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***Secretary in Fashion and Love-Letters: A Study of Socio-cultural  
and Pragmatic-linguistic Features in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century  
English Language***

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's Degree (MRes) in English  
Language

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## Abstract

Epistolary manuals are conspicuous historical documents for the pedagogy of letter writing; however, their actual usage as manuals by letter writers is unknown. *Secretary in Fashion* by Serre (1668), an epistolary manual, and *Love-Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister* (1684), an epistolary novel attributed to Behn, both give insights into epistolary conventions. Their inception and nature is interesting, considering their historical context. Despite the Restoration of Charles II, 17<sup>th</sup> century England was in a confused political state; as a result, texts regarding social convention or politics interested contemporary readers (the novel is inspired by a scandal of Lord Grey, an ardent Whig opposing Charles II).

Past epistolary studies focus on 18<sup>th</sup> rather than 17<sup>th</sup> century manuals; the latter is typically used as supplementary information. Similarly, past epistolary fiction studies focus on 18<sup>th</sup> century texts; moreover, linguistic studies on Behn and the novel are deficient. Thus, this study addresses the research questions: 1) What are the socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features represented in *Secretary in Fashion*? 2) What are the socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features represented in *Love-Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister*, and do any of these features correlate with the features represented in *Secretary in Fashion*? How far do the characteristic linguistic features of *Love-Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister* correlate with the practices recommended by the manual?

Both texts were qualitatively analysed from an historical pragmatic perspective, which observes the potential effects of the socio-cultural and historical context. Also, as the texts concern shared discourses, comparisons were made with Gricean and Politeness Theory. The results show that the manual is a typical 17<sup>th</sup> century epistolary manual, aligning particularly with the *Academies of Complements*, as it concerns the social conventions of the gentry. The novel mainly upheld instructions on form and matter; deviations occurred due to the amatory nature of some letters, and the narrative force affecting the style.

Unfortunately, neither research question elucidates the actual usage of manuals. However, this study does show the epistolary practices of two writers, within specific contexts. It reveals that their 17<sup>th</sup> century English language use is affected by socialisation, in terms of social conventions concerning social rank, age, and gender; therefore, context varies language use. Also, their popularity reveals the interests of the 17<sup>th</sup> century society. Interest in epistolary-related texts, surely piques the interest of the modern reader as to why such epistolary-related texts were interesting.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces this thesis by discussing: the subject of this study (1.1), the research questions (1.2), the methodology (1.3), the justification for the use of pragmatic theories concerning Grice's co-operative principle and politeness theory, and their basic principles (1.4), notes concerning the study's main texts (1.5), the structure of the study (1.6); it concludes with the literature review (1.7).

### 1.1 The Subject of this Study

Epistolary manuals are conspicuous historical documents for the pedagogy of letter writing. Their content indicates specific views on how letters should be constructed, whilst the selling/buying history and the numerous editions of some manuals indicates the interests of the reading audience. However, these statements do not necessarily reflect that letter writers used epistolary manuals. The present study compares the -cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features of the epistolary manual, *Secretary in Fashion* by Jean-Puget de la Serre (1668), with the features of the fictional letters which constitute the epistolary novel *Love-Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister* (1684)<sup>1</sup>, attributed to Aphra Behn. These texts date from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, which was a period which saw the rule of England go through extreme changes. In 1649 Charles I was executed, and the next decade saw an England without a monarchy led by the Puritan values of Oliver Cromwell. However, this interregnum came to an end with the Restoration of Charles I's son, Charles II, in 1660. Yet, despite the restoration of the monarchy, the stability of who should reign was still up for debate. As a result, differing factions drew up plots to overthrow Charles II; one in particular being for Charles II's illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth. These plans came to a failure with Charles II's brother, James II succeeding in 1685. With this historical context in mind, the inception and nature of *Secretary* and *Love-Letters* is of particular interest.

