

Recycling the exile :

Thomas Killigrew's *Thomaso, or the Wanderer* (1664), Aphra

Behn's *The Rover* (1677) and the Critics

J. P. Vander Motten
Ghent University

I

On 16 April 1662, in one of the last letters of thanks he sent to Willem-Frederik, stadholder of Friesland, Thomas Killigrew graciously acknowledged the fact that in the gloomy days of the exile only his Frisian patron's generosity had been able to soften what the writer called "les plus rudes chocs de la fortune qui persécutaient lors les gens de bien."¹ The allusion was to the favours which the stadholder, intent upon good relations with Charles II, had secured for the letter-writer in the latter half of the 1650s, including the relative security that came with a military appointment in the army of the States General. From around 1647 until the Restoration, Killigrew had shared with his Stuart masters the vicissitudes of a life in exile, in his different capacities as the duke of York's groom of the bedchamber in The Hague in 1648, a member of Charles the Second's household in Paris in 1649, the royal resident in Venice from late 1649 until 1652, the Duke of Gloucester's servant in Paris (again) in 1653, and a soldier of fortune and liaison officer of sorts in the Low Countries from late 1654 until 1660².

Such summary account does not even begin to do justice to the extent of the man's peregrinations, let alone the worries, hardships and frustrations of all those who, for better or for worse, had thrown in their lots with the royalist cause. Insofar, however, as a valid

¹ J.P. Vander Motten and Katrien Daemen – de Gelder, "'Les plus rudes chocs de la fortune' : Willem Frederik, Stadholder of Friesland (1613-1664), Thomas Killigrew (1612-1683) and Patronage in Exile", *Anglia. Zeitschrift für Englische Philologie*, 127 (2009), 65-90 (79, 89)

² J.P. Vander Motten, "Thomas Killigrew's 'Lost Years', 1655-1660", *Neophilologus*, LXXXII (1998), 311-34.

general profile of the Cavalier in exile can be reconstructed, Killigrew's case was in two ways an untypical one. First, rather than trying to support a family in the straightened circumstances of the exile, he *started* one after contracting a marriage to a wealthy Dutch heiress in 1655. The circumstances surrounding this Anglo-Dutch match suggest that he possessed the unique ability, at the intersection point of intermeshing personal, family and political interests, to turn to his own advantage Charles II's 'entente cordiale' with the Frisian stadholder.³ Second, he was the only Cavalier author (that I am aware of) to have used the exile experience as the raw materials for an autobiographical comedy, entitled *Thomaso, or the Wanderer*, in which he himself featured as the protagonist.

Published in the 1664 folio-edition of Killigrew's *Comedies, and Tragedies*, *Thomaso*, like most other plays in the volume, had been written abroad. In his "Address to the Reader" Killigrew alluded to the unusual context in which his works had seen the light of day : "„If you have as much leasure to Read as I had to Write these Plays, you may, as I did, find a diversion; though I wish it to you upon better terms then Twenty Years Banishment”⁴. The separate title-pages indicate that, even before being forced into exile around 1647, he had made a creative use of the 'leisure' time spent on the continent. The tragicomedies *Claricilla* and *The Princesse; or Love at first Sight* were wholly or partly composed as early as 1636, in Rome and Naples; his most famous play, the bawdy comedy *The Parson's Wedding*, was composed in Basel in 1640-41; *The Pilgrim*, a romantic tragedy, was written in Paris, probably for the Prince of Wales's Company, in 1646.⁵ *Bellamira her Dream; or, the Love of Shadows* was written in Venice; and *Cicilia and Clorinda*, another two-part tragicomedy, was written partly in Turin,

³ J.P. Vander Motten, "Unpublished Letters of Charles II", *Restoration* 18 (1994), 17-26.

⁴ Thomas Killigrew, *Comedies, and Tragedies* (London, 1664), sig. [*2]^r. All in text references (by act, scene and page-number) will be this edition.

⁵ Alfred Harbage, *Thomas Killigrew. Cavalier Dramatist 1612-83* (Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press, 1930; repr. 1967), 192-93.

partly in Florence. As Paulina Kewes rightly observes, “[t]he arrangement of the contents of the book figuratively evokes the course of the author’s enforced travels.”⁶

Set in Madrid and composed there according to the title-page, *Thomaso* is a two-part closet drama, whose list of “dramatis personae” consists of no fewer than twenty-seven male characters and at least ten female ones, including Spaniards, an Italian, three French gentlemen, a Prince of Poland, a Flanders merchant, and a group of English cavaliers who have served in the Spanish army. With its ten acts and seventy-three scenes, its bustling action, chatty dialogues, and racy language generously injected with pseudo-Spanish loanwords, the play has been aptly summarized by Montague Summers as “a regular pell-mell of amorous encounters, mistakes, jealousies, intrigues, and whore-hired ambuscades.”⁷ Not counting two or three subplots, *Thomaso* is essentially concerned with the rake’s progress from one conquest to the next, until his fifth-act (actually, tenth-act) domestication by the virtuous Serulina.

There is solid evidence to show that the dramatist realized that his long-winded play as originally composed towards 1654 was not stage-worthy. In his personal copy of *Comedies, and Tragedies* he made substantial cuts in six of his plays, most of them in *Thomaso* --which he planned to stage in late 1664 or early 1665.⁸ This performance may never have taken place, even though as the manager of the King’s Company, Killigrew was faced with the problem of putting together a repertory for the new theatre at Drury Lane, which had opened in May 1663. *Thomaso, or the Wanderer* might have passed into complete oblivion if it had not been for the fact that thirteen years after its publication, Aphra Behn’s version of the play, entitled *The Rover; or, The Banish’t Cavaliers*, was staged by the Duke’s Company at Dorset

⁶ *Authorship and Appropriation. Writing for the Stage in England, 1660-1710* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1998), 193-94.

