Francis K.H. So
Editor

Perceiving Power in Early Modern Europe

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Preface

The present volume is an outgrowth of the 8th International Conference of the Taiwan Association of Classical, Medieval and Renaissance Studies held at National Sun Yat-sen University, Taiwan on October 24–25, 2014. The theme of the conference was "Ideas of Rulership: Kings and Queens in Elite and Popular Cultures." As can be expected, there was a wide range of papers and presentations spanning a huge time line. Most chapters collected here have been presented at the conference, and afterward, in response to the Call for Papers, were screened, reviewed and revised. We are grateful that the anonymous external reviewers of Palgrave Macmillan lent their support to this project.

One special feature of the present *Perceiving Power in Early Modern Europe* is that, centering on the same theme, the chapters have multifarious contents, covering various disciplines, transnational in judgmental perspectives, multidimensional in interpretation and cross-cultural in synthetic application. We have very conventional approach as well as contemporary voguish social critique and analysis. While the focus has been on the historical past of the West, during the discussion, some classic works inevitably become the popular basis for explication. Much as there are some common concerns in investigation, there are also some subtle Eastern dimensions in viewing the Western past. As the majority of contributors here are from the Eastern world, there is an added value of psychological distance to scrutinize the broiling issues of political disposition or implication of the texts. The intricacy of political favoritism of the set mind imposes no taboo to an alternative argument. Likewise, the strife between different religious denominations, specifically Protestantism and

Catholicism, does not hinder the Eastern view in perceiving the basis of power manipulation. Far from being audacious, without the cultural or political burden of the Western world, our Eastern academics can treat sensitive topics with an unprejudiced and open mind. One demonstrative example is the various ideological persuasions in looking at the same monarch Charles I in this volume. Some called him weak, some called him incompetent, but others would call him martyred and valued. Some of our contributors' detachment from traditional European mainstream political view in reassessing the ruling figures and events is what I would consider an asset due to the contributors' Eastern dimension in explication.

This view reminds us of the famous incident in literary criticism of the nineteenth-century Japan. When in 1881 at the University of Tokyo, the later famous Japanese writer Tsubouchi Shōyō was taking an examination to write on Queen Gertrude in *Hamlet*. He received a poor grade from his American professor. Not that he did not study well but that he applied the Confucianistic tenet of "rewarding the virtuous and punishing the evil" to look at Gertrude. His comments were said to be moralistic and didactic. Yet that Confucianistic tenet has been the backbone of some East Asian cultures when monitoring human behaviors. Having said that, it is hoped that whatever Eastern dimensions there are in the collected chapters will be appreciated as an alternate contribution, alongside the other Euro-oriented contribution, to the larger scope of humanistic purview.

A word of appreciation goes to my former graduate student Yu-chu Lin, who at the last moment, helped me compile and separate versions of similar-looking manuscripts from drowning in the deluge of stages of files. Her word processing technological assistance has been sine qua non.

Kaohsiung, Taiwan — Francis K.H. So

Contents

Introduction 1
Francis K.H. So

"Live Like a King": The Monument of Philopappus and the Continuity of Client-Kingship 25
Ching-Yuan Wu

Dreams of Kings in the *Liber Thesauri Occulti* of Pascalis Romanus 49
Lola Sharon Davidson

The Jewel for the Crown: Reconsidering Female Kingship and Queenship in the Galfridian Historiography 69
Sophia Yashih Liu

King Arthur: Leadership Masculinity and Homosocial Manhood 85
Ying-hsiu Lu

Innocent and Simple: The Making of Henry VI's Kingship in Fifteenth-Century England 103
Chiu-Yen Lin

Mending People's Broken Hearts: The Fashioning of Rulership in John Ford's *The Broken Heart* 121
Ming-hsiu Chen

Henrietta Maria as a Mediatrix of French Court Culture: A Reconsideration of the Decorations in the Queen's House 141
Grace Y.S. Cheng

Royalism and Divinity in Katherine Philips's Poems 167
Hui-Chu Yu

Private and Public: Rulers, Kings, and Tyrants in Plato, Aristotle, John of Salisbury, and Shakespeare and his Contemporaries 187
Jonathan Hart

Tobias Smollett's Literary Redefinition of Kingship for the Eighteenth Century 207
Simon White

List of Contributors 227

Index 231

List of Figures

Fig. 1 Philopappus Monument Façade Layout 27
Fig. 2 Antiochus IV and the sella curulis 30

Northeastern University Press, 1992) and in *Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

45. Bernard Shaw, *Shaw on Shakespeare*, ed. Edwin Wilson (New York: Applause Books, 2002), 14. See Adams xvi, 63–69.
46. This discussion of *The Merchant of Venice* is a considerably shorter version of an analysis that occurs in Jonathan Hart's *The Poetics of Otherness* (New York: Palgrave, 2015).
47. See *The Merchant of Venice*, III.i. 58–73 in *The Riverside Shakespeare*.
48. The Merchant of Venice, III.i. 77–78, *The Riverside Shakespeare*.
49. All citations and quotations from *The Tempest* are from William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. Frank Kermode (1954; London: Methuen, 1958). This is a considerably shorter discussion of this play related to that included in *Columbus, Shakespeare and the Interpretation of the New World* (New York: Palgrave, 2003).