Much work has been done on *Love-Letters* and Behn from a literary perspective, however, less has been undertaken from a linguistic perspective, and therefore an historical linguistic perspective. In its most basic definition, *pragmatics* analyses language use in terms of how *context* affects the *meaning* language denotes rather than its form. Analysing language usage with regards to the socio-cultural and historical context is, in sum, an historical pragmatic perspective. This is a relatively new field of study established around 1995, 'with a scholarly research volume *Historical Pragmatics*' edited by Andreas H.

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<sup>1</sup> Henceforth, the texts will be referred to as *Secretary* and *Love-Letters*, respectively.

Jucker (Jucker & Taavitsainen 2013: xi); in 2013 Jucker & Irma Taavitsainen brought out an accessible and comprehensive introductory book *English Historical Pragmatics*. With both *Secretary* and *Love-Letters*, as with other studies on historical texts, we are denied access to the actual impetus of their inception; we cannot interview their authors, and so, we have to rely on any available contextual information regarding such texts and the possible influence context has on a text. ‘Historical pragmatics takes into account both sides of the communication, and [therefore] what was written is assessed both from the point of view of its illocutions and purposes of writings as well as its receptional side’ (*ibid.* 17); thus, historical pragmatics appropriately aligns with the nature of how these texts – in particular the letters - need to be treated. An underdeveloped area of historical pragmatics is the analysis of literature, as much work concerns non-fiction such as spoken discourse transcripts and diary entries (see *ibid.* xii & 200-201). Therefore, being modelled on personal discourse, epistolary fiction, i.e. *Love-Letters*, is an ideal transitional, and key, resource for an historical pragmatic analysis of literature.

## 1.2 Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

- 1) What are the socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features represented in *Secretary in Fashion*?

In order to answer this question, firstly, I will need to provide a landscape of the pedagogy of epistolary practice prior to and including the 17<sup>th</sup> century, which comprise the socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features. The reason for discussing this landscape of the pedagogy of epistolary practice that when language is discussed in terms of certain periods, such as Early Modern English or 17<sup>th</sup> century English, we are retrospectively observing the most common and distinct trends which specifically fit to these eras. However, any information prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century cannot be discounted, as if by the end of the year 1599 every person decided to change their language use to fit the proceeding century. Moreover, the 17<sup>th</sup> century did not just contain people born within the 17<sup>th</sup> century; thus, their language was socialised by the generation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps their parents and grandparents, who were in turn influenced by those in previous centuries, and so forth. Therefore, what distinguishes and categorises the language of 17<sup>th</sup> century England is a comparison with the preceding and, indeed, proceeding centuries.

- 2) What are the socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features represented in *Love-Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister*, and do any of these features correlate with the features represented in *Secretary in Fashion*?

In order to answer this question, I will discuss the socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features of *Love-Letters*, before comparing how far these features align with the features represented in *Secretary*. I want to find out if there are any reasons for duplicate features, and conversely for any differing features. By looking at this from an historical pragmatic perspective, I want to see how far socialisation, historical events, and the narrative affect the authors' stylistic choices, and, thus, the epistolary-related features. In this way, I will be more able to speculate as to whether or not *Secretary* or other manuals were used as reference guides for the construction of *Love-Letters*.

### 1.3 Methodology

I will be using facsimiles of *Secretary* and *Love-Letters*, available from *Early English Books Online (EEBO)* and accessed via *Historical Texts*. These texts will be qualitatively analysed in order to determine their representative socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features. Firstly, I will qualitatively analyse *Secretary*, in order to determine which epistolary features it prescribes in terms of the form and the subject matter of letters. Then, I will use these features to qualitatively analyse the content of *Love-Letters*. Selected letters will be transcribed and also qualitatively analysed, in order to observe marked stylistic features which will address the second research question.