⁷ *The Playhouse of Pepys* (London, 1935; repr.1964), 77

⁸ William Van Lennep, “Thomas Killigrew Prepares his Plays for Production”, in *Joseph Quincy Adams Memorial Studies*, ed. James G. McManaway, Giles E. Dawson, and Edwin E. Willoughby (Washington : Folger Shakespeare Library, 1948), 803-808. See also Colin Visser, “The Killigrew Folio : Private Playhouses and the Restoration Stage”, *Theatre Survey* 19 (1978), 119-138.

Gardens. Although not an instant smash hit, *The Rover* proved vastly more successful than *Thomaso*. The premiere may have been on 24 March 1677; further performances were given on 11 February 1680 (?), by the same company, at court; and possibly 4 November 1690, by the United Company, with a concert in honour of King William's birthday. *The Second Part of the Rover* was given at least twice, in January and April 1681.⁹ Two factors may help to account for the relative success of Behn's play in the late 1670s and early 1680s. First, audiences may have been attracted by its nostalgic depiction of cavalier life on the continent twenty years earlier. (It was no coincidence that Behn returned to the setting of the Civil Wars and the Interregnum in *The Round-heads, or the Good Old Cause*, a comedy acted in 1682). Second, as a 'sex comedy' featuring the 'gay couple' pattern, *The Rover* was obviously in tune with the theatrical vogue of the moment : Willmore's and Hellena's banter in Behn's play would have reminded the spectators of the verbal skirmishes between Dorimant and Bellinda in Etherege's recent *Man of Mode* (1676). Behn's play reached the peak of its popularity in the early 1730s and went on to secure a place in the repertory until 1790. In the course of the eighteenth century, as Jane Spencer has pointed out, it was "the presence of the male fantasy itself [which] did most to ensure *The Rover*'s continuing popularity". Throughout this period, "male actors, managers and adapters [were to deliver] a male-centred *Rover*, softening Behn's mocking view of her hero."¹⁰

Not until the publication of *The Second Part of the Rover*, in 1681, was the author of the adaptation identified as "Mrs. Ann Behn". In her "Postscript" to the anonymously published 1677 edition, Behn disingenuously admitted that, apart from "some hints", the "only object" she had "stolen" from *Thomaso* was "the sign of Angellica" --the high-priced courtesan

⁹ *The London Stage 1660-1800. Part 1 : 1660-1700*, ed. William Van Lennep e.a. (Carbondale, Ill. : Southern Illinois UP, 1965), 256, 284, 293, 295, 391.

¹⁰ *Aphra Behn's Afterlife* (Oxford : OUP, 2000), p. 189, 198-99, 221

of Killigrew's play. The "plot and business" were supposedly her own; the "words and characters" she left to the reader to compare with her source play (85). Gerard Langbaine, in his *Account of the English Dramatick Poets* (1691) duly noted that the two parts of *The Rover* were "so excellent in their Original, that 'tis pity they should have been alter'd : and notwithstanding [Behn's] Apology in the Postscript to the first part...she [has] borrow'd largely throughout."¹¹ Most modern critics have confirmed and documented the findings of the assiduous source-hunter Langbaine. May it suffice to mention a handful only of Behn's revisions.¹² The scene of *The Rover* is Naples instead of Madrid and the temporal setting is the carnival season, a period allowing for the reversal of the established order. The main character Thomaso is split into two, the virtuous Belvile and the rakish Willmore, both of whom go their separate ways. *Thomaso's* Angellica is less substantial in *The Rover*, which on the whole has fewer courtesans and more virgins. The new female character Hellena, a virginal heiress, resembles Serulina in *Thomaso*. Some characters are renamed, including the 'Essex calf with two legs' Edwardo (Part 2, III, iv, 419), who becomes 'Ned Blunt' in *The Rover*. Many speeches are accordingly reassigned; and Behn has omitted several farcical and bawdy scenes.

In the wake of the twentieth-century revaluation of the entirety of Behn's work, *The Rover* has received generous praise, especially from feminist critics, who have made the comedy a rewarding playground for gender-orientated interpretations. Jones DeRitter has argued that Behn's adaptation reflects her "fundamental hostility to the type of sexual politics presented and approved in Killigrew's closet drama...While Killigrew is interested chiefly in an individual hero he has modeled on himself, Behn is concerned with the social consequences of rakish behavior : thus Killigrew provided Thomaso with unqualified approval, while Behn

¹¹ Gerard Langbaine, *An Account of the English Dramatick Poet* (Oxford, 1691), 20-21.