Tobias Smollett's Literary Redefinition of Kingship for the Eighteenth Century

Simon White

Kings, Queens and Foreign Imports

The Oxford English Dictionary (Simpson and Weiner 1989) defines 'kingship' in four ways: as 'the dominion or territory of a king', 'the office and dignity of being a king', 'the rule of a king; monarchical government' and 'the personality of a king'. The term 'king' originates from the loose family association of Saxon 'kinship'. The terms 'kingship' and 'queenship' therefore comprise two different emphases: the office of the monarch, or rather the monarchy, and the attributes of the individual who inhabits it; and the problem is that these are less natural concomitants than they are conflicting interpretations resulting from historical changes in power distribution. Foucault (2000, p. 31) traced the path in Europe by which individual chieftains or barons expanded their first-among-equals status into something more extensive and less easy to challenge, using primarily an arrogation of the power to judge, hitherto decided by combat or culture, and the author even offered the Assyrian example as a model of embodied authority to which these putative kings might aspire. True power, however, which is immune to the assassin's dagger or disappointed associate's well-placed

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barrel of gunpowder, is diffused too widely through a system for its flow to be staunched at one fixed locus or at the juncture of an act of violence. Such is the quality of 'monarchical government' in which the figurehead is really only what that title suggests, an interchangeable and virtual symbol of power without necessarily being central to its flow, direction or exercise.

Smollett's position and problem are uniquely proximal to the nexus of historical shift. The writer was engaged in the cultural transformation which took place from the early to the late eighteenth century from literary, academic and political standpoints, and the position of the monarchy served as a bellwether for this change. Smollett's period of literary and academic output, from the 1740s to the 1760s, represented an extraordinarily active and unstable period of what Foucault might term 'radical discontinuity' (2002, pp. 4–5). Two systems, and the dynasties that represented them, were grinding against each other. On the one hand was the old, feudal, French-speaking, Tory, rural agricultural, absolutist, Scottish Stuart dynasty; while on the other lay the new, commercially driven, German-speaking, Whig, urban mercantile, constitutionally limited, Hanoverian dynasty. This was no merely abstract dualism for a 'North Briton' in London while swaggering pro-English, anti-Scots mobs roamed the Capital after defeat of the last major Stuart uprising in 1745 (Knapp 1949). Trevelyan (1965, p. 338) lamented that after the Charles II and James II, 'the glory of the court grew dim'. The last Stuart, Anne, Trevelyan characterized as 'the invisible queen' ensconced in St. James's Palace. Her court, like that of the German-speaking royals who succeeded her, was no longer 'the microcosm and throbbing heart of England', and certainly fell far short of its constitution and prominence under the latter Charles, where it was 'not only the scene of much pleasure, liberty and scandal, [but] it was also the center of patronage for politics, fashion, literature, art, learning, invention, company-promoting, and a hundred other activities of the king's eager subjects seeking notoriety or reward'. Charles's court served as the epitome of Stuart rule which had commenced in England with his grandfather James I in England. His court was neither ancillary nor understated, but rather it was central to the political process as he occupied and controlled the political locus of power, so it could never be said of Charles's reign, as it was of Anne's, that her apparent absence made little difference to the great and the good in 'sedan chairs and six-horse coaches in the Mall' because '[i]t was more to the point that in the other direction the Houses of Parliament were but a few minutes' walk away', together, of course, with the abundant flow of ministerial patronage which issued forth.

The terms 'Stuart' and 'success' seem an odd coupling, perhaps, for the family history savors more of tragedy than triumph. Massie (2011, p. 3) chose the Duke of Monmouth, presumptive heir to Charles II to lead his biography of the Stuarts because he represented the apotheosis of their flaws: '[H]e was in many ways characteristic of that remarkable family: he charmed easily, inspired devotion, failed his followers, showed himself to be possessed of lamentable judgment, and ran headlong into misfortune. He was Stuart through and through; Stuart to the bone'. Even one who was not one of their legitimate members could still tap into the force of Stuart magnetism and charisma in some measure, therefore. The diminution of monarchy in style and scale was brought home starkly with the arrival of George I. Something had changed in the culture of monarchy in the eighteenth century such that the exemplary punishments and egocentricity of the previous dynasty seemed to be of a time removed much further than was really the case. Old-fashioned spectacular monarchy, given to the greatest of deeds, the foulest of perfidies and sudden flashes of Foucauldian barbarity as seen in the pages of Smollett's four-volume *History of England*, was out; and new-fangled constitutionally limited monarchy, with its smaller, safer and less remarkable political personages, was in. No monarch could now maintain of kings, as James I had, that 'even by God himself they are called gods' (as cited in Prothero 1906, p. 293). Tobias Smollett witnessed the rise of the next long-lived dynasty and by his time the Stuart past was more than inscribed history, for it had attained the unassailable proportions of myth and was beyond conventional horizons of respectability or responsibility. James I's confident assertion of his divine right was belied by the violent deaths of his parents, but his public face was more seductive than the mundane profiles of his businesslike German successors, whose banal squabbles never culminated in similar spectacle or horror even when their regimes appeared to be in equal peril.