For my qualitative analysis on *Love-Letters*, firstly, the letters will be discussed individually, as if they were a real set of correspondence – I will analyse these letters without any contextual information, in order to observe any initial marked features which may then be explained by the contextual information; and then I will discuss the letters in relation to the novel's characters, as if they were real people; secondly, I will discuss all of the selected letters, in relation to other variables affecting the epistolary style, namely the relationship between the author and the reader – in terms of the readership, I will discuss the general contemporary readership, and then discuss the specific readership of Lord Grey and the Whigs.

#### 1.4 Grice's Co-operative Principle and Politeness Theory

Instructions for epistolary style are inherently subjective. If epistolary manuals are not followed, this does not stop letters materialising. Their rules differ from, for instance, formulae for chemical reactions, if the wrong chemicals are mixed together then the wrong solution is formed; but if the prescribed rules in a manual are not followed, a letter can still be formed. Manuals are referenced, so that their users do not accidentally write the “wrong” content, which is determined by social conventions; letter writers may seek co-operative exchanges. In light of this, I will observe whether the manual aligns with Grice's co-operative principle and politeness theory's “face” work.

Furthermore, letters tend to be written in the absence of the addressee, and the writer will want to convey information, perhaps to share news or to inquire about the receiver. However, owing to the nature of the written medium, when reading a letter the addressee is bound by their own knowledge of and relationship with the writer, as well as their own personal conduct; as best as they can, an addressee has to determine how the writer intended a letter to be read. Thus, one assumes that if a writer wants to avoid ambiguity then precautions will be taken, to ensure this avoidance. Therefore, the initial writer is inviting a situation with the addressee whereupon they are participants of a cooperative correspondence, which will adhere to social practices with which they are each familiar. Thus, I will also use these theories to analyse the intentions and perceptions of the participants in the correspondences.

Grice's co-operative principle concerns participants making appropriate contributions, or utterances, in a discourse. The “appropriateness” of an optimum contribution is illustrated by Grice's four main maxims of: quantity, quality, relation and manner. The maxim of quantity concerns the amount of information a participant offers, where a contribution must be neither lacking in information nor over-informative (such as, repeated information or unnecessary digressions). The maxim of quality concerns truthful contributions, as perceived by the participant; they must not, knowingly, lie. The maxim of relation concerns contributions being relevant, and the maxim of manner concerns a contribution being clear and understandable (see Grice 1989: 26-8; Kádár & Haugh 2013:13–14; Leech 2014: 316-320).

The concept of “face”, derived from Goffman's work and developed by Brown and Levinson, refers to a person's ‘public self-image’, as perceived by themselves and other participants during an exchange (see Goffman 1955: 7; Brown & Levinson 1987: 61;

Leech 2014: 24-25). Face is differentiated into “positive face”, which is the desire for one’s ‘wants [to] be desirable’ to others, and “negative face”, which is the desire to have one’s ‘actions [...] unimpeded by others’ (*ibid.* 62). With regards to co-operative exchanges, politeness concerns ‘humans efficiently and smoothly achieving whatever goals and satisfying whatever needs they may have’ (Gregoriou 2009: 153). Thus, participants will strive to maintain the positive and negative ‘face’ of themselves as individuals, and one another as participants of such an exchange. This maintenance is achieved when a person’s conduct carries out ‘[t]he combined effect of the rule of self-respect and the rule of considerateness’ (Goffman 1955: 7). The failure of this maintenance results in a face threatening act or FTA. FTAs are measured in terms of their “weightiness”, by factoring the social variables of: the relative power a participant has on another, the social distance between these participants, ‘and the ranking of the imposition [...] involved in doing the face-threatening act’ (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 15).

The basic principles of Gricean and Politeness theories have since been developed, and indeed criticised. Kádár & Haugh’s *Understanding Politeness* (2013) provides an updated discussion on Politeness Theory; their ‘broad definition of politeness’ concerns politeness as ‘a key means by which humans work out and maintain interpersonal’ relationships. Furthermore, politeness encompasses ‘all types of interpersonal behaviour through which’ participants of a linguistic exchange ‘take into account the feelings of others as to how they think they should be treated in working out and maintaining our sense of personhood as well as our interpersonal relationships with others’ (*ibid.* 1). This notion of accounting for ‘the feelings of others’ aligns with Brown and Levinson’s work concerning face-work and negative/ positive politeness.