¹² For a fuller list, see : Janet Todd, *The Secret Life of Aphra Behn* (London : Deutsch, 1996), 215-17, 268-71; and Derek Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn* (London : Palgrave, 2001), 81ff.

uses Willmore as both an instrument and a target of her satire.”¹³ According to Anita Pacheco, “the presence of rape in the experiences” of the characters of Florinda and Angellica works to interrogate and problematize different modes of female subjectivity by situating them within a patriarchal dramatic world in which the psychology of rape is endemic.”¹⁴ Laura Rosenthal has observed that Behn “appropriated and rewrote Killigrew’s autobiographical play...in order to comment on gender, property, and Killigrew himself.” The major difference between Thomaso and Willmore in Rosenthal’s view is that the latter does not have the capacity (or perspicacity) to “read” the ladies, he is a blunderer and a conniver. Killigrew’s hero, on the other hand, is a swaggerer who “stands at the center of the play, drawing desire from all the women and admiration from all the men.”¹⁵ Recently, Behn’s adaptation has come to be viewed from other than proto-feminist angles, more specifically a political/nationalist one. Viewing the play as a “serious rewriting of the Stuart exile”, Adam Beach has attributed much of its appeal to the royal court in the late 1680s to “its creation of a nationalist spectacle that fantastically recasts the Stuart exile as another chapter in the venerable English tradition of anti-Spanish privateering.”¹⁶ Along the same lines, Brian Lockey has argued that “the play both conveys nostalgia for the Elizabethan state and presents an alternative to the Elizabethan adoration of the female sovereign, which formed the basis of late-sixteenth-century English national identity”. More specifically, Behn’s was “a cosmopolitan perspective, through which

¹³ Jones DeRitter, “The Gypsy, *The Rover*, and the Wanderer : Aphra Behn’s Revision of Thomas Killigrew”, *Restoration*, X (1986), 82-92 (82, 91).

¹⁴ Anita Pacheco, “Rape and the Female Subject in Aphra Behn’s *The Rover*”, *ELH* 65 (1998), 323-345 (323).

¹⁵ Laura Rosenthal, *Playwrights and Plagiarists in Early Modern England. Gender, Authorship, Literary Property* (Ithaca, N.Y. : Cornell UP, 1996), 117-131 (119, 126).

¹⁶ Adam Beach, “Carnival Politics, Generous Satire, and Nationalist Spectacle in Behn’s *The Rover*”, *Eighteenth-Century Life* 28 (2004), 1-19 (3).

distinctions between various national identities are viewed as under pressure from new commercial forces that cause such identities to collapse into one another.”¹⁷

II

Most of these readings have considerably extended our understanding of Behn’s comedy, as indeed have those which have demonstrated the dramatic qualities of her adaptation --more concise in its dialogues, less sprawling, and more tightly constructed than *Thomaso*. But in calling attention to *The Rover*’s preoccupation with political, legal, socio-economic, and primarily gender issues, critics have created the impression that gender politics is the prime, if not the only, focus of interest in Behn’s source play as well. In so doing they have (unintentionally) obscured those aspects of Killigrew’s comedy which mark it out as an autobiographically inspired fiction, whose original purpose in the mid-1650s was fundamentally different from that of Behn’s adaptation more than 20 years later.¹⁸ Admittedly, the intrinsic historical interest of Killigrew’s play has been recognized from time to time. John Loftis has noted that although *Thomaso* is not to be “accepted in literal detail”, it perhaps conveys “more of the quality of life experienced in exile than factual records such as letters and documents do.”¹⁹ Dale Randall, while calling attention to Killigrew’s “gift for detail”, has observed that the author’s “efforts to place his sordid high jinks in a particular social and political milieu could hardly more direct.”²⁰ And Laura Rosenthal, too, has expressed surprise that the obvious

¹⁷ Brian Lockety, ““A Language All Nations Understand” : Portraiture and the Politics of Anglo-Spanish Identity in Aphra Behn’s *The Rover*”, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 39 (2009), 161-81 (161-62).

¹⁸ In this sense, *Thomaso* has now come to be primarily treated as a “readers’s text”, i.e. in terms of “its affectation of the reader”, rather than as an “author’s text”, i.e. in terms of “what has been put into the work...by the author” : for a discussion of the terms, see John T. Shawcross, *Intentionality and the New Traditionalism. Some Liminal Means to Literary Revisionism* (Philadelphia, Penn. : Pennsylvania State UP, 1991), 2-3 and passim.

¹⁹ *The Spanish Plays of Neoclassical England* (London : Yale UP, 1973), 140

²⁰ *Winter Fruit. English Drama 1642-1660* (Lexington, Ky : Kentucky UP, 1995), 283-84.

reference of the rake Willmore to Killigrew himself has received “less attention” than his supposed resemblance to John Wilmot, earl of Rochester.²¹ But neither the “autobiographical” ingredients nor the play’s texture have been properly highlighted in the broader context of Killigrew’s career.

Although plays introducing the character of the libertine cavalier after 1660 are far from uncommon, literary works written by exiles *about life abroad* in the Interregnum years are relatively rare. In his recent study of the seventeenth-century experience of exile, Christopher D’Addario has pointed out that “[f]or many exiles the performative, be it the public gesture, the fashionable garment and posture, or the published written text, becomes an essential method through which identity is created and the disruptions of exile are overridden.”²² It has been insufficiently recognized that Killigrew’s *Thomaso* was just such an elaborate exercise in self-fashioning, a contribution to the creation, or the perpetuation, of the dramatist’s own myth. Unlike Abraham Cowley in his epic poem *The Civil War* (1656), Killigrew did not chronicle contemporary political or military events (the early 1640s, in Cowley’s case). Nor did he set out to produce a full-fledged political allegory or to dramatize episodes from his chequered career, even though *Thomaso* does contain allusions to such episodes. It is the play’s texture which makes the playwright’s intentions manifest. The setting may be a Spanish one but disquisition-length speeches allow him to range across a European-wide panorama of men and manners. Dialogues do not much advance the plot, and many exchanges are merely a ‘pre-text’ for the characters to ventilate their feelings on any topic that comes their way --be it the horrors of a decrepit husband, the poor quality of Spanish fish or life in a nunnery. In an unmistakably autobiographical passage Harrigo, “a sober English Gentleman” (“*Dramatis Personae*”) recommends his friend Thomaso as one who “has seen the world, and gather’d from every

²¹ Rosenthal, 126.