The Stuart myth had wider appeal than just Scots and Catholic loyalists. George III (Langford 2000) and Victoria (Massie 2011) expressed their enchanted admiration in word and deed, so if royals fell under the spell of the majesty of the Stuarts, Smollett could not be condemned for allied partiality. The young George III went so far as to have Johan Zoffany paint him in Stuart garb in the most egregious attempt to snatch some Stuart resplendence (Zoffany 1770). Smollett's lowland Scottish roots, and his upbringing near rural Leven Water, gave him a naturally Tory-leaning, traditional stance, as well as the default position of suspicion of

political change and radicalism in general, according to his seminal literary biographer (Knapp 1949). Yet Smollett's view of the Stuarts cannot be as blithely sympathetic and uncomplicated as Victoria's, for he does not have the luxury of a century's distance from the growing pains of the new Union and existential threats to its establishment. His authorial period was suspended between the dynastic horns of a succession dilemma, one that percolated through all levels of society and divided the political parties between Stuart-leaning Tories and Hanoverian-supporting Whigs. Even this concealed a broader division between alternative cultural British identities, as represented by the two families: one was feudal, French, ancient, romantic and dominated by individuals both outstanding and infamous; the other was commercial, continental German, contemporaneous, prosaic and dominated by the supporting 'system' not the living figure presiding over its center—namely, the monarch. Smollett, like many others, was drawn in opposing directions.

Smollett's *History* confirms that the author's definition of kings and queens was of distinctly Stuart flavor (Smollett 1810). One contemporary critic commented that 'this writer's merit is rather that of an ingenious novelist than of an accurate historian' (cited in Kelly 1987, p. 135). The 'extremely entertaining writing' was one fault of the work, and the other was its 'Toryism'. The key to both attraction and fault is Smollett's concise yet powerfully characterized and dramatized vignettes describing British kings and queens, which, while being balanced appraisals, are also intensely concentrated, evocative and near-visceral standalone pieces that would be the envy of any obituary writer. The power of their appeal lies in Smollett's very close and personal depictions of royals, which no doubt could come across as essentially novelistic treatment, ill-suited to the academic historian. Here, Smollett's monarchs are individuals who define their office rather than being circumscribed by it. This interpretation based on the *History* cannot apply to the literary works, however, for, perhaps due to the competing conditions of culture, identity and economy upon the writer, there exist several permutations of monarchs and monarchy from the Jacobean giant endowed with divine right at the beginning of the 1600s through to his constitutionally shrunken counterparts in the latter 1700s. This chapter takes three works as exemplary of depictions of the monarchy: his first abortive dramatic opus, written some decade before its actual performance in 1750, *The Regicide*; his first enormously successful novel *Roderick Random* (1748); and his last, and critically best-regarded, epistolary novel, *Humphrey Clinker* (1771). In their various depictions, these works exhibit the modulations of Smollett's view of monarchy from a power-grabbing baronial figure and first-among-equals, who claimed to be an arbitrator with both arbitrating and arbitrary power, to the disquieting flux that resulted when seventeenth-century absolutism jostled with eighteenth-century patronage, finally to a surprisingly novel redefinition and analysis of kingship in the St. James's Palace sections of *Humphrey Clinker*.

The Regicide: Inspired Autocrat or Dangerous Tyrant

Smollett's first dramatic and literary work was his only one to focus almost exclusively on the naked use and abuse of power by a king, and his rivals, who compete for the support of the fickle nobles in Scotland's comparatively decentralized and weak state structure. This work has received almost no critical attention, however, probably for two reasons: first, by his own admission in the preface, the author was only a teenager when he wrote it, 'having finished a Tragedy at the Age of Eighteen', and so, it falls under the uninviting category of juvenilia; and second, it is, in terms of plot, character, development and especially diction, unremittingly terrible. Nevertheless, quality aside, the play affords the opportunity for the king and his chief rival contender, Athol, to have set-piece debates, which though stilted are still of essence in determining the young author's view of kings. The play is fairly loosely based upon the largely anecdotal history of the murder of the first James and third Stuart to occupy the Scottish throne. What was originally a simple assassination and coup which failed to garner the requisite support to sustain momentum is transformed into a discussion of legitimacy and the personal attributes of the person on the throne. Smollett's James, referred to only as 'king', is a metaphorical and physical expression of power in addition to a fountain pouring forth illiberal constitutional invective while abusing his disloyal rebellious subjects. The play opens in the middle of an insurrection with the king in his castle with limited forces available to him and the rebels camped upon the plain beyond preparing to attack. The fighting takes place offstage, the king's forces miraculously prevail, and consequently the royal knights start their Bacchanalian celebrations. During the partying, they neglect the security of the castle and those within, and a rump force of rebels is able to mount a surprise attack killing the king, but ultimately failing to supplant his dynasty, for their leader, Athol, is

captured, and the infant James II will succeed his murdered father, under the protection and stewardship of one of his most trusted advisors for the duration of his minority.