However, Kádár and Haugh’s view on politeness differs from Brown and Levinson as they note that ‘although Brown and Levinson’s framework does not ignore context completely, it encourages the analyst to examine only basic contextual factors without analysing the interactional history behind a certain conversation’ (*ibid.* 37). In contrast, for Kádár and Haugh politeness is a social practice which ‘goes beyond the boundaries of language’, and therefore all contextual information must be taken into account; as such, politeness needs ‘a multidisciplinary approach’ which brings ‘together first-order (language **user**) and second-order (language **observer**) understandings of it’ (*ibid.* 2). Moreover, as politeness is a social practice it ‘has to be described with reference to **time** and **space**’, as ‘any understanding of politeness always arises relative to time’; and, in this

situation '[t]he concept of space [...] refers specifically to social space, which operates with reference to time (*ibid.* 4).

Kádár and Haugh also inform that 'a key finding from more recent research is that understandings of politeness are cumulative' meaning that 'a particular utterance of a turn at talk vis-à-vis politeness are invariably understood relative to both prior and forthcoming evaluations'. In light of this, 'two key inter-related analytical notions' need to be considered: *incrementality* which 'refers to the way in which speakers adjust or modify their talk in light of' the reception of progressive utterances, and *sequentiality* which 'refers to the way in which current turns or utterances are always understood relative to prior and subsequent talk, particularly talk that is contiguous (i.e. immediately prior to or subsequent to the current utterance)' (*ibid.* 112).

Leech's *The Pragmatics of Politeness* (2014) also views politeness as a social practice, specifically a 'social phenomenon' which therefore 'has to be studied in terms of the relationship between language use and social behaviour'; Leech explicitly identifies this as the study of pragmatics (*ibid.* ix). This concept of face work is also covered by Leech when he notes that a 'characteristic of politeness is its tendency to preserve *balance*'; for example as compliment is often balanced by thanks, this is because 'social value passing from one participant to another ultimately [...] is felt to require recompense' (*ibid.* 8). Similar to Brown and Levinson's 1987 work on face work, Leech talks about this balance in terms of 3 dimensions: power and distance between the speaker and addressee, and the weightiness of the transaction (*ibid.* 11).

However, Leech differs from Brown and Levinson's work as he avoids the terms *positive politeness* and *negative politeness*, because he believes that there is 'a lack of correspondence' between the terms 'which mars the value of this distinction' and that '[t]he notion of *positive politeness* [...] is too broadly defined' (*ibid.* 13). Rather than using the terms positive politeness and negative politeness, Leech opts for his replacement terms "pos-politeness" and "neg-politeness." Neg-politeness is the more important type: its function is mitigation, to reduce or lessen possible causes of offense' by impositions; it 'typically involves indirectness, hedging and understatement' which Leech further describes as being 'the best-known and most-studied indicators of the polite use of language' (*ibid.* 11). Whereas pos-politeness 'gives or assigns some positive value to the addressee'; examples of pos-politeness are listed by Leech as being '[o]ffers, invitations, compliments, and congratulations', and as a sub-category thanks and apologies are 'remedial strategies' of pos-politeness (Leech 2014: 12). With regards to face, Leech

considers this psychological notion as the ‘psychological property of real people’ which ‘depends on, and feeds back into, our rapport with other people in the social environment’; whilst Brown and Levinson regard both negative and positive politeness as ‘strategies for avoiding’ face threatening acts, Leech’s terms neg-politeness and pos-politeness respectively have separate functions which mitigate or enhance face (Leech 2014: 25-26).

## 1.5 Notes on the Texts

*Secretary* is featured in Bannet’s comprehensive discussion (2008) of manuals produced during 1680-1870s. Bannet selected manuals which ‘dominated the English, Scottish and American markets by virtue of the frequency of their London reprints, their dissemination from London, and their repeated importation, reproduction and adaptations to local needs and tastes’ (*ibid.* xx). Thus, popularity is determined by the concept of “supply” and “demand”. However, this popularity does not mean that people bought these books solely for the direct and active purpose of using them as manuals – some may have been used to be read as sources for ‘leisurely amusement through vicarious engagement in other peoples’ real or imagined lives’ (Green 2007: 103). Instead, popularity gauges certain people’s interest in these books, as to spend money on such manuals requires a desire to either own these books and/or read them. I separate these terms of ownership and readership, though they can overlap, as a person may purchase a manual with no intention to read it but to display ownership of a manual, to their peers, as a status symbol. Or, equally, someone may want to read a manual but without others’ knowledge of this practice and ownership, as their education may be viewed as flawed, or to hide their interest in a popular fashion. Whatever the case, *Secretary*’s contemporary popularity makes it an apt text to use, when investigating typical 17<sup>th</sup> century epistolary prescriptions found in 17<sup>th</sup> century epistolary manuals. After analysing *Secretary*’s contents, I will compare it with the general epistolary trends of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

One of the limitations of *Love-Letters* is the novel’s anonymity. Author attribution is a difficult task, especially when concerning historical texts. The “best” thing one can do is find the most probable author, rather than the definite author. In fact, even in Behn’s ‘own lifetime there were constant rumo[u]rs that she had not written her own works’ (Goreau 1980: 10; see also Todd 1999: 2). Thus far, the consensus amongst scholars supports Behn’s authorship of *Love-Letters* (see 1.7.3); by my own admission, I have done little intrusive work on this claim. The compromise I have taken is to analyse *Love-Letters* with Behn as the author, but on the condition that this is an assumption. This is perhaps the most appropriate way to treat this text, owing to the little information on Behn’s life

outside of her texts (Todd 1996b:1); her life is very much open to speculation. And so, when author attribution is considered in this study, the authorship is understood from the general characteristics most often attributed to Behn – a propagandist, a Tory royalist, and, of course, a woman. What I hope to achieve is an analysis of the application or the reflection of epistolary style in usage (whether affected by manuals or confirming practices laid out by manuals), informed by historical pragmatic factors. Thus, should any future suggestions that Behn is not the author arise, this thesis will at least be able to offer some general analysis regarding 17<sup>th</sup> century epistolary practice.

## 1.6 Structure of the Study

This introductory chapter concludes with a literature review; Chapter 2 discusses the pedagogy of letter writing prior to and including 17<sup>th</sup> century England, then focuses on the analysis of *Secretary*; Chapter 3 analyses *Love-Letters* as a whole, and then the selected letters; Chapter 4 is the conclusion, which discusses results of the research questions, and also the study's limitations and further lines of enquiry.

## 1.7 Literature Review

This section summarises previously undertaken work in this study's the three main fields of enquiry - epistolary manuals (1.7.1), epistolary fiction (1.7.2) and Behn and *Love-Letters* (1.7.3). An insight into a few recent studies regarding socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistics, and historical pragmatics is given (1.7.4). It concludes by summarising the specific research space that this study addresses (1.7.5).

### 1.7.1 Epistolary Manuals

Researching the field of epistolary study is not a straight forward task, owing to the variants for which one can search: epistolary study, letter writers, letter manuals, correspondence etc. And once this is done, one discovers finds new terms drawn up by researchers as a further way to differentiate between aspects of this field: dictamen, epistolarity, epistolography (Poster 2007b: 3). This unrestricted amount of terms accounts for the different ways letters are studied.

Studies on 18<sup>th</sup> century epistolary culture<sup>2</sup> are more abundant than those on the 17<sup>th</sup> century; consequently, 17<sup>th</sup> century manuals tend to supplement introductory information.

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<sup>2</sup> Brant (2008) provides an informative discussion on letter and their trends; Bannet (2008) surveys manual genres; Goodman (1999) discusses French female writers, Dossenna & Tieken Boon Von Ostade (2008) provide a corpus analysis on Late Modern English correspondence.

The 17<sup>th</sup> century manuals focused on the rhetoric of courtly affairs, but eventually the English *Secretaries* emerged, by the 1680s, as practical models for matters of commerce and the government; and, by the 18<sup>th</sup> century the *Secretaries* and *Complete Letter-writers*<sup>3</sup> had developed as socially and gender diverse manuals. The result was a high production and demand for manuals.

Historical and bibliographical studies, on the state of epistolary culture in Britain prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, have two early key contributions by Jean Robertson and Katherine Hornbeck. Robertson's *The Art of Letter Writing: An Essay on the Handbooks* (1942) is slight in size but dense in information which surveys the *ars rhetorica* and the *ars dictaminis* of classical Greco-Roman antiquity and 17<sup>th</sup> century dictamen. Hornbeck's *The Complete Letter Writer in English* (1934) is '[o]ne of the most significant' studies on manuals dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries (Mitchell 2007: 196). As with Robertson, Hornbeck discusses the medieval period of the *ars dictaminis*; and, both are useful background sources, for the history of the pedagogy concerning epistolary practice. However, 'in the half century since Robertson's survey, much more work has been done in the larger contexts of Renaissance rhetoric and a great many more bibliographical resources have become available' (Green 2007: 103).

In comparison to Robertson and Hornbeck relatively new works on epistolary manuals by Eve T. Bannet, James Daybell, James How and Carol Poster and Linda C. Mitchell comprise key recent studies. Bannet's four volume study, *British American Letter Manuals, 1680-1810* (2008), gives brief contextual information on manual genres, which are exemplified by her selection of dominating commercial manuals, including their specific contextual information. This is a useful source for anyone wishing to study specific manuals from this period. High resolution images of the manuals are included, and prove very useful when transcribing or analysing a text; however, information, such as title pages, is missed out. Therefore, databases, such as *EEBO*, are more reliable resources when studying manuals in their entirety, despite the varying degrees of quality. Although it is more than a decade since *Epistolary Spaces: English letter writing from the foundation of the Post Office to Richardson's Clarissa* (How 2003), thus far, it is still one of the most useful examinations on the role of the British postal services during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries; it has heavily informed this study's historical and causal variables. *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing* (Daybell 2001) is, as its name suggests, a useful book on

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<sup>3</sup> Not to be confused with Hornbeck's use of "complete letter-writers" 'designed for the middle-class Elizabethan' (1934:1).

female epistolary practices; however, the essays in this edition tend to focus on the early rather than late 17<sup>th</sup> century. Poster and Mitchell's *Letter-writing Manuals and Instruction from Antiquity to the Present* (2007) offers further insights into the state of epistolary practices, prior and including the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Britain. Mitchell (2007: 178) states that 'previous scholarship on English letter-writing manuals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has focused primarily on a small number of important texts such as Angel Day's *The English Secretorie* (1607) and Thomas Blount's *The Academy of Eloquence* (1653)'. Thus, Poster and Mitchell highlight the gap for studies on the mid to late 17<sup>th</sup> century.

### 1.7.2 Epistolary Fiction

*Love-Letters* coincides with what may retrospectively be observed as a transitional period to the 18<sup>th</sup> century manuals. Bannet's 2008 work, which studies 1680 to 1810, is only just about concurrent with *Love-Letters*; however, as with other studies (see 1.7.1), Bannet focuses more on the 18<sup>th</sup> rather than late 17<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, *Love-Letters* appears to have "missed the boat", in terms of studying the application of manuals in epistolary fiction.

In terms of epistolary style in fiction, Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* has been more studied than *Love-Letters*; Richardson seems to be viewed as the principal author of fictional epistolary style, despite *Love-Letters* predating *Clarissa* by nearly 60 years (see How 2003; Todd 2000; Todