of the custom of making gentlemen's servants heavily drunk as a gesture of cordial welcome in the houses of country squires. John Evelyn, the diarist who had noble connection, seemed to have troubles that were different from the ones Pepys had. Evelyn and his acquaintances seemed to have had all their servants intoxicated every time they visited a country squire or an old knight. Evelyn seemed to have resented this custom. After a visit, in July 1654, to Sir Edward Baynton, who was an old knight, Evelyn, who escaped many dangers in returning home caused by making his servants exceedingly drunk, wrote in his diary that the intoxication of servants was carried out upon

by/

orders from the Knight. This seemed to him "barbarous and much unbecoming a Knight, still less a Christian."⁴² The same custom seems to have lingered for many years to come. In March 1669, Evelyn visited Sir William Ducie at Charlton with Lord Howard of Norfolk. The same intoxication took place again with extra strength this time which led to the falling off their boxes on the heath of the two coachmen of Evelyn, and they were left where they fell, and Evelyn was driven back to London by two of Lord Howard's servants. Evelyn resented again that this "barbarous custom of making the masters welcome by intoxicating the servants, had now the second time happened to ... [his] coachmen."⁴³

IX. References as a Prerequisite for Employment

The practice of enquiring about the employment records or the social behaviour of potential employees, and the practice of asking for references as a prerequisite for employment seem to have started in the early years of the Restoration. In March 1663, Pepys told his wife, who had hired a maid the day before, that he "would have [her] enquired after before she comes".⁴⁴ This might have been one of the many developments which started to creep in after the Civil War. The war years seem to have generated in people a tendency for being extra cautious and more tending to mistrusting natural instincts. The negative

side of this new development, so far as servants are concerned, is the fact that it must have forced some servants to rather put up with the worst of abuses, physical or sexual, than to risk losing the prospect of acquiring a good reference from his employer. This can be supported further by arguing that even nowadays, in the age of Human Rights and the age of freedom and enlightenment, this business of references is still the nightmare of potential employees and the ultimate power in the hands of employers.

The picture gets gloomier and more regrettable when we learn of the fate of female servants who were made pregnant by their masters, their masters' sons, or their fellow male-servants. Pregnancy meant more than immediate sacking. It meant that finding another place for work, without a recommendation letter, was almost impossible. Things proved to be a lot worse for female-servants who gave birth to children as a result of their masters' or male-servants' sexual relationships with them. This, according to Bridget Hill, accounts for the fact that "of those women convicted of infanticide [in the eighteenth century] whose occupation was known, the majority were domestic servants, and there must have been many cases which never came to light." She also maintains that to be "an unmarried mother in eighteenth-century England was of all plights the worst, and servants were peculiarly vulnerable."⁴⁵

The references were not the only way through which domestics were recommended for various employments. Working in great households owned by 'great families' used to be reckoned by potential employers, in the majority of cases, as a reliable reference. In 1669, Pepys used a 'black-moore' of Mr. Batelier's for a cook-maid with whom the Pepys' family were "mightily pleased" for she managed to dress their meat "mightily well". In some other cases, employers used to depend on the recommendation of a relative, a neighbour, or a person of important standing in employing domestics. Pepys' diary contains some references to the fact that he depended on the advice of important persons, Mrs. Turner and Lady Pen etc., in his attempts to find a domestic servant. Anyway, as for Lady Pen's recommendation, it proved to be utterly disappointing.

X. The Incidence of Suicide Among Servants

Unlike the custom and traditions of the earlier times, the domestic servants of the second half of the seventeenth century were in many ways the offspring of destitutes. These poor people were, in the majority of cases, forced by hardship to hand out their children to the more fortunate people to work as domestics. This practice of disposing of children because of inability to find enough food and shelter for them brought about intolerable conditions of service which those unfortunate children had to put up with, simply

because they did not have any other choice. A striking result of this tradition of sending children into service is the fact that some children found their circumstances intolerable and committed suicide. In an attempt to explain some of the reasons behind the "significant incidence of suicide" of children aged seven to twenty-one, between 1507 and 1710, T.R. Murphy thinks that childhood suicide "presented an attempt to retaliate against parents and masters in the social context of customary severe discipline and the sending of children out from the home into service."⁴⁶ He thinks that such an explanation is much more probable than attributing suicide to "Romeo and Juliet syndrome", romantic puberty crisis or childhood melancholia or depression. Depending on contemporary records Murphy asserts that childhood suicide in early modern England "would in fact appear to have constituted a much larger proportion of the total suicides than it does today and yet to have occasioned little contemporary comment and no special attention by the law and society."⁴⁷ There must have been many other reasons behind this drastic act of a child or a young man taking his own life and depriving his parents and his society from his services; not to mention the shame, the stigma of being fearless of God and under the influence of the Devil, and the "posthumous punishment of ignominious burial and forfeiture of goods and chattels."⁴⁸ Some of these

reasons were identified by "early modern Englishmen" as economic problems, bereavements, hopeless illnesses, and by other contemporaries as revenge, hostility and aggression. Nobody can rule out the possibility that some cases of suicides were occasioned by one or a combination of two or more of those reasons. Yet, there is enough evidence that going into service and the circumstances and conditions of service had its big share of occasioning suicide. Murphy mentions an incident in which, in 1695, a twelve-year-old boy called Daniel Rose, who worked as an "apprentice weaver of Strowd in Gloucestershire", was "upset about his employment and complained to friends."⁴⁹ Subsequently, he hanged himself in his master's garden.

According to the common law of the time, masters causing death to their servants in the course of correcting them, in a moderate fashion, can get away with it as a misadventure. Servants who happen to cause the death of their masters were to be punished with "extreme severity."⁵⁰ Such a law, although cruel and unfair, must have been used and abused to ensure unconditioned and absolute submission of the domestic servants of the age. Poor children who must have suffered from depression, loneliness, anxiety and estrangeness, whether already in service or waiting to be transferred to the places of service, found themselves in impossible situations. Laws, customs,

feelings of inferiority, bitterness and internalized ethics of having to be obedient and submissive "set the young person at odds with parents and master but denied him any means of retaliation".⁵¹ Powerlessness made life unbearable misery.

XI. Service and Cost of Living

From the late years of the sixteenth century until the mid seventeenth century, the cost of living rose more slowly than the previous decades in which the rising had been substantially quicker and sharper. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the cost of living fell for a while, to recover again in the 1690s, "and then remained trendless until the mid eighteenth century, when the rise leading to the extraordinary inflation of the Napoleonic Wars began."⁵² The sharp increase of the cost of living in the sixteenth century and the slower one in the first half of the seventeenth seem to have had their toll on the livelihood of the less fortunate people of the time. This might account for the fact that "most youths [persons aged fifteen to twenty-four] in early modern England were servants".⁵³ This, in many cases, might also account for the bad conditions of service resulting from the employers' awareness of the need of the less fortunate people to send their children into domestic service. This seemingly plentiful availability of potential domestic servants does not

seem to be the case with Samuel Pepys. He seemed, sometimes, to have had great difficulties in finding domestic workers. Some of the reasons are the relative fall of the cost of living in the second half of the seventeenth century, and the fact that Pepys, in many cases, needed to have a domestic worker in a very urgent fashion.

XII. Masters' Treatment of their Servants

As for the treatment received by servants from their masters, the picture is heterogeneous and varied. This largely differed from one household to another; depending on the social standing, personal characteristics, affluence and abundance of wealth, income resources, domestic arrangements, number of servants, domestic duties, and idiosyncratic fits. It also depended on the diligence and hard work of the servant, and in some cases where female servants were involved, on the physical features and attractiveness of the candidate. In August 1661, Pepys' wife hired an ugly chambermaid. Pepys registered his response as follows: "This morning came the mayd that my wife hath lately hired for a Chamber-mayd. She is very ugly, so that I cannot care for her; but otherwise she seems very good."⁵⁴ Similar to this is his response to his wife's chamber-maid Mary, whom his wife hired in March 1665, and whose ordinary appearance, contrary to what his wife thought, made him "mightily disappointed".

This obviously is in stark contrast to his response to the attractive maid Deb Willet.

It must be noted that our information about domestic service in this period is exclusively gleaned from the sources left to us by the employer class. This might account for the surprise and disappointment which Pepys had when, in March 1665, Besse, who "of all wenches that ever lived with [them]..., received the greatest love and kindness and good clothes, besides wages," decided to leave "with the greatest ingratitude".⁵⁵ What made Besse do so is either kept secret from Pepys and the rest of the family or Pepys chose to overlook it. Anyway, History is mostly written by the ink of Sultans, as the Arabic proverb goes, and consequently, there are always unexplored areas of knowledge, the knowing of which would change our perception and understanding of life, and it would also expurgate history from the misleading, information. This necessitates the careful perusal and consideration of the so-called historical facts to get as closely as possible to the truth of the matters.

XIII. The Demand for More Servants in the 18th Century

In the eighteenth century, a "variety of economic developments and resulting social changes created a steadily increasing demand for domestics throughout the period."⁵⁶ In his book, The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England (first published in 1956 as

The Servant Class in Eighteenth-Century England, and reprinted in 1980 with the formerly mentioned title), J. Jean Hecht's states that "multiple sources furnished a constantly increasing, though generally inadequate, supply"⁵⁷ of domestics. Of course, the industrial and commercial developments in this century created a class of manufacturers and traders who came to be called the middle class. This class came to employ large numbers of domestics in their new and more elaborate households for several reasons, the most conspicuous of which is the desire of the new upstarts to "equal the magnificence of the upper classes."⁵⁸ This sort of development made the importance of maintaining larger numbers of servants by the nobility and gentry more pressing, for wealth "became a more potent criterion of social status,"⁵⁹ and servants were one of the most obvious evidences of wealth.

Dorothy Marshall, in her essay: "The English Domestic Servant in History", mentions that a "common way of disposing of a child was to bind it out to housewifery with a purely nominal premium"; and this, in turn, led to the dreadful result of young girls entering "the ranks of the most victimized class of domestic servants."⁶⁰ She also points out to the fact that the governors of the workhouses of the first years of the eighteenth century, bowed to the pressure of the 'philanthropic zeal' excited by binding

children of poor families to workhouses, and decided to provide better training for those paupers. Unfortunately, these workhouses, which seem to have been very much like prisons rather than places where children of poor parents were supposed to receive proper training for domestic service, failed to fulfill their declared aims. Obviously, these unfortunate children did not qualify for proper domestic service.

XIV. Main Sources of Servants

According to J. Jean Hecht, the main source of domestics in the eighteenth-century England was the offspring of farmers and of agricultural servants and labourers. But one would think that the more sophisticated servants who appear in comedies set in London or in other fashionable places are children of labourers rather than farmers, for the farmers' children were reputed to have been honest and virtuous young men and women. Interestingly enough, the prying eyes of servants on the privacy of their masters forced or at least brought about architectural developments on the planning of residential quarters. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, great houses did not have corridors which would have allowed moving about without passing through others' rooms. This intrusion on the privacy of the inhabitants of these great houses was drastically reduced in the house

plans of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by providing access to all chambers through proper corridors and by transferring most bedrooms upstairs and "leaving the ground floor for living-quarters."⁶¹ This, obviously, should have provided a good deal of privacy for the masters of the houses of the middle and upper classes of the time and the members of their families, but the cracks in the wainscoting and the notorious keyholes provided a convenient alternatives and enabled servants to spy on their masters and be key witnesses in "the trials for noble adultery of the eighteenth century."⁶² This tendency towards greater privacy and subdivision of houses spread to all classes of society. Free food and free lodging for apprentices and domestics in the households of tradesmen and the less wealthy shopkeepers and farmers were replaced by wage increases, and this definitely must have provided more privacy for employers and more liberty for servants and employees. This might also have provided some sort of protection for single girls employed in domestic service from sexual exploitation by their masters or by their fellow male domestic servants, in the sense that having upper and lower servants living and sleeping in the same household increases the chance of single girls falling victims to sexual exploitation. What is worse is the fact that girls who became pregnant by their masters or their fellow male servants were dismissed from employment

and left alone to face all sorts of problems. Lawrence Stone mentions in his book The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800, that many of the girls, who were made pregnant and who were dismissed from employment in domestic service in the nineteenth century, "drifted into the disease-ridden and futureless profession of prostitution".⁶³ I think, it can be comparatively safely assumed that some of the girls, who were exposed to the same circumstances in the eighteenth century, were forced to go into the business of prostitution. The eighteenth century, Stone maintains, "saw a rise in prostitution and pornography".⁶⁴

London was a great attraction to young people who sought employment as domestics, and servants from the country and those who belonged to farming families were welcomed in London "because of the ill-repute of the local species."⁶⁵ Servants brought up in London were considered to be unfit for service, for "urban living was supposed to have given them a sophistication characterized by a highly insubordinate spirit and an exceptionally self-interested attitude."⁶⁶ This attitude towards the metropolitan domestics forced many of them to leave the city after they had lost their jobs and return to it posing as fresh arrivals. The attraction of London to domestics is not confined to the expectation of high wages, but also extends to the glitter and novelty of it,

particularly for the servants who came to London in droves from the country. The attraction of London was also so strong that young people of both sexes imagined the metropolis to "resemble that paradise promised to the Mahometans by their prophet."⁶⁷ A satirist, in 1725, depicted the typical farmer as being "charmed by the Sight of every Jackanapes in Livery,"⁶⁸ and as resolving to send his Jack to London to become a footman. Footmen who came from the country were reported in some London magazines to have inflamed the imagination of their fellow country-men with their stories about London during their visits to their parents in the country.

XV. Reasons for Going into Service

The attraction of London and its various prospects of better wages, better boarding and ultimately better life was not the only thing which made the young people of the eighteenth century decide to go into servitude. Events, calamities, circumstances, personal tragedies and domestic hardships left many young people of the eighteenth century with no other options but to seek livelihood through entering into servitude.

John Macdonald's family was ruined by the Jacobite uprising of 1745, and his father, who was the "captain of the Macdonald clan," lost his life in fighting at Culloden. This left John and his brother Daniel

"homeless, landless and fatherless".⁶⁹ This, in turn, led to the two boys becoming beggars in the streets of Edinburgh from the age of 4 and 6 respectively. John, fortunately, left us an account of his life, which registers the early days' nightmares and hardships, and the later stages of his life spent in domestic service in London. These accounts derive their importance from the fact that a very few servants of the age managed to leave accounts of some sort of their lives in service, but these accounts are mostly confined to registering personal experiences. His account of the nights which he and his brother had to spend in the streets and below the stairs of some buildings, and how the frightful stories which became nightmarish after the 'Rebellion', which seems to be the Jacobite uprising, and which made the two brothers sleep by turns, so that there is always one of them on guard throughout the night against the possible attack of the doctor who might come at night to "poor children asleep, and put sticking plasters to their mouth, that they might not call out, and then to carry them away to be dissected."⁷⁰

John's accounts of his life as a domestic servant in London, and how he was hired by Mr Hamilton's coachman, give us an idea that:

In a substantial household, the servants themselves ran the house [of their master] and its

affairs, [and how in theory] a house and its servants were an extension of the householder's family; [and how] in practice the householder and his family were proprietors of a great hotel, employing a staff of perhaps eighteen or twenty (and far more in a really important house).⁷¹

John chose to go down to London to seek employment, because London's businessmen, craftsmen, and tradesmen needed to employ servants to carry out different kinds of activities. The demand for extra servants in the second half of the eighteenth century was not confined to male servants. On the contrary, the "demand for servants, especially for 'the useful housewifery sort', generally exceeded the supply and throughout the century domestic service in London was one of the brighter economic prospects for unmarried working women."⁷² The number of servants who flocked to London in the second half of the eighteenth century was very big so that in 1762, a correspondent to the London Chronicle thought that the city "would soon become depopulated if it were not for the waggon loads of poor servants arriving everyday from all parts of the Kingdom."⁷³

XVI. The Emigration of Servants to America

This big demand for servants, generally speaking, seems to have been a result of the fact that after 1740, the faster population growth "was matched by faster output growth, leaving the growth rate of output per head unchanged at a low level until the last decades of the century."⁷⁴ This balance between the population growth and the output growth made the growth of both total output and output per person appear "to have been sustained throughout the [eighteenth] century prior to the 'take-off'"⁷⁵, which took place in the last two decades of the century. In other words, "the big acceleration in industrial output growth at the end of the century was preceded by a long period of steady growth in both workshop and farm."⁷⁶ In such circumstances where employment in domestic labour is within the reach of less fortunate people, one would expect that the number of servants who emigrated to America to seek employment must be substantially smaller than the number of those who emigrated at earlier stages.

A study of the contracts of English emigrant servants recorded in London between 1682 and 1686 showed that a big number of them were fatherless and friendless. Although the total of those who chose or forced by circumstances to migrate to America is not very substantial - an average of 3,000 a year compared with approximately five million inhabitants of England - I purposed to mention this incidence of indentured

emigration as a possible factor which might account for the difficulty Samuel Pepys and others encountered in replacing their domestics. What accounts for the migration of this number is not only the circumstances of some of the English youth aged between 15 and 25, being fatherless and friendless and impecunious, but also the fact that the "intramarginal migrant's best alternative in England was worse than the value of slave labor in America."⁷⁷ Add to that the possibility that "the risk, information, and other non-pecuniary costs of indentured emigration were low."⁷⁸ Grubb also mention some relevant information which might help us understand why some English youths chose to emigrate to America even after the colonies had shifted into slave labour. He argues that most apprenticeships in England required entry fees -between 5 and 20 pounds. 5 to 10 pounds were enough for a youth to meet the travel costs to America as a free person. Apprenticeships also used to be secured more easily with the help of fathers through familiarity with professional masters. The loss of fathers put some English youths in very difficult situations and reduced future prospects of taking up lucrative professions to a minimum. Even though some of those fatherless youths would have managed to secure an apprenticeship, the problem of finding enough money to establish themselves as master tradesmen would have been a major obstacle. "Colonial servitude required no

entry fee and did not discriminate against fatherless youths in terms of contract length."⁷⁹

XVII. Scottish and Irish Servants

England, which failed to offer a propitious future or professional prospects for some unfortunate English youths, attracted many servants from Ireland and Scotland. What prompted those who chose to leave their homeland on their own initiatives seems to be, in many ways, the same which prompted some English youths to emigrate to America. Losing parents and guardians; which meant, in the majority of cases, losing the providers of food, clothes, and shelter was one of the main reasons which accounts for the emigration to other places. The Scottish John Macdonald went into service after the death of his father and the ruin of the Macdonald family by the Jacobite uprising of 1745 for few years, and then went down to London hoping for a better future.

XVIII. Gratuities and Vail-Giving

Tips and vails were another reason which made many Scottish servants eager to leave their homeland and come to London. In London vails and tips were still being given to domestics by the guests of their masters. This vail-giving was not in fashion in Scotland. Vails were so important to servants that they, in 1761, threatened Sir Francis Dashwood with

death being vehemently opposed to this custom.⁸⁰ One more obvious example of servants' desperate concern about abolishing vails was the battle, in 1764, between liveried servants and their masters during a fancy-dress masquerade in Ranelagh building in the village of Chelsea:

A great disturbance was created at Ranelagh-house by the coachmen, footmen, etc., belonging to such of the nobility and gentry as will not suffer their servants to take vails. They began by hissing their masters, they then broke all the lamps and outside windows with stones; and afterwards putting out their flambeaux, pelted the company in a most audacious manner, with brick-bats, etc., whereby several were greatly hurt, so as to render the use of swords necessary. In the scuffle one of the servants was run through his thigh, another through his arm, and several more otherwise wounded.⁸¹

This incident, which achieved nothing for servants in the way of keeping the custom of vails, seems to have been one of a series of action taken by domestic servants, on the spur of the moment or otherwise, to defend what they must have thought to be their right. In Edinburgh, in January 1760, some seventy footmen "evidently members of a secret combination,"⁸²

threatened to burn down the theatre in which a play called High Life Below Stairs was being performed. The same play, which was "a moralising satire, showing servants extravagantly entertaining when their master was away, stealing from him while aping the manners of high society,"⁸³ caused resentment and outrage among domestic servants in London. The story had it that the

whole race of domestic gentry ... were in a ferment of rage at what they conceived would be their ruin; and from the upper gallery ... came hisses and groans, and even many a handful of half-pence was flung at the stage.⁸⁴

Such incidents and the arguments of the opponents of vail-giving, and the growing spirit of independence and insubordination among the servant population led, in 1760, to the inevitable abolition of this custom in Scotland. Anyway, the custom lingered on here and there for some time particularly in the middle-class households.

XIX. The Hierarchical Relationships of Servants

The servant class was actually composed not only of the offspring of farmers and labourers, but also of "recruits from social levels as diverse as the gentry and the rural proletariat."⁸⁵ It also comprised servants from Scotland and Ireland brought to England

either by their masters or on their own initiative. It also included smaller numbers of continentals, Indians from Asia, and blacks from Africa and America.

In this highly diverse class, domestics were related to each other in a hierarchical order. "Household function was the essential basis of this differentiation."⁸⁶ Other factors, like personal background, were taken into account. The land steward ranked at the top of the hierarchy. This is reflected in some comedies produced in this period, like Charles Johnson's The Country Lasses; or, the Custom of the Manor (1715), and Joseph Addison's The Drummer; or, the Haunted House (1716). On smaller estates, the land steward is replaced by the house steward. With him, as an upper domestic, ranked the gentleman-in-waiting who was a masculine counterpart of the lady's maid or waiting-woman in the early years of the century. With these two also ranked the master of the horse. These two latter posts almost disappeared by the end of the first quarter of the century. The valet de chambre took over the function of the gentleman-in-waiting, and the master of the horse was replaced by the clerk of the stables. Among male servants, the clerk of the kitchen, the man-cook, the confectioner, the baker, the butler, and the gardener belonged to the upper domestics. Lower domestics wore livery. Of them the coachman ranked highest. Below him came the footman, the groom, the under-butler, the under-coachman, the

park-keeper, and the game-keeper. Below the livery servants came the postilion, yard boy, provision boy, footboy, and page. Among maidservants, the lady's maid occupied the top of the hierarchy. This position was shared by the companion, who provided agreeable company to upper-class ladies. The housekeeper was equivalent to the house steward among the male servants, and inferior only to the lady's maid. Beneath her came the cook, and then came the chambermaid who was higher than the other inferior female servants. These chambermaids figure more prominently than all the other maidservants in the comedy of the time. The maidservants who ranked beneath the chambermaid had no ornamental function. They included the housemaid, the laundry maid, the dairy maid, and the scullery maid. "Extending from the land steward to the footboy and from the lady's maid to the girl in the scullery, this occupational hierarchy was of considerable height."⁸⁷ This was quite obvious in terms of wages, relationships to each other, authority, and relationship with the employer which was almost entirely contractual.

XX. The Development of Master-Servant Relationship

The relationship of master and servant in the eighteenth century, though almost entirely contractual, "retained much of the old medieval order. But the independent attitude of the servant class that

contributed so heavily to the elimination of what remained was already highly developed."⁸⁸ This independent attitude was nourished by the ample opportunity of employment. It was this attitude and the "increasingly dynamic character that English society assumed during the period"⁸⁹ which created discord in the relationship of master and servant, and made the eighteenth century "no golden age of service."⁹⁰ The insubordinate spirit of servants was made worse and less tolerable by their self-interest. They tended to make as much use of their posts as possible. They carried this further in malpractices like "the purloining of provisions, the padding of tradesmen's bills to increase the commissions, the neglect and ill treatment of guests who failed to give generously."⁹¹ In short, there was no genuine attachment between masters and servants - or if there was, it was the exception rather than the rule. These facts, I suggest, account for the harsh ways of talking which some masters use with their servants in many comedies, but these same facts seem to invalidate and make the more harmonious relationships which exist in some sentimental comedies less tenable and incongruous with the realities of history. Those relationships can be partially looked at as being idealized examples that are possible and commendable if the argument which advocates tolerance and indulgence as being more effective in controlling the

activities of servants was taken seriously and faithfully. The insubordination and independence of servants culminated in their "strong sense of solidarity or group loyalty."⁹² In some places, like London for example, some servants formed themselves into "well-organized groups that functioned both as friendly societies and as something resembling the modern trade-union."⁹³ Different means were followed by the employer class to insure the tractability of servants and to enforce a greater attachment to their masters. Tracts and satires, like Swift's Directions for Servants, were published to bring them back into line. Penalties, punishments, and abolition of vail-giving were proposed to curb the increasing spirit of insubordination. In 1727 Defoe recommended a revision of the style of hiring domestics, and in 1728 he suggested that the basis of their employment be altered to deal with their "roving temper."⁹⁴

XXI. Conditions of Service

As for the conditions of service, there is much evidence that these conditions allowed for a considerable amount of recreation. Exaggerations which depict the servant class as engaged in "a perpetual bacchanal"⁹⁵ are not to be taken seriously. It should be borne in mind that conditions of service varied considerably from one place to another, and between the metropolis and the country. As for the rewards and

pecuniary profits, domestics received regular payments and on occasions incidental fees. Rewards were also granted to deserving servants from their appreciative masters. Wages differed substantially from one place to another, and according to the hierarchical scale of their occupational positions. "There was opportunity for domestics to swell the legitimate yield of their perquisites by unscrupulous practices, and doubtless the less vigilant employers were often sadly defrauded."⁹⁶ Vails-giving was a less agreeable institution to the employer class than it was to domestics. Visitors to England from other nations criticized the English for this institution and compared every gentleman's house to an inn where they had to pay their reckoning before leaving. Domestics were very rude and insolent to guests and visitors who failed to pay tips and gratuities. Several attempts at abolishing vails were launched, but the inertia of employers was behind the "dilatory advance of the reform."⁹⁷ Pecuniary rewards were not the only ones that domestics received from their employers. Social advancement was another way of rewarding diligent and deserving servants. Some servants managed to rise to occupy higher positions on the hierarchical social scale, and others radically altered their conditions. The London Chronicle (1757, I, and 1765, XVII), the Morning Post (1777, No. 442, June 4), The Diary of the Revd. William Jones, 1777-1821, ed. O. F. Christie,

(1929), and the Diary of a Country Parson, (II), chronicled some remarkable stories of success in this respect⁹⁸.

XXII. Conclusion

On the whole, the domestic servant class had a special and recognizable significance in the society of eighteenth-century England. It could be viewed as a cultural nexus which contributed to the process of the cultural change. "It was vitally involved in many of the mutations that transformed the England of Queen Anne into the England of George IV."⁹⁹ By promoting the circulation of cultural elements, the servant class

was instrumental in furthering all these changes and many others like them. It also accelerated the rate at which such changes took place, for cultural elements descended much more rapidly through servants than when they passed less directly from one level to another.¹⁰⁰

XXIII. Notes

¹ D. A. Kent, "Ubiquitous but Invisible: Domestic Female Servants in Mid-Eighteenth Century London," History Workshop Journal, 28 (1989) 111.

² "Ubiquitous but Invisible: Domestic Female Servants in Mid-Eighteenth Century London," 111.

³ As quoted by D. A. Kent in "Ubiquitous but Invisible: Domestic Female Servants in Mid-Eighteenth Century London," 111.

⁴ "Ubiquitous but Invisible: Domestic Female Servants in Mid-Eighteenth Century London," 112.

⁵ "Ubiquitous but Invisible: Domestic Female Servants in Mid-Eighteenth Century London," 111.

⁶ Pamela Horn, The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1975) 1.

⁷ The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant, 1.

⁸ Dorothy Marshall, "English Domestic Servant in History," The Historical Association, G. 13 (1949) 4.

⁹ The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant, 4.

- ¹⁰ The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant,
4.
- ¹¹ "English Domestic Servant in History," 7.
- ¹² "English Domestic Servant in History," 6.
- ¹³ "English Domestic Servant in History," 7.
- ¹⁴ "English Domestic Servant in History," 6.
- ¹⁵ "English Domestic Servant in History," 6.
- ¹⁶ "English Domestic Servant in History," 6-7.
- ¹⁷ "English Domestic Servant in History," 7.
- ¹⁸ Ron Becker, "The Ideological Commitment of Locke: Freemen and Servants in The Two Treatises of Government," History of Political Thought, XIII, No. 4 (1992) 644.
- ¹⁹ "The Ideological Commitment of Locke: Freemen and Servants in The Two Treatises of Government," 644.
- ²⁰ "The Ideological Commitment of Locke: Freemen and Servants in The Two Treatises of Government," 644.
- ²¹ Alan Ereira, The People's England (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981) 49.
- ²² "English Domestic Servant in History," 6.
- ²³ The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant,
4.
- ²⁴ The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant,
5.

²⁵ Mark Thornton Burnett, "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 158-c. 1642," The arts, literature, and society, ed. Arthur Marwick (London: Routledge, 1990) 50.

²⁶ "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 158-c. 1642," 54.

²⁷ "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 158-c. 1642," 54.

²⁸ "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 158-c. 1642," 55. Please read through this article for horrific examples of physical abuse of servants by their masters.

²⁹ "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 158-c. 1642," 57.

³⁰ "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 158-c. 1642," 50-51.

³¹ "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 158-c. 1642," 58.

³² "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 158-c. 1642," 59.

³³ "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 158-c. 1642," 62.

³⁴ "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 158-c. 1642," 63.

³⁵ "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 158-c. 1642," 63. For more information

on this point, see Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800.

³⁶ "Masters and servants in moral and religious treatises, c. 158-c. 1642," 53.

³⁷ "English Domestic Servant in History," 7.

³⁸ R. C. Latham and W. Matthews, eds. The Diary of Samuel Pepys, 10 Vols. (London: Bell & Hyman, 1983) IX: 115.

³⁹ The Diary of Samuel Pepys, VII: 311.

⁴⁰ The Diary of Samuel Pepys, VI: 51.

⁴¹ The Diary of Samuel Pepys, II: 204.

⁴² Austin Dobson, ed., The Diary of John Evelyn, 3 Vols. (London: Macmillan and co. ltd., 1906) II: 81.

⁴³ The Diary of John Evelyn, II: 295.

⁴⁴ The Diary of Samuel Pepys, IV: 78-79.

⁴⁵ Bridget Hill, Women, Work, and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England (Oxford: Basil Blackwell ltd., 1989) 138.

⁴⁶ T.R. Murphy, "'Woful Childe of Parents Rage': suicide of children and adolescents in early modern England, 1507-1710," Sixteenth-Century Journal, 17, No. 3 (1986), 260. For more information on suicide in the sixteenth century see M. Zell, "Suicide in pre-industrial England," Social History, 11, No. 3 (1986) 303-317.

⁴⁷ "'Woful Childe of Parents Rage': ... , 259.

⁴⁸ "'Woful Childe of Parents Rage': ... , 262.

⁴⁹ "'Woful Childe of Parents Rage': ... , 266.

⁵⁰ "'Woful Childe of Parents Rage': ... , 266.

For more information on the English law of the period in question see Sir William Holdsworth, History of English Law, 16 vols. (London: Methuen, 1903-1966).

⁵¹ "'Woful Childe of Parents Rage': ... , 269.

⁵² Ann Kussmaul, Servants in husbandry in early modern England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) 101.

⁵³ Servants in husbandry in early modern England, 3.

⁵⁴ The Diary of Samuel Pepys, II: 151.

⁵⁵ The Diary of Samuel Pepys, VI: 51.

⁵⁶ J. Jean Hecht, The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-century England (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980) 1.

⁵⁷ The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-century England, 1.

⁵⁸ The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-century England, 1.

⁵⁹ The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-century England, 2.

⁶⁰ "English Domestic Servant in History," 9.

⁶¹ Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977) 254.

⁶² The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800, 254.

⁶³ The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800, 647.

⁶⁴ The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800, 645.

⁶⁵ The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-century England, 11.

⁶⁶ The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-century England, 11.

⁶⁷ As quoted by Hecht in The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-century England, 13.

⁶⁸ As quoted by Hecht in The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-century England, 14.

⁶⁹ Alan Ereira, The People's England, 40.

⁷⁰ Alan Ereira, The People's England, 40.

⁷¹ Alan Ereira, The People's England, 41.

⁷² "Ubiquitous but Invisible: Domestic Female Servants in Mid-Eighteenth Century London," 124.

⁷³ As quoted by D. A. Kent in "Ubiquitous but Invisible: Domestic Female Servants in Mid-Eighteenth Century London," 124.

⁷⁴ Roderick Floud and Donald McCloskey, eds., The Economic History of Britain since 1700, (1981;

rpt., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984)

I: 1-2.

⁷⁵ The Economic History of Britain since 1700,

I: 1.

⁷⁶ The Economic History of Britain since 1700,

I: 1.

⁷⁷ Farley Grubb, "Fatherless and Friendless: Factors Influencing the Flow of English Emigrant Servants," The Journal of Economic History, 52, No. 1, (1992) 87.

⁷⁸ Farley Grubb, "Fatherless and Friendless:...", 89.

⁷⁹ Farley Grubb, "Fatherless and Friendless:...", 97.

⁸⁰ Alan Ereira, People's England, 45.

⁸¹ As quoted by Alan Ereira in People's England, 47-48.

⁸² Alan Ereira, People's England, 44.

⁸³ Alan Ereira, People's England, 43.

⁸⁴ As quoted by Alan Ereira in People's England, 43.

⁸⁵ J. Jean Hecht, The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980) 19.

⁸⁶ The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 35.

87 The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 69.

88 The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 71.

89 The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 77.

90 The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 77.

91 The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 80.

92 The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 85.

93 The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 86.

94 The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 90.

95 The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 125.

96 The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 157.

97 The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 166.

98 For more information about the success stories of some servants in those magazines and diaries, read chapter seven: "The Rewards of Service: Social Advancement" in J. Jean Hecht's The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 177.

⁹⁹ The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century
England, 227.

¹⁰⁰ The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century
England, 228.

Chapter III

**The Comedy between
1666 and 1700**

I. Introduction

In this chapter, a selection of comedies, produced in the second half of the seventeenth century and ranging from major ones to fairly minor ones, will be considered. The argument which needs to be supported and verified is the fact that the comedies in question offer very little to the social historian who wants to find out about the realities of domestic service in the second half of the seventeenth century. The representation of servants in those comedies seems to have been a reflection of inherited stereotypes rather than a literary and artistic reproduction of real experiences. Consequently, it accentuates the stereotyped propensities and self-interestedness of domestic servants, and chooses substantially to ignore their problems and dilemmas.

The selection of plays is wide-ranging and chronological. It is meant to cover the period in question and to address the main argument and contention as much as possible. This deliberate selectivity, and the large number of examined plays which cover a substantial period of time, usually makes the qualitative critical engagement with the plays of secondary importance to the main objective. The same approach will be applicable in my examination of the plays, in the next chapter, produced in the early years of the eighteenth century.

In this chapter I will examine a number of Restoration comedies which show the changing attitudes towards morality and human relationships and their representation on the stage, and how those changes influence the stage representation of domestic servants. This representation seem to be some sort of response to the criticism of the reforming pamphleteers and to the changing morality of the audience rather than a depiction of the real circumstances of domestic servants.

Some of the characteristics of the society of the Restoration period are dynamism, vitality, and liveliness. This development could have been the result of the restrictive years of the Commonwealth. One criterion for wit and gentlemanliness was the extent to which a person was able to outwit and outsmart others. Such an environment is more than likely to redefine the role of servants on the stage.

The settings of the comedies of the second half of the seventeenth century and their status as originals or adaptations help us to acquire a better understanding of the role of servants in them. Yet, it is difficult to define a specific ancestry for the servants of the Restoration period. One cannot, for example, say that the servants in the comedies of Ben Jonson or Beaumont and Fletcher are the ancestors, or those in Molière's comedies, or those in

classical comedy. In fact, the servants in Restoration comedy are a combination of all these.

II. The Comedy of the Early Years of the Restoration

In the period that preceded 1660, the Interregnum, the production of new comedies was almost at a halt, and the theatres were closed between 1642 and 1660. In the early years of the Restoration, new comedies started to appear. Sir Robert Howard's The Committee (1662) is set in the late phase of the Interregnum, when the newly rich puritans were prosperous and the cavaliers were in defeat. It is a sort of intrigue comedy, the purpose of which is to ridicule the puritans and the upstarts. So far as servants are concerned, the main servant-character in the comedy is the Irish Teague or Teg. This servant is a vagabond, who, supposedly, migrated from Ireland to seek employment in England. The role Teg plays in this comedy is significant as well as attractive. "A long series of commentators down to Sir Walter Scott testify to the role's attractions."¹ The notable characteristics of this servant are his lovable simplicity and his amusing ignorance. He does a great service to his master by stealing the "Covenant" from a bookseller. His obedience, his accurate conducting of duties, and his immaculate carrying out of his master's orders are what make him commendable and amusing. Obeying his master's orders, he manages to get the pompous clerk Obadiah

drunk, causing him to sing songs in which he curses Cromwell's dreadful sequestration committee.

Despite the importance of what Teg does in the play, he is not to be compared with the witty and contriving servants of classical comedy, or with the French valets. He is also not to be compared with the servants in Jonson's comedies. He lacks their wickedness and their skill in the art of manoeuvring and evasion. On the whole, he is a very amusing character, especially when he presents himself as an Irish rebel. Robert D. Hume rightly observes that "the Irish dialect, the zaniness, the human warmth of the character are mere shadows on the printed page". He thinks that "one gets only a hint of why the role was a favourite vehicle for actors, from Lacy and Leigh to Macklin, Jack Johnstone, and John Moody late in the eighteenth century."² Teg is in some ways reminiscent of the servants in the Spanish comedy of the Golden Age.

In 1663, Sir Samuel Tuke wrote his comedy The Adventures of Five Hours. He did this after he had been recommended by King Charles II to adapt a Spanish play for the English stage. The appearance of this comedy marks the advent of Spanish romance. The original Spanish romance play belongs to the Golden Age and was attributed to Calderón. Unlike the majority of the topical Restoration comedies, this comedy has a large number of domestic servants; but Flora, the waiting-woman to Porcia, is the only

female servant. This comedy is typical of the drama of the Spanish Golden Age in all respects. The main characters have nothing to do with the playful and often promiscuous male characters of Restoration comedy, or with its amorous female characters. The ladies, Porcia and Camilla, are severely virtuous and careful of their honour. The men are generally moral and honourable. The servants are, on the whole, loyal and faithful to their masters. They are a very important element in the play in which the codes of honour and rules of propriety, which are strictly observed by the lovers and some of the other characters, make it more of a tragi-comedy rather than pure comedy. The servants, especially Diego and Flora with whom he is in love, provide the play with comic relief. Diego, Don Octavio's servant, is witty and pleasant. His cowardice, besides being amusing, is typical of the majority of servants of antiquity and renaissance who care about their personal safety. In a relatively lengthy conversation with his master, Diego, unobtrusively, expresses anti-chivalric views which presumably do not appeal to Don Octavio, the accomplished cavalier:

Diego. . . . there lives not in the world

A more valiant man than I, whilst danger

Keeps its distance; but when saucily

It presses on, then, I confess, 'tis true,

I have a certain tenderness for life,
Which checks my ardour and inclines my prudence
Timely to withdraw.

Don O. Your style is wondrous civil to yourself;
How you soften that harsh word call'd cowardice.
But the danger is not always evident,
When you are pleas'd, my friend, to run away.³

Diego is convinced that what seems to be cowardice in him is sufficient courage "for the profession/ To which [his] parents did design [him]."⁴ In this, Diego echoes the true feelings of the majority of domestic servants. Remarkably enough, Diego sounds Machiavellian and Hobbesian and anticipates Mandeville's The Fable of the Bees when he considers valour and courage as stemming from fear of shame or from failure to perceive imminent danger. What is more, Diego is a social satirist and a keen detector of the corruption prevalent among lawyers and some other professionals.

Diego's cowardice is shared by many others in the play. Apart from Silvio, they are slow to respond to Don Henrique's calls to take part in fighting. Diego's remarks and opinions are a mixture of buffoonery, satire, and seriousness. His buffoonery is magnified because he makes fatal mistakes and numerous revelations which, eventually, lead to the unravelling of the plot of the play.

It is not only Diego who makes deadly mistakes in this play: some of the other servants, like Ernesto, make blunders which lead, later in the play, to further confusions and intricacies. On the whole, the servants here are, in many ways, different from the quick-witted slaves in the classical comedy of Greece and Rome. They blunder, get tricked, and get lost in the turmoil, whereas the slaves in classical comedy are usually in control of everything around them.

Flora is loyal to her mistress, Porcia. She is emotionally attached to her.⁵ Her attachment to her mistress is different from the attachment which exists between the male servants and their masters. They are more practical and business-like. Ironically enough, Diego's thoughts about marriage as an uncomfortable bond bring him closer to the spirit of the Restoration age than the masters in this comedy.

The other servants are portrayed quite realistically. They like to be given tips, vails, and gratuities, and in return for this, they may divulge secrets or private information. Pedro, one of Don Henrique's servants, conversing with his master says: "Give me my albricias, sir; I bring you/ The rarest of news."⁶ Flora, in the last scene of the play, gives us an important bit of information about one feature of domestic service in the late seventeenth century. She says: "We by

unthrifty parents forc'd to serve,/ When fed are slaves, and when w'are free we starve."⁷ This recalls the ordeal of those unfortunate youths who lost their fathers early in life, and were forced to emigrate to America to work as domestics. It also recalls the dilemma of those unfortunate children who know, or were made to know, that freedom - being not in the business of domestic service - means starvation. So when their conditions in service became unbearable, suicide presented itself as the only lasting and alternative freedom.⁸

On the whole, the servants of this comedy are vivid and lively, but they do not reflect the realities of domestic service in the Restoration period. This is because this play is, in a sense, a borrowed one, which reflects some of the common traits of servants at large, and some aspects of the particular culture and mannerisms of the Spanish domestics.

III. The Restoration Comedy

"The closing of the theatres in June 1665 temporarily interrupted production of the plays."⁹ But when the theatres were reopened in October 1666, new plays started to appear again. The most remarkable thing in that period is that low London comedy of various sorts was becoming increasingly popular. The beginnings of this sort of comedy go back some way before 1666. We could, for example,

mention Sir George Etherege's The Comical Revenge; or, Love in a Tub (1664). The later sixties saw "a definite move toward the smut and profanity often considered typical of Carolean [Restoration] drama."¹⁰

In 1667, Dryden's Sir Martin Mar-all appeared. It is commonly known as an adaptation of Molière's L'Etourdi (The Blunderer). This is perfectly true, but the comedy also owes a great deal to Philippe Quinault's L'Amant Indiscret. This comedy does provide glimpses of everyday life in London during the first decade of Charles II's reign, but only glimpses rather than a wide picture. We have here, as in many plays written during the Restoration period, a group of country gentlemen, gentlewomen, and servants caught up in the vortex of city intrigues and intricacies. London proves to be too much for Sir Martin, the country gentleman, and he consequently engages in an endless series of ridiculous mistakes and blunders. His man and valet de chambre, Warner, manages to overcome his master's disastrous blunders, but no sooner does Warner manage to concoct a plan to help his master get what he is after, Mrs. Millisent, than his master, foolishly and in many cases unwittingly, steps in to spoil it. This is exactly what happens in Molière's L'Etourdi, where Mascarille and his blundering master are the equivalent to Warner and his master.

Warner, in Sir Martin Mar-all, is a unique case among the servants in the comedies of Charles II's reign. This is probably because the play is an adaptation from a Renaissance source, and also because the breed of servants which previously dominated the scene is no longer in command. Warner is a unique mixture of the proud classical slave, who takes pride in his conspiratorial achievements, and the Renaissance servant who relishes reward and cares obsessively for material benefits. Addressing his master, Warner says: "Hope of reward will diligence beget,/ Find you the money, and I'll find the wit."¹¹ The thing he shares with the other servants in Restoration comedy is the thing which all servants of all times share; namely, constant love of money and tips. Unlike the roles of most servants in the comedies of Charles II's reign, his role is pivotal to the play. He is the engineer of all the tricks and designs in the play. He fully understands his relationship with his master, and, like Mascarille, he knows when he can take liberties in upbraiding his master. His master is always in fear of being called a fool by Warner in front of his companions. That is why he chooses to threaten him on some occasions: "If I don't fright him, the sawcy Rogue will call me fool before the company."¹² What is more, Warner seems to be able to beat his master if he keeps on blundering. In an aside, Warner says: "Say, Yes good Sir John ----- or I'll

swindge you."¹³ When Warner gets fed up with his master's blundering, he becomes incredibly vituperative. After a series of blunders, Warner describes his master to his face as follows: "You are one that had a knock in your Cradle, a conceited lack-wit, a designing Ass, a hair-brain'd Fop, a confounded busie-brain, with an eternal Wind-mill in it; this in short, Sir, is the Contents of your Panegyrick."¹⁴ This speech is an almost exact reproduction of a similar speech uttered by Mascarille in a similar situation in Molière's L'Etourdi. Dryden seems to have seen no need to change this utterance in any way. The idea of Warner being able to beat his master, and the strong vituperative language he uses to upbraid his master deviate from representing actual history into Molière's world of reverie and fantasy. There is no historical evidence to support the portraiture of characters like Warner and his master. The historical evidence, as we have seen in chapter II, tells of servants being the target of different kinds of abuse by their masters.

As usual, and typically enough, money and gratuities are the easiest means to alleviate Warner's indignation and anger when his master commits a big mistake and spoils his stratagems. What is more, when money is granted profusely and generously, Warner becomes ready to "take the fault upon [him]self."¹⁵

When Warner deals with people other than his master, he turns out to be a dangerous swindler and an unscrupulous cheat. He villainously manages to dupe Sir John Swallow, the Kentish knight, and gets a diamond as a reward for his false news about his master's decision to quit Mrs. Millisent. Talking in the form of an aside, he gloatingly says: "Thus the world goes, my Masters, he that will cozen you, commonly gets your good will into the bargain."¹⁶ He goes further than that on another occasion and beats up the disguised landlord. This sort of stuff is much rarer in the thematically topical comedies of the Restoration period. People in these comedies are no longer stupid enough to be duped, ridiculed, and ill-treated by their servants. On the whole, Warner's character does not seem to have a real connection with the way servants behaved in real life. The portrayal of his relationship with his master does provide an abundance of humour, especially in Act III, Scene i, yet it is hardly a convincing one. One would expect to have a good time watching this play performed on the stage, but, on the other hand, one feels that it does not fit in among the main body of comedies produced in the Restoration period. As a matter of fact, this comedy reflects Dryden's passionate urbanism; otherwise he would not allow such a flippant servant to make such a spectacle of his master.

Prominent among the other servants in the play is Rose, Mrs. Millisent's maid. She is intelligent and contriving, and she also contributes substantially to the desperate attempt to join Sir Martin and Mrs. Millisent together. She works in collaboration and co-ordination with Warner for this purpose, and on many occasions proves to be clever enough to understand Warner's gimmicks and tricky intentions. But sometimes things prove to be a bit too tricky for her. Smartness and loyalty are two of the most outstanding characteristics of the maidservants of urban ladies in Restoration comedy.

In 1668, Sir George Etherege produced his successful comedy She Would if She Could. Thomas Shadwell, John Dennis, and many others commended the play. It is a social comedy which portrays the lively and relatively debauched society of the time of Charles II. The setting is contemporary London, and the comedy as a whole is remarkably typical of the Restoration comedy (or Carolean comedy, as Robert D. Hume prefers to call it).¹⁷ In this play we find the social climber, the pretender, the enthusiastic Cavalier, the libertine, and the commonwealth man.

So far as servants are concerned, their number dwindled considerably in the most typical Restoration comedies, and their role became very much less important. Notably, the servants of the country people are smarter and perhaps wittier than

their masters. In many cases, they conspire with the young gentlemen of the town to enable them to have a good time with the country ladies. Consequently, the ridiculously foppish and amorous country gentlemen get duped and cuckolded in the process. This formula is repeated in quite a number of comedies produced in the second half of the seventeenth century. I would suggest that this formula must have appealed to the audience of the time as a result of the traditional animosity and the stereotyped conflict contrast between urban and country people.

Mrs. Sentry, Lady Cockwood's gentlewoman, is remarkably efficient in this play. She strongly assists Lady Cockwood in her debauchery. Lady Cockwood considers her gentlewoman very sincere, but rightly observes that "it is not good to trust our reputations too much to the frailty of a servant."¹⁸ But Mrs. Sentry, through her unfailing knowledge of her mistress's inclinations and emotions, is hardly ignorant of any of Lady Cockwood's secrets. She also knows quite well when she can take a liberty in reprimanding her employers, and when she should back off. When Sir Oliver is discovered in the Bear wenching, Mrs Sentry attacks him vehemently. She shouts at him: "Out upon thee for a vile hypocrite! Thou art the wicked author of all this; who but such a reprobate, such an obdurate sinner as thou art, could go about to abuse so sweet a lady?"¹⁹ In fact, it is only on such occasions when men are caught

fornicating or wenching that the female servants, under the pretence of defending their mistresses' honour, can take such a liberty. Despite the fact that such outbursts are possible in such circumstances, there is no obvious historical evidence to support this. Knowing about the secrets of employers has always been a bargaining power which smart servants, presumably, used to the best of their abilities. Nevertheless, such scathing and vituperative outbursts are used more in the way of producing hilarious comical effect than reflecting a slice of social life with its peculiarity and appeal.

The role of Thomas, Sir Oliver's man, in the comedy is unimportant, and so is the role of the unnamed servant of Mr. Courtall. This comedy seems to have been designed not only to avenge the injuries inflicted upon the old generation of the Cavaliers, but also to reconcile the young generations of the Cavaliers and the commonwealth men, and to reinstate the status quo which dominated the scene for generations before Cromwell. Within this framework, the role of the servants has to be made subservient and relatively subdued, so as to bring out the full vigour of the young generation rather than overshadow it as was the case in the classical comedy of Greece and Rome.

In Sir Charles Sedley's The Mulberry Garden (1668), the role of the servants is insignificant

compared with the role of servants in Sir Martin Mar-all, and even in She Would if She Could. Because wit and disguise were the spirit of the new society of the Restoration era, and because wit and smartness were associated with the Cavaliers and the people of the court, the witty and contriving servants were no longer in demand. Stagnation afflicted their trade, and their duties became largely confined to announcing new arrivals and carrying messages. The Mulberry Garden is set in "a London as yet unrefined by fire, a London prior to the elegantly organized map of pleasure of a play like She Would if She Could."²⁰

In this comedy, Widow Brightstone is a housekeeper. She has a maid whose actions give us the impression of her being lively, active, and fun-loving. She does not speak on the stage; rather she acts behind the scenes, yet, the engineers of the tricks in this comedy are the witty Cavaliers: the female servants provide a little help, but their role is far from important. One gets the feeling that the lovers could have managed to promote their causes and objectives without the help of these two female servants. The rest of the servants in this play, mainly Sir Samuel Forecast's servants, are scarcely worth mentioning. They merely provide services for Sir Samuel which have nothing to do with the main activities in the play. It is here again that we see the role of servants subdued and

made subordinate so that the force of the young generation can have a chance to prove its credibility and vitality.

The pace of change on all levels in Restoration society had been fairly quick. The London audience, which roughly totalled a few thousand, was "comparatively homogeneous in taste."²¹ The writers of drama felt forced to cater for the prevailing taste, if they wanted to succeed and prosper. "Even the well-to-do writers tried for hits, and almost all of the professional writers were exquisitely sensitive to what was currently successful." This led to a situation where "they imitated each other, plagiarized, adapted, and burlesqued each other's work."²²

IV. The Restoration Sex Comedy

During the 1670s, in response to public taste, sex comedy dominated the scene. Robert D. Hume observes that if one were ignorant of the rapid changes in morality between the late sixties and the seventies, one would be astonished at the difference between Etherege's two comedies She Would if She Could and The Man of Mode in terms of morality and technique; but the explanation is that Etherege, like many other professional writers, "stayed up to date."²³ He also observes, and rightly so, that what happened in the 1670s "is in many ways analogous to the developments of the 1960s: capitalizing on audience

titillation, writers pushed even further in sex, innuendo, and sexual deviation."²⁴ He also cites two opposing views about the composition of the audience during the 1660s: one is that of Harold Love, who tries to refute the supposition of such critics as John Wain that "the whole object of Restoration comedy is to show the courtly audience that it is 'wittier, handsomer, and more successful' than its 'anti-type' the cit";²⁵ and the other is that of A. S. Bear, who "maintains that the audience was indeed an 'elite', a 'coterie' hostile to the bulk of English society."²⁶ These views are based on information from works written in different years; and consequently the contradiction between them is more apparent than real. Hume believes, and rightly so, that the domination of the Court circle during the sixties could have been a result of puritan objections to the reopening of the theatres. This discouraged the merchants, who were still holding on to an old-fashioned morality. By the end of 1660s, "an increasing number of plebeians were attending the theatre."²⁷ The importance of the bourgeois audience became clear after 1688. In conclusion, Hume says:

I think one can say with fair assurance that there never was a genuinely dominant court coterie, even though Court patronage was important; that the composition of the audience

altered by the end of the 1660s, and changed greatly by the 1690s; that a successful writer had to please a fair fraction of a rather small total potential audience; and that this group was socially varied . . . and quite prepared to enjoy very disparate sorts of plays.²⁸

As I have mentioned earlier on, sex comedy prospered during the seventies as a result of the dramatic changes that took place gradually but rapidly on the level of morality. Tolerance and indulgence, particularly in terms of moral behaviour, characterized King Charles II's style of life and government. His patronage of many theatrical productions greatly encouraged freedom of expression. His merry spirit and his indulgent style of government must have delighted his subjects, especially those who were gradually freeing themselves from the strict morality of the puritans. In the reign of this merry monarch, London sex comedy achieved its finest form.