What is more interesting is the language employed by the imperiled yet still strident king. The king echoes the real James VI of Scotland (and James I of England), with his startlingly simple definition of his office as sole source and central locus of power within the state, just as James's before Parliament in 1610. The real king's words seem to be voiced by the dramatic king even to the extent that the fictional James I uses one of the real James I's favorite Scottish terms:

> The Commonweal
> Has been consulted.—Tenderness and Zeal
> Became the Parent. Those have nought avail'd.—
> Now let Correction speak the King incens'd! (Smollett 1749, 2.2)

The king is furious at the temerity and presumption of the rebels and their supporters who dare to impugn his legitimacy and dispute his authority, and in his anger, he resorts to more Jacobean imagery invoking divine right before their first military engagement: 'Let Heaven decide/Between me and my Foes' (Smollett 1749, 2.2). The king will not brook any compromises, and he ignores the queen's pleas for him to stay back from the fight. As both figurehead and military commander rather than hero, he must lead by example and be seen to be at the front. This behavior makes that of the two conspiratorial leaders look even more reprehensible after defeat on the battlefield forces them to find other ways to prevail. Lewis (2003, p. 53) may be right with his 'sub-Shakespearean stinker' quip about the play, for there is whiff of the playwright's Machiavellian tribunes in Athol's and Grime's strategy and tactics:

> *Grime*
> Our plan pursu'd
> A purpose more assur'd:–With Conquest crown'd,
> Our Aim indeed, a fairer Wreath had worn:
> But that deny'd, on Terms of darker Hue
> Our Swords shall force Success!—
> *Athol*
> Th'approaching Scene
> Demands our utmost Art! Not with tame Sighs
> To bend before his Throne, and supplicate
> His Clemency, like Slaves; nor to provoke

> With Pride of Speech, his Anger half appeas'd:
> But with Submission mingle (as we speak)
> A conscious Dignity of Soul, prepar'd
> For all Events.— (Smollett 1749, 3.7)

This brief exchange occurs just before the play's big confrontation scene with the king, and it is surprising how what would otherwise seem reasonable thought and mollifying address can be depicted as villainous intent. Smollett is going to kill his king, but there is sympathy with the absolutist as he is enraged by the parity which Athol assumes as he asks to 're-unite our interests' 'On terms that equally become us both' (Smollett 1749, 3.8). The king cannot believe the arrogance of his servant, asking, 'Dar'st thou to my Face,/Impeach my Conduct/ ... ungrateful Traitor?'. The king's anger is turning apoplectic with Athol's answer of a refusal to 'crawl' to his monarch or to serve as the king's 'footstool' (Smollett 1749, 3.8). The play still takes the king's side as Athol seems to make a subtle—for the play at least—distinction between office and man when he goes on to contend that 'Not with you, But with your Measures ill advis'd I warr'd', objecting to the 'arbitrary Pow'r' and 'lawless' measures of the overly extensive power of the individual person of the king. This debate could develop into an interesting exchange on the nature of absolute power and even represent an implicit dramatic rejection of James I's claims of royal prerogative. However, the play never follows up on this possibility. The king is goaded into a reply by Athol's charge of his excessive and arbitrary exercise of power and, out of context, it sounds as if the king is arguing that his ends justified his means, and that it was service to the people that was his motivation and his justification for seizing and expanding monarchical power:

> I found your miserable state reduc'd
> To Ruin and Despair:– Your Cities drench'd
> In mutual Slaughter, desolate your Plains:
> All Order banished, and all Arts decay'd:–
> No industry, save what with Hands impure
> Distress'd the Commonwealth:–No Laws in Force
> To screen the Poor and check the guilty great;
> While squalid Famine join'd her Sister Fiend
> Devouring Pestilence, to curse the Scene!—
> I came,–I toil'd,– reform'd, –redress'd the whole:
> And lo, my Recompense! (Smollett 1749, 3.8)

The king appears to merit his power by his reformist agenda, but it only seems so to an enlightened political audience. In fact, he claims to be the savior of the state, or more precisely that this salvation was only accomplished through his auspices, which are of divine origin. It is less an articulation of reform and more of a kingly power-grab, reminiscent of the English king James I's vow to rule according to the 'common weal' and not the 'common will'. It is interesting that in a subsequent scene, the character, who is once more central to events and unchallenged by his audience, follows the Foucauldian model for extending the monarchy's reach. The king arrogates to himself the power to judge a dispute between two feuding nobles, replacing a trial by combat with an inquisition by a third figure, himself. This never actually comes to pass, since the assassination follows before he has the chance to put his examination into effect. The play nevertheless endorses the version of extensive monarchy to which the king aspires, even up to the point of the exemplary punishments associated with such a system, for where a king is the living body at the center of power, the assassin's blade is deadly not just to him but also to the state he personifies. This explains the kind of extreme and brutal punishments meted out to the guilty where excruciating agony is designed in to be seen and absorbed by spectators and chroniclers, of the kind which still retain the capacity to shock and to impress, like Foucault's choice of the Damiens case (1995, pp. 3–5). The play wastes few words as Angus, the loyalist who apprehends Athol, disabuses the would-be usurper about his hope of being crowned: 'Thou shalt be crown'd–/ An Iron Crown, intensely hot, shall gird/Thy hoary temples', and the only crowd cheering will be pronouncing him 'King of Traitors' (Smollett 1749, 5.8). Athol's fate will be every bit as horrifying as that of Damiens, as the play concludes first with the assurance that the rightful—divinely and earthly—heir will take the real crown, and with the closing couplet endorsing divine right of kings. Angus plaintively outlines the corruption and criminality which motivate and in turn flow out from the crime of regicide, 'Till Heav'n at length ... levels all its tow'ring Schemes in Dust' (Smollett 1749, 5.8). The king occupies the center of power and his presence constitutes it; he reigns and he rules, an absolute an unchallenged figure, and in *The Regicide*, it is going to stay that way.

Roderick Random: A Microcosm of the Hanoverian State

Georgian culture may permeate *Roderick Random*, though, in a work of some 400 pages which spans territories on both sides of the Channel and the Atlantic, the king, the center, symbol, and occasionally prime cause of the wars that the hero is travelling to fight, is mentioned only on several occasions. George II receives scant attention during the hero's presence at the battle of Dettingen, even though he was on the field commanding the troops, which was the last time that a British monarch took a direct role in the fighting (Cannon 2002). One might expect that a king wielding his sword on the field, leading his forces, would be too good an opportunity to miss, for the Hanoverian George was displaying just the kind of hands-on authoritative leadership which was implicitly endorsed in *The Regicide*. Where the king's name is invoked—be it by Random's uncle Tom Bowling in a plea for redress against the injustice committed against him by a dictatorial and incompetent captain, or by an angry seaman who blames the Cartagena military debacle on the court's reliance on poor advice from sycophantic ignoramuses, or even by Random in commending the king's good conduct to prisoners after battle—Smollett appears to be playing to the British gallery in its suspicion of the Georgian ascendancy and of its monarchs, who were definitely not above and beyond a position of criticism from their subjects.

Tom Bowling regards the king as a judge and a personal protector. Rather than speaking truth to power, Bowling's version of the king delivers power against untruth; he is the kind of paternalist beneficent model that James I had posited to Parliament just over a century before. Bowling, unfortunately, is going to be disabused of his illusions as a salutary warning to those who hold faith in the feudal ideal of a benign chieftain. Bowling's service in the navy, and his support for his nephew's education, come to an abrupt halt, 'being obliged to sheer off for killing my captain, which I did fairly on the beach ... having received his fire, and returned it, which went through his body' (Smollett 1981, p. 22). As Random learns when he joins the very same ship upon which Bowling had served, his uncle, guardian and sponsor had been forced into the duel by the boorish Captain Oakhum, who was spoiling for a fight. The matter may have been decided by means of an honest duel, but the captain's associates did not play fair,

so Bowling had to flee for fear of being charged with mutiny or murder, or both, not knowing that Oakhum survived his wound. Bowling still seems optimistic: he hopes 'to be restored in a little time' because he has sent a direct letter of appeal to 'his majesty who (God bless him) will not suffer an honest tar to be wronged' (Smollett 1981, p. 22). Half the book has passed when Random runs into his uncle in France, but Bowling is still engaged in the task of trying to clear his name, saying little for the king's fatherly intervention or care for his servant and vassal. Even in the original letter, Bowling unknowingly betrays the real reason that there has been no royal pardon when he refers to the 'parliamentary interest' of Captain Oakhum. This—to Bowling innocuous—term was one not employed during Stuart's tenure of the throne, because influence had not yet undergone the commoditization that occurred under the first two Georges, the invention in the popular mind of their first minister, Prime Minister Robert Walpole. The very title conveys the transfer in power from royal prerogative to ministerial patronage, in what became known as the 'Robinocracy' of the early Hanoverian period, where the commercial interests took the reins of power away from the vested interests of landowners who had held sway up to that point. This construct was a bête noir of Tory-leaning country gentry, who hated the new Whig oligarchy and the monarchy it utilized, but used the metaphorical filters of foreignness, urbanization or luxury as code for attacking their political foes (Langford 2000, p. 19). The first two Georges were exponents of the diminution, or Trevelyan's 'dimming', of royal presence from an empowered individual with agency and will, and range to arbitrate disputes and deliver judgments. From Foucault's image of a rapacious and arrogating figure of medieval feudalism, the force which wrenched power from contesting barons to a sufficient density that power gravitated toward the person at the center, Georgian Britain was witness to the move toward 'Robinocrats', who pull influence and authority back from that figure, creating a method of government through which power is once again diffused, but without any modern patina of democratization. Judgment here was no longer a matter of individual right in both senses of the word, but an entity that was subject to the advantages and vagaries of party and political favor. Bowling never gets the decision he seeks not because he is in the right or in the wrong; he has simply applied for assistance from a specie of king who has ceased to exist, for the George II in Random is not what his Stuart forerunner had been, for while both kings reigned, the later incarnation does not 'rule' in any sense his forbear would understand as exercising royal prerogative.

The other two locations in which the king comes in for direct treatment to a greater and lesser degree are the chapters concerning the abortive Cartagena expedition, and the battle of Dettingen. If *The Regicide* is any gauge of the younger Smollett's view of kingship, the degree of military or naval success or the absence of it should represent a clear metaphor for the political health of the government and its figurehead. If this is so, Random paints a bleak picture. Oakhum is adept only at turning minor infractions into major issues. His arrogant and rank incompetence leads him into a maelstrom of self-inflicted disasters, such as when he orders his gunners to target an allied French ship, rather than the Spanish enemy. Several hours and 28 casualties later, he admits sullenly that he had misidentified the other ship's standard. Oakhum's self-defeating actions are bad enough, but they only serve as entrée to the main course of incompetence shown by his commanders, which results in the abject failure of the campaign. Smollett gives the forensic examination of the rout over to Random's fellow officer and experienced seaman Jack Rattlin in Chapter 32. Placing the ships too far out to the sea puts the English fleet in even greater danger, according to Rattlin, for it was open not only to a cannonade from the fortress but also to hostile fire from the Spanish ships and neighboring fortifications as well. When the British force had finally taken one fort, it stopped without any apparent reason. This welcome lull in the hostilities then gave the Spanish valuable time to regroup at the castle in sufficient strength to repulse the British assault when it resumed. The motivation for a later attack upon the Spanish position is compared to 'that which induced Don Quixote to attack the windmill'. Random's judgment is more vernacularly expressed. In the 'vulgar idiom', the nation could be said to 'hang an a[rs]e at Cartagena' (Smollett 1981, p. 187). Through Rattlin's interpolated narrative, Smollett can make his own position and experience clear. Ten days' delay in the initial onslaught surrendered the element of surprise and condemned the campaign to failure. The sting comes when reasons are mulled and responsibility apportioned, and it is to be felt at the top of the military and political establishment:

> Perhaps they [the commanders] were loth to risk their best troops on such desperate service; or, may be the colonels and field officers of the old corps, who, generally speaking, enjoyed their commissions as sinecures or pensions, for some domestick services rendered to the court, refused to embark in such a dangerous and precarious undertaking; for which, no doubt, they are to be much commended. (Smollett 1981, p. 180)

The 'court' had by its prerogative given, or sold, the officers their positions, which led to the 'commendable', or indecisive and incompetent, leadership. One must note that it is not the king who is named, blamed and shamed, but reference to his 'court' makes the target abundantly clear. At various points in his service on the Thunder, Random serves under an octogenarian who promptly dies, an open homosexual who never appears on the bridge, and a psychotic coward who tortures his crew for pleasure, all of whom are beneficiaries of the system of government by patronage, or ministerial largesse. When the king is praised for his good conduct toward prisoners after Dettingen in the other direct reference to royalty, the rich irony here is that Random only knows this because he has been forced onto the other side by the cruel and unusual treatment he received from His Majesty's navy, in the form of its politically and financially appointed officers.

Random is not at war with the Hanoverian on the throne—though his service of king 'Lewis' at this point would technically mean just that—although he, like Athol, is at war with the system that he represents, or presides over. Boucé (1976) noted the abundance of societies in microcosm in the Smollettian novel, including the army, the navy, the school, the aristocracy and the court system. Random is not fighting the king, but he is rebelling, occasionally violently, against his appointed representatives. More than just youthful rebellion, or an overly contrary attitude, these kicks against the system are indicative of the rural gentleman, for that is what Random remains, and his antipathy to the encroachment of the newly defined institutional monarchy upon his world. These locations—school, jail, army, navy and the rest—are precisely those channels which Michel Foucault (1995, pp. 137–9) singled out as inculcating docility in the new eighteenth-century individual, so Random's conflicts in these institutional settings make clear his resistance to the new roles, of subject and master, which they embody and perpetuate. From this perspective, Smollett may well be seen as the inveterate Tory reactionary whom some contemporary detractors vilified in reviews.

Yet this would be too simple for Smollett's novel. Things have developed much further since his royal tragedy, *The Regicide*. The House of Hanover is not given much direct treatment, but other monarchies are, most notably the Bourbons. Random may be serving on the French side before the battle of Dettingen, but that does not mean he has accepted French absolutism, as illustrated by his fractious exchange with the 'Gascon' soldier who tries to commend Random for his support. The proud French soldier

asserts that his sacrifice will 'contribute to the glory of the king', and that his 'wounds' will 'establish his [the king's] glory'. Random's response is abundantly and rudely clear:

> I was amazed at the infatuation that possessed him; and could not help expressing my astonishment at the absurdity of a rational being, who thinks himself highly honoured in being permitted to encounter abject poverty, oppression, famine, disease, mutilation, and evident death, merely to gratify the vicious ambition of a prince, by whom his sufferings were disregarded, and his name utterly unknown. (Smollett 1981, p. 245)

Random goes on to remark that he would try to look for any positives in terms of stoical fortitude of bearings one's lot, or of patriotism and sacrifice to his country, but he cannot accept the bizarre motivation that the Gascon evinces, which for Random is nothing more than 'to sooth the barbarous pride of a fellow creature, his superior in nothing but the power he derived from the submission of such wretches as he' (Smollett 1981, p. 246). Far from feudal serf or abject vassal to his Stuart overlord, Random sounds like a radical, as he counters the Frenchman's devotion to the king with his British freedom, insisting that 'every man has a natural right to liberty', that when kings go too far, their subjects have the right to hold them accountable, and that the 'rebellions' instigated by 'the slaves of arbitrary power' were in fact 'glorious efforts to rescue that independence which was their birthright, from the claws of usurping ambition'. Random would seem to take Athol's line of speaking truth to power here, were it not for the fact that Athol wants only to replace James, not reform his office. Random's abstracted king can no more exist by divine right than can the constitutional German monarch. Perhaps it comes as no surprise, therefore, that the French king occupies a position in the novel that his British counterpart cannot. George II's power is dissipated through a network of offices and the individuals who fill them: Louis the XIV's authority is not. A discussion of the French state is of necessity a discussion of Louis. Louis the absolutist must appropriate everything belonging to his subjects, whether their bravery, wounds, sacrifice or death, just as the Gascon insists, for he is the embodiment of the state, and the people are a part of his body politic, exactly as envisaged by James I in the previous century. That George cannot occupy this position in the novel and that he is conspicuously absent from the narrative implicitly endorse the system of constitutional monarchy that Random appears to asperse in his encounters. That George cannot own

his state and his subjects in the same way is the strongest affirmation of the system of constitutional monarchy which Random so often vilifies when he encounters one of its many manifestations. Kingship has moved on in Smollett's novel to an extent that it can never turn back to Bourbon's or to Stuart's conceptions of what a monarchy should be. Dorothy Marshall (1962, p. 43) leads one chapter of her eighteenth-century history with a satirical mangling of the biblical aphorism stating, 'Sufficient unto the day as yet were the politics thereof'. On the one hand, this reads as mere tautology, but reflecting on the reactionary Random's inability to accept the Frenchman's definition of monarchy which strongly resembles that given by James I a century before, one can see that it means much more than that, possibly even as far as redefinition of the state's role.

Humphrey Clinker: No Longer Royals from Afar

Although Smollett's last epistolary novel uses many narrators, the correspondence is dominated by the curmudgeonly, occasionally irascible, but fair-minded valetudinarian Matthew Bramble and his more reasonable, but crucially more naive, nephew, Jery Melford. Other characters seem to be there for comic effect, especially Bramble's sister, Tabitha, and her maid, Win Jenkins. The maid is at her stylistic best describing the royal family and using her powers of felicitously phonetic spelling very much to that family's cost: 'And I have seen the Park, and the paleass of Saint Gimses, and the king's and queen's magisterial pursing, and the sweet young princes, and the hillyfents, and pye-bald ass, and all the rest of the royal family' (Smollett 1983, p. 102). Including in the royal family a 'pye-bald ass' may be one of Win Jenkins's finer unintentional flourishes, but despite the comedy, she is drawing attention to something new about the palace, namely its status as a tourist venue, with the zoo in St. James's Park, the elephants and the zebras, and occasionally the royal family as well. What Win Jenkins accomplishes with humor, Matt Bramble and Jery Melford demonstrate by their close observation. The fact is they can all get closer to the king and queen, for while the court is still exclusive, it is not now the distant floating island that Jonathan Swift had satirically included in *Gulliver's Travels* (Swift 1987). The Hanoverian royals are by the later eighteenth century at once more proximal and more available to their populace. Bramble displays this in the very architecture of his figurative language. Bramble uses a royal reference without the ceremony or the symbolism that the Stuarts would evoke, and surely without the romanticism, during his meditations upon the new town of Bath. Bramble hates

the spa town for its cult of fashion, its architecture, its rampant commercialism, its 'luxury' and its new social fluidity. Bath, like London, functions as a metaphor for the new Britain governed by Whigs and presided over by the Georges. It is with a barbed undertone, therefore, that, as he laments the jarring mixture of bustle and of restraint, he should choose such a simile: '[H]ere we have nothing but noise, tumult and hurry; with the fatigue and slavery of maintaining a ceremonial more stiff, formal, and oppressive than the etiquette of a German elector' (Smollett 1983, p. 32). Bramble is an unabashed snob, given to long rants about the nouveau riche and its abrasive habits, about social decline into unbridled commercialism and about the acquisitive new mercantile class who use Bath as a place to flash their cash. He dwells on their excruciating lapses in decorum as well as their disgusting and faddish health regimens. He has done all this while, with supreme irony, he confirms that breakdown in hierarchy by his own choice of linguistic figure. The Georges—for no other 'German electors' are possible—are mundane, not exceptional, in that they inhabit not a divine plain of existence, but the same one as everyone else in Bramble's perceived chaos of later eighteenth-century society, and so they can be plucked from their thrones for a comparison as readily as any other figure might be. Bramble's figure is an affective one: he is behaving with the crassitude, linguistically, that the inhabitants of Bath exhibit in their behavior. Bramble is what he condemns.

This proximity of the royal family in general and the monarch in particular differentiates the later novel *Clinker* from *Random* two decades before. Critics have noted that Matt Bramble's character is in some ways Smollett's own (Knapp 1983), though he may be closer to a middle-aged incarnation of Roderick Random, and with this novel the author returns to the first-person narrative form which gave him his first and biggest literary hit too. Despite similarities and some direct connections—Smollett uses Clinker to revisit characters from his past works giving these sections a crepuscular feel—the work is radically different in its perception and use of the Hanoverians, and this becomes most acutely clear in Jery Melford's letter dealing with their visit to the court, the heart of the establishment, in St. James's Park. Their guide on this mini tour of the court is Melford's fellow university alumnus, Barton. As a neophyte member of the political nation, Barton displays wide-eyed naïveté and bestows eager praise on all and sundry who are connected to it, including the king, the queen, the Duke of Cumberland, the Earl of Bute, the Duke of Newcastle and even John Wilkes. Barton's non-judgmental presentation of this political slide show of the great and not necessarily good is robbed of all the

puffery by Bramble's near monosyllabic commentary. Where Barton's scattergun flattery has George III variously as 'most amiable sovereign', a veritable 'Augustus' and a 'Vespasian', Bramble is quick to modify the young intern's depiction and restoring the more homely figure of 'Farmer George' to the monarch. George may not be a giant of monarchy, but Bramble is not damning by faint praise in his perspective on the king: 'A very honest, kind-hearted gentleman ... he's too good for the times. A king of England should have a spice of the devil in his composition' (Smollett 1983, p. 91). Perhaps Bramble, too, to some extent has fallen under the Stuart spell in its Carolinian incarnation. More importantly, this backhanded compliment reduces the status of George in two ways. First, he is a 'gentleman', a social level with which no Stuart was familiar, and second, his political acumen is being aspersed, for now the king is a politician working under constraint within the institution of constitutional monarchy, something James I had sententiously rejected in his address to Parliament. The power of the king may have come full circle, with George III once more first among equals, except now it is the 'Robinocracy,' not disputatious barons, with whom he must compromise. It is possible also that the king has shrunk to something less. In Bramble's depiction he appears to be powerless because he is now an office within a system, and a tool for use by those who would wield power. In this situation, the king hardly retains any individuality at all, save for the 'oppressive' one of the 'German elector', of course.

The rub concealed within Bramble's comments comes slightly later, when he is in conversation with the slightly senile Duke of Newcastle, a former prime minister. Newcastle mistakes Bramble for a former political ally, and, as Bramble disabuses him of his error, the reader sees the real reason that Bramble cannot share the ingenuous and dazzled approach of their guide to the Palace and the Park. He explains, allowing for the elderly statesman's infirmity, 'that his name was Bramble and that he had the honour to sit in the last parliament but one of the late king [George II] as representative for the borough of Dykymraig' (Smollett 1983, p. 93). This is the first time that any mention has been made of Bramble's proximity to power. Bramble attests to the fact that he was indeed a Member of Parliament, and therefore has no need or time for the Banter's meretricious vignettes. He is the first of Smollett's heroes to know politics by its practice. Unlike Random, Bramble has viewed the system from the inside looking out, and has seen the 'stiff' Hanoverians in their court with sufficient familiarity to employ them as a ready metaphor. Royalty is different

in *Clinker* precisely because it is not special, nor has it been accorded any unique status as above the fray, or been invested with great significance, as when Bowling invokes the king, or when the playwright dare not even use his name in *The Regicide*. In short, the monarch here lacks the majesty of his forerunners even if he still claims that title.

What has happened to Bramble may be a symptom of the changes wrought in Smollett's own political outlook. Boucé warns of the dangers of 'biocriticism' or of reading an author's life into his work (as cited in Butler 2007, p. 138). Nevertheless, Smollett was employed in the service of the Earl of Bute's ill-fated administration in the 1760s, and this closeness to the center of power must surely have had some influence upon his much changed depiction of the apex of government in the novel he wrote at the end of that decade, *Clinker*. Smollett had been excoriated in the literary and political journalistic world for his involvement with Bute and the unpopular policies he pursued, 'traduced by malice, persecuted by faction, abandoned by false patrons', leaving him with the bitter aftertaste of real politicking (Smollett 1979, p. 15). This party–political experience as a result of his short stint as Tory writer and activist does seem to inform the letters in *Clinker* profoundly. His view of the court is radically changed in the last novel, as is the king who occupies his position rather than defining it. Indeed, Smollett's only direct experience of the political system was of constitutional monarchy where the king can play a part but does not represent the whole, where it is the office not the living body in which now power resides; and, moreover, that diminution is a good and necessary thing. The culture of king 'Lewis' that Roderick Random disparages while in France is not something which can ever resurface in the post-Union Britain. All power's coalescence around one fallible figure without external checks on their decisions, endowed with fierce independence and wide latitude for action produced the vicissitudes of Stuart history, after all.

Smollett passed through divergent incarnations of monarchical figureheads. The first, his ill-fated Scottish dramatic character, could be voicing sentiments of his namesake James I of England. The second, a chimerical figure, shifts between the feudal model of prerogative without boundaries and the constitutional one of a monarch within a largely corrupt system, a form of commoditized royalty. The final figure is that of a person who inhabits their office, an individual who has character, albeit supplied by the mischievous phonetics of a maid, but whose character can never represent the essence of government as it had done before. The moderation

of James's absolutist state was contingent upon the intellectual rationalist who was the king, not upon any mitigation through constitutional checks. James I may have claimed absolute right before parliament, but his more private sentiment should have been a salutary warning to his son and heir that 'the prerogative is a secret which ryves [tears] with the stretching of it' (as cited in Massie 2011, p. 189). Indeed, Massie goes on to claim that as a constitutional monarch, Charles could have been resplendent, attractive and popular. By *Clinker*, it is clear who wields the power and who symbolizes it even in the crude terms of number of paragraphs devoted to each. Smollett's *History* retains this privileging of character over politics in the descriptions of kings and queens, while the novels take a new political path, reflecting that genre's intrinsically progressive bent. The development of the novel not only occurred in the same time frame as the transformation of the body politic but also frequently directly addressed the change 'from a sovereign head, who confers rights according to particular stations, to a legislative body representing citizens by whose consent that body governs and whose rights, newly deemed "natural," it is designed to protect' (Lanser 2005, p. 483). Lanser offered Daniel Defoe, Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin in support, and no doubt Smollett could be added to this list. The monarch, by the last of Smollett's novels, is a consensual figure, and the rights associated with privilege have changed to assumptions about the 'natural' rights of the people. Of course, Smollett is no democratic revolutionary, for the constituency of that political nation is as select as some of its chief exponents, but he is radical not reactionary, looking forward toward a united, stable constitutional future rather than back at the unpredictable, and occasionally brilliant, Renaissance monarchs of the feudal past.

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