²² Christopher D’Addario, *Exile and Journey in Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Cambridge : UP, 2007), 9.

Nation what is excellent, and can comply with times and natures, for he has been bred in Courts and Armies, those schools of the mind, where men learn to tame their wills and passions” (Part 2, II, i, 402). The comfort and understanding he could provide Serulina will be all the more considerable for being based on “the Histories of persons, times, and places.” (ib.) *Thomaso* indeed is rife with comments on momentous events and anecdotes which the exiles have witnessed or experienced at first hand. It brims over with allusions to friends, relatives and royals whose precarious lives they have shared; pokes fun at the utterly contrasting living conditions in England, Holland, France, and elsewhere; and is littered with wisecracks, proverbial expressions, and references to “national” customs and habits. The play’s action consequently resonates with significant overtones. *Thomaso*’s wanderings, culminating in wedded bliss, can be read as a form of escapism on the author’s part or indeed as a re-enactment of Charles the Second’s peregrinations after his defeat at Worcester in 1651 --two elements figuring prominently in contemporary tragicomedies²³. And the cosmopolitan setting, the fragmented structure, and the mixture of ranks and professions may be taken to mirror the disorderly life in exile, much as the halting progress towards a *dénouement* expresses the author’s impatient longing for the restoration of the monarchy.²⁴

The one character trait by which *Thomaso* is seen trying to make sense of the circumstances of the exile, and indeed remain in control of the situation, is his incurable garrulousness --the same talent which earned Killigrew the title of royal jester to Charles II and established his reputation as a sharp-tongued conversationalist.²⁵ When in 1667 he brought out his scathing *Life of Tomaso the Wanderer*, the spiteful Richard Flecknoe noted how Killigrew

²³ Killigrew had fled to the continent, amongst other things, in order to evade his English debts : see Vander Motten, *Unpublished Letters*, 21.

²⁴ On these elements, see Lois Potter, *Secret rites and secret writing. Royalist literature, 1641-1660* (Cambridge : CUP, 1989; repr. 2009), 101ff.

²⁵ Martin W. Walsh, “Killigrew’s Cap and Bells”, *Theatre Notebook* 38 (1984), 99-105.

“talkt madly, *dash, dash*, and never car’d how he bespatter’d others, or defil’d himself, sparing neither his own, nor others shames..”²⁶ The imputation was not entirely beside the mark and it was actually as a nimble-witted buffoon that the dramatist was to be introduced in comedies, jest books and farces well into the 18th century. Not very surprisingly, all the major characters in *Thomaso* prove to be irrepressible talkers. Witness the following monologue, which reads like a passage in a mock travel-guide, with ethnic slurs and religious stereotyping thrown in for good measure. Ferdinando, one of the English ex-mercenaries, has this to say about the horrors of standing sentinel at night in the hot, insect-infested Spanish climate :

I would not suffer such another night for their *Indies*; By this light, a Leager *Osteria* [‘hosteria’] Louse bites as venomous as a mad Dog, and then a new vermin called Punesies [‘punaises’], more offensive then garden Toads, or house Spiders in our Countrey; a Gnat here wounds like a Scorpio; a Bee not onely stings, but stabs as Mortally as a poison’d Dagger, and would destroy the People, were it not for Reliques and *Madonna’s* that protect them (Part 1, I, ii, 319).

The utterly destitute condition of the “race of Cavaliers”, including those staying with Queen Henrietta-Maria in Paris, is summarized thus by Don Johanne [Juan] :

...the *Louvre* and the Pale-royal have been sad enchanted castles to them, they have kept a *Lazarello’s* court there; darkness, loanness, and the nest of poverty; but two loaves a day, and without fish, to work the Miracle; yet the Gallery was a Christian Coney-warren fill’d with Cavaliers of all Trades; and unless they fed upon their children, ‘tis not visible what they eat. (Part 1, III, i, 343)

Historical reality (the Louvre as a poverty-stricken court “filled with Cavaliers”), the romance tradition (‘enchanted castles’), picaresque tales (‘Lazarillo’), and a New Testament episode (‘two loaves’ and a ‘miracle’) are the disparate components of a purple patch calculated to dazzle the reader. Far-fetched propositions, hyperbolic statements, and puzzling metaphors with a faintly ‘Donne-ian’ whiff throughout testify to the dramatist’s capacity for impromptu wit -- no matter whether the topic was the Welsh interest in genealogy, the Scottish Factory [the

²⁶ *Life of Tomaso The Wanderer. An Epitome* (Printed for the Author, 1667), B2v.

trading settlement] in Poland, or the statue of St. Christopher in the Notre-Dame in Paris. Long passages of high-flown love-making in the platonic vein alternate with scurrilous lines strangely anticipating, by six decades, the tone of Jonathan Swift's scatological poems.²⁷ Piled up in clusters, the quips and quirks of this language may occasionally tax our patience but one suspects they were a close transcription of the writer's own habits of speech. Although perfectly suited to give expression to what has been called "the pressures placed on the material and affective lives of these writers through their removal from the familiar"²⁸, Killigrew's lingo was evidently a medium too self-indulgent to be disciplined in the interest of dramatic economy or by the strait-jacket of dramatic verse.

No less than the language, the range of cultural references in the play is too conspicuous to have a purely decorative function. It is the hallmark of a style of writing which cannot be traced to any of the identifiable sources of the play, John Fletcher's *The Captain* (1647), the anonymous *Blurt Master Constable* (1602) or even Richard Brome's *The Novella* (1653), which suggested the character of 'Angellica Bianca'.²⁹ In an age not overly concerned with "originality", Killigrew nevertheless took care to insinuate the earnestness of his literary efforts. The printed marginal notes accompanying Part 2, V, vii, for instance, call the reader's attention to the existence in the mid-1650s of a continental poetical faction, which included the writer himself, Sir John Denham, and William Crofts, all self-declared enemies of Sir William Davenant's incomplete but much-debated *Gondibert* (1651).³⁰ The allusions to classical and

²⁷ Paulina's lines on the "humour of most men" for a woman who slights them and proves no more than "a dismembred Carcass" are reminiscent of "A Beautiful Young Nymph Going to Bed" (Part 1, I, ii, 317).

²⁸ D'Addario, 9.

²⁹ Langbaine, *An Account*, 313-14. In the "Postscript" to the 1677 edition of *The Rover*, Behn stated, "if the Play of the *Novella* were as well worth remembring as *Thomaso*, they might (bating the name) have as well said, I took it from thence..."

³⁰ In the course of debating the respective deserts of Spain and Holland, Thomaso, Edwardo and Ferdinando gleefully remember feasting on a dinner of roasted "Rotterdams Pig" at the "Saint John's head", together with "old Satan of the *Disser*....Embassadour *Will*, and Resident *Tom*, with M. Sheriffs Secretary, *John* the Poet with the Nose; all *Gondibert's* dire Foes..." (456). As the notes explain, "Disser" is William Murray, first earl of Dysart (d. 1655); "Will" is William Crofts (c. 1611-1677), Killigrew's brother-in-law; "Resident Tom" is the dramatist himself; and "John" is Sir John Denham (1614/15-1669), whose nose had been disfigured by venereal disease. The "dire foes" were obviously the contributors to *Certain Verses Written by severall of the Authors Friends To Be Re-*

non-English literatures, to the London theatre world, and to characters from English drama and folklore were designed to publicize the dramatist as the literary self-made man, who may never have mastered the art of spelling but whose wide reading had made him a citizen of the republic of letters.³¹ The worldly-wise protagonist's knowledge of books and people justifies his central position in the plot, while at the same time pointing up the playwright's earnestness and competence.

According to D'Addario, "[e]xile is a profoundly disruptive and traumatic experience, one that entails both a sharp break in the quotidian existence of one's life and a removal from that which is most familiar and comforting; it "involves dislocation, disorientation, self-division"."³² Throughout most of the play, Thomaso does not appear to be too hard hit by the psychological pressures of exile. Styled "the *Wanton Wanderer*" (Part 1, I, ii, 320) by Harrigo, an attendant on the English ambassador, the hero finds something to his liking everywhere he goes. "Variety is the Soul of Pleasure" (321) is his guiding principle. He is full of praise for the stylish Spanish courtesans, who unlike their English counterparts in "Turnbal-street" [i.e. Turnbull street or Clerkenwell, mentioned in *2 Henry IV*] live undisturbed by "Constable, lowsie Watch-man, Beadle, or Sawcy Bell-man"; and he reprimands his unbelieving companions : "A pox on these English humors, you come abroad to learn, and yet take it ill to be inform'd..." (318). No doubt the dramatist saw himself as having been tempered by the historical events but his *alter ego* Thomaso is presented as a marvelously worldly-wise and versatile character, who in the course of seven years' banishment "has past all Fortunes by Sea and Land;...thrown from his cradle into other mens grounds, naked, and unthought of by his

printed with the *Second Edition of Gondibert* (1653), a collection of mock commendatory verse on *Gondibert* (1651). Eight poems by Denham were included in the collection; one wonders whether Killigrew himself may have been responsible for some of the (anonymous) verse in the collection.

³¹ For a representative sample of Killigrew's spelling, see J.P. Vander Motten and Katrien Daemen – de Gelder, "New Evidence about the Restoration Scenekeeper James Triggs?", *Theatre Notebook* 59 (2005), 20.

³² D' Addario, 8

Parents and Friends, and what was cruelty then, is his happiness now; for being bred with the wolf he grew wise enough to thrive in the forest.” (321). While the English past is not forgotten, it is never made the object of wistful longing but often of bitter comment. More than by his straitened circumstances, Thomaso is beset with the grievances associated in this age with the social position of a younger son of the gentry, who as a rule was deprived of means by the “tyranny and injustice of primogeniture.”³³ At one point the protagonist sullenly characterizes an “English elder Brother” as one “bred in a Nursery with a Bib and Muckander [= handkerchief], ...one that knew no joy beyond a Birds-nest, Angling, or a Play-day at twenty; one that is whip’d in a Free-school, and would cry and scramble for Nuts till he was out of his Wardship, and lay with his Grandam till he was marry’d.” (Part 1, I, v, 325) The need for self-fashioning was apparently more keenly felt by one whose early education had been rather incidental and who now considered himself “unthought of by his Parents.” In this respect Killigrew’s case is a neat illustration of one of the “governing conditions common to most instances of self-fashioning” noted by Stephen Greenblatt, which is that “none of the figures inherits a title, an ancient family tradition or hierarchical status.”³⁴ A soldier of fortune, Thomaso is a middle-class character, whose natural habitat is with the denizens of Madrid’s less reputable neighbourhoods.

Critics have paid scant attention to the mountebank scene in Part 1 of *Thomaso* (IV, ii), which is largely transcribed from Ben Jonson’s *Volpone* but developed into a subplot providing some of the final scenes of the play.³⁵ Killigrew’s addition is the idea of a magic bath having rejuvenating powers and “a wonderfull variety of Amorous effects” (Part 1, IV, ii, 362).

³³ Joan Thirsk, “Younger Sons in the Seventeenth Century”, in *The Rural Economy of England. Collected Essays* (London : Hambledon Press, 1984), 335-57 (338).

³⁴ Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning. From More to Shakespeare* (1980; repr. University of Chicago Press, 2005), 8-9. In (hitherto unpublished) letters addressed to social superiors, Killigrew liked to refer to himself as “poor Tom”, even in his capacity as the King’s envoy to the Italian states: see the letters to Prince Rupert, dated 2 April 1644 (Princeton University Library, Robert H. Taylor Collection, Bx 10, F 27), and to Charles the First’s private secretary Sir Robert Long, dated from Venice, 13 January 1650 (The Morgan Library and Museum, New York, Literary and Historical MSS, Rulers of England Box 09, Charles II, Part 2, no. 009).

³⁵ *Ben Jonson*. Edited by C.H. Herford and Evelyn Simpson. *Volume IX* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1950), 703.

This device is connected with Edwardo's and Ferdinando's pursuit of two wealthy 'monsters', one a giantess, the other a pigmy, who have recently returned from the Indies with their Jewish guardian. By the fourth act, it appears that the country oafs have been successful in their courting, Edwardo having married the giant, Ferdinando the dwarf. The respective alliances are justified in purely financial terms. In Ferdinando's eyes his bride's delights consist in "four Foot-men and Velvet Coach, with six Flanders Graces more" (Part 2, IV, xi, 441). And Edwardo proudly confesses that his wife is his "Place at Court, [his] Ship at Sea, [his] Vocation" (442), the sort of security that any cavalier might well be hankering for after years of wandering. A good deal of comic action is thereafter derived from the attempt to transform the brides into ordinary humans by means of Lopus's ancient powder "that made Venus a Goddess." (Part 1, IV, ii, 361). The experiment goes catastrophically wrong and the two creatures become even uglier and more deformed. In addition, Scarramucha, the mountebank's man, is turned into a woman more awesome than the giantess and the old courtesan Helena emerges from the bath in the guise of Scarramucha, with breeches *and* beard. But Edwardo and Ferdinando soon lose the monsters' immense dowry and the rumour that they have been involved in acts of black magic suddenly poses such a threat in Catholic Madrid that, in order to escape the inquisitors, they envisage fleeing to the Indies to find there "six black wives apiece, smooth and comely beauties, naked truths, *Eves...*" (Part 2, V, vii, 453).

Are we meant to understand the idea of multiple 'metamorphosis' in relation to the transformation into a virtuous lover that Thomaso himself undergoes? Are the "thirsty and hungry sinners" Edwardo and Ferdinando (Part 2, V, x, 463), in their restless search for money, simply his foolish counterparts? In this connection, Laura Rosenthal argues that Edwardo "reveals his inability to inhabit the position of proper and proprietary masculinity in his incapacity to distinguish among women and also in his scheme to marry one of the Jews for her

money.”³⁶ But “proprietary masculinity” is not the only standard. The sisters’ deformity is associated with the corrupting wealth of the Indies, where they too have been exiles of sorts; the servant Scarramucha, tired of being beaten, wants to be a young, attractive wench; old Helena hopes to recover the “amorous lustre” (Part 1, IV, ii, 364) of her youth; and Edwardo and Ferdinando overreach themselves, aspiring to be more than the whining lovers they were in England.

Metamorphosis, then, may be a metaphor for the exile’s alienating effects on those who fail to accommodate themselves, in a sensible and morally acceptable way, to the ever-changing circumstances fate throws at them. Thomaso’s adaptability, his talent for survival, and the new-gained maturity that comes with it set him apart from those around him and foreground him as a unique character. Despite his boisterousness, Thomaso in Part 1 of the play is typified by Serulina as a ‘devotee’ (Part 1, III, iv, 351) of St. Cecilia, the patroness of music and hence harmony --an allusion to Killigrew’s first wife, Cecilia Crofts, who had died in January 1638 and whose memory always stayed with him. In the final act Thomaso admits that “if I would eat a Girle it should be a Dutch-girle, a North *Holland* child...[a] *Capon de Lecho*...[a milk capon] ..” (Part 2, V, vii, 456). It is impossible not to understand this passage as a tongue-in-cheek hint at Killigrew’s courting of, and marriage to, a young and well-to-do Dutch heiress, Charlotte van Hesse, towards 1654 and in January 1655, respectively.³⁷ The stability and the financial security that this second marriage brought are obviously echoed by Thomaso’s joy at his union with Serulina and the “new and surprising pleasures..[s]uch, as I in all my

³⁶ Laura Rosenthal, 122.

³⁷ J. P. Vander Motten, ‘Killigrew, Thomas (1612–1683)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn. See also Vander Motten, “Killigrew’s ‘Lost Years’”, 315-18.

curious search could never find.” (Part 2, V, x, 464). What Lois Potter has called the play’s “linking of sexual and financial relationships” had already been tested and tried in real life.³⁸ It may be true that works written in exile not only registered “the distinct sense of loss, the profound up-rootedness, and the novel set of social and political circumstances ...but also importantly negotiated and attempted to configure these consequences for both the author and his or her audience.”³⁹ As far as *Thomaso* is concerned, the ‘configuration’ was one that prioritized certain aspects at the expense of others --discovery and recovery more than loss and alienation. Underlying its plot is an unobtrusive but unmistakable morality pattern taking the protagonist from a state of fallen-ness to one of insight and, finally, one of repentance and forgiveness, holding out hope of a new equilibrium. Not only is this pattern lacking in Behn’s adaptation, where Willmore is happy to live on as a “gallant”; it is not incongruous with the way Killigrew liked to represent himself to the outside world

III

The publication of *Comedies, and Tragedies* in 1664 was itself a feat of carefully managed self-advertisement. Printed for Henry Herringman, the edition in folio, with its eye-catching frontispiece by William Sheppard depicting the pensive dramatist, his dog (an emblem of fidelity) and his playbooks as well as the title-page identification of the author as “Page of Honour to King CHARLES the First. And Groom of the Bed-Chamber to King CHARLES the Second”, provided graphic evidence of Killigrew’s lifelong devotion to playwriting and to the monarchy (see image 1). The dedication of *Thomaso* to the “friends” of the dashing soldier Rupert of the Rhine (1619-1682), addressed here as “Prince Palatine Polixander”, subtly hinted at Killigrew’s military career. The dedication of each one of the other nine plays in the volume

³⁸ Lois Potter, “Transforming a super-rake”, *TLS* 25 July 1986, 817. The kind of economic independence that Charlotte van Hesse aimed to preserve through her prenuptial agreement with Killigrew is the subject of Elaine Hobby’s “No Stolen Object, but Her Own : Aphra Behn’s *Rover* and Thomas Killigrew’s *Thomaso*”, *Women’s Writing* 6 (1999), 113-127.

³⁹ D’ Addario, 4

to a noble *lady* highlighted his association with gentle society --an ironic feature given the author's dubious reputation. Above all, Charles the First's portrait, shedding its benign influence over Killigrew's work, would have reminded the perceptive reader of the frontispiece to *Eikon Basilike* (1649), in which the martyred King, kneeling down at a table supporting a prayer book, looks to a heavenly crown for eternal glory (see image 2).

If Killigrew's comedy is an elaborate act of self-advertisement, this is not just on account of the learning displayed by the playwright. Without venturing into the field of psychobiography, I want to suggest that in Part 1 of his play Killigrew, through the character of his protagonist, set out to capitalize on the reputation of a loose and incorrigible rascal that he had fostered even *before* his banishment, as contemporary letters, prints and satires go to show. Mr. Marcombes, Robert Boyle's French tutor, who met Killigrew in Paris and Geneva between 1639 and 1641, wrote of him as one "that speakes ill of his o[w]ne Mother and of all his friends, and that playes ye foole ...having allwayes his mouthe full of whoores and such discourses."⁴⁰ In 1642 the famous etcher Wenceslaus Hollar (1607-1677) devised a satirical print sometimes said to represent Killigrew, who in the accompanying moralizing lines shamelessly confessed to his lechery, symbolized by the monkey in female accoutrements on his left (see image 3).⁴¹ The sitter's rich coat is lined with the variously coiffed heads of two dozen ladies, each one of them a love trophy, "Some Lovelie faire, some black, and some [are] browne, / Some Wives, some Maidens, some rich and others poore / Some old, some young, yet everie one a whore". The bored-looking dramatist is depicted wearing a domed crown --the symbol both of his political allegiance and his status as the bawdy monarch of wit-- and leaning on his left hand, the same melancholic pose in which, together with William, Lord Crofts, he had been portrayed by Van

⁴⁰ See Clare Howard, *English Travellers of the Renaissance* (London: John Lane, 1914), 163-66; and J. W. Stoye, "The Whereabouts of Thomas Killigrew, 1639-1641", *Review of English Studies* 25 (1949), 245-48.

⁴¹ Richard Pennington believes the ascription to Killigrew (in the British Library *Catalogue of Prints and Drawings* and elsewhere) is unlikely as the sitter hyperbolically refers to himself as having had "so fair a State, / Fower or five thousand by the yeare at least": see *A descriptive catalogue of the etched work of Wenceslaus Hollar 1607-1677* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 73 (item 487). But this is exactly the sort of red herring Killigrew would have been fond of publicizing.

Dyck only four years earlier, mourning the death of his first wife Cecilia Crofts (d.1638). The Hollar print and the Van Dyck painting appear to catch two utterly contrasting facets of the same personality, as if part of an intentional, inside joke at the sitter's own expense. Unsurprisingly, it was the lascivious side that contemporary testimonies often fastened on. At the time of Killigrew's appointment as envoy to the Italian states, an anonymous libel entitled *Newes from the New Exchange, or the Commonwealth of Ladies, Drawn to the Life* (London, 1650) represented him as a consoler of lonely widows. "The young Lady *Devonshire*...a very sad woman ever since the death of my *Lord Iohn*", its author wrote, "hath been rid of her *Qualm* by *Tom Killegrew*, who is now gon Ambassador from *Iersey* into *Italy*, on purpose to fetch her a Musk-cod [OED : "a heavily perfumed gentleman, a fop"] to perfect the Cure."⁽⁴⁾

Much as the Van Dyck picture of Angellica in *Thomaso* (Part 1, II, ii, 333) was meant to display and put on offer the courtesan's matchless beauty, the stately portraits of Killigrew painted by the same artist in the 1630s were calculated to sell to the viewer his serious and responsible side. If anything, they prove that Killigrew was never averse to having his vanity tickled, to put it mildly. Other evidence, pictorial as well as literary, strongly suggests that the dramatist *throughout his life* liked to cut a figure, be it as a mourner in 1638, a womanizer and nobleman in the 1640s and 1650s, or a pilgrim in his final years.⁴² In a self-reflexive monologue towards the end of *Thomaso*, the protagonist's change of heart is explained thus :

Wisdom and Conscience bids us seek a Nest ere Age and Diseases find us...;
 'tis sad to be out of doors in the Winter of our Age. A gray Wanderer is but a
 bad Tragedy to himself, though an old Beggar may be a Comedy to others.
 These thoughts, and the noble nature of this vertuous Maid, have made me
 resolve to abjure this humour...(Part 2, IV, ix, 438).

⁴² Malcolm Rogers, "'Golden Houses for Shadows' : Some Portraits of Thomas Killigrew and His Family", in *Art and Patronage in the Caroline Courts. Essays in Honour of Sir Oliver Millar*, edited by David Howarth (Cambridge : CUP, 1993), 220-42. In *A Briefe Relation of some Affaires and Transactions...from Tuesday, January the 29. to Tuesday February the 5. 1649* [i.e. 1650], the correspondent from Rome reported on the arrival of King Charles' new resident, "a great Noble man of *England*, who calls himself an Earle, his name is *Thomaso Killegrew*, he profeseth himself a Roman Catholique, is lodged at *St. Marks* palace, where he is sumptuously entertained by the *Venetian* Ambassadour" (281).

This gloomy reflection proved eerily prophetic of, and apposite to, the way Killigrew wanted to be seen around the time when Behn's adaptation was first performed. An anonymous portrait, dating from the 1670s, depicts the ageing dramatist with the hat, staff, gourd and scallop shells typical of a pilgrim of St. James. It has the following inscription : "You see my Face, and if you'd know my Minde, / 'Tis this : I hate myself, and all Mankinde." (<http://www.grosvenorprints.com/anonkill.jpg>)⁴³ Although a proper motto for an ageing misanthrope, the lines strike a cynical note not very different from that in the verse accompanying the Hollar print, executed thirty-five years earlier. The last Killigrew portrait that we know of, painted by Willem Wissing (1656-1687), probably after 1680, was conceived in an outspokenly religious mode. A mezzotint of this painting, by Jan Van der Vaart (1647-1721), shows Killigrew bearded as St. Paul, and holding a sword, the emblem of his martyrdom (www.npg.org.uk/.../portrait.php?mkey=mw61448; see **image 4**). Was it the idea of the apostle Paul's *wanderings* that prompted this particular pose? Did the gouty dramatist live out his final years in the same penitent mood that led his elder brother Sir William to publish --*anonymously*, it may be noted-- his pious *Midnight Thoughts* (1682)? Did the former groom of the bedchamber, in the highly volatile political situation of the early 1680s, really want to be thought of as a martyr, if only in the Stuart cause? Whatever his intentions, such symbol-laden representations of the author's spiritual change, produced long after the exile, still carry the distinct air of being exercises in the construction of an identity.

Self-fashioning in *Thomaso, or the Wanderer* operates, in Greenblatt's words,

"without regard for a sharp distinction between literature and social life. It invariably crosses

⁴³ Killigrew appears to have been very fond of this particular persona. In *The Pilgrim* (see above), Prince Cosmo, the banished son to the deceased duke of Pavia, attempts to regain his country disguised in a "Periwigg and a Pilgrims Weed" (III, v, 186). One is also reminded of the (apocryphal?) story according to which Killigrew, dressed as a pilgrim, once paid a visit to Charles II. Upon being asked where he was going, Killigrew is reputed to have said : "To hell...to fetch back Oliver Cromwell that he may take care of the affairs of England, for his successor takes none at all" : see *The Fashionable Tell-Tale; Containing a great Variety of Entertaining Anecdotes and Bons Mots*, 3d ed., Vol. II (London, 1787), 59.

the boundaries between the creation of literary characters, the shaping of one's own identity, the experience of being molded by forces outside one's control, the attempt to fashion other selves".⁴⁴ We may never be able to get to the essence of Killigrew's self : vanity, grandiloquence and theatricality are properties that come readily to mind but they probably tell only part of the story. Insofar as his identity can be gauged from the available literary and pictorial record, instability and changeability (in perfect accordance with post-structural theory) would appear to have been its hallmarks. Any attempt, therefore, at uncovering the dramatist's "real" self through the extant portraits and drawings or indeed through readings of the characters he created must inevitably founder somewhere in the existential twilight zone separating the man and the mask. When Aphra Behn came to 'rewrite' the world of *Thomaso*, more than twenty years after its composition, she decided to streamline the action, pare down the dialogues, and (rather perspicaciously?) split up the character of the protagonist. Acquainted as she was with Killigrew himself, she must have realized, however, that *Thomaso* was uniquely the expression of his personality and that no amount of appropriation could recapture the singular spirit of a work that had resulted from his confrontation with the experience of exile.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Greenblatt, 3.

⁴⁵ On Behn's relations with Killigrew, see : Janet Todd, *The Secret Life*, 83-84.