In 1671, William Wycherley wrote his comedy Love in a Wood. An important source of the play is Calderón's Mananas de abril y mayo. In Love in a Wood, the role of the servants is not significant. There are only Isabel, Christina's woman, and Leonore, Lydia's servant. Isabel seems to be impertinent and witty. On one occasion, Christina complains of her misfortunes, declaring that Isabel's impertinence

"is not the least of them."²⁹ On another occasion, Valentine describes Isabel as being well-trained and careful of her mistress's interests. Leonore is perhaps less active than Isabel, but she does sometimes offer advice and suggest solutions. Like Isabel's role, Leonore's is far from important. The other servants in the play are there only to provide a suitable background. Tricks and designs are engineered by the ladies, Christina and Lydia, and the women servants carry off their letters and despatch their messages.

Despite the fact that this comedy is based on a Golden Age Spanish play, the closeness of the portrayal of women in it to the historical facts is obvious. It is the ladies here who take the initiative, and control their lives. As a matter of fact, the years of Civil War proved to be an emancipating experience for women; the women of the defeated Cavaliers bravely defended their husbands' properties against Cromwell's army and eloquently lobbied the parliament in defence of their husbands' rights. The women's individualism must have started to grow at a quick pace during and after the Civil War; and some of them must have felt that they had had enough of the miseries and hardship of the years of the puritans, so they got out to the public places to enjoy themselves. They were trying to shed the traditional and psychological inhibitions which they inherited and internalized from previous

generations, and, probably, charging their male partners for the services they had done through the years of the 1640s and the 1650s. It can also be understood as a clever investment of the men's tolerance and appreciation brought about by the women's assistance and contribution in the years of war and conflict, and their growing brilliance and individualism. The playwrights were quick to detect this overriding change, and to depict it in their plays.

The absence of prominent male servants is quite noticeable in Wycherley's major comedies. This may be connected with the fact that, during the late seventeenth century, domestic service was taken over by women rather than men: the men worked on the land as servants in husbandry, and showed strong signs of independence and insubordination. It is also possible that in the new and more tolerant environment of the late seventeenth century, ladies and wives of the rich households grew more tolerant of their husbands' employment of female servants, who could have been more sympathetic with the sexual pursuits of their mistresses. Many stories from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries tell us about many maidservants made pregnant by their masters, not to mention the possible larger numbers who were more careful with contraceptive measures and managed to avoid getting pregnant, but there are no corresponding stories of gentlewomen or mistresses

who had sexual relationships with servants. This might explain why women servants outnumbered their fellow men servants. We can add to that the fact that women had always been cheaper to employ and easier to control.³⁰

In The Gentleman Dancing Master (1672), there is only one chambermaid, who is Prue, Hippolita's maid; this, obviously, seems to be unrepresentative of the reality of the situation in this period. The other unnamed servants merely provide a theatrical background. There is also a little 'black-a-more', who is a 'lacquey' to Mr. James Formal. Prue is reminiscent of the lively and impertinent maids of Molière's comedies. She is active, intelligent, playful, practical, and sometimes vulgar. The presence of a lively and funny chambermaid in this comedy is used by the writer to provide himself with an efficient means of highlighting the objects of ridicule in the play. Her discourse and exchanges with her mistress show how far chamber-maids can go in arguing with their mistresses, and how damaging, sometimes, their advice can be. Moreover, her views on husbands and gentlemen, and her description of Monsieur De Paris as a "pretty apish kind of a Gentleman, like other Gentlemen,"³¹ smack of a comparatively new attitude which was to grow into a fully-fledged feminism in the twentieth century. Nevertheless, she is like the majority of the chamber-maids in Renaissance and Restoration

comedies, who stay loyal and faithful to their mistresses despite their talkativeness and impertinence.

The codes of honour which Mr. James Formal - or Don Diego, as he likes to be called - holds are very similar to those of the Spanish comedy of the Golden Age, which are, in turn, influenced by hundreds of years of Arab rule in Spain. The difference is that these codes of honour eventually triumph in the comedy of the Golden Age, and servants, influenced by their masters, never dare to violate them, whereas here, these codes are violated and ridiculed, not only by Prue, but also by most of the characters in the play except Don Diego. The other servants in the play are, as I said earlier, brought on the stage for background purposes.

One more point regarding the female servants in the comedy of Charles II's reign: their importance to their mistresses as alleviators of suffering is very much less than it was in classical comedy, where the authority of the father, the paterfamilias, forced women to live in a hell-like situation. In the Restoration period, women had more freedom to go out and about, and paternal authority became considerably less. What sometimes makes the mistresses cautious in their behaviour is fear of scandal rather than fear of their fathers' chastisement. Hence, this obvious difference between

the female servants in ancient comedies and those in Restoration and even Renaissance comedies.

Maid-servants in Dryden's Marriage à la Mode, acted in 1672, are not different from those of the other Restoration comedies of the late sixties and early seventies. Philotis can be looked at as an exception because she has got a knowledge of the French language. She also teaches her affected mistress how to use French words to appear genteelly educated and impressively fashionable. This consolidates Philotis's position in her mistress's favour, and saves her from reproach even when she fails to fulfill her duties appropriately. Beliza is always on guard, especially when her mistress's honour is in danger. She is very much like an early warning apparatus. It is she who alerts her mistress to the arrival of her husband while she is courting with Palamede at the beginning of the play. In addition to that, she carries her mistress's messages. Once more, this play confirms the idea of mistresses preferring to have female rather than male servants.

On the level of trickery and intrigue, Philotis engages in both encouraged by tips and bribery. The prominence of the French elements here is partly due to the indignation of the playwrights of this period, not only Dryden, against the dominance of French customs and fashions in English society, and partly to the fact that Dryden has gleaned some material from French texts and French song-books.

The setting is not in London but in Sicily, yet the characters and the events of this comedy are identifiable with the fashionable society of London with all its social vivacity and erotic dynamism.

The activities of the maidservants in this comedy, as indeed in many other Restoration comedies, are trimmed and tailored in such a way as to allow the emerging generation of women to express their rebellious views against the traditional inhibiting mentality of the past, with its negative attitude towards the freedom of women and particularly towards sexuality. One should be fully aware of the fact that the relatively new appearance of actresses on the stage must have had a great impact on the thinking of women, despite the fact that the majority of the actresses came from the lower classes of society, and were badly used by the directors of theatrical productions and their patrons. Their images were eroticised for commercial purposes. There is no doubt that the ladies who frequented the theatres admired these actresses and probably envied their outspokenness and freedom. This admiration should normally have led the ladies to start questioning the codes of morality which they had internalized, and the position of women in the hierarchy of society.

In Thomas Shadwell's Epsom Wells (1672), there are only two domestic servants: Toby, Clodpate's man, and Peg, Mrs. Woodly's maid. This comedy

depicts contemporary life at a fashionable spa. In it Shadwell abdicates his early commitment to a purer and more moral type of comedy. In his preface to The Sullen Lovers (1668), he attacks the reigning heroes and heroines of comedy, and in the preface and prologue to The Royal Shepherdess he anticipates Jeremy Collier's strong onslaught on the immorality and depravity of the Restoration stage. He also employs exemplary heroes and heroines in later comedies, particularly in The Miser (1672). Despite all this and despite his later commitment to the Whig party, this play is typical of the Restoration comedies written by playwrights who held Tory sympathies and convictions. In their comedies, the Republicans or Roundheads are bitterly mocked, disparaged and belittled, and the Royalists or Cavaliers are praised, applauded and favourably portrayed. The Cavaliers' pursuit of pleasure is portrayed as chivalric and in harmony with the sublime emotions of love and joy; whereas the Roundheads' pursuit of pleasure is painted in such a way as to make the reader feel disgusted, disenchanted and unimpressed.

Remarkably enough, this comedy has three men of wit and pleasure, two bullies, two cuckolds married to whorish wives, an affected whore, two young ladies of wit and beauty, two domestic servants, one country justice - who might represent Oliver Cromwell - and some other background characters. In

this sort of comedy, one can easily foresee that the men of wit and pleasure will eventually get married to the young ladies, that the depraved married men will be duped and cuckolded and ultimately give up their debauchery, and that the whorish married women will be duped by their young lovers and give up their adultery. In this network of relationships, domestic servants help the playwright to develop the line of his plot and bring the whole equation to the required conclusion. They carry out their masters' orders, like spying on others, as is the case with Peg, who spies on Bevil at Mrs. Woodly's request, and they carry messages.

In Wycherley's The Country Wife (1675) domestics are kept to a minimum, as is the case with most of his comedies. The remarkable dynamism of the main characters allows for a very limited appearance of Lucy, Alithea's maid, on the stage in the first three acts. In the last two acts her role becomes more obvious, and her talent for trickery and stratagems yields plenty of complications that eventually leads to humorous scenes. As a matter of fact, her talent for plotting and outsmarting the patriarchal authority, represented by Mr. Pinchwife, gains more significance and distinction from her being in the service of Mr. Pinchwife's sister, who still retains a great deal of the traditional morality, and from her being the engineer of some of the tricks which are designed to help Mrs.

Pinchwife, the crude and naive country wife who is entirely alien to the pleasures and sophistication of London, to gratify her desires with Horner. Lucy's character is a remarkable mixture of the impertinence and outspokenness of the chamber-maids of Molière's comedies, and the cautious and quailing tendency of the English maid-servants in earlier comedies in standing up against male domination and sexism. When she is with the women, she makes numerous arguments about love, marriage, and men, which very much echo those of the maids of Molière's comedies.³² All her views show her ahead of her mistress in going along with the spirit of the time, and confirm her cynicism and rejection of traditional values, like honour for example, as long as they do not reflect genuine emotions and do not lead to real happiness.

The necessity of Lucy's help is exclusively occasioned by her being in the service of ladies who are a lot behind the smart and fashionable people of the time. In other words, her inherited talents of scheming and playing tricks would have been redundant had she been in the service of fashionable and smart ladies, who usually manage their own affairs with very little help, if any, from their maids. Needless to say, the main tricks and love intrigues are done by the main characters, male and female. Lucy provides the playwright with the means to ridicule the rural naivety and the traditional

morality of the time through the traditional uninhibited outspokenness of servants. Her presence also occasions a popular joke about the supposedly sexual relationship between chamber-maids and chaplains. Lucy confirms this in Act IV Scene i, in her response to Sparkish's request to inspect the appearance and the identity of the disguised Harcourt.

There is also a case, in this play, for arguing that the eroticization of some of Lucy's speeches and her help to Mrs. Pinchwife to fornicate with Horner are part of a newly-developed formula which was designed to cater for the prevailing taste, at least among the higher classes of society, and to exploit the titillation effect of the presence of very popular actresses with unmistakably tarnished reputations. Mrs. Bowtel, who played Mrs. Pinchwife, was claimed to have been sexually available to all the town.³³ Such a reputation, coupled with the naivety and frankness of Mrs. Pinchwife in explicitly describing her sensual encounter with Horner, must have been an erotic sexual thriller.

Within the same category of sex comedy, which dominated the scene in the second half of the 1670's, falls Shadwell's comedy The Virtuoso (1676). Emphasis in those comedies is placed on the dynamism and individualism of the heroines who, assisted by their slick chambermaids, defy and outmanoeuvre patriarchal authority and repression.

The change in people's attitude towards servants is strongly accentuated in Etherege's The Man of Mode (1676). Dorimant's treatment of his valet de chambre and other servants is a clear indication of that. He is so tolerant and indulgent in his government of his household that his servants "lie snoring abed till noon", when they are up, "they're ever poaching after whores all the morning."³⁴ His comically exaggerated threats to punish and sack lazy and clumsy servants seem to be intended, merely, to keep the household in a reasonable degree of discipline and order. Dorimant, in a way, is typical of the wealthy libertines of the Restoration period, like Etherege himself and more obviously like the Earl of Rochester, John Wilmot, whose name is notoriously associated with love of women, reduced to mere cunts in his poem "Over a Bowl", and love of wine. Superficially, men like this, who stand for the joy of life, though in their own terms, can be expected to be tolerant towards their domestics as long as their main pursuit is catered for. This seems to be the case with Dorimant, whose tolerance is well exploited by his servants. So there is here a case for arguing that the portraiture of servants in some of the comedies of this period is substantially defined by the characterization of the hero or sometimes the heroine. The exaggerated tolerance of Dorimant towards his lazy servants is detached from the real

conditions of employment. History tells us of cases where servants were generously rewarded for honesty and hard work, not for laziness and drunkenness; and of cases where hard working servants were kindly looked after when they fell ill.

Harriet, the playful and affluent young lady, sounds too indulgent. She complains of her waiting-woman's officiousness and impertinence: "How do I suffer under thy officious fingers!"³⁵ It must be noted that Busy is responsible for her mistress's appearance and make-up. She is against her mistress's refusal to tidy herself up to look beautiful before Young Bellair. She is also, unlike what is usually expected from a waiting-woman in her position, apprehensive about her mistress's romantic inclinations; namely, her love for Dorimant. Pert, Mrs. Loveit's woman, is flattering and consoling. She is also watchful and cautious. She prescribes hatred as the right medicine which cures her mistress from her miserable infatuation with Dorimant.

This comedy gives us an idea about the equipage and entourage which French fops had in the reign of Charles II. The ridiculous fop Sir Fopling Flutter has a relatively big entourage: six footmen and a page. He is reminiscent of the foppish Mascarille, in Molière's Les Précieuses Ridicules. Sir Fopling, like Sparkish in Wycherley's The Country Wife, tries to join in the circles of the smart people of the

English court and to make an impression on them by lavishly dressing himself in fashionable clothes and also by using fashionable language. His attempts and exhibitionism end in failure, and are bitterly mocked and ridiculed, presumably because of his being an outsider with a different culture and a different set of values, and probably because of his failure to understand the language and the metaphors of the Restoration libertines. Among the members of the entourage of such fops, the most important servant is the one who takes care of his master's appearance: he is usually an expert on fashion and all that is associated with it.

According to John Dennis, The Man of Mode was believed to be "an agreeable Representation of the Persons of Condition of both Sexes, both in Court and Town."³⁶ In terms of morality, the comedy has been criticized by some critics on the basis that it countenances vice and encourages debauchery. To me, its merit is manifest in being a remarkably revealing comic tableau in which the gossip, the characters, the villainies, the mannerisms, the affectations, the mixed emotions, and the incidents are all skillfully wrought up to create a delightful upper-class microcosm in which domestics perform their allocated parts, with a bit of nonchalance, and take good care of their own welfare. It is, more or less, a carefree world of fantasy where joie de vivre reigns supreme.

Thomas Otway's Friendship in Fashion (1678) is not different, in any sense, from other comedies of this time, either in terms of the representation of servants or in terms of plot and characterization. This comedy is "an exact, and even a brilliant picture of social life in the heyday of King Charles' reign."³⁷ There is a remarkable point in the character of Lettice, Mrs. Goodvile's woman, which is her taking pride in being a servant to a London lady, and not being a country chamber-maid. She does not scruple at telling lies to defend her mistress.

There is a case here for arguing that the portrayal of the maidservants of the sex comedies of the late seventies was largely determined by the sexual politics of the time. In other words, the maidservants are trapped in a situation where their mistresses are launching a cautious sexual revolution and seeking to evade and outmanoeuvre the patriarchal sexual authority. In this situation, their merit is determined through their ability to be of subsidiary help to their mistresses by using whatever tactics are available to them like lying, reneging on promises, eavesdropping, alerting, etc.

In Aphra Behn's The Rover; or, The Banished Cavaliers (1677), domestic servants are prominent. There are six servants: five male servants and one female servant. This does not accord with the usual pattern in Restoration comedies, where the dominance

of the female servants is clear. But a possible explanation rests in the foreign setting, Naples.

So far as domestic service is concerned, it is reminiscent of the kind of comedy Spanish playwrights produced in the age of Lope de Vega and Calderón. In addition to that, the entire plan and many other details of both parts of the play are taken openly and unreservedly from Tom Killigrew's Thomaso, or The Wanderer. Killigrew wrote his comedy probably about 1654-5, the period during which he was at Madrid. Nobody could rule out the possibility that Killigrew drew heavily on Spanish models.

As regards the domestic servants in The Rover, they do have the spirit of the Restoration period in them, particularly Moretta, Angelica Bianca's woman. As everybody would expect from a maidservant working for a famous courtesan, Moretta is outspoken and materialistic, particularly when she bargains for her mistress. According to her, love is the only enemy of their trade. Moretta's trade, which is threatened by love, is a hugely challenging step towards sexual freedom in a society where women writers were still facing all sorts of problems and prejudices and where actresses were treated and looked down upon as whores and sexual objects. Behn's presentation of sexuality and sexual relationships is not only different from that of her male fellow-writers, but also brave and revolutionary given the circumstances and the rules

which she had to defy at that time. The clandestine sexual activities of women are replaced by a radical form of activity which is used by Behn to expose and make public the weakness and the hankering of men for sex, and ultimately to make people think seriously and differently about sexual politics. Within this context, one should expect the role of servants to be different in many ways. Moretta becomes and behaves like a businesswoman. She thinks of what is profitable and what is not. She shouts at customers and tell them off. She also becomes outspokenly critical of her mistress, who seems to be less business-conscious, less practical and less interested in money. To Moretta, love is a luxury commodity which is not tradeable in the market of human relationships.³⁸

Sancho is a servant, but of a particular type. He is a pimp to the jilting wench, Lucetta. His lucrative job entitles him to good clothing and a comfortable life. Stephano, Don Pedro's servant, is, in all respects, a lively and helpful servant. We could know from his conversation with his master (Act III, Scene iii) that servants take part in masquerading and enjoy their life. He also, remarkably enough, gives a hand to women in their struggle for sexual freedom. Aphra Behn seems to be interested to get male servants, who are less dogmatic than their masters, on the side of women in their search for freedom from the patriarchal

domination of their sexuality. This could have been a result of Behn's awareness that both women and servants shared the same feeling of bitterness as a result of being underprivileged and unfulfilled.

Four years after the production of The Rover, Behn produced a sequel to her play, turning again to Killigrew's Thomaso; or, The Wanderer. The interesting thing in this sequel is that the character of Harlequin appears again after our first encounter with him in the Italian commedia dell'arte. Harlequin, Willmore's man here, is extremely funny, so much so that his pranks come too close to being farcical. He provides the play with an abundance of humour and buffoonery.³⁹

Sancho is here a bravo to La Nuche, the beautiful Spanish courtesan, and Aurelia is her woman. Nothing is special about Aurelia; about Abeville, Beaumont's page; or about Rag, Willmore's boy. Remarkably enough, there is only one female servant here, although there are four male ones, not to mention the unnamed footmen and servants whose role is, as usual, to provide a suitable background to the action. It is easily noticeable here and in the previous comedy that a polarisation of attitude is consciously promoted by the playwright. In other words, Behn deliberately endeavoured to make the scene look like a battlefield in which men are charlatans, cheats, pimps, bravos, harlequins, and languishing lovers, and in which women are

courtesans, jilting wenches, and businesswomen. Obviously the superiority of women is emphasised through their defiance, practicality, pragmatism, and realism.

No wonder Aphra Behn occupies a very significant place in the literature of the feminist movement. The heroines in her comedies embody a feminist revolution against the forces of oppression and the age-old male domination. Her comedies also present an unprecedented exposé of men's weaknesses and their undeserved inherited privileges.

Otway's The Souldier's Fortune (1680) is a genuine sex comedy. The sardonic cynicism of the writer creates an effective and remarkably unattractive atmosphere. Captain Beaugard's servant, Fourbin, seems to be dangerous and contriving. He is reminiscent of the intriguing and contriving slaves of the classical Greek and Roman comedies, but Fourbin is different from them in the sense that the tricks they play, particularly on old fathers, are in most cases harmless and amusing, whereas Fourbin's undertaking is harmful and evil. Fourbin is not the only dangerous servant in the play. In Act II, Beaugard tells of a footman who has been in the service of his father, and who

has pimpt for [him] oftner than he has pray'd for himself; that good quality recomended [sic] him to a nobleman's service, which, together with

flattering, fawning, lying, spying, and informing, has raised him to an imployment of trust and reputation; though the Rogue can't write his Name, nor read his neck Verse, if he had occasion.⁴⁰

Accordingly, the road to fame and fortune seems to be a crooked one, and political allegiances might have brought about the employment of hitmen and pimps in the guise of servants. If we remember that ejection from service meant starvation, we should not find it unlikely that some servants were, in real life, forced to perform criminal tasks for their masters. In such circumstances, the threats of sacking and the temptation of substantial rewards; add to this the inadequate upbringing, left servants with very limited option, if any, but to get involved in crime.

Vermin, Sir Davy's servant, is an ordinary sort of servant, subsisting on the meagre gratuities and wages of Sir Davy, who promises Vermin to give him his old shoes in case he dies. Of course, in contrast to the thriftlessness and open-handedness of the Cavaliers, the meanness and the tight-fistedness of the Roundheads are quite often made much of in the Restoration comedy.

V. The Restoration Comedy of the Eighties

The comedy of the eighties changed in line with the changes in theatrical conditions brought about by many factors such as the Exclusion Crisis, the death of Charles II, and the ousting of James. In addition to that, the end of playhouse competition between the King's Company and the Duke's Company had quite an impact on theatrical fashion. Political drama figured prominently in the first three years of the eighties, and this was followed by a period in which few new plays were produced. Court interest in theatrical productions continued, however, even after the death of Charles II in 1685. Further changes in audience taste began to emerge, and playwrights had to stay up to date.

During the late seventies and most of the eighties, Dryden's works reflect the political controversies initiated by the Exclusion Crisis - a crisis which, Dryden argued, posed a threat to the established fabric of society. Drawing on the political ideas of Sir Robert Filmer, Dryden professed to believe in divine intervention to protect monarchy and to restore it when it is destroyed. This thought is dramatized in his comedy The Spanish Fryar; or, The Double Discovery (1680). Torrismond, the son of the deposed king Sancho, regains his right to the crown and gets married to the queen of Aragon, Leonora.

The unnamed servant who speaks in Act II, Scene ii, of this comedy sounds humorous and shows a

talent for verbal caricature. His sketch of the friar is a good example: "his Gills are as rosie as a Turkey-Cock; his great Belly walks in state before him like an Harbinger; and his gouty Legs come limping after it: Never was such a Tun of Devotion seen."⁴¹

Teresa, the Queen's woman, is observant, and seems to be in a position to give advice to the Queen herself. Her being in the service of a Queen, not of a courtesan or an amorous wife, obliges her to observe a less relaxed standard of behaviour. She is skilful in interpreting visions and fancies, and is not entirely different from the English maidservants of this period. She knows how to find solutions to her mistress's problems.

Remarkably enough, the role of servants in the political comedy of the eighties is very much less important than it is in the comedy of the seventies, so much so that John Crowne chooses to ignore them entirely and not mention one by name in the *Dramatis Personae* of his two comedies City Politiques (1683) and Sir Courtly Nice (1685). In City Politiques, the role of the unnamed servants is to deliver messages.

In Sir Courtly Nice, there are no servants at all. This could be due to the fact that this comedy is politically serious and there is no room in it for the buffoonery and slapstick of the servants. In drama domestic servants prosper where there is a lot

of cuckolding, masquerading, amorousness and debauchery.

Unlike the last three comedies of Dryden and Crowne, Aphra Behn's The Lucky Chance (1686) is heavily populated by servants. There are six of them - three maidservants, and three footmen - not to mention the other unnamed servants who constitute the background of the comedy. This type of comedy is different from the sex comedy of the seventies in the sense that the ladies here are comparatively virtuous, and the men faithful and loyal to their beloved ladies. The main motif in Behn's comedy is the injustice and cruelty involved in marrying young ladies to old men, and not allowing them to marry for love. In this framework, servants have to assist the afflicted young men and women in beating the system and baffling it. This is exactly the situation of servants in classical comedy, and, to some extent, in the Spanish comedy of the Golden Age, where honour and propriety were strictly observed.

Ralph, Sir Feeble's footman, is not happy about the prospect of the inappropriate marriage between the young Leticia and the elderly Alderman, Sir Feeble. He describes it as "One that was never made in Heaven,"⁴² Ralph and Pert, Julia's maidservants, are thoroughbred descendants of their classical ancestry, who also prize love over everything, and help young people consummate their love-affairs to

the utter dismay of the covetous and greedy old people. Behn seems here to be recruiting everybody including servants in her fight against the orthodoxy of marrying young women to elderly men.

Philis, Leticia's maidservant, is clever and helpful to her mistress. Rag, Gayman's footman, is probably the most unfortunate servant, not only in this play, but also in all the Restoration comedies. Ironically enough, Gayman accuses Rag of being a lavish spender for spending three pence in a fortnight, oblivious to the fact that he has squandered his money on buying presents and souvenirs for Julia.

The Lucky Chance could be considered as indicative of the increasing hostility to the sex comedy which had developed in the seventies. Behn herself seems to have abandoned her comparatively radical views as expressed in The Rover and replaced them with views less offensive to the male-dominated society. In the dedicatory epistle to this play, Behn approves of Cardinal Richelieu's idea that plays are schools of virtue "where Vice is always either punish't, or disdain'd."⁴³ She maintains that example prevails above reason or divine precepts, and that it is example alone "that inspires Morality, and best establishes Vertue."⁴⁴ This concept was to be adopted by the sentimentalists in the first half of the eighteenth century. Behn's compromise is mostly brought about by the sheer

difficulty of swimming against the tide in a society where women writers were looked down upon as transgressors of the long-established codes of decency and womanhood.

In his preface to Bellamira, or The Mistress (1687), Sir Charles Sedley makes allusions to the obvious change in the people's morality, and humbly asks the audience to absolve the poet [originally Menander in the Greek, and Terence in the Latin], and the translator [himself] "from any unpresided [sic] indecency."⁴⁵ The main source of the play is Terence's The Eunuch, first acted in 161 B.C.

As far as servants are concerned, Smoothly is a servant to Dangerfield. His policy of flattering and getting into the favour of his master is a result of his own understanding of men. "There are," he tells Isabella, "a sort of Men who think themselves the first in all kinds, and are the last; these I get acquainted with: nor do I attempt to please 'em with my Wit, but win their hearts an easier way, by Applauding theirs." and "If any of 'em tell an old Tale, that I have Read in Print, straight I never heard any thing so well, and listen to it as if it were my Fathers last Will and Testament." His trick when a master tells a joke is to "dye with Laughing, before his Mouth opens", and if a master walks home "without taking Cold? he is hardy and fit to be a General."⁴⁶ He sums up his policy by telling Isabella that he will say what his masters say,

"deny what they deny," and "like what they like"; and if they subsequently dispraise it, he is prepared to do so too.⁴⁷ In short, he is the sort of servant who is equipped for all occasions, and armed against all dangers, but definitely not the sort of servant that one should relish. He is a worse replica of his classical ancestors and a sibling to the French valets de chambre.

The two maidservants, Silence and Betty, are witty, educated, clever, and sometimes talkative, but not clever or witty enough to be classified with the maidservants of Molière's comedies.

Despite the undeniable variety of the Restoration comedies, they are conventional, imitative, and repetitive. In addition to that, they offer highly enjoyable entertainment. Servants have their share in all of them in varying degrees, but the importance of their role is considerably less than it was in classical and Renaissance comedies. The domination of the female servants, particularly in the sex comedy of the seventies, is clear. The servants' role in the political comedies of the early 1680s is almost non-existent. In the adaptations, servants are often more numerous than in the original comedies.

During the 1680s, considerable changes in drama and the theatrical climate took place, despite the fact that many of the older writers like Dryden, Shadwell and Crowne continued to write and produce

plays. Generally speaking, the social sex comedies of the seventies were losing their once-relished reputation, and new types were being tentatively tested and tried. Political events, like the Popish Plot, for example, and other reasons gave more prominence to the serious drama. Comedy was in the process of developing into a purer and more prudent type. This type is basically an audience-orientated response catering for the new emerging morality of the people. This type ultimately developed into the fully-fledged and accomplished exemplary comedy of Steele and other sentimental writers. This trend in comedy was not totally new. It had its immediate roots in the comedy of the early sixties, namely the Spanish romance and the heroic comedy. Anyhow, the older social sex comedy continued to have influence on the age but with much less vigour. To use metaphorical language, sex comedy went into a phase of hibernation to come up again in the nineties in the later comedies of Dryden, and in those of Southerne and Congreve.

The remarkable success of Crowne's Sir Courtly Nice and Shadwell's The Squire of Alsatia is an unmistakable proof of the new taste for purer and more moralistic comedy. This is not surprising, when we know that the audience was no longer court-oriented, and the political events had quite an impact on the constitution of the audience.

In the early nineties, the old Restoration tradition of the social sex comedy, or the 'old' hard comedy, as Robert D. Hume calls it, emerged from its hibernation to begin a second glorious period. This resurgence coincided with the appearance of the counter-balancing humane comedy and a resurgence of the serious drama. All these schools were trying to "please an audience which did not care for the libertine ethic of Carolean [Restoration] sex comedy."⁴⁸ As Hume rightly observes, this "shift of sensibility is symptomatic of a change in general moral climate." And the "thunderclap provided by Jeremy Collier did not come out of the blue."⁴⁹

The later years of the nineties were characterized by the growing influence of the arguments against the comedies which particularly revived the Restoration sex comedy tradition. These arguments were set out in Sir Richard Blackmore's Preface to Prince Arthur (1695) and in Jeremy Collier's A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage (1698). Comedies about newly-discharged soldiers figured prominently in this period, and the tradition of the Spanish intrigue-comedy was maintained.

So far as the servant character is concerned, Lolpoop, in Thomas Shadwell's The Squire of Alsatia (1688), is a North-Country fellow. His accent seems to be of comical interest to the writer. Despite his

seemingly excessive naivety, he is quite aware of the vicious circle of friends in which his master, Belfond Senior, is entangled rather than involved. In fact, he is more sensible and more cautious than his foolish master, who has fallen an easy prey to the vicious trio Shamwell, Cheatly and Captain Hackum. His dissatisfaction with his master's pursuits is frequently the subject-matter of conversation between him and his master. When he has become fed up with his master's proceedings, he wishes he could go home: "Hea'n bless us, and send me a whome again."⁵⁰

The way his master treats him is cruel and inhumane. He sometimes cudgels and beats him. Such an incident is not recurrent in other comedies. Historical evidence on physical abuse to servants, particularly in the first half of the seventeenth century, suggest that this sort of abuse was not, more or less, common to immigrant servants and those who are not of English origin. It might be sensible to say that some masters might have felt that immigrant servants were more vulnerable, being away from their families and those could have sought some sort of means to protect and defend them, and less likely to cause any trouble to their bullying masters.⁵¹

He is also different from the classical servants in many respects. Like them, he knows what is good and what is bad for his foolish and gullible master,

but, unlike them, he is unable to do anything towards saving his master. He is able to judge and draw conclusions, but to no avail.

Like other naive servants, Lolpoop is not impervious to the temptations and diversions of the city and, like his master, he falls prey to the cheating gang in the play, who are anxious to keep Lolpoop out of their way while they carry out their plans. He is reminiscent of the Irish servant Teague, in Sir Robert Howard's comedy The Committee (1662), who came over to England to seek employment. This group of servants are characterized by their simplicity, naivety, honesty, loyalty, homesickness, vulnerability, and nostalgia. They are also unique in the sense that being originally nationals of presumably less sophisticated and more conservative and conventional countries makes them less perceptive of the entanglements and temptations of the English urban life, and consequently more at risk of making spectacles of themselves. In terms of history, Lolpoop belongs to this category of servants who immigrated to England as a result of catastrophes at home, or in expectation of better future. There is no historical evidence that suggests that this category of servants were abused on a wider scale than the local species.

La Mar, the French valet de chambre in the same play, speaks French and understands English. He is not important, nor is Roger, Belfond Junior's

servant, who speaks only twice in the play. This does not appear surprising when we know that in typical Restoration comedy, or even in the comedies of this period which adopt the 'old' hard style of the Restoration comedy, such servants usually contribute considerably to the obscene language and the smutty atmosphere of the plays by their remarks and observations. This treatment of Roger by the writer seems to me to be a deliberate attempt to make the comedy less offensive and more to the increasingly moral taste of the audience.

Another point concerning the treatment of servants and the didactic purpose of this comedy, is the fact that in order to communicate his message, which is that tolerance, indulgence and love are much better in bringing children up than cruelty and rigour, the writer employed a naive and easy-to-manipulate servant, so as to ease the way for the cheating gang to do their job on Belfond Senior; for if the writer had employed a cleverer and more contriving servant, that servant would have saved his master from the clutches of the cheats. Another point is that a simple and funny servant like Lolpoop could be much more tolerated and, possibly, relished by a morality-conscious audience than a sophisticated and aggressive one.

It should also be noted that Shadwell, because of Whiggish sympathies and allegiance, tries to depict the lifestyle of merchants in a favourable

manner. This entails a bit of seriousness mingled with a portion of comedy to be provided by a genuinely good-natured character like Lolpoop. In fact, sophistication here has no haven; that is why La Mar, the French valet de chambre, is suppressed and reduced to a very marginal figure.

In Bury Fair (1689), Shadwell improved on his exemplary formula. In fact, according to John Harrington Smith, Shadwell and the respectable ladies who frequented the theatre are two of the major factors which caused the gradual demise of the old hard style comedy and the emergence of a new one which is more edifying. Smith believes that Shadwell was the first who voiced opposition to "the strictly nonexemplary mood which dominated comedy in the early Restoration."⁵²

The lovers, particularly Philadelphia, Gertrude's sister, use elaborate techniques not for the sake of fornication or fun, but for the noble end of getting their beloved ones. Philadelphia takes up the 'breeches' part and disguises herself as a page to serve Lord Bellamy, with whom she is in love. This technique is a common recurrence in English comedy, and its roots go back to the Italian comedy Gl'Ingannati.

Lord Bellamy's treatment of his disguised page, who calls herself Charles, is remarkably untypical of the usual treatment of pages. Addressing his page, Lord Bellamy says:

I use thee not as other Noblemen their Pages, who let Gentlemens Sons ride at the Tails of their Coaches, crouded with rascally Footmen: 'tis a French mode; they used formerly to give 'em the same Education with their Sons, which made their Fortunes; and 'twas a Preferment then, for a Gentleman's younger Son: Now, they are bred to Box and Dice, and Cheat with the Footmen; after they're out of Livery, perhaps they turn to the Recreation of the High-way; or the top of their Fortune is to take up in some Troop, and there's an end of 'em.⁵³

This speech gives us a good idea about one source of pages. The speech claims that in England noblemen used to employ gentlemen's sons as pages, and used to give them the same education as their own sons. This, according to Lord Bellamy, enabled the gentlemen's sons to make their fortunes; but now, as soon as they get out of livery, they turn to unlawful pursuits. The speech impresses Charles, whom Lord Bellamy thinks to be a "Gentleman's Son," and he replies: "I must confess, your usage of me has been so Noble, that all the Service of my Life, can never make return."⁵⁴ To this Lord Bellamy responds: "I'll breed thee up to be my friend."⁵⁵ It is quite obvious here that Lord Bellamy is a much more refined version of the noblemen of the

Restoration comedy proper. He is made to look superior to Wildish, the type of person who used to be considered the accomplished man of sense in the Restoration comedy of the seventies and even before. Lord Bellamy is an exemplary character, who represents the sort of gentleman Shadwell would like to see in big numbers in society. His attitude towards his page who, in real life, ranked low in the hierarchy of servants in the households of the rich, is not very believable. It is much more an approving response to the calls for better morality and more responsible attitude towards employees than a true segment of life. Lord Bellamy's attitude to footmen does not accord with his caring attitude towards his page. He calls them in the previous quotation 'rascally Footmen', and his preferential treatment of his page is wrongly based on the assumption that he is a son of a gentleman. On the literary level, the development of the line of the plot and the maintaining of the suspense element in the play make such a relationship preferable and more serviceable.

Roger, Mr. Wildish's valet, and the other servants are ordinary servants: obedient, and sometimes inquisitive. We should notice here that although Roger has his ancestry in the highly contriving and remarkably sophisticated valets of Molière's comedy, most notably Mascarille, he has very little of them in his character. This is, most

likely, done deliberately by Shadwell to meet the demands of the audience, and make his didacticism more convincing, and to make his comedy purer.

In Bury Fair Shadwell endeavoured to push forward his new message. The ladies, who had already grown very critical and censorious of the comedies of the former two decades or so, which they considered to be obscene and smutty, Shadwell sought to oblige them not only by refining his language but also by providing some delicate romance in the story of Lord Bellamy and his disguised page. The servants are disciplined into the new formula, and made to contribute to it through curbing their potentially wild behaviour and through keeping a check on their language. We should recall that no historical evidence seem to emphasize the fact that servants, unlike their ostensibly conforming masters, broke with their age-old habits of being unscrupulous, amoral, wily, opportunist, and untrustworthy. This discrepancy between the historical evidence and the literary and theatrical documentation will be discussed further in the comedy of the sentimentalists.

VI. The Literature of the Reforming Pamphleteers

Dryden's Amphitryon (1690) belongs to the class of comedy which follows the 'old' hard style of Restoration comedy. It is exactly this class of comedies which is the subject of the attack made by

the reforming pamphleteers. Sir Richard Blackmore, in his preface to Prince Arthur, attacked the obscenity and immorality of the English stage, and highlighted the deviation of poetry from its fundamental purpose. To him, the business of comedy is to "render Vice ridiculous, to expose it to public Derision and Contempt, and to make Men ashamed of Vile and Sordid Actions."⁵⁶ He allows that poetry should please and delight, but this should not be the ultimate aim. He says: "They are Men of little Genius, of mean and poor Design, that employ their Wit for no higher Purpose than to please the Imagination of vain and wanton people."⁵⁷ According to him, the ultimate end of all poetry should be:

To give Men right and just Conception of Religion and Virtue, to aid their Reason in restraining their Exorbitant Appetites and Impetuous Passions, and to bring their Lives under the Rules and Guidance of true Wisdom, and thereby to promote the publick Good of Mankind.⁵⁸

He condemns the English poets for their efforts to expose religion and virtue, and to countenance or bring into esteem vice and corruption. He regrets the fact that the man of sense and the fine gentleman in the contemporary English comedies is:

a Derider of Religion, a great Admirer of Lucretius, not so much for his Learning as his Irreligion, a Person wholly Idle, dissolv'd in Luxury, abandon'd to his Pleasures, a great Debaucher of Women, profuse and extravagant in his Expences; and, in short, this Finish'd Gentleman will appear a Finish'd Libertine.⁵⁹

Young women are introduced as immodest, intriguing, immoral, and disobedient. The clergymen are portrayed as pimps, blockheads, and hypocrites. Wives are encouraged to despise their husbands, and to make friends with the libertines. The language of the comedies is, to him, immodest and offensive. He tries to refute the claims of the writers who "allege for themselves that the Degeneracy of the Age makes their leud way of Writing necessary."⁶⁰

Jeremy Collier produced a long and much more detailed work entitled A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage (1698). In the introduction, he says that the business of plays is:

to recommend Virtue, and discountenance Vice; to shew the Uncertainty of Humane Greatness, the suddain 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 bring

every Thing that is Ill under Infamy, and Neglect.⁶¹

He sets out after this introduction to expose in monotonous detail the immorality of the stage, the abuse of manners, and the abuse of clergy and religion. The main bulk of his criticism is directed at the comedies of Dryden, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and some others. He goes on to say that "notwithstanding the Latitudes of Paganism, the Roman and Greek Theatres were much more inoffensive than ours."⁶² He also argues that in classical Greek and Roman drama, it is only the slaves, generally speaking, who talk intemperately, and that "Slaves and Clowns are not big enough to spread Infection; and set up an ill Fashion."⁶³ He provocatively maintains that the strumpets of Terence's comedies "are better behaved than our honest Women, than our Women of Quality of the English Stage."⁶⁴ He makes endless comparisons between English comedies and those of the Greeks and Romans. He argues that the English stage had "always been out of Order,"⁶⁵ but that became worse in the age of Charles II. In fact, Jeremy Collier's attack is on such a massive scale that almost no writer escapes his scathing lashes and censorious eyes. He strongly condemns the abuse against the clergy and good manners. In the conclusion, he says: "Nothing can be more disserviceable to Probity and religion, than the management of the stage."⁶⁶

VII. The Comedy of the Nineties

Despite the fact that some of the attacked playwrights made admirable attempts to ward off the effect by defending the ultimate aims of their drama and the efficiency of their means to these aims, these pamphleteers would have a share in furthering the change in the spirit and formula of comedy for many years to come.

In the comedies which adopt the 'old' hard style of the Restoration comedy proper, particularly those of Dryden, Southerne, and Congreve, servants relapse into their old habits of talking about love-making, vying for gratuities and tips, and helping their debauched masters and mistresses into further debauchery and fashionable sex games. In this respect, these comedies mirrored the pursuits of servants in real life, and carried on the traditional image of servants and slaves in the Elizabethan and ancient comedy, but failed miserably to do justice to the servants by ignoring and overlooking some of their sufferings and their calamities.⁶⁷

In Dryden's Amphitryon, ironically enough, the fornicator is the god Jupiter, and the target of his licentiousness is the good lady, Alcmena, Amphitryon's wife. In his dedication of the comedy to Sir William Levison Gower, Dryden says that the comedy is not wholly his, and had it been wholly

his, he would have called it a trifle, and rightly so; but since "the Names of Plautus and Molière are joyn'd in it,"⁶⁸ it cannot be belittled or underestimated.

As far as servants are concerned, Phaedra, Alcmena's waiting woman, has an incredible and somewhat hyperbolic lust for gold and gifts. Nothing in the world matters to her but the accumulation of money and gold. When she hears about the news of Amphytryon's glorious victories on the battlefield, she asks Alcmena: "what matter is it to me if my Lord has routed the Enemies, if I get nothing of their spoils?"⁶⁹ Phaedra is also good at making deals, no matter how honest or otherwise these deals might be as long as she gets her portion of gold out of them. Describing her Jupiter says: "Her Sex is Avarice, and she, in One,/ Is all her Sex."⁷⁰ Such utterances, one could guess, together with the smut that abounds in this class of comedy, must have outraged the ladies and inflamed their anger. Actually, Phaedra is understandably a unique case among servants, who share with her the love of money, but fall short of her incredibly insatiable appetite for it.

Sosia, Amphytryon's servant, is clever, satirical, and observant. He detests the masters' pursuit of pleasure, and their constant swearing by their honour for trivial matters. He, after his long and perilous journey from the battlefield to Thebes

to deliver the news of his master's victory, says:
"The better sort of 'em will say Upon my Honour, at every word: yet ask 'em for our Wages, and they plead the Priviledge of their Honour, and will not pay us; nor let us take our Priviledge of the Law upon them."⁷¹ This piece of information rings historically true. In real life, there is enough evidence that some servants, earlier in the seventeenth century, were sacked and abused for no reason other than asking for their wages to be paid to them.⁷² It might be helpful to remember that the domestics of the second half of the seventeenth century were mostly the offspring of destitutes, which made the act of defrauding them of their wages easier and less risky.

Sosia shares with Phaedra the love of gifts and money, and like all servants, is safety-conscious. When he encounters the transformed Mercury at the gate of Amphytrion's house, Sosia gets confused and superstitious. He reminds us of the superstitious servants of the Spanish comedy of the Golden Age.

Bromia, Sosia's wife, is a funny and amusing woman. She belongs to this class of country maidservants with their laughter-provoking skill in making rows. The presence of such figures in comedy enriches it with worldly humour and comic relief.

This comedy is undoubtedly entertaining and amusing, but, because of its supernatural theme and subject-matter, it looks out of place among the

other comedies of the period, which predominantly adopt the social-realistic approach in characterization and in depicting contemporary society. Nevertheless, the delineation of servants, particularly Phaedra, sounds realistic - with a touch of exaggeration, presumably for comic reasons.

In Thomas Southerne's Sir Anthony Love; or, The Rambling Lady (1690), which is, in part, "an unacknowledged borrowing from one of Mrs. Behn's novels, The Lucky Mistake"⁷³ (first printed 1689), the role the servants play is hardly worth mentioning so far as extraordinary activities are concerned. Their presence provides a suitable background to the play, and facilitates the connecting-up of the episodes of the action, and the unravelling of the plot. An interesting point can be worked out from the role the servants of Sir Gentle Golding and others play in this comedy, which is that, unlike most of the French servants, most of the English servants tend to carry out their duties blindly and without thinking too much about them. Nevertheless, Sir Gentle's servant proves to be smart enough in some situations.

What is obviously notable in this comedy is the unrelenting abuse of the clergy, represented here by the Abbé. This, of course, together with many other factors, triggered the reforming pamphleteers' attacks on the immorality of the English stage. This satirical comedy belongs to the class of early

Restoration comedies where the excessive activities of the dynamic hero or heroine eliminate the need for the help of servants and emphasise the desire of the younger generation to break loose from the fetters of the past. It also capitalizes on the erotic appearance of actresses in men's clothes.

Southerne's next comedy The Wives' Excuse; or, Cuckolds Make Themselves (1691), is a lively picture of contemporary life. Although the servants, mainly footmen, are not effective participants in the action, their chats and conversations are highly amusing and informative. Their number is comparatively large. There are seven footmen and two pages. They provide the comedy with a considerable amount of humour and fun, and provide integrating and essential pieces in the jigsaw of contemporary life. Their relatively obscene conversations, together with those of some other characters, won the admiration of Dryden, who likens Southerne to Terence in terms of plotting and wit, and maintains that by his skill and manipulation Southerne makes lewdness look moral:

May be thou hast not pleas'd the Box and Pit,
Yet those who blame thy Tale, commend thy Wit,
So Terence Plotted; but so Terence Writ.
Like his thy Thoughts are true, thy Language
clean,
Ev'n Lewdness is made moral, in thy Scene.⁷⁴

It is most likely here that Dryden is pointing at the discontent of the ladies, which seems to be mingled with a certain amount of esteem and appreciation for witticism. He also refuses adamantly to yield to pressure or compromise on his thoughts and language.

The footmen here are servants to fashionable men who pursue pleasure and debauchery, particularly debauching newly-married women. These men are, like their counterparts in Restoration comedy proper, smart enough to look after their own interests without the assistance of their servants.

The role of the servants in this play, in terms of action, is hardly notable. Probably this is why the playwright chose to assign numbers to footmen rather than proper names.

What is remarkable about them is their thorough knowledge of the mentality and manners of the people around them. In Act I, Scene i, their chats reflect their typical concern for wages and their being bored with playing music in the music meetings. Footman no. 3, who is Wilding's footman, gives us in the same scene a bit of information about the employment of servants during the closing years of the seventeenth century. He tells us that one of his fellow-footmen has got married to a chamber-maid because of the difficulty of getting employment in the households of the rich. Talking about Footman

no. 6, Wilding's footman says: "Ay, want of Employment has thrown him upon some gentle Chambermaid, and now he sets up for good husbandry, to Father her Failings, and get a Wet-Nurse for his lady."⁷⁵ To this, Footman no. 6 replies: "Better so, than to Father your Master's Bastards, as you do sometimes; and now and then cheat him of his Wench, in the Convey, and steal his Clap from him."⁷⁶ His concerns reflect widely current anxiety about access to and retention of serving jobs in the second half of the seventeenth century.

The footmen's knowledge of their masters' designs and pursuits is accurate, and so is their inferences. Mr. Friendall's footman makes good remarks on his masters's pursuits. Stage servants prosper in environments where love-intrigues and unlawful pursuits abound. This is typical of servants of all times. The slaves in the ancient comedies of Greece and Rome prosper in such environment. Wilding's footman tells Friendall's footman, after having been informed that Mrs. Friendall is handsome and hospitable: "You may make a Fortune out of such a Mistress, before your master can get her with Child."⁷⁷ Friendall's footman is not unaware of the prospect of a lucrative investment in such a situation. He has expectations of thriving by the young men of the town: "I grind with her Mill, and some of 'em I hope will set it a going."⁷⁸

Scrutinizing this key scene, as far as servants are concerned, one gets the impression that the employment of servants in the late seventeenth century, apart, of course, from many possible exceptions, became a business void of any emotional or sentimental implications. Servants know their duties and carry them out accordingly, and with the least possible effort, particularly when they are sure of escaping their masters' attention. Their uppermost concern is to make as much money as they possibly can. Such relationships are more likely to exist between masters and servants in bourgeois societies rather than in societies under the feudal system, where more emotional attachments are likely to exist between servants and their masters. This has a psychological element to it. Servants in bourgeois societies do tend, one would think, to hold their masters in less esteem because of their knowledge of their original social background. In other words, there might be an element of envy in the process, where servants might think that their employers have luckily and undeservedly risen to a better status, and one would guess that some of the servants might think that had they been given a similar chance, or had luck been as good to them, they would have been better people. This, of course, is unobtrusively implied in the answers given by Footman no. 6 to the comment of Wilding's footman on his marriage to a chamber-maid. This point is much

more tenable in comedies where the servants' dissatisfaction with the pursuits and lifestyles of their masters is clearer.

There is also here a place for arguing that the playwright's eroticization of the servants' dialogues is a conscious attempt by him to profit from the sexual image of the actresses as conceived by the privileged audience, who associate these actresses with lack of social status - the majority of the actresses came from the lower classes - and availability for sex. Thomas A. King, in his essay "As if (she) were made on purpose to put the whole world into good Humour", mentions that the "disclosure of an actress' talent was inevitably connected with her defloration by her sponsor."⁷⁹ Accordingly, an actress' debut on stage was "constructed as a rite of sexual maturation and availability."⁸⁰ Their lower-class status rendered them vulnerable to the audacious advances and gaze of the privileged spectators. Elizabeth Barry had the misfortune of having a financially ruined father whose job as a barrister presumably could have properly secured his future and the future of his daughter had he not been involved in raising a regiment to support the Stuarts. Anne Bracegirdle's father worked in the coach trade but, probably luckily for her, his financial hardship compelled him to consign his daughter to the care of Mr. Betterton. Anne Oldfield was the daughter of a

Soldier in the guards and a granddaughter of a vintner. Mary Davies' father is said to have been a blacksmith, and it is said that Eleanor Gwyn's mother ran a brothel in Drury Lane.⁸¹

These actresses' humble origins, their acute sense of vulnerability, and their hankering for promotion on the social scale through aristocratic patronage and earning lots of money, made them willing to accept any erotic role allotted to them, and to recite sexually exciting prologues and epilogues written by Dryden and others. This in turn encouraged the playwrights to feel at ease and free to eroticize, for the benefit rather of the male spectators than of the actresses, the conversations and dialogues of the saucy servants. The derogatory attitude of the upper-class public towards the actresses stems from the fact that acting and playing were looked at as the jobs of vagrants and prostitutes. Consequently, historical discourses are filled with outrageous remarks and naked allusions to the sexual availability of the actresses and their blatant immorality. Samuel Pepys describes in his diary how he got into the coach in which Mrs. Knipp was going home, and how he got her on his knees and "played with her breasts and sung".⁸² A poet outrageously describing Elizabeth Barry's heavy bleeding during menstruation because of her promiscuity says: "Had she been living in famed Pharaoh's reign,/ He and even all his fierce and

num'rous train/ In her red sea might have been surely slain."⁸³ Charlotte Butler's chief aim was said to be money: "But if She's hungry, faith I must be blunt/ She'll for a Dish of Cutlets shew her C--t."⁸⁴ Gwyn was publicly known as the protestant whore and her image was highly eroticized. So despite the fact that some of the actresses, like Elinor Leigh and Anne Shadwell, did manage to marry actors, one could safely say that the majority of the actresses, probably the most glamorous ones, chose to break down the traditional ideologies of marriage and chastity, and to struggle for promotion and individualism through getting closer to the aristocracy, earning as much money as possible, glamorizing their images, and gaining wide publicity. All these factors allowed the playwrights, directors and producers to make bold with them and to exploit their glamour and talents for sexual excitement to make huge profits and to gain fame and popularity. The servants' activities and dialogues should accordingly fit in with this thrilling and profitable formula to achieve the required goal. After all, the majority of playwrights are very much like businessmen, who always try to cater for the popular taste of their customers to become popular and to earn more money. It is well known that many playwrights made many changes on the original text after the first performance of their plays as a response to the

comments and reaction of the audience. Pepys' reaction to the first performance of Dryden's The Wild Gallant (1663) was a negative one. So was the reaction of the majority of the people who saw it. In response to that Dryden "made at least one addition to the original text".⁸⁵ This addition is the scene (IV,I) in which Lady Du Lake and her girls are featured. Dryden refers to this addition in his Prologue to the second version of The Wild Gallant.⁸⁶

There is another point which is applicable to the majority of the comedies considered in this chapter. It is the fact that servants reflect, bluntly and unartificially, the manners of the environments they live in. They sound good and polite when their masters and mistresses are good and well-behaved. They also sound obscene and opportunistic when their masters and mistresses are careless and abandoned to the pursuit of pleasure and debauchery. This fits in with the theory of the correlation between the characterization of masters and servants in comedies. This correlation does not seem to reflect the realities of the master-servant relationship of early modern England. There are so many stories, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, of masters defrauding their servants of their wages and abusing them, and of others sacking their chamber-maids to consign to history their crimes of making these vulnerable women pregnant. There are even more

stories of servants abusing the trust of their kind masters by doing all sorts of petty crimes, like purloining, stealing, cheating, and lying.

Thomas Southerne's The Fatal Marriage; or, The Innocent Adultery (1694), belongs to the category of the serious drama of that time. This play is a mixed-plot tragicomedy. The plot of the tragical part of the play is taken out of a novel by Aphra Behn called The Fair Vow-Breaker (1689). The comic sub-plot is derived from the eighth novella of the third day of Boccaccio's Decameron. In fact, the tragical part of this play strongly overshadows the comic one to the extent that one could hardly have laughed had not the comic sub-plot been handled with excellent skill and craftsmanship.

Jaqueline, Frederick's servant, is crafty and contriving. He manages to make Fernando, Victoria's father and Julia's husband, carry Frederick's letter to his daughter Victoria by pinning it to the back of his coat. This servant has a great deal of the classical servant in him. He is an obvious parallel to those classical servants or slaves, in the classical Greek and Roman comedies, who are always enthusiastic to help their helpless young masters to get their mistresses by circumventing outrageous paternal authority. Jaqueline, also, is ethically Restorational. He holds negative views about marriage.⁸⁷ His unscrupulousness makes him ready to cheat and lie as long as things go as he would like

them to go. On the other hand, he proves to be loyal to his master in a professional manner, although he knows that his master is not a man of his word.

Sampson, Count Baldwin's porter, is typical of those servants, in the classical Greek and Roman comedies and indeed in the comedies of all times, whose only concern is to get more money, and to do his duties unquestioningly and in a passive and unemotional manner. He carries his conservative professionalism to an extreme when he responds negatively to the heart-breaking entreaties of Isabella to be admitted to the Count's house. Addressing the Nurse, who nicely and emotionally responds to Isabella's predicament and admits her to the house, he says: "we are but Servants you know: we must have no likings, but our Lord's, and must do as we are ordered."⁸⁸ This servant also unequivocally declares his hatred to the "decay'd Gentry", because they are no longer in possession of big amounts of money. To this the Nurse responds: "that is a grievance indeed in great Families; where the Gifts at good times are better than the Wages."⁸⁹ A nostalgic remembrance of the good old days is obvious here. Nostalgia for the days when the gentry were still rich and prosperous, and when gifts were given lavishly to the servants.

In actual life, employment in the houses of the gentry became more difficult in the closing years of the seventeenth century; yet, compared to employment

in the households of the newly-emerging bourgeoisie, it was more lucrative. So one could think that the Nurse's observation does not imply that employment in the houses of the bourgeoisie is better or more profitable; rather, she implies that the old days were better than the new ones. This, of course, encourages her and her fellow-servant Sampson to leave their old master and follow Isabella to the house of Villeroy, where they expect double wages and good treatment. Sampson's justification for his departure is that serving in a house where the master or the mistress "lies single" is intolerable, because they are "out of humour with every body, when they are not pleas'd themselves."⁹⁰ This decision is probably associated with the fact that comedy is bourgeoisie-orientated. Sampson's departure from Count Baldwin's house implies that the traditional sentimental attachment of servants to the gentry is nothing but a fairy tale. Their loyalties crumble at the very first sign of recession, and get metamorphosed into dispassionate nostalgic recollection of the good old days when gifts and tips were in abundance.

"In the years immediately following 1695," as Hume points out, "the Carolean norms are rapidly left behind."⁹¹ The Restoration style of comedy started once again to lose ground under the heavy blows of the social reformers and the unmistakable changes in the moral climate at large. Yet the

comedies produced in that period adopted reconciliatory approaches by engrafting the 'old' Restoration style with a favourable moralistic observation of the demands of the audience. This mixture, it seems to me, made the comedies achieve a state of equipoise which rendered them acceptable to the general taste. This taste, one can argue, is a failure on the side of the comparatively newly-emergent bourgeois audience to cope with cultural elements they are not yet used to.

Congreve, in his comedy Love for Love (1695), seems to have adopted this new approach by mixing the old norms with the more prudent new ones. Although Valentine is leading an extravagant and expensive life-style, he is not involved in cuckoldry or seduction, and proves in the end to be a good lover. Congreve claims that Love for Love belongs to the daring tradition of Wycherley, but at the same time hopes that "there's no ill-manners in his Play."⁹²

Valentine is impecunious and a prolific reader of books, and his life-style is costly and expensive. In the service of such a man, one would straight away expect a practical servant to be found. This is exactly the case with Jeremy, who is utterly dissatisfied with his master's pursuits. Act I Scene i is a lengthy conversation between Jeremy and his master impregnated with humour and wit provided mainly by Jeremy. In the same scene, Jeremy exhibits

versatility and wit mixed with common traits and qualities typical of the servant's mentality.⁹³

Jeremy's tough attacks on wit through remarkably lengthy speeches sound more like an attempt by Congreve to display his admirable ability to humorously ridicule poets and wit, rather than an attempt by Jeremy to persuade his patient master to give up his way of life. Servants in positions like Jeremy's usually prove to be very helpful and loyal. This case is reminiscent of a similar case in Behn's comedy, The Lucky Chance (1686). I would venture to say that in the majority of comedies, when a gallant and witty gentleman is relegated to destitution by his extravagance and intellectual pursuits, his servant is witty, contriving and loyal. Bundles of remonstrances and condemnations are to be expected from the servant against his master, and a great deal of indulgence and tolerance is to be expected from the master. I am tempted here to argue that in this comedy, and probably in The Lucky Chance, there is a reluctant resignation to the fact that the age of intellectualism has already gone by, and that life needs more practical attitudes. The historical records, so far as I know, tells us nothing about servants who managed to save their masters from ruin. The more tenable possibility is the fact that late seventeenth-century servants were always on the move, and that they preferred to leave decaying masters. Sampson's departure from Count Baldwin's

house in Southerne's Fatal Marriage is more representative of the realities and possibilities of such situations.

Colley Cibber's Love's Last Shift; or, The Fool in Fashion (1696), is considered by many to be the first sentimental comedy, in the eighteenth-century sense of the word. In the epilogue of this comedy, Cibber declares: "There's not one cuckold made in all this play."⁹⁴ The libertine is reclaimed at the end of the play, and virtue is made triumphant in the person of Amanda, who successfully brings about the reformation of her husband, Loveless, through her adamant and strict devotion to virtue.

Amanda's reformation of her husband can be viewed as a microcosm of the impact which the ladies in the audience had on the theatre through their protests against alleged obscenity and smuttiness in comedy, and through their avowed approval of plays with idealised images of women and with touching sentiments. The methods they used to get their message through took different forms. One of the most obvious ones was to throw their pears and oranges at the actors. Among the many comedies which the ladies did not approve of are Congreve's The Double Dealer, and Wycherley's The Country Wife and The Plain Dealer. Ironically enough, the plays of some female dramatists were met with more severe forms of condemnation by these conservative ladies. Rumours were enough to make them choose to boycott

Aphra Behn's Sir Patient Fancy and The Lucky Chance. Because of their subconscious internalisation of conventional concepts and beliefs, these strict ladies, one would think, would tolerate digressions and transgressions from a male writer rather than a female writer. Feminist novelties, particularly those related to introducing unchaste and outgoing heroines, did not prove to be popular with the ladies. There is also evidence that Ravenscroft's comedy The London Cuckolds (1681) proved to be so offensive that the ladies formed protest groups to disrupt its performance. This conservatism was seen as hypocrisy by some playwrights. Burnaby cynically suggested that a play would please the ladies more if it contained a couple of rapes, and Steele was aware of the fact that the ladies would relish sentiment.⁹⁵

Colley Cibber's response to the ladies' protests and to the changing moral climate is one of compromise. In Love's Last Shift he tries to strike a balance between the demands of the ladies and the excitement and sexual sensationalism of the Restoration sex-comedy. There is a lot of the Restoration and classical spirit in this comedy; the love intrigues, the language in some scenes, and the character of the fop.

As for the servants in this comedy, Snap, Loveless' servant, is as naughty and vigorous as the contriving servants of Restoration and classical

comedies, but he is also strongly critical of his master's squandering of his wealth on strumpets and whores, and of his gross neglect of his virtuous and beautiful wife. He is not engaged in sexual activities like the servants of Dorimant in The Man of Mode. Rather, he tries to bring about his master's reformation. On the other hand, he proves that he still retains a lot of the traits of his senior fellow-servants in the Restoration comedy proper when he manifests an unscrupulous readiness to do Young Worthy the service he likes in return for a guinea.⁹⁶ Despite his frivolity, Snap is critical of his master's mistreatment of Amanda, and sounds rather sympathetic to her suffering, but his sympathy is overshadowed by his fear of starvation after his master has gone bankrupt. His obsession with food and drink is exaggerated for comic reasons.

It is clear, in this play that Snap's role is modified in such a way as to make him unable to detect the love intrigue, which is crucial to the whole sentimental design and the conclusion of the play. He is made less clever than the top-ranking servants of Restoration comedy proper so that the plot can be carried out in a way that makes the ladies in the audience feel flattered and exhilarated, and also makes the ultimate message of the writer get through.

Amanda's woman carries out her role in the intrigue elegantly and professionally. Unlike the maidservants in the sex comedy of the seventies, Amanda's woman here assists her mistress in her attempts not to avenge her abused dignity through debauchery and cuckoldry, but to reclaim her debauched husband and prove through example the ultimate sovereignty of virtue and its triumph over vice. One can say with a good amount of certainty that such an argument would not have pleased Aphra Behn; and some other women dramatists who stood for more drastic punishment of male trespasses and transgressions. Modern feminist discourse looks at such a case, Amanda's case, as demeaning and outrageous. The other servants in the play make amusing comments and sound lively and agreeable. Their overall contribution does not disturb the functional design and Gestalt of the comedy. On the contrary, it fits properly into it.

Unconvinced by the sentimental reformation of Loveless, and the false representation of human nature in Love's Last Shift, Vanbrugh wrote his comedy The Relapse; or, Virtue in Danger (1696). In the preface to the first edition of this comedy, Vanbrugh refers to blasphemy and bawdy as 'two shining graces', and applies himself to the ladies who are of real reputation to defend him against the pretenders to morality who will ever be his enemies because he will never write 'anything lewd enough'

to make them his friends. This scathing attack is toned down a bit by pleading not guilty to the indecencies which took place on the stage in the first performance of this play. George Powell, who played Worthy, had been drinking the health of his mistress since six in the morning. This gave him extraordinary vigour in his passionate scenes with Mrs. Rogers, who played Amanda; and she just managed to escape the possibility of Powell going too far in the physical expression of his natural instincts. Nevertheless, Vanbrugh's reluctance to misrepresent human nature made him feel very sorry that Mrs. Rogers managed to free herself from Powell.

In this comedy, there is only one male servant, who is Lory, Young Fashion's servant; and there is also one Nurse, who is a governess to Miss Hoyden. Lory is heavily involved here in the attempts and efforts to get his debt-stricken master out of trouble.⁹⁷ Young Fashion asks his servant to join forces together to destroy his brother. Lory, unexpectedly, refers his master to Coupler, the match-maker, but for good reasons.

In this comedy, Vanbrugh does not seem to bother too much about the newly-prevailing moral climate. His daring challenge is made clear in his Prologue on the third day of the staging of the play.

This is an age where all things we improve,
But, most of all, the art of making love.

In former days, women were only won
By merit, truth, and constant service done;
But lovers now are much more expert grown;
They seldom wait t'approach by tedious form;
They're for dispatch, for taking you by storm:
Quick are their sieges, furious are their fires,
Fierce their attacks, and boundless their
desires.⁹⁸

This challenge does not seem to be a deliberate offence against accepted social morality; rather, it is a brave attempt to present contemporary social conduct with a good degree of frankness and bravery. Yet, despite his obvious challenge to the ostensibly escalating sensitivity to immorality and sensationalism, Vanbrugh is here slightly acquiescent, in that he makes his comedy less erotic and the heroine less glamorous. The glamorous women of the Restoration sex comedy seem to be superseded by less glamorous women, with more intellect to make up for their reduced glamour. This particular technique becomes more convincing in the witty and well-spoken heroine of The Way of the World, Millamant, and grows tenable with the comparatively passive heroines of the sentimental comedy of the eighteenth century.

In The Provok'd Wife (1697), Vanbrugh is less offensive and more acquiescent than he is in The Relapse. Lady Brute, the provoked wife, does not

make love to her lover Constant, although she does think of infidelity at one stage. She is not as pure as Mrs. Friendall in The Wives' Excuse, but is far from Mademoiselle's drive for adventure, love-making, and preference of nature to reason.

The entertaining element in this comedy is largely the contribution of the French soubrette Mademoiselle and the clever lackey Razor, who are almost the quintessence of the maid-servants and valets of Molière's comedies. Mademoiselle, Lady Fancyfull's woman, is different in every respect from the English maid-servant Cornet. Unlike Cornet, she is highly flattering and uninhibited. The truthfulness of Cornet almost outrages her mistress. Asking about how she looks, Lady Fancyfull gets two entirely different answers. Cornet's answer is: "Your ladyship looks very ill, truly,"⁹⁹ whereas Mademoiselle's answer is: "My opinion pe, matam, dat your ladyship never look so well in your life."¹⁰⁰ Mademoiselle also expresses her preference of nature to reason, because nature makes her happy and reason makes her sad. Accordingly, she encourages Lady Fancyfull to respond positively to a letter from an anonymous lover and to go and meet him. Lady Fancyfull confides her secrets to Mademoiselle.¹⁰¹ The particular characterisation of Mademoiselle in this comedy is due to the stereotyped image of the French as being less inhibited, more outspoken, and more flattering than the English. So there is a

place here for arguing that historical stereotyping, whether correct or not, affects the characterisation of servants, particularly if this stereotyping serves and boosts the comic elements in comedies. The same argument can be applied to the representation of French valets de chambre and the French coxcombs. This stereotyping also accounts for the similar characterisation of French valets, servants, and coxcombs in the comedy of the time.

Razor, Sir John Brute's servant, is clever and playful. His views on marriage are Restorational. To him marriage is a slippery thing, and women have depraved appetites. He knows all that is happening around him. Towards the end of Act V, Scene ii, he tells us: "My lady's a wag; I have heard all, I have seen all, I understand all---- and I'll tell all, for my little Frenchwoman loves news dearly."¹⁰²

On the whole, Razor and Mademoiselle are not very commendable servants; Mademoiselle for her lack of prudence, and Razor for his weak resistance to temptation. Yet, they do provide the comedy with an abundance of humour and vivacity. The eroticization of the dialogue between Mademoiselle and Razor, and between Mademoiselle and Lady Fancyfull, is typical of the Restoration sex comedy, and this particular relationship between Mademoiselle and Razor is a less glamorised version of the 'gay couple' - usually the hero and the heroine of the Restoration comedy proper - which is one of the most distinctive

and original features of the Restoration comedy. It is not easy to define the effect the 'gay couple' had on the representation of servants. One could assume with a good amount of certainty that the over-emphasis in some comedies on the attraction of the 'gay couple' overshadows the attraction of the rest of the *Dramatis Personae*, and makes the playwright subconsciously inclined to make the role of servants subordinate and less prominent. This, I would think, is one of the reasons why the classical and even Elizabethan comedy have more effective and more prominent domestic slaves and servants. The absence of the 'gay couple' in the classical comedy accounts for the extraordinary place of domestics on the stage.

VIII. Conclusion

Servants, like all men and women, change from age to age. They prosper when their masters are prosperous, enjoy their life when their masters pursue pleasure, and become wretched when their masters go bankrupt. Their bad qualities are developed through their vital need to earn their living, and their good ones are what their jobs entail and what they share with other men and women. Their roles in the plays are designed to construct and support an argument where support is needed, and to disrupt a pattern where disruption is needed for the construction of the suggested or approved pattern. Their comical

contribution, not only through their lapses and failures but also through their capacity to provoke and bring out the shortcomings and idiosyncrasies of other characters, is their main asset. In those terms, the comedy of the Restoration period and the later years of the seventeenth centuries are near adaptations of the comedy of the antiquity and that of the Renaissance in Europe and the Golden age in Spain. In terms of historical representation, the Restoration comedies and those of the later years of the seventeenth century are good documents as far as the servants' common qualities, particularly the bad ones, are concerned. They are poor resources of information as far as the problems and calamities of servants are concerned. They do provide bits and pieces of information about their concerns, but, ultimately, depict the upper servants as a dangerous species, prepared to do anything for money and gratuities. These comedies do not offer much explanation to the reasons behind much of the servants' misbehaviours. They depict them as a unique species born with instinctive inclinations and tendencies for wrongdoing.

The servants' real lives are very imperfectly represented on stage. Inherited stereotypes shape representation more directly than everyday experiences of servants and their masters and mistresses. There are also signifying silences - about serving class destitution, the treatment of

the rarely-represented serving children, and the despair of young servants, which produced many suicides.

It is obvious that changes in stage representation represent shifts in cultural ideology rather than changes in the real conditions of servants.

IX. Notes

¹ Robert D. Hume, The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977) 113.

² The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 114.

³ A Select Collection of Old English Plays, originally published by Robert Dodsley in 1744; revised, enlarged, and chronologically arranged by W. Carew Hazlitt (London: Reeves and Turner, 1876) XV: 225-26.

⁴ A Select Collection of Old English Plays, XV: 226.

⁵ A Select Collection of Old English Plays, XV: 252.

⁶ A Select Collection of Old English Plays, XV: 292.

⁷ A Select Collection of Old English Plays, XV: 317.

⁸ See T.R. Murphy's article, "'Woful Childe of Parents Rage': Suicide of Children and Adolescents in Early Modern England, 1507-1710," Sixteenth-Century Journal 17, No. 3 (1986), 259-270. See also Farley Grubb's "Fatherless and Friendless: Factors Influencing the Flow of English Emigrant Servants,"

The Journal of Economic History 52, No. 1 (1992) 85-108.

⁹ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 248.

¹⁰ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 249.

¹¹ John Dryden, The Works of John Dryden, gen. ed. H. T. Swedenberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966) IX: 220.

¹² The Works of John Dryden, IX: 232.

¹³ The Works of John Dryden, IX: 233.

¹⁴ The Works of John Dryden, IX: 254.

¹⁵ The Works of John Dryden, IX: 266.

¹⁶ The Works of John Dryden, IX: 230.

¹⁷ See Robert D. Hume's The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, Chapter I.

¹⁸ She Would If She Could, 34.

¹⁹ She Would If She Could, 69.

²⁰ Edward Burns, Restoration Comedy: Crises of Desire and Identity (Macmillan, 1987) 97.

²¹ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 16.

²² The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 17.

²³ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 18.

²⁴ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 18.

²⁵ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 24.

²⁶ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 24.

²⁷ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 25.

²⁸ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 28.

²⁹ William Wycherley, The Plays of William Wycherley, ed. Arthur Friedman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979) 44.

³⁰ See Dorothy Marshall, "The English Domestic Servant in History," The Historical Association, G 13 (1949), 1-30. See also chapter II of this thesis.

³¹ The Plays of William Wycherley, 132.

³² The Plays of William Wycherley, 304.

³³ See Thomas A. King's "'As if (she) were made on purpose to put the whole world into good Humour': Reconstructing the First English Actresses," The Drama Review, T132 (1992) 88.

³⁴ George Etherege, The Man of Mode, ed. W. B. Carnochan (London: Edward Arnold, 1967) 8.

³⁵ The Man of Mode, 49.

³⁶ As quoted in The Man of Mode, xi.

³⁷ Thomas Otway, The Complete Works of Thomas Otway, ed. Montague Summers (Bloomsbury: The Nonesuch Press, 1926) II: 3.

³⁸ Aphra Behn, The Works of Aphra Behn, ed. Montague Summers (London, 1915; reissued, New York: Benjamin Blom, 1967) I: 38-42.

³⁹ The Works of Aphra Behn, I: 142.

⁴⁰ The Complete Works of Thomas Otway, II: 259.

⁴¹ John Dryden, Dryden: The Dramatic Works, ed. Montague Summers (London: The Nonesuch Press, 1932) V: 145-46.

⁴² The Works of Aphra Behn, III: 197.

⁴³ The Works of Aphra Behn, III: 183.

⁴⁴ The Works of Aphra Behn, III: 183.

⁴⁵ Charles Sedley, The Poetical and Dramatic Works of Sir Charles Sedley, ed. V. De Sola Pinto (London: Constable & Company Ltd., 1928) II: 6.

⁴⁶ The Poetical and Dramatic Works of Sir Charles Sedley, II: 26.

⁴⁷ The Poetical and Dramatic Works of Sir Charles Sedley, II: 26.

⁴⁸ Robert D. Hume, The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977) 381.

⁴⁹ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 381.

⁵⁰ Thomas Shadwell, The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell, ed. Montague Summers (London: The Fortune Press, 1927) IV: 213.

⁵¹ See chapter II of this thesis.

⁵² John Harrington Smith, "Shadwell, the Ladies, and Change in Comedy," Modern Philology, 46, No. 1 (1948) 24.

⁵³ The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell, IV: 307-08.

⁵⁴ The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell, IV: 308.

⁵⁵ The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell, IV: 308.

⁵⁶ J. E. Spingarn, ed., Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1909) III: 228.

⁵⁷ Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, III: 228.

⁵⁸ Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, III: 229.

⁵⁹ Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, III: 230.

⁶⁰ Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, III: 232.

⁶¹ Jeremy Collier, A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage (Menston: Scolar Press, 1971) 1.

⁶² A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage, 15.

⁶³ A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage, 16.

⁶⁴ A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage, 22.

⁶⁵ A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage, 127.

⁶⁶ A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage, 287.

⁶⁷ See Chapter II of this thesis.

⁶⁸ John Dryden, The Works of John Dryden, gen. ed. H. T. Swedenberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976) XV: 224.

⁶⁹ The Works of John Dryden, XV: 240.

⁷⁰ The Works of John Dryden, XV: 245.

⁷¹ The Works of John Dryden, XV: 246-47.

⁷² See Chapter II of this thesis.

⁷³ Thomas Southerne, The Works of Thomas Southerne, eds. Robert Jordan and Harold Love (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1988) I: 163.

⁷⁴ The Works of Thomas Southerne, I: 270.

⁷⁵ The Works of Thomas Southerne, I: 275.

⁷⁶ The Works of Thomas Southerne, I: 275.

⁷⁷ The Works of Thomas Southerne, I: 275.

⁷⁸ The Works of Thomas Southerne, I: 276.

⁷⁹ Thomas A. King, "'As if (she) were made on purpose to put the whole world into good Humour': Reconstructing the First English Actresses," The Drama Review: A Journal of Performance Studies, T135, (1992) 92-93.

⁸⁰ "'As if (she) were made on purpose to put the whole world into good Humour' ... , T135, 93.

⁸¹ "'As if (she) were made on purpose to put the whole world into good Humour' ... , T135, 85.

⁸² Robert Latham and William Matthews, eds. The Diary of Samuel Pepys, (London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd., 1972) VII: 2.

⁸³ As quoted by Laura J. Rosenthal in "'Counterfeit Scrubbado': Women Actors in the Restoration," The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation, 34, No. 1 (1993) 5.

⁸⁴ As quoted by King, "'As if (she) were made on purpose to put the whole world into good Humour' ... , T135, 88.

⁸⁵ John Dryden, The Works of John Dryden, eds. J. H. Smith and D. MacMillan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962) VIII: 235.

⁸⁶ The Works of John Dryden, eds. J. H. Smith and D. MacMillan, VIII: 6.

⁸⁷ The Works of Thomas Southerne, II: 40.

⁸⁸ The Works of Thomas Southerne, II: 25.

⁸⁹ The Works of Thomas Southerne, II: 25.

⁹⁰ The Works of Thomas Southerne, II: 52.

⁹¹ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 406.

⁹² William Congreve, The Complete Plays of William Congreve, ed. Herbert Davis (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967) 214.

⁹³ The Complete Plays of William Congreve, 217.

⁹⁴ Dougald Macmillan and Howard Mumford Jones, eds., Plays of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966) 348.

⁹⁵ For more information on women in theatre audiences, consult Jacqueline Pearson's The Prostituted Muse: Images of Women & Women Dramatists 1642-1737 (London: Harvester. Wheatsheaf, 1988) 33-41.

⁹⁶ Plays of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century,
311.

⁹⁷ John Vanbrugh, The Relapse; or, Virtue in Danger,
ed. Bernard Harris (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1971)
17.

⁹⁸ The Relapse, 7.

⁹⁹ John Vanbrugh, The Provoked Wife, ed. James L.
Smith (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1974) 13.

¹⁰⁰ The Provoked Wife, 13.

¹⁰¹ The Provoked Wife, 31.

¹⁰² The Provoked Wife, 91.

Chapter IV

**Comedy from the Beginning of the
Eighteenth Century until 1737**

I. Introduction

The demand for domestics was on the increase during the eighteenth century. This, according to historians, was occasioned by a number of economic and commercial developments, which in turn brought about some social changes. The increasing number of traders and manufacturers opened a big market for domestic labour, the supply of which was generally inadequate. There were some other reasons which increased the demand for domestic labour. Some of these reasons are the new households of the newly-emerging middle class and the middle-class inferiority complex, which led some middle-class people to try to over-employ and over-spend on domestic servants in an attempt to outstrip upper classes in terms of lavishness and social prominence.¹

The comparatively new environment considerably influenced the relationship between masters and servants. The availability of employment put servants in a more secure position and contributed to their spirit of insubordination and independence. This, in turn, led employers to get tougher and less easy about the new mentality of servants. On the whole, the verdict of historians, based on historical evidence, confirms, apart from some exceptions which do not seem to be important enough to change the final verdict, that the eighteenth century was "no golden age of service."²

In this chapter, I will try to demonstrate that the historical evidence on the relationship between masters and servants contradicts the depiction of this relationship as harmonious in the comedies of the eighteenth-century sentimentalists. The historical evidence on the behaviour and pursuits of servants does not accord with the considerably improved mentality and behaviour of domestics in the same comedies.

II. The Comedy of the Early Years of the 18th Century

Before I move to my main task, I would like to consider some of the comedies which were written, early in the eighteenth century, in the vein of the old style of the Restoration comedy, in an attempt to show the gradual process of development in terms of subject-matter of comedy and response to changes in moral climate. This attempt should also serve to show the richness and diversity of the literary scene which might be misrepresented by non-chronological selection.

Early in the eighteenth century, comedies which were still loyal to the old style of the Restoration comedy, with some modifications and refinements in terms of morality, did not disappear from the scene.

William Congreve, who was attacked by Jeremy Collier in his famous publication A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage, and who, straight away, answered him with Amendments

of Mr. Collier's False and Imperfect Citations (1698), in which he defended his plays with vigour and enthusiasm, set out, in the next year to defend himself better against Collier by writing a play. This play is The Way of the World (1700). Congreve claims in the dedication of his play that only a little of it "was prepar'd for that general Taste which seems now to be predominant in the Pallats of our Audience."³

The major deception in this comedy is Mirabell's invention. Waitwell, Mirabell's servant, plays an important role and displays qualities inherited from the servants of the classical and Renaissance comedies. The onslaught on the immorality of the stage seems to have already taken its toll. Dorimant, the nonchalant and promiscuous, is replaced here by Mirabell, who is seriously and single-mindedly intent on marriage.

Mrs Foible is always prepared to tell as many lies as necessary to execute her role properly.⁴ Her role and character are typical of the maidservants of the comedy of the Restoration period, but do not catch up with the impertinent maidservants of Molière's Comedy. She is different from Molière's maid-servants in that she is genuinely concerned about the injustice and suffering she has brought upon her mistress. This is clearly manifested in her painstaking efforts to prove her innocence. Such a thing is not to be expected from a maid-servant in

the tradition of Molière's maid-servants. This, probably, has to do with the English mentality in matters relating to service.

The other servants in the play are not involved in the main plot. Mincing, Mrs. Millamant's woman, is kept away from the stage right to the end of the play, where she takes a Bible-oath about what she has seen of Mrs. Marwood's debauchery with Mr. Fainall. It is not unlikely that Mincing's role has been deliberately subdued and refined not only to be in line with the chaste and refined role of Millamant, but also to accord and harmonize with the reputation and life-style of the actress, Anne Bracegirdle, who played the role of Millamant and who, unlike the majority of the Restoration actresses, was renowned for leading a strictly moral life. It is a well-established fact that some of the Restoration playwrights wrote comedies with leading roles particularly designed for certain actresses.

As it is the case with the majority of Restoration comedy, the representation of servants in this comedy is single-sided. It projects the stereotyped flaws of servants, with very few exceptions, and overlooks their problems and suffering.

The 'old' mode of Restoration comedy, or that of the comedy of manners proper, had one last disciple in William Burnaby. This playwright is highly critical of the pretentious society of London. He

is, in many respects, akin to Southerne in his sharp critical insight; but in Southerne's comedies the gentry and nobility are the ones who bear the brunt of his bitter criticism, whereas in Burnaby's comedies it is the bourgeoisie or the people who have newly risen to power and wealth who are his main target.

In his comedy The Reform'd Wife (1700), Burnaby does not seem to have been intimidated by the attacks of the social reformers. In this comedy we find a rich mixture of libertinism, debauchery, fashionableness, mannerisms, love intrigues, and a bit of romanticism. Unlike Cibber's Amanda, Burnaby's Astrea is the transgressor. This character might have been intended by Burnaby to stigmatise the ladies and slander their alleged inclination to free sexuality.

Sir Solomon Empty has "grown so important to himself,"⁵ that he becomes afraid that the cook or the butler may poison him. This is an entirely new idea as far as servants are concerned. The reason behind this paranoia may be related to political and partisan issues. Depending on the historical discourse, and the disastrous effect of unemployment or sacking of domestic servants, one can argue that some servants might have been, involuntarily, used in some criminal activities. One can also argue that fear of sacking and starvation was much more to blame than expectation of substantial rewards; add

to this element of feeling dehumanized and depersonalized, which could, in some cases, have made some servants develop an inclination and propensity for criminal pursuits.

Fidelia, Astrea's woman, is proud of being in the service of a lady. This, according to her, instructs her "in the Fashionable Mysteries of Lying, Hypocrisy, and Intrigue: so that half a Year Service,...shall teach a Woman to Cuckold her Husband with more dexterity, than ten Years practice."⁶ In fact, Fidelia does learn how to be always on full alert, and how to keep a watchful eye to protect her Mistress's honour, and how to let her pursuits pass undetected, for she is privy to her lady's intrigues. She is also highly flattering to her lady on every occasion, and ironically she constantly commends her lady's unblemished virtue.

This is typical of chambermaids, who ranked at the top of the hierarchy of female servants, and who had to follow certain prerequisites for this particular job. The portrait of maidservants in the comedy of the Restoration mentality seem to be a reflection of the image of maidservants in the contemporary literature, and the prejudiced attitude of the employer class towards these unfortunate people. Bridget Hill, in her Book Women, Work, and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England, says that the "majority of comments on servant-maids in diaries, journals, memoirs, and autobiographies give

the impression that female domestic servants were a body of totally unscrupulous, inefficient, immoral, unreliable, and dishonest women."⁷ The Restoration playwrights failed to show any better appraisal or understanding of the intricacies of human behaviour than ordinary people.

Cloe, Lady Dainty's woman, is witty and censorious about the fashionable pursuits of ladies and their ridiculous activities, like keeping themselves ill and sick, simply because it is unbecoming for a fashionable lady to be in good health. She says: "These Ladies make themselves Sick, to make themselves Business, and are well or ill, only in Ceremony to each other."⁸ Lady Dainty, who is the most delightful character in the play, is not happy about the new footman whom Lady Prayseall has recommended to her.⁹ This reflects one of the methods followed by employers to hire domestics.

In Burnaby's The Ladies Visiting Day (1701), the targets are the talkative and gossiping ladies of London fashionable society.

Supple, Sir Testy's man, is a good match for his master. His cynical wit is typical of servants in the comedies of all times, particularly those of antiquity. His description of what it takes to be a pimp is a good example.¹⁰ He goes further than lying and cheating and enters into an alliance with Fulvia's party against his master. This is not, by any means, a surprising twist or an uncommon

occurrence, particularly when servants join forces with young masters and mistresses to circumvent the old blockheaded masters who care for nothing but money and materialistic gains.

Lady Lovetoy hates to have English servants in her equipage: "as to servants, the Air of the World is agreeably alter'd, and it looks Magnificent to have some of every Nation in our Train; French Cooks, Swiss Porters, Italian Singers, Turkish Footmen, and Indian Pages."¹¹ This diversity in the source of domestics is historically true. J. Jean Hecht confirms that the servant class included "continental, Negroes from Africa and America, and Indians from Asia."¹²

There is an important point in Act IV Scene iii, in which Captain Strut, one of Fulvia's suitors, turns out to be a former footman to Polidore at the time of the revolution, presumably the Glorious Revolution of 1688 whose events resulted in the deposing of James II. So, one could assume that some footmen had been recruited as officers for William III's war with France, and had been disbanded after the Treaty of Ryswick. In fact, these disbanded officers provided ample comic material for playwrights.

In his comedies, Burnaby make conciliatory gesture to the steady progress towards the conservative morality of the bourgeoisie by granting the reformation of the immoral and perverse

characters at the end of the plays. This eventual reformation, unlike what we are going to see in the comedies of the sentimentalists, does not apply to the servant characters.

The situation in Richard Steele's The Funeral; or, Grief a-la-Mode (1701) is considerably different from the situation in the comedies which adopt the 'old' style of the comedy of manners proper. Here, although the comedy can be fairly seen as a mixture of some old elements and some new ones, yet it is a serious and genuine attempt at a new kind of drama. Most of the main characters are exemplary ones. Likewise, the steward Trusty is an exemplary character as well.

The relationship between Trusty and his master, Lord Brumpton, is an ideal one. The steward not only respects his master, but also is emotionally attached to him. When Lord Brumpton goes into a fit of unconsciousness, the company around him, including his hypocritical young wife, leave him, supposing that he is dead. Trusty tells him after he unexpectedly regains consciousness:

'Twas fondness Sir, and tender duty to you who
have been so Worthy, and so Just a Master to me,
made me stay near you; they left me so, and There
I found you wake from your Lethargick-slumber; on
which I will assume an Authority to beseech you,

Sir to make just use of your reviv'd Life, in seeing who are your True Friends¹³.

Trusty, whose name smacks of a new attitude towards the servant class, does all he can, with a spirit of honesty, to assist his master; not in pursuing debauchery or promiscuity, but in serious family affairs. His emotional attachment to Lord Brumpton and to his son Lord Hardy, who remembers that when he "was turn'd out of the House, he follow'd [him] to the Gate, and wept over [him],"¹⁴ represents a new type of relationship between masters and servants that introduces a representational problem as far as history is concerned. The relationship between masters and servants in the eighteenth century is a mixture of contractualization, detachment, insubordination, harshness, kindness, attachment, care, cruelty, chastisement, disappointment, appreciation, devotion, ingratitude, and self-interest. Yet, and depending on analysis, numbers, frequency of certain incidents, and the abundance of complaints and proposals for reining the servants in, this relationship was not a healthy one.¹⁵ The representational problem in the comedy of the sentimentalists stem from the fact that harmony and healthiness are established as recurrent characteristics in the relationship between masters and servants. Moreover, the reformed and, sometimes, drastically modified behaviour and mentality of

servants in the comedy of the sentimentalists does not reflect a similar or approximate development in real life. As a matter of fact, the servant class, in the eighteenth century, grew more self-interested and more aware of their rights as stated in their work contracts.

Scenes of sentimentality and emotionalism are rife in The Funeral, particularly when the nostalgic Trusty recalls the good old days when his master kissed him before great Lords and when the good lady, Lord Hardy's mother, used to treat him kindly.

The seriousness and unrelenting perseverance of Trusty, which actually makes the play come very close to a tragicomedy, is relatively counterbalanced by the highly amusing vividness and comic liveliness of Trim, Lord Hardy's servant. He provides the play with abundance of humour, which keeps our tears inside our eyeballs and exacts little smiles from our lips. Trim's relationship with his master is not void of emotions, but Trim's comic and out-going personality makes it less intimate than the relationship of Trusty and his master.

Tattleaid, Lady Brumpton's woman, effectively spies for her mistress, flatters her, and dissembles her true passions and feelings. Her mistress is not unaware of that. On the contrary, she knows how dishonest she is, and approves of it as a prerequisite for professionalism.¹⁶ Actually

Tattleaid's qualities are designed in such a way as to go harmoniously with those of her mistress.

One of the most interesting and most unprecedented categories of servants is the category represented by the servants employed by the undertaker Sable. These servants work as professional mourners in funerals. They get paid for mourning and for conducting all the requirements of a funeral. What is more interesting is that, probably, the more they impress by their performances the more wages they get.¹⁷

On the whole, servants in this play are made to behave in a way which serves the overall plan of the comedy, and enables the writer to direct the channels of the action and the ideas so that the result can be a proof and demonstration of his comparatively new dramatic formulae. On the sentimental level, one servant is very active and above all exemplary. On another level, some other servants, those who are in the service of the non-exemplary characters in the play, are made to look harmfully flattering and futile.

In Colley Cibber's The Careless Husband (1704), Sir Charles Easy commits the act of fornication with Mrs. Edging, Lady Easy's woman, yet he is not to be compared to the promiscuous husbands of the comedy of manners proper. He is intrinsically good and easily reclaimable. Lady Easy and Lord Lovemore are, to some extent, exemplary characters. Because of the

Steinkirk scene the play is called by some writers the first sentimental comedy, but eighteenth-century writers preferred to describe it as the first of the "genteel" comedies.¹⁸

As far as servants in this comedy are concerned, Mrs. Edging's affair with Sir Charles Easy is possibly unprecedented. Restoration libertines usually wench with fashionable ladies and mistresses, but not with maid-servants. Maid-servants usually get debauched by their male fellow-servants. The unrepresentational aspect in this comedy is the misleading treatment, by the playwright, of a real problem, which is the sexual abuse of maidservants by their male employers, with careless neglect to what such abuse caused in real life. Dismissal from service was one of the measures which some employers took to avoid the shame and responsibility of making their maidservants pregnant.¹⁹ As for sentimentalism in this comedy, Mrs. Edging is used cruelly by Cibber, particularly in the Steinkirk scene, to bring about the reformation of Sir Charles and promote the cause of virtue and sentimentalism.

It should be noted that in comedies like this one, which is not very far away from the sentimental comedy proper, the acquiescence and complaisance of the female characters contrast sharply with the defiant female characters in Aphra Behn and even in the sex comedy of the Restoration. The impudence of

servants in such comedies, those which contain complacent and compliant female characters, are usually gagged or at least toned down to make way for the homogeneity of the dramatic Gestalt.

In The Tender Husband; or, The Accomplish'd Fools (1705), Steele seems to have deviated, certainly temporarily, from sentimentalism. The reason which forced him to write this light-hearted comedy is believed to have been a financial one. It must be pointed out that Steele never mentioned the reason for writing this comedy. In this comedy we encounter, in general, "new renderings of Restoration stock figures."²⁰ The number of servants in the *Dramatis Personae* has here dwindled to one, and servants' tricks are not as intricate and complex as in Restoration comedy proper.

The greatest dramatist in the early years of the eighteenth century is George Farquhar. His most successful comedies, like many others produced in this period, exhibit the old-comedy new-comedy duality, as Hume puts it. Farquhar started his theatrical career by writing comedies which adopted the 'old' hard style of the comedy of manners proper. Later on, he chose to respond positively to the changing theatrical and moral climate. His comedy The Twin-Rivals (1702) proved to be too harsh to be popular, despite the fact that Farquhar "was trying to put the principles of Jeremy Collier into practice."²¹ So he had to find a more successful way

to popularity. The way turned out to be genial realism, as exhibited in The Recruiting Officer (1706).

As far as servants are concerned, Lucy, Melinda's maid, is the only servant mentioned by name in the *Dramatis Personae*. She is incredibly lively, effective, and contriving. She is typically fond of gifts and bribes.²² Her inclination to accept bribes makes her mistress reluctant to divulge secrets to her. Melinda also thinks that a secret would make a servant saucy.

With the relative demise of the Restoration sexual liberality came the re-emergence of the institutionalized and conventional ideas of marriage and family values. Hence came the difference between Lucy's utterance in this comedy, about marriage and the scarcity of men,²³ and those of some of her fellow maidservants in the Restoration comedy proper.

In The Beaux Stratagem (1707), Farquhar "mixes the cynical and the sentimental even more strikingly."²⁴ The sentimental element is clearly manifested in Aimwell's emotional unveiling of his trick on Dorinda: "I'm all a Lie, nor dare I give a Fiction to your Arms; I'm all Counterfeit except my Passion."²⁵ The basic changes in tone, plot development, and characterization made Hume consider the last two comedies, The Recruiting Officer and

The Beaux Stratagem as the finest examples of humane comedy.

Servants in this comedy provide a lot of humour and fun and are fundamentally good. Scrub, Mr. Sullen's servant, is an unreliable source of information, not because he is a liar, but because he is not good at obtaining information. He complains about the amount of work he does in the household:

Of a Monday, I drive the Coach; of a Tuesday, I drive the Plough; on Wednesday, I follow the Hounds; a Thursday, I dun the Tenants; on Friday, I go to Market; on Saturday, I draw Warrants; and a Sunday, I draw Beer.²⁶

This comedy, unlike the Restoration comedy proper, touches upon the daily worries of servants with plenty of realism.

Also in this comedy, Dorinda tells us that she has "known several footmen come down from London set up [in Lichfield] for Dancing-Masters, and carry off the best Fortunes in the Country."²⁷ This, of course, gives us the idea that the metropolitan servants are more versatile and crafty than their fellow-servants in the country. In the same scene, Archer talks about the stagnation of wages in the period. That is, probably, why Scrub tells Archer, in Act IV, Scene i, that he is ready to discover a

plot for one guinea. In such a situation, it is only money which really matters. Obviously, there are plenty of true representations of the domestic domain in this humane comedy.

As for the portrayal of servants in the comedies considered so far in this chapter, one could safely say that in the comedies which adopt the 'old' hard style of the Restoration or the comedy of manners proper, servants are still contriving, impudent, flattering, unscrupulous, imprudent, and fond of gifts. Their traditional vivacity, dynamism, and trickery are somewhat subdued to make way for stressing and highlighting the incredible dynamism, smartness, and manoeuvres of the heroes and heroines of the plays. The eroticisation of the language and life-styles of some of the domestics is part and parcel of a commercial and publicity stunt in which the playwrights and the management of the theatres made the most of the glamour, charisma, provocativeness, and seductiveness of the Restoration actresses. In the comedies which adopt the 'new' style of the genial and exemplary comedies, servants are very much less impudent, very much less unscrupulous, but still fond of money and gratuities. The relationship between the servants and their masters, in the genial and exemplary comedies, involves more respect on the side of the servant and more care and tolerance on the side of the master. In one way or another, the portrayal and

representation of the servants in the comedies examined in this chapter are integrated elements in the overall designs of those comedies. These elements are made by the writers to fit properly in the overall designs, and to provide a contributory factor in the philosophy and social thought of the comedies.

III. Servants in the Periodical Essay

One distinctive feature of the eighteenth century, as far as domestic service is concerned, is the fact that a great deal of non-dramatic literature which touches upon domestic service was produced. This is not surprising, because non-dramatic literature was mushrooming quite rapidly in the form of newspapers, prose works, and novels.

In the non-dramatic literature produced early in the eighteenth century, the servant class has a fair share of publicity. In Richard Steele's Tatler, which appeared thrice weekly from 12 April 1709, there are scattered pieces of writings and bits of information about some issues involving the employer class and the servant class. These writings seem to have been intended to publicize and support Steele's views and suggestions on how best the relationship between masters and servants could be redefined. His formula seems to recommend care and tolerance on the part of the employers, and honesty and obedience on the part of the servants. Needless to say that the

same formula is reflected in the comedy of Steele and the other sentimentalist writers.

A careful perusal of the material relating to domestic servants, in The Tatler and The Spectator, confirms the opinion that the differentiation between the complaints against the behaviour of servants and the suggestions for a solution to the problem is essential for a fuller understanding of the situation. The complaints reflect the realities of the situation, and the suggestions represent a formula for rectifying unhealthy situation.

The complaints do confirm the historical facts, in books and articles, dealing with this particular period. Servants persisted in their unlawful pursuits and unrelenting misbehaviour. Nevertheless, the literature of the day seems to have amplified their failings and shortcoming, and touch, lightly and nonchalantly, upon their problems and grievances as if they were a sub-human species. The misrepresentation of their relationship with their masters in the comedy of the sentimentalists, and the inadequate and prejudiced portraiture of their behavioural irregularities and mean nature, not only rendered these comedies unrepresentative of history, but also, probably intentionally, confirmed the status quo. The problems remained as they had been before, and the dynamics of class struggle continued to shape human relationships.

The main complaint against domestic servants in The Tatler is their impudent behaviour when they serve tolerant and indifferent masters.²⁸ Maidservants are attacked on the basis of being

so used to conform themselves in every Thing to the Humours and Passions of their Mistresses, that they sacrifice Superiority of Sense to Superiority of Condition, and are insensibly betrayed into the Passions and Prejudices of those whom they serve, without giving themselves Leave to consider, that they are extravagant and ridiculous.²⁹

Of course, the argument is not acceptable in the modern discourse. It introduces a prejudicial judgement, regardless of reasons and circumstances. This applies to the portrayal of domestics in some of the comedies of the period. Writers seem to be quick to condemn and more than slow to justify.

An author in No. 25 of The Tatler (Tuesday June 7, 1709) states that a generous and benevolent master is bound to have servants who would "act with affection to [him]..., and Satisfaction in themselves."³⁰ Of course, this is one argument about how best to manipulate domestics. There are many others which advocate using strict laws to curb the malpractices of servants.

In No. 180 (Saturday June 3, 1710) the writer mentions the abatement which tradesmen suffer through the extortion of upper servants when their bills are being paid, and in No. 210 (Saturday August 12, 1710) the author tells us about a visit he has made to a lady of quality, and relates the unhappy conditions her servants have to suffer because of her humours and demands.

The Tatler ran from April 1709 until the end of 1709 as a miscellany, but after that, and owing to Addison's advice, it became a single essay on more universal and more serious subjects, and came to be known as the 'periodical essay'. It continued to run until January 2, 1711, and totalled 271 numbers.

The Spectator started on Thursday March 1, 1711, and ran to a total of 555 numbers. The last number appeared on Saturday December 6, 1712. On Friday June 18, 1714, the first number of Addison's Supplementary Spectator appeared, a year and a half after the close of Steele's. The first copy of this paper was given the number 556, and the paper was issued three times a week. It ran until Monday December 20, 1714, when No. 635 concluded it.

The complaints against domestics in The Spectator are put forward in a more urgent tone and a more serious style. In No. 88 (Monday June 11, 1711) Steele, addressing Mr. Spectator, wonders why he has not yet touched upon "the general Corruptions of Manners in the Servants of Great Britain."³¹ He

goes on to say that he has resided in London or within twenty miles of it constantly for the last seven years. In this time, he continues: "I have contracted a numerous Acquaintance among the best Sort of People, and have hardly found one of them happy in their Servants."³² He goes on to say: "we cannot but observe, That there is no Part of the World where Servants have those Privileges and Advantages as in England."³³ Steele complains of the servants' negligence and carelessness, and attributes the robberies and losses which happen on high roads and in houses to them. He concludes his letter to Mr. Spectator by suggesting that "Masters may enter into Measures to reform them."³⁴

Mr. Spectator comments that he knows "no Evil which touches all Mankind so much as this of the Misbehaviour of Servants."³⁵ He also observes that the licentiousness which has recently prevailed among men-servants is attributable to the custom of Board-Wage which, he thinks, is sufficient to debauch the whole nation of servants. He tells us that servants, if they wait at taverns, eat after their masters, and save their wages for other occasions. They also imitate their masters' manners, and "assume in an humorous Way the Names and Titles of those whose Liveries they wear."³⁶ So they grow insolent and less respectful. Then Mr. Spectator mentions the entrance to Hyde Park, where lackeys and servants are let loose, and the side-boxes in

theatres, where footmen carry on amours in their masters' habits.

Surprisingly enough, Steele, whose comedies try to promote a kind of a relationship between masters and servants based on care, respect, honesty and obedience, puts forward a suggestion that masters should take measures to reform their servants. This can be understood as a contradiction, but it is possible that what Steele means by measures is nothing more than urging masters to be more generous and humane in their treatment of their servants. Another point is the deplorable fact that no writer or observer bothered to look deeper into the reasons behind the servants' corruption. This can be understood as a deliberate action on the part of writers and theorists to avoid antagonising the employing class, or to cover up their misdeeds against their servants. Steele himself seems to have been uneasy about condemning the servants and overlooking good things in them. That is why in No. 96 (Wednesday June 20, 1711) Steele, writing on behalf of servants, and posing as a servant called Thomas Trusty, blames Mr. Spectator for overlooking the good things in servants.

Steele relates to Mr. Spectator, writing in the first person as Thomas Trusty, that he is now forty-five, and works as a nobleman's porter after having started as a footboy at fourteen, that his luck has been very capricious, and that he has been wronged

by many masters, not because of his ill conduct, but because of the marriages and the ill pursuits of the people he has served. Towards the end of the letter, Thomas Trusty tells Mr. Spectator that all he means by relating the story of his life is to "shew you that we poor Servants, are not (what you called us too generally) all Rogues; but that we are what we are, according to the Example of our Superiours."³⁷ This letter represents an attitude by Steele which anticipates the good treatment of servants by masters in The Conscious Lovers.

Steele continues his discussion, in No. 107 (Tuesday July 3, 1711) to show how to achieve an ideal relationship between masters and servants. The reception and manner of attendance which Steele met with in the country seems to have confirmed him in the opinion, which he always had, that "the general Corruption of Manners in Servants is owing to the Conduct of Masters."³⁸ He also maintains, in the course of outlining the treatment of the fictional character, Sir Roger de Coverly, of his servants, that a man

who preserves a Respect, founded on his Benevolence to his Dependents, lives rather like a Prince than a Master in his Family; his Orders are received as Favours, rather than Duties, and the Distinction of approaching him, is part of

the Reward for executing what is commanded by him.³⁹

This is obviously the new approach which Steele and some of his contemporaries adopted in dealing with the country gentlemen. This is also totally different from the image of the country gentlemen which we find in the comedies of the Restoration playwrights who are principally urban-orientated. In short, Sir Roger's servants are always satisfied and contented, and they also had the chance of manumission and of having their own livelihood. By allowing this, on some occasions, Sir Roger encourages his servants to be very diligent and humble. Yet, households like Sir Roger's were very few. Steele regrets the fact that he has never seen, except in Sir Roger's family and one or two more, good servants being treated as they deserve. Sir Roger's household and estate are more or less a continuation of what had been prevalent in some households and estates in medieval times and under the feudal system.

One day earlier, Addison, who is the author of No. 106 (Monday July 2, 1711), had introduced a slightly different and rather cynical impression of Sir Roger and his habitation. This reflects Addison's belief that the gentry had already decayed and that the unpractical paternalistic and emotional conservatism which had characterised the

relationships in their households was already something of the past. Describing the situation in his Sir Roger's abode, Addison says:

as the Knight is the best Master in the world, he seldom changes his Servants; and as he is beloved by all about him, his Servants never care for leaving him: By this Means his Domesticks are all in Years, and grown old with their Master. You would take his Valet de Chambre for his Brother, his Butler is grey-headed, his Coachman has the Looks of a Privy-Councillor. You see the Goodness of the Master even in the old House-dog, and in a grey Pad that is kept in the Stable with great Care and Tenderness out of regard to his past Services, tho' he has been useless for several Years.⁴⁰

Obviously, Addison is less for emotional attachment and more for contractual bonds than Steele. Fielding and some others suggested retributory measures rather than tolerance for controlling domestics. In a letter to the editor of the Covent Garden Journal, Henry Fielding denounces "'the unjust Characters given of Servants; . . . who are moved out of one Station into another, and are admitted into Places of Trust according to their Recommendations'". He concludes his letter by declaring that "whoever acts in [his] Family in the Capacity of Servant shall,

when he or she leaves it, have the Character from [him] which their Behaviour intitles them to".⁴¹ Obviously, this letter implies that unruly and intractable servants should be punished by giving bad 'characters' of them.

In No. 137 (Tuesday August 7, 1711) Steele includes in his essay letters addressed to Mr. Spectator by servants who wish they were in the service of Sir Roger, whom they hold in great esteem. They also complain about their masters' and mistresses' treatment of them, and their bad qualities. The sketches these letters present of masters and mistresses contain a lot of humour. Steele maintains that it is not only "paying Wages and giving Commands, that constitutes a Master of a Family; but Prudence, equal Behaviour, with readiness to Protect and Cherish them, is what entitles a Man to that Character in their very Hearts and Sentiments."⁴² He also argues that fear does not lead anywhere, and does not create a good servant. In the same essay Steele includes letters from servants complaining about being plagued with patronizing people who are friends to their employers and with spies employed by masters to spy on their behalf on the other members of the household. It is worth noticing that the letter addressed to Mr. Spectator in which the petitioners complain about the mischievous spies is from domestics serving families within the cities of

London and Westminster. One would expect this business of spying to be rife and well-paid in the cities rather than in the country-side. Its importance to employers stems from the fact that the relationship between masters and servants is based not on trust and confidence but on a contractual basis which excludes emotional affinities.

The Guardian ran from Thursday March 12, 1713 to Thursday October 1, 1713, and totalled 175 numbers. It concentrates on the faults and immorality of servants, and has scanty information about domestic service in general. No. 87 (Saturday June 20, 1713) contains a silly but amusing story about a courtship between a maid and a footman. Reflecting upon this courtship, the author of this number talks about "the Low Part of the Town"⁴³ and their manners of communication through a coded language unintelligible to others. He remarks that the "common Face of Modesty is lost among the ordinary Part of the World, and the general Corruption of Manners is visible from the loss of all deference in the low People towards those of Condition."⁴⁴ He goes on to express his regret that masters' vices are transferred to servants because of their lack of that prudence which should prompt them to take care that inferiors know of none of their pleasure pursuits but the innocent ones. He also mentions that footmen practise everything, except writing songs, as well as their masters. Then he proceeds to

lay the blame on employers for the servants' corruption, which arises from the employers' negligence in their care of them. Accordingly, he recommends the practicality and effectiveness of fatherly care and conduct towards servants. He gives an example of how fatherly treatment of servants yields good results: "Lycurgus is a Man of that noble Disposition, that his domestics, in a Nation of the greatest Liberty, enjoy a Freedom known only to themselves, who live under his Roof." He tells us that kindness and fatherly care make every one of Lycurgus' domestics recommend himself "by appearing officious" so that he knows "the Merit of others under his Care". He also tells us that Lycurgus' generosity is so well managed that the fountain of his wealth "is not exhausted by the Channels from it, but its way cleared to run into new Meanders."⁴⁵ Again, the author of these remarks and moralizations chooses to ignore the fact that this disdainfully patronizing and deprecating way of looking down upon these less fortunate people, calling them "the Low Part of the Town" and the low people, is what generates in them this spirit of antagonism towards their employers, susceptibility to wrongdoing, and aggressive self-interestedness.

Later in the century, Jonathan Swift wrote his unfinished treatise, Directions to Servants, which was printed in 1745, the year Swift died. He started working on this treatise long before that date,

roughly the early thirties. According to the publisher's preface, the author's design was "to expose the Villainies and Frauds of Servants to their Masters and Mistresses."⁴⁶ The publisher, George Faulkner, who published this work in 1745, also observes that if "Gentlemen would seriously consider this Work, which is written for their Instruction, (although ironically) it would make them better OEconomists, and preserve their Estates and Families from Ruin."⁴⁷

Swift's directions extend to all servants in general, and in particular to the butler, the cook, the footman, the coachman, the groom, the house-steward and the land-steward, the porter, the dairy-maid, the chamber-maid, the nurse, the laundress, the house-keeper, and the governess or tutoress. He gives hundreds of directions, mostly in a humorous way, teaching servants how to find good excuses for all faults on all occasions. He also acquaints them with how to grow into favour with their masters and mistresses, how to make money out of deals or purchases, how to make the best use of opportunities whenever they arise, how to get around the problem of breaking the china and the drinking vessels, how to find a good pretext for a fellow-servant who comes home drunk at night, how to treat guests, how to make good use of a wrongful accusation by a master or a mistress, how best to enjoy the time without being detected by employers, and many other

directions. After that he goes on to give specific directions to each type of servant individually, telling them how to escape the punishment of employers and how to economize in the conducting of their duties and offices. There is a great deal of creativity, humour, and irony in these directions. There is also a measure of professional knowledge of domestic service. In his directions to the cook, Swift mentions that keeping French men cooks was still in fashion among people of quality, but because his treatise is addressed or designed for the benefit of all classes of society, he refers to the cook as a woman. On the whole, this treatise is valuable not only as a document which exposes the misconduct of servants, but also as an account of what domestic life was like in the eighteenth century, and how kitchens, houses, bedrooms, estates, and stables were maintained and organized. It is, in fact, a reflection of a large segment of life in that period.

This is what domestic service and the relatively self-contradictory feelings towards servants, and the skeptical suggestions regarding the way the problem of the servants' corruption should be addressed, looked like. Scepticism is manifested in the English writers' uneasiness about the way servants behaved in the households of the tolerant and indulgent French employers, and their simultaneous recommendation of care and kindness on

the part of English employers to reform wily domestics. It is also evident in the English writers' deprecatory and disdainfully prejudicial attitude towards servants.

IV. Comedies with Sentimental Elements

Now I can go back to investigating how domestics were portrayed in the comedy of the time, in relation to classical comedies and historical realities, from the second decade of the eighteenth century until 1737, when the Licencing Act curbed theatrical productions for a while.

In his book Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding, John Loftis maintains that in this period "comedy and society underwent parallel and related changes."⁴⁸ He also observes that the "dramatists are intensely preoccupied with the contemporary scene, and above all with social relationships exacerbated by the increase in the wealth of businessmen."⁴⁹ These businessmen and merchants had undoubtedly been the major contributors to the wealth, prosperity and supremacy of England for almost two centuries already, but it was only in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries that "the traditional disdain for merchants"⁵⁰ was largely suppressed. "The incongruity of the merchants' prominence in the nation's economy compared with the subordinate role to which they had long been assigned provided a tension that dominates

the social relationships of comedy."⁵¹ As we have already seen, during the first years of the eighteenth century, comedies continued in the vein of the Restoration tradition, and Restoration stereotypes survived. After 1710, and notably after the debates which preceded the Treaty of Utrecht,

the better dramatists reversed their judgements, openly espousing the claims of the merchants, whereas the obscure dramatists continued to rely on the older satirical patterns. And after 1728, when political debate entered drama with The Beggar's Opera, the older character stereotypes and accompanying satirical judgements either disappeared or were radically altered.⁵²

This new attitude towards merchants is clear in Susannah Centlivre's comedy The Busy Body (1709) in a subtle way, and social barriers seem to be disappearing or at least getting blurred in this comedy. This is, of course, an indication of a change in social classification.

This comedy is also an offspring of the classical tradition, where young lovers are handicapped in getting their wishes fulfilled by the obstinacy, meanness, avarice and materialistic considerations of their fathers. The difference between this comedy and the classical comedies is that women here are effective, intelligent, scheming

and creative. Nevertheless, their creativity and manoeuvres do not drastically disturb the reigning male-oriented views of women and the approved social conduct. Centlivre's compromise in this comedy, and in some others, came as a result of her failure to develop and popularise the more daring and unconventional views which she expressed in her earlier play The Perjur'd Husband. Genuine disturbance of the conventional code of conduct seemed to have been a very risky business. Margaret Cavendish, who is probably the only feminist playwright of the period, was forced by the overwhelming power of the patriarchy and traditionalism to confine herself to closet dramas.

As for the role of the domestic servants in this comedy, Patch, Isabinda's woman, is equivalent, with less subtlety, to the top-ranking scheming slaves of the classical comedy. She is clever, contriving and ever resourceful. She naturally sides with the afflicted lovers to outsmart and circumvent their elders. Talking to Miranda in Act I, she expresses her disapproval of Sir Jealous' unbearable and retrogressive views on women:

Oh, madam, it's his living so long in Spain; he vows he'll spend half his estate but he'll be a parliament man, on purpose to bring in a bill for women to wear veils, and other Spanish odious customs. He swears it is the height of

impudence to have a woman seen barefaced even at church, and scarce believes there's a true begotten child in the city.⁵³

Her tactics to help her mistress are classical, typical and efficient.⁵⁴ It is worth noticing here the influence of the Arab custom of wearing veils on Spanish social life, which in turn was reflected in the English comedies of the time through the merchant character who traded and sometimes resided in Spain. This must have provided the women playwrights of the time with ample material, usable to criticize and condemn men's treatment of women. The plot is advanced by the devices of Patch and by the funny blunders of Marplot, who is reminiscent of the blunderer in Molière's comedy L'Etourdi, and also by the contributions of Whisper and Mrs. Scentwell, Miranda's woman.

The feminist tendency in this play is manifest in the fact that the heroines are more practical and less romantic than the heroes. There is also a good deal of criticism of male chauvinism and patriarchy as represented by Sir Jealous' views on women. Servants here are ahead of their young masters in trying to circumvent the injustice and cruelty of traditions and to disturb the status quo.

The older satirical patterns which the less prominent dramatists adopted after the first decade of the eighteenth century are clearly evident in

Charles Shadwell's comedy The Fair Quaker of Deal; or, the Humours of the Navy (1710). This comedy is a satire, not only on the corruption of the navy staff, but also on the degradation of manners in Deal and London, and on the corruption of religious figures represented by Scruple.

As for the servants' role in this comedy, it is clear that the servants are not participants in the tricks and intrigues which constitute the well-wrought plot of the play. The role of the maidservants is here reduced to mere commenting on the behaviour of their mistresses: Advocate, for example, has much to say about the behaviour of her mistress Belinda. In this comedy, the survival of the Restoration stereotypes is perfectly clear. You feel as if the navy and Deal were substitutes for the court of Charles II and the rendezvous places in and around London. The main source of information about domestics, from which a bit of knowledge can be gleaned, is the conversations between Belinda and her maid Advocate. Typical of maidservants who usually prove to be more practical in matters concerning marriage than their coquettish and fashionable mistresses, Advocate warns her mistress against playing with Rovewell as a cat plays with a mouse.⁵⁵ Belinda reiterates the inherited distrust and suspicion of mistresses about their chambermaids: "Why should we make such unfaithful creatures as our chamber-maids our confidants."⁵⁶

Arabella's maid is an ordinary sort of maid, obedient and uninterested in love intrigues. She tells Arabella: "I'm wholly disposed to follow whatever your commands are pleased to lay upon me."⁵⁷ This is probably because Arabella is of a strong character and determination, made stronger by eschewing female vanities and affectations.

There is a touch of sentimentalism in this comedy, manifested in Worthy's attitude towards the corruption of Flip and Mizen, and his freeing them from their disastrous marriages with Jiltup and Jenny Private who are both whores. It is quite obvious here that the servants' unruliness is kept in check to make way for the plausible exit to the repentance scene, and to ensure the collective contribution of the various elements of the play to the ultimate message.

Susannah Centlivre's The Wonder; or, A Woman Keeps a Secret (1713) belongs to the species of comedies in which heroines fight, plot, and contrive to free themselves from the injustices of their guardians or fathers, helped by enlightened and chivalric gentlemen. Susannah Centlivre's advocacy of the merchants' dignity, gallantry and accomplishment is here developed further. Merchants here are represented by the socially accomplished Frederick, who is an intimate friend and confidant of the hero Don Felix. The setting of the comedy is Lisbon in Portugal, and the English characters are

there for trading, particularly Frederick, who is loved by the Portuguese grandees.

As regards the servants in this play, Centlivre's position on this is reminiscent of Aphra Behn's treatment of them. Many of Behn's comedies are set in countries overseas, most notably Spain, and her Dons and Donnas have servants in the same way as those of Centlivre. It seems to me that Behn and Centlivre found out that campaigning at home was sometimes quite hard so they went overseas. This could have been intended by the two playwrights as a tactic to pre-empt disapproving reactions, and a round-about-way of satirising negative conventions and highlighting, by contrast and comparison, the positive ones. In The Wonder, there are five male and female servants, not to mention the unnamed ones. As is the case with Behn's comedies, servants provide a lively and vivid atmosphere in Centlivre's comedies. One of the most notable servants in this comedy is Gibby, who is Scottish and in the service of the Scottish Colonel Briton. It is now clear, since we have encountered characters like Gibby in other comedies, Lolpoop in The Squire of Alsatia, in the previous chapter, that such characters are employed by playwrights to supply their plays with humour and comedy. Their simplicity, naivety, honesty, single-mindedness, dress, and particularly their accent are the main elements which are used by playwrights for comic purposes. Gibby is good for

nothing. He is so useless and blundering that he not only proves to be of no help to his master Colonel Briton in his mysterious affair with the veiled lady, Donna Isabella, but also puts him in great trouble by his negligence, clumsiness, and inaccurate information. His master does not seem to be sophisticated enough to employ a better servant. On many occasions, he proves to be not very much cleverer than his footman. He has failed more than once to tell a maid from a mistress. This could be not only because Colonel Briton is not sharp or smart, but also because he is not familiar with the costumes and dresses of Portugal, or (although this is less likely) because the dresses of maidservants are so neat and elegant that it is difficult to tell the maid from her mistress if one looks only at the outer appearance. It is true that domestic servants in eighteenth-century England were often well-dressed. Their standard of dress differed from one place to another, and from the city to the country, and it depended on how rich the employer was, and on whether he belonged to the nobility, the gentry, or the new bourgeoisie. But this play is set in Portugal, and one can hardly take it as evidence on how British servants dressed in the early eighteenth century - especially as Gibby's master insists, "for the honour of Scotland,"⁵⁸ that all his servants and footmen should wear his national dress.

Gibby's blunders occasion cruel and inhumane treatment of Gibby, not only by his single-minded master, but also by Don Felix. Outraged at the mentioning of his beloved lady's name, Don Felix kicks Gibby and swears at him, threatening further action if his master does not justify him. To this Colonel Briton answers surprisingly and untypically: "I answer for nobody's lies but my own; if you please kick him again."⁵⁹

It is evident again that servants who were of Scottish origin were more exposed to beating and abuse more than their English fellow-servants. This could have been a result of a traditional attitude on the part of the English towards the neighbouring peoples, based on a sense of superiority. Another reason might have been, as I have mentioned in the previous chapter, the absence of parents and guardians who could have protected those unfortunate servants.

Obviously, the classical element in this comedy is manifested in the paternal authority over the younger generation. That authority is the power which blocks the happiness of the young, not only because of financial considerations but also for religious reasons. Young characters here, particularly the female ones, are highly resourceful and contriving. The male and female servants, either through blundering as is the case with Gibby, or through invention and contrivance as is the case

with Flora, contribute substantially to the comic elements in the play and to the development of the plot.

As for party politics, which as John Loftis points out "had little discernible impact on the social themes of comedy"⁶⁰ in William III's reign and in the earlier years of Queen Anne's, there is nothing in The Wonder, apart from support for the merchant's cause, which could be seen as based on or occasioned by party affiliation. It was not until "the political debates preliminary to the Treaty of Utrecht that political rivalry was clearly and emphatically expressed by official propagandists in terms of the central social rivalry in comedy, that between gentry and merchant."⁶¹

In Charles Johnson's The Country Lasses; or, The Custom of the Manor (1715), party politics become more apparent. In the prologue of this comedy, there is an allusion to dramatists who affront the city with their hackneyed and trite jests. Yet the comedy is set not in the city but in the countryside. There is also some satire at the expense of the stock-jobbers, who were denounced not only by the Tory party but also by the Whig party, which distinguished them from the merchants whose cause it vehemently supported.⁶²

Domestic servants in this comedy, particularly Timothy Shacklefigure who is Sir John English's steward and the top ranking domestic, are highly

amusing. Timothy is uniquely delightful, especially in his formal fashion of answering his master's questions and inquiries and in conducting his duty. Sir John, fed up with his dull rhetoric and boring politeness, calls him a "confounded multiplication puppy".⁶³ Amusingly, Timothy's cool-bloodedness and punctiliousness reaches its climax in Act III, Scene ii, when Vulture holds a pistol to his head threatening that he will shoot him if he does not part with the money he has on him.⁶⁴ Timothy responds: "Really I never part with money without a receipt."⁶⁵ Describing Timothy as he approaches him and his friend, Heartwell says: "What solemn piece of formality, what man of wires is this, that moves towards us? He stirs by clock-work, like St. Dunstan's giants; he prepares to open his mouth; as if he could not speak without an order of court."⁶⁶ We can imagine how funny and amusing such a character would look on the stage if played by an able actor. There should be no doubt that Henry Norris, who played Timothy in the first performance, must have delighted the audience by his acting. Depending on the information available about him in the Dictionary of National Biography, one comes to know that his fame as a good actor had already been established when in, 1699, he played Dicky in Farquhar's The Constant Couple; or a Trip to the Jubilee. His remarkable success in this role made the name Jubilee Dicky stick to him. Together with

Timothy, the Butler Doublejugg enriches the play with comedy though they appear in a few scenes only.

Needless to say that this comedy falls within this group of comedies which depict the traditional gentry as being already decayed and antiquated. It also falls in line with Addison's views and attitude towards the fictional country gentleman, Sir Roger, in whose household everything, including the domestics and the house-dog, is 'in years'. In this class of comedy, the representation of some of the domestic servants has got a lot of truth in it, particularly when compared with the new updated image of the servants of merchants. Historical evidence of domestics who spent long years of service in the same household is available, but those cases were the exception rather than the rule.⁶⁷

The servants' role in the intrigues of the play is non-existent, probably because the writer thought that using wily servants in the plot would wreck the sentimental reconciliations in the play. The sentimental elements in the play are quite obvious. They are manifest in the reclamation of Modely, and in the process of reconciliation between Lurcher and Sir John in the exposition scene. Heartwell concludes the play as follows: "There is no real lasting good but in virtue, and ... great happiness below consists, however libertines and half-wits may affect to ridicule it, in honourable love."⁶⁸ It is

clear that Charles Johnson's sentimentalism is strongly attached to the glamorization of virtue. This is exactly how sentimentalism started to appear in the comedies produced in the late seventeenth century and the early eighteenth. It was to develop into the aggrandizing of the merchant character in later works. The peculiarity of humour in sentimental comedies is usually helpful in counterbalancing the tragi-comedy of the other elements in them. It is also a substitute for the impudent and indecent humour of domestics in non-sentimental comedies, particularly sex comedies.

Sir George Truman's household, in Joseph Addison's comedy The Drummer; or, The Haunted House (1716), is full of domestics; and the top ranking domestic, the steward Vellum, is, as is the case with the steward Timothy Shacklefigure, in The Country Lasses, a unique fellow. The other domestics, the butler, the coachman, and the gardener, tell us that, unlike them, Vellum is a man learned in Latin. In fact, by contrast, Vellum's brilliance becomes more prominent. The other domestics are illiterate, superstitious and funny, particularly when they converse about how awful the harm which the ghost might inflict upon them could be.⁶⁹ Vellum in this comedy is very much like a director of the household. His relationship with his master, Sir George, who was thought to have died in the last campaign with France, but is still alive,

is very close and confidential indeed. Such a relationship is more credible, in terms of history and logic, than a similar relationship in a comedy with a mercantile household. Long service is much more likely to generate such a relationship rather than the yearly contracts, then overwhelmingly in fashion. There is also a case here for arguing that in comedies set in the country-side and particularly in the households of the gentry, house-stewards are portrayed as being out of touch with the new realities around them. Their masters' households are their sanctuaries, and their amusing peculiarities are nostalgic relics of the decaying culture of the gentry.

Mrs. Abigail, Lady Truman's woman, though vivid, impudent, and active, is not as subtle as Molière's chambermaids in ensuring a safe conclusion to her tricks and intrigues. Arguably, Joseph Addison could have deliberately made her in this fashion so as to make her fit properly in the overall design of the plot where she performs funny but harmless frolics, which enrich the play with comedy without disturbing the harmony of the Gestalt.

Servants here conform to the chaste tone of the play, and refine their language. Apart from Mrs. Abigail, who is brought into line in the end, all the servants are obedient, respectful, and appreciative of their master's past kindness to them. This is what makes Sir George, having

overheard them talking favourably and nostalgically about their past life with him, announce: "I protest these Fellows melt me! I think the Time long till I am their Master again, that I may be kind to them."⁷⁰ Sir George is here reminiscent of Sir Roger whom Addison and Steele created in the Tatler and The Spectator.

Rewarding the deserving is not confined to comedies written in the sentimental vein. In comedies written in the old satirical style of the Restoration sex comedy, the deserving are rewarded, but in a less indulgent manner, with no consideration to emotional or sentimental reformation. In Three Hours after Marriage (1717) - written collectively by John Gay, Alexander Pope, and John Arbuthnot - Dr. Fossile, the old physician, is rewarded for his nerve-racking three-hour marriage by having a child bestowed upon him by an anonymous sailor. Mrs. Phoebe Clinket is rewarded for her obsession with play-writing by witnessing an amazingly eventful three-hour marriage suitable for a comedy. Lieutenant Bengal, who has been away in the Indies and has just returned from there, is rewarded by getting his wife, Mrs. Townley, back.

This farcical comedy, which is more a dramatic satire than a burlesque comedy, contains attacks on many literary and personal enemies of the authors. Sir Tremendous, for example, represents John Dennis, and Fossile is a caricature of one Doctor Woodward.

Unlike the comedies of Susannah Centlivre and Joseph Addison, this comedy contains jibes at the merchant class. In the letter sent by Madam Wyburn to Mrs. Townley and intercepted by Fossile, there is an allusion to the indecency of the merchants' wives and the corruption of manners at that end of the town where merchants and their families live.

As for domestics in this play, Sarsnet, Mrs. Townley's maid, is a typical sibling of the maids of the fashionable and amorous ladies of the Restoration comedy proper or sex comedy. She assists her mistress in her sexual pursuits and frolics, but in the concoction and designing of intrigues Mrs. Townley is the real professional. Sarsnet's help is mainly in keeping a watchful eye on the moves and activities of the duped Dr. Fossile, so that they can prevent him from detecting the influx of gallants to Mrs. Townley's house.

In reading this comedy, and all the Restoration sex comedies, one thing baffled me by its absence. It is the possibility, in real life, that the relative sexual freedom of the Restoration age must have allowed for incidents of sexual relationships between the wives of the pleasure-pursuing masters of the households and the male-servants in the same households. It seems to me, judging from the objection of the censors and guardians of morals to Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's* fornication with the game-keeper about two hundred and fifty years on,

that revealing such incidents in any form imaginable was beyond the wildest imagination. There must have been a particular sensitivity to such things. In contrast, Arabian Nights' tales are all occasioned by the fornication of King Shahryar's wife with Saeed, 'the blackamoor'.⁷¹

Servants' weakness towards the temptation of money, and their readiness to betray their masters is depicted here. Such depiction is more akin to reality here than in the sentimental comedies. History has it that the insubordinate spirit of servants, in the eighteenth century, made their malpractices worse. They betrayed their masters by stealing provisions, padding "the tradesmen's bills to increase commissions," and neglected the guests who "failed to give generously."⁷² Hugh's remedy for his ailing conscience is, remarkably enough, original and funny. Soliloquizing as he prepares to betray his master, he says: "I have betray'd my mistress. My conscience flies in my face, and I can ease it no way but betraying my master."⁷³

Prue, Mrs. Phoebe Clinket's maid, is not in an enviable position. She has to put up with the idiosyncrasies and oddities of her mistress, who is morbidly obsessed with writing plays, exactly in the same way in which some maidservants in Restoration comedy put up with the peculiar and odd activities of their demanding and finicky mistresses.⁷⁴

On the whole, Three Hours after Marriage is a serious critique of the stage written in the vein of the Restoration comedy which was being supplanted by the more refined and the more audience-orientated comedies of sentiment. That is probably why, after its first staging for seven consecutive nights in 1717, Three Hours after Marriage went into oblivion for twenty years.

The politics of The Beggar's Opera and Pasquin were preceded by different politics in Colley Cibber's comedy The Non-Juror (1717), based on Molière's Tartuffe. Here the playwright is discrediting not the government but the non-jurors, who refused to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary after the Glorious Revolution of 1688. He tries to present the non-juror, Doctor Wolf, as a hypocrite, an opportunist and an impostor. He also tries to expose the falsity of the non-jurors' religion and beliefs, and the danger of allowing them to prevail on simple minds like that of Sir John Woodvil.

Charles, Doctor Wolf's servant, is not an ordinary servant. He himself is an earlier victim of Doctor Wolf. He tells Maria, Sir John's daughter, that he "was not born to serve; and had not an unfortunate Education ruin'd [him], might have now appear'd like what [he was] by birth, a gentleman."⁷⁵ Historical information tells us about servants who were recruited as officers in private regiments, and Charles' case, though contrary to

what we know of, is not impossible at all. In fact, fear of punishment is likely to have driven many people into hiding and disguise.

It is quite clear here that the nature of the subject does not allow for the frolics and the fun of the servants. In other words, this comedy is one of those comedies which tackle subjects that have political dimensions, and in which the comic role of domestics is substantially gagged to ward off the trivialisation of the theme. The comic relief in such comedies is usually provided through revelations of double-standards, hypocrisy, and falsehood.

In Susannah Centlivre's comedy A Bold Stroke for a Wife (1718), the sympathetic portrayal of merchants is evident in her treatment of Freeman. She also makes a distinction between the merchants and the stockjobbers, who are satirically portrayed in this comedy. The heroine of this comedy, like all the other heroines in her comedies, is won through stratagem and intrigues. This is done not by the servants but by Colonel Feignwell and his friend Freeman and some other characters.

Betty, Anne Lovely's maid, is not a participant in the tricks, and the other servants are background figures. There is also, in Act II, an allusion to the fact that fashionable gentlemen, like Sir Philip Modelove, employ servants whose names indicate their French origin. The names are Pierre, Jacques, and

Renno. This is a reflection of the fact, as I have mentioned earlier, that in real life, domestics did include men from France and other parts of the continent during the eighteenth century.

V. The Sentimental Comedy Proper

The defence of the right of the merchant class to a higher place in social esteem came to its peak with the performance of Steele's sentimental comedy The Conscious Lovers in 1722. Mr. Sealand, Indiana's and Lucinda's father, talking to Sir John Bevil, who seems to have taken him for a cit, says:

we Merchants are a Species of Gentry, that have grown into the World this last Century, and are as Honourable, and almost as useful, as you landed Folks, that have always thought your selves so much above us; For your trading, forsooth! is extended no farther, than a Load of Hay, or a fat Ox ---⁷⁶

On the political or partisan level, The Conscious Lovers reflects the controversies of the Whig propagandists, which were part of the partisan debates of Queen Anne's last years, "for Steele had already planned [his comedy] before the queen died."⁷⁷ This comedy also initiated a large volume of contemporary commentary from many critics, hostile and sympathetic, for it "embodies a theory

of comedy evolved in protest against the comedy of the Restoration tradition."⁷⁸ Steele was viewed by hostile critics as having violated "the neoclassical doctrine of kinds by introducing into comedy pathetic incidents and characters intended to arouse admiration."⁷⁹ In defence of Bevil Junior's evading the quarrel with his friend Myrtle, and of the case of Mr. Sealand and his daughter Indiana - considered by some critics to be improper subjects of comedy - Steele declares in the preface to The Conscious Lovers that:

anything that has its Foundation in Happiness and Success, must be allow'd to be the Object of Comedy, and sure it must be an Improvement of it, to introduce a Joy too exquisite for Laughter, that can have no Spring but in Delight.⁸⁰

Steele, like Addison and Jeremy Collier, associated laughter with a feeling of superiority and selfish contempt for the person provoking it. This approach to laughter is a Hobbesian one in the sense that Hobbes always distrusted the motives of human conduct. These views, together with the other elements of Steele's comic theory embodied in The Conscious Lovers, such as the employment of emotions of sympathy and the self-conscious avoidance of

licentious dialogue, stirred up an unprecedented critical controversy.

John Dennis was one of the main opponents of Steele's comic theory. In his Remarks on a Play, Call'd, The Conscious Lovers, A Comedy (1723), he systematically attacked the improbability of the incidents of the play. In his remarks on the preface to the play, Dennis suggests that the only entertaining scene in the play is the "Catastrophe." What he implies here is that any deviation from the classical rules of dramatic composition results in utter failure. He also believes that Steele owes his success in the "Catastrophe" to Terence, from whose Andria The Conscious Lovers is adapted.

In comparison with Dennis's A Defence of Sir Fopling Flutter, Benjamin Victor's defence of The Conscious Lovers is according to John Loftis "a lame performance."⁸¹ In addition to Victor's defence of The Conscious Lovers, there were many other defences in the form of pamphlets or journals which approved Steele's use of exemplary characters and the relations of the Bevils in his comedy.

Despite Dennis's blistering criticism of the play, it enjoyed a good reputation in the second half of the eighteenth century. This was, of course, due to the predominance of sentimental values in the theatre and the appeal which the questioning of class barriers must have made to the middle-classes.

In such a play, where the purpose is the promotion of moral didacticism and exemplary conduct, the role of the domestic servants has to be so big that they provide the play with comic episodes, which counterbalance the tragic and serious elements involved. Nevertheless, the relationship between the masters and the servants here, particularly between Sir John Bevil and Humphry, is saturated with sentimental touches reflecting the tolerant and fatherly behaviour of the masters to their servants, and the gratitude and emotional respect of the servants to their masters. This is by no means unprecedented. We have already encountered such situations in earlier sentimental or genteel comedies.

In view of the fact that the eighteenth century was no golden age of service, once again, one has to say that the relationship between Mr. Sealand, the Merchant, and his servant is not a representation of the reality of domestic service in the eighteenth century. It is a political attempt by Steele to equate the gentry and the merchant class. The mercantile mentality and the contractual nature of the bond between employers and employees, allow for very little emotion, if any, in this relationship. All new developments in the century, like the ample availability of employment, the new dynamism of the English society, the growing insubordination and self-interestedness of domestics, the new attitude

towards the gentry and their decaying order, and the historical evidence which refers to incidents of suicides and incidents of emigration to America, the growing numbers of servants in the households of the bourgeoisie which usually allow for less order and discipline, the small wages, the huge contrast between the lives of masters and their servants, the incidents of physical and sexual abuse, and the shorter periods of service (compared to the feudal order), leaves very limited space to accept that kind of relationship between masters and servants as portrayed in sentimental comedies. As a matter of fact, this portrayal must have done more harm than good to the suffering of the servants in that century. It must have falsified their conditions by depicting their life as comfortable and pleasant.

The relationship between Sir John and Humphry is less incredible since it is a continuation of an old order which had its different circumstances. Nevertheless, the historical information refer to incidents of suicide as far back as the early years of the sixteenth century, and incidents of abuse in the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries.⁸²

Unlike servants in the Restoration comedies who used to complain of serving single gentlemen, Tom takes pride and feels privileged in serving a single gentleman. Boasting of his prerogatives before Humphry, he says: "Sir, we Servants of Single Gentlemen are another kind of people than you

domestic ordinary Drudges that do Business: We are rais'd above you: The Pleasures of Board-Wages, Tavern-Dinners, and many a clear Gain; Vails, alas! you never heard or dreamt of."⁸³ This brings back to the mind Mr. Spectator's comment, on Steele's complaint about the corruption of servants in June 1711, in which he attributed the licentiousness of servants to the custom of board-wages.

Humphry imputes Tom's rudeness and impatience to the gentleness of his master in training him into proper obedience, but Tom tells Humphry that the world has changed and that his master "scorns to strike his Servants."⁸⁴ Describing the world as it used to be, when Humphry and his master were still young, Tom says:

You talk as if the World was now, just as it was when my old Master and you were in Youth --- when you went to dinner because it was so much a Clock, when the great Blow was given in the Hall at the Pantrey-door, and all the Family came out of their Holes in such strange Dresses and formal Faces as you see in the Picture in our long Gallery in the Country.⁸⁵

Humphry falls upon Tom, with an air of ethical dogmatism: "Sirrah, who do you prate after? Despising Men of Sacred Characters! I hope you never heard my good young Master talk so like a

Profligate."⁸⁶ The argument goes on between Tom who represents the modern generation of domestics and Humphry who represents the old generation of domestics, each disapproving of the other's views. Then Tom gives us detailed account of the domestics of his time:

Lacquies are the Men of Pleasure of the Age; the Top-Gamesters; and many a lac'd Coat about Town have had their Education in our Party-colour'd Regiment --- We are false Lovers; have a Taste of Musick, Poetry, Billet-doux, Dress, Politicks; ruin Damsels; and when we are weary of this lewd Town, and have a mind to take up, whip into our Masters Wigs and Linnen, and marry Fortunes.⁸⁷

To support his statements, he asks Humphry to go into the Painted Chambers, in which servants of Members of Parliament waited, and in the meantime adopted their masters' names, and to come down to the Court of Request, which was a room in the old Palace of Westminster, to see how privileged his fellow-servants are. When their conversation turns on their masters' affairs, Tom boasts of his wantonness with Phillis, Lucinda's maid, which Humphry, of course, condemns. But Tom, despite all that, sounds genuinely concerned about his master's affairs out of an obligation based on friendship,

not on a contractual basis as was the case in fact in the eighteenth century. It should be mentioned that conditions of service varied from one place to another depending on wealth, social status and disposition. There were some conditions which enabled servants to treat themselves to a good deal of recreation.⁸⁸

Steele and Addison made it clear in the Tatler and the Spectator, through the character of Sir Roger - which they created partly to promote their notions of how best to treat servants and control them - that tolerance, indulgence and trust are the only effective means to control servants and make them loyal and faithful.

The classical element in this comedy is this clash of generations between parents and their children. The servants' allegiance is, typically enough, to the younger generation, who are after nothing but their beloved ones, and who, unlike their avaricious parents, have no esteem for money or estates. The lovers win the battle in the end, not by aggressive measures against their elders, but through tolerance, obedience, a bit of trickery and, most important of all, fortunate discoveries. The servants are not unscrupulously indifferent to honesty or good conduct. Their speeches, unlike some speeches in classical comedy, are far from obscene or immoral. All this was done deliberately by Steele to fit in with the mood of sensibility and with the

overall design of the play, which is the promotion of his reformist gospel.

This reformist gospel is not alien to Colley Cibber's comedies. He always showed a particular interest in married life. In his last comedy, The Provok'd Husband (1728), which is a completion of Vanbrugh's fragment "A Journey to London", he does exactly that by preserving Lady Townly's chastity, and by bringing about her sentimental reformation. According to what Cibber could gather, Sir John Vanbrugh intended in the "Catastrophe" to make Lord Townly turn her out of his doors, but Cibber thought that such "violent Measures, however just they might be in real Life, were too severe for Comedy."⁸⁹ His concern for the welfare of married life is clearly proclaimed in his address to the Queen. He tells her that the design of his play is "chiefly to expose, and reform the licentious Irregularities that, too often break in upon the Peace and Happiness of the married State."⁹⁰ To make his comedy more palatable to the growing taste for more refined language and more decorous humour on the stage, he left out a scene or two of the lower humour after the first day's presentation, and also cleaned up the dialogue in a few places. But the uncommitted and easy-going Cibber could not write an entirely moral play. He did not entirely leave out Vanbrugh's bawdy humour.

As for the domestics in the play, John Moody, Sir Francis Wronghead's servant, is made more

clownish in Cibber's play, but his honesty is clearly emphasized. James, who is servant to Uncle Richard in Vanbrugh's fragment, is left out in Cibber's play, perhaps because Uncle Richard is replaced by the good-hearted and exemplary character Mr. Manly.

In Cibber's play, John Moody has a funny accent and is amiably honest and naive, which is typical of the servants who come from the country. Needless to say that Vanbrugh's John Moody has in Cibber's version been stripped of his cunning, his high expectations of pleasurable life in London, and his high spirits, and has been fashioned in a way which makes him fit appropriately in the realm of sentimentalism.

The happy ending of the play is brought about not by the servants but by the exemplary character, Mr. Manly, whose benevolence and good-heartedness is made to prevail on all parties, and bring happiness to everybody.

In the 1720s, politics again brought about a substantial change in comedy and a further displacement of the Restoration tradition. With the appearance of John Gay's comedy, The Beggar's Opera (1728), politics in comedy took an almost unprecedented turn. At this stage in the eighteenth century, the attempts of James II's supporters, the Jacobites, to dethrone the Hanoverians and restore the Stuarts to the throne seemed to have been

defeated. The "political attention of the dramatists turned increasingly to the antagonism between the Walpole government and the opposition."⁹¹ The opposition consisted of dissatisfied Whigs and Tories, and William Pulteney became their leader.

The comedies which appeared after The Beggar's Opera - those written by Henry Fielding, Robert Dodsley, James Miller, and Gay himself - "depart radically from the older pattern of the love chase, often including social commentary rather than love intrigue as their chief source."⁹² The merchant character embodying a "social judgement"⁹³ occurs in a few dramatic works between 1728 and 1737. Corruption, during the decade after 1728, was seen to have been sweeping the country, particularly in London and the big cities. The horror which attended this corruption in London life, depicted by Hogarth in his prints in a frightening way, made the dramatists see in the "contrast between rural and urban life a contrast between an old and vigorous way of English life that had made England strong and a new and debauched way that threatened destruction."⁹⁴

VI. Political Comedy

The world of The Beggar's Opera is the life of London's underworld, which invites comparison with the corruption of Sir Robert Walpole's government. So the implication here is that the corruption in

low life is similar to that in high life. In fact, class relationships in The Beggar's Opera are looked at differently through making highwaymen and beggars appear of more consequence than the gentlemen who rule the country. The play also includes burlesque, satirical, and farcical elements; and it burlesques Italian opera and parodies poetic justice.

In a comedy or a play where the underworld is the setting, one should not expect its inhabitants to have servants or domestics. This is exactly the case in The Beggar's Opera. We cannot expect highwaymen and beggars to have servants. Rather, we should expect that servants who, forced by unemployment, abuse, fatherlessness, and sometimes in expectation of getting rich and self-employed, might leave respectable society and go down into the social underworld of highwaymen and robbers. In this criminal world, men became highwaymen and beggars, and women became prostitutes. One could argue that even in such a situation, these people do not cease to be servants, because they have to work under the protection of a strong chief in their new environment. So the corruption underground reflects a more dangerous corruption above the ground. The relationship between the members of these two worlds is not contractual. It is based on mutual interest and mutual security, the violation of which usually results in disastrous consequences to both parties. Of course, since The Beggar's Opera is a comedy with

a substantial farcical element in it, one should expect that even when the interests of the inhabitants of the underworld clash, the end will nonetheless be happy and reconciling.

The absence of servants in political comedies, like Crowne's City Politics and Sir Courtly Nice, is not to be compared to their absence in The Beggar's Opera. The inhabitants of these two earlier comedies are people from the gentry and the nobility.

Servants in Henry Fielding's Pasquin (first acted in April 1736) also have no place or role but as background figures. The comedy rehearsed in Pasquin is a farce depicting some local figures involved in a corrupt election. It is a political satire on the corruption of Walpole's regime. It is worth mentioning that Fielding "had come to London from a distinctly Whig family and ... early cultivated his famous relative Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who was a Walpole supporter."⁹⁵ For this lady, he wrote poems in which he praised Walpole as the "country's Protestant bulwark."⁹⁶ Later on, Fielding's attitude to Walpole showed signs of change shortly before the election of spring 1734. He moved from Drury Lane to the Haymarket, and dedicated his Don Quixote in England to Chesterfield, the leader of the opposition. He then exposed the corruption of England and called Walpole the "Great Corruptor."⁹⁷ His political stances culminated in Pasquin and in The Historical

Register for the Year 1736 (first acted in May 1737) which is an outspoken anti-Walpole satire.

In Pasquin, there are two rehearsals of a comedy, which is a political satire, and a tragedy, which is a literary satire. By including these two rehearsals in one play, Fielding could further dramatise political corruption and reinforce his attack through an exposition of the literary and cultural degeneration. In the tragedy rehearsal there is a harlequin, but in the comedy rehearsal servants do not take part in the action. Because of the radical departure from the pattern of love chase and love intrigues, servants lost their places as participants in the action. There is no place for them when politics invade the world of comedy. Their role of entertaining is taken over by corrupt characters who, like some servants, are disinclined to honest conduct, being driven by their egoistic inclinations and self-interest. Humour is also provided by other characters who profess knowledge and expertise but show gross ignorance.

In The Historical Register also, servants have no place. This spirited satire on political corruption not only excluded servants from its world but also caused Sir Robert Walpole to become intolerant of the theatre and of theatrical productions. Walpole therefore promoted the notorious Licensing Act of 1737, which authorized the Lord Chamberlain to ban the performance of plays

at any playhouse but the two patent houses, Drury Lane and Covent Garden. This was a major setback for theatrical activity. The repertoire of the period between the Licensing Act and the 1760s was largely composed of old plays, including some of Shakespeare's and Jonson's works, and of comedies and tragedies written between the Restoration and the Licensing Act. Restoration comedies had to be revised in order to eliminate the bawdy elements.

VII. Conclusion

Representation of servants in the English comedies of the first half of the eighteenth century is affected by the theatrical and social changes which marked this period of the eighteenth century. In the few comedies which partly resisted these changes, servants continued to be portrayed as vivid, contriving, and resourceful.

With the new respectful treatment of the merchant character came the trend of sentimentalism, and with it emerged a different representation of domestics. In sentimental comedies, they are mostly loyal, obedient and good-mannered. Their language is more refined, and their humour is innocent, good-hearted, and down-to-earth. This new formula is part of a remodelled and harmonious whole.

In the political comedies, servants lose their significance as participants in the action and become merely background figures. This is because the nature of the subject-matter allows for very limited and subsidiary intervention of servants.

On the evidence of my work on the slave and servant-character in the comedies of the antiquity and the Renaissance period on one side, and on the historical realities of domestic service in the second half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries on the other, I can say that the representation of servants in the comedies of the period in question continued, in slightly varying degrees, in the same vein of the classical and Renaissance comedies. The representation of the realities of domestic service and the character of the servant, male and female, are, in many ways, misleading and inadequate. Restoration comedy carried on with the classical representation of domestic servants as being insensitive to all forms of honesty, as highly self-interested, flattering and untrustworthy. Their portraiture is part of a prejudicial attitude on the part of the more fortunate people, compliantly espoused by the playwrights of the period. Moreover, these comedies contain, almost, no information about the problems and calamities of servants nor do they include any form of reflection of any form of abuse, persecution, or offence committed by masters against

their servants - despite the fact that such abuses led to incidents of suicide among the young servants and to infanticide in the case of female-servants who gave birth to children and were denied further chances of employment.

In the sentimental comedy of the eighteenth century, the relationship of masters and servants reflects the feigned reforming gospel of the sentimental writers and continues to ignore the realities of the situation. It misrepresents servants and transforms their characters into models remote from reality. The change in morality and the shift towards the feigning morality of the middle class did not improve the behaviour of servants. As a matter of fact, there is evidence that servants became more insubordinate, more self-interested and more motivated to seek the betterment of their circumstances. These factors are a lot more likely to create discord and clash of interests than mutual respect and harmony.

The over-staffing of the households of masters who belonged to the category of businessmen for prestige purposes allows for less harmony and care in the relationships of masters and servants. Moreover, the introduction of contracts for employment eroded non-material and emotional ties between employers and employed.

In other types of comedy, particularly the political one, servants there perform very limited

and traditional tasks, and sometimes they disappear from the scene. In real life, property qualifications disfranchised most servants; servants can do very little in politics.

The comedy of the Restoration period and the first half of the eighteenth century fail to present a fair representation of domestic servants because of inherited attitudes towards this underprivileged class, and because of the malpractices of the members of this class in their determined attempts to improve their lives and their social status.

VIII. Notes

¹ See J. Jean Hecht, The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England (1956; rpt. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980).

² See The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 77.

³ William Congreve, The Complete Plays of William Congreve, ed. Herbert Davis (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967) 387.

⁴ The Complete Plays of William Congreve, 427.

⁵ William Burnaby, The Dramatic Works of William Burnaby, ed. F. E. Budd (London: The Scholartis Press, 1931) 122.

⁶ The Dramatic Works of William Burnaby, 154.

⁷ See Bridget Hill, Women, Work, and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989) 131.

⁸ The Dramatic Works of William Burnaby, 135.

⁹ The Dramatic Works of William Burnaby, 135-36.

¹⁰ The Dramatic Works of William Burnaby, 205.

¹¹ The Dramatic Works of William Burnaby, 214.

¹² See Hecht, The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England. See also Hecht's essay, "Continental and Colonial Servants in Eighteenth-Century England," Smith College Studies in History, XL.

¹³ Richard Steele, The Plays of Richard Steele, ed. Shirley Strum Kenny (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971) 30.

¹⁴ The Plays of Richard Steele, 71.

¹⁵ See B. Hill, Women, Work, and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England. See also Hecht, The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, the third chapter. See also Dorothy Marshall's essay, "The Domestic Servant in History," The Historical Association, G 13 (1949).

¹⁶ The Plays of Richard Steele, 83.

¹⁷ The Plays of Richard Steele, 28.

¹⁸ See the introduction of Colley Cibber's The Careless Husband, ed. William W. Appleton (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1967) xiv.

¹⁹ See Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800 (1977; rpt., Penguin Books, 1990), 647. See also Bridget Hill, Women, Work, and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England, 125-147.

²⁰ The Plays of Richard Steele, 192.

²¹ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977) 464-65.

²² George Farquhar, The Works of George Farquhar, ed. Shirley Strum Kenny (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1988) II: 88.

²³ The Works of George Farquhar, II: 89.

²⁴ The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century, 466.

²⁵ The Works of George Farquhar, II: 234.

- ²⁶ The Works of George Farquhar, II: 194.
- ²⁷ The Works of George Farquhar, II: 195.
- ²⁸ Donald F. Bond, ed., The Tatler (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987) I: 83.
- ²⁹ The Tatler, II: 218.
- ³⁰ The Tatler, I: 196.
- ³¹ Donald F. Bond, ed., The Spectator (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965) I: 372.
- ³² The Spectator, I: 373.
- ³³ The Spectator, I: 373.
- ³⁴ The Spectator, I: 373.
- ³⁵ The Spectator, I: 373.
- ³⁶ The Spectator, I: 374.
- ³⁷ The Spectator, I: 409.
- ³⁸ The Spectator, I: 443.
- ³⁹ The Spectator, I: 444.
- ⁴⁰ The Spectator, I: 439..
- ⁴¹ As quoted by Hecht in The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 83.
- ⁴² The Spectator, II: 292.
- ⁴³ John Calhoun Stephens, ed., The Guardian (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1982) 316.
- ⁴⁴ The Guardian, 316.
- ⁴⁵ The Guardian, 317-18.
- ⁴⁶ Jonathan Swift, Directions to Servants and Miscellaneous Pieces: 1733-1742, ed. Herbert Davis, Vol. XIII of The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1959) 5.

⁴⁷ Directions to Servants and Miscellaneous Pieces: 1733-1742, 5.

⁴⁸ John Loftis, Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding (California, Stanford University Press, 1959) vii.

⁴⁹ Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding, vii.

⁵⁰ Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding, 1.

⁵¹ Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding, 1.

⁵² Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding, 3.

⁵³ Susannah Centlivre, The Busy Body in The Acting Drama; Containing Sheridan's Dramatic Works, Together with most of the Popular Plays, Standard and Modern (London: Issac, Tuckey, and Co., 1836) 482.

⁵⁴ The Busy Body, 482.

⁵⁵ Charles Shadwell, The Fair Quaker of Deal; or, The Humours of the Navy (London, 1792) 34. This copy was printed for the Proprietors under the direction of John Bell, British Library, Strand, Bookseller to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

⁵⁶ The Fair Quaker of Deal; or, The Humours of the Navy, 34.

⁵⁷ The Fair Quaker of Deal; or, The Humours of the Navy, 47.

⁵⁸ Susannah Centlivre, The Wonder in The Acting Drama; Containing Sheridan's Dramatic Works, Together with most of the Popular Plays, Standard and Modern (London: Issac, Tuckey, and Co., 1836) 445.

⁵⁹ The Wonder, 459.

⁶⁰ Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding, 69.

⁶¹ Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding, 77.

⁶² Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding, 94-95.

⁶³ Charles Johnson, The Country Lasses; or, the Custom of the Manor (London: 1792) 36. This copy was printed for the Proprietors under the direction of John Bell, British Library, Strand, Bookseller to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

⁶⁴ Vulture is written with 'e' in the Dramatis Personae, but in the text it is written without 'e'.

⁶⁵ The Country Lasses; or, the Custom of the Manor, 44.

⁶⁶ The Country Lasses; or, the Custom of the Manor, 62.

⁶⁷ See J. Jean Hecht, The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, Chapter Three for examples. "A man-cook who served the Leghs remained with them from 1693 until his death in 1757, a period of sixty-four years" 82.

⁶⁸ The Country Lasses; or, the Custom of the Manor, 89.

⁶⁹ Joseph Addison, The Drummer; or, the Haunted House (London: J. and R. Tonson, 1765) 10.

⁷⁰ The Drummer, 61.

⁷¹ Richard Burton, trans., Arabian Nights (London: Bracken Books, 1994) 6. Sir Richard Francis Burton (1821-90) commenting on the sight of the private parts of Saeed says: "In my time no Hindi Moslem would take his women-folk to Zanzibar on account of the huge attractions and enormous temptations there and thereby offered to them."

⁷² See J. Jean Hecht, The Domestic Servant in Eighteenth-Century England, 80. See also Hill, Women, Work, and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England, 139.

⁷³ Simon Trussler, ed., Burlesque Plays of the Eighteenth Century (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969) 118.

⁷⁴ Burlesque Plays of the Eighteenth Century, 101.

⁷⁵ The Dramatic Works of Colley Cibber Esq. 5 vols. (New York: AMS Press, 1966) III: 299.

⁷⁶ Simon Trussler, ed., Eighteenth Century Comedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969) 130.

⁷⁷ Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding, 83.

⁷⁸ Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding, 83.

⁷⁹ Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding,
84.

⁸⁰ Eighteenth Century Comedy, 83.

⁸¹ John Loftis, Steele at Drury Lane
(Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1973) 208.

⁸² See Mark Thornton Burnett "Masters and
servants in moral and religious treatises, c 1580-c.
1642" The arts, literature, and society, ed., Arthur
Marwick (London: Routledge, 1990) 56. See also T. R.
Murphy's essay "'Woful Childe of Parents Rage':
Suicide of Children and Adolescents in Early Modern
England, 1507-1710," Sixteenth-Century Journal
(1986), 17, No. 3, 259-70.

⁸³ Eighteenth Century Comedy, 92.

⁸⁴ Eighteenth Century Comedy, 92.

⁸⁵ Eighteenth Century Comedy, 92.

⁸⁶ Eighteenth Century Comedy, 92.

⁸⁷ Eighteenth Century Comedy, 93.

⁸⁸ See Hecht's Book The Domestic Servant in
Eighteenth-Century England, Chapter Five.

⁸⁹ The Dramatic Works of Colley Cibber Esq. 5
vols. (New York: AMS Press, 1966) IV: 108.

⁹⁰ The Dramatic Works of Colley Cibber Esq. IV:
105.

⁹¹ Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding,
101.

⁹² Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding,
102.

- ⁹³ Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding,
102.
- ⁹⁴ Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding,
103.
- ⁹⁵ K. G. Simpson, ed., Henry Fielding: Justice
Observed (London: Vision and Barnes & Noble, 1985)
36.
- ⁹⁶ Henry Fielding: Justice Observed, 36.
- ⁹⁷ Henry Fielding: Justice Observed, 36.

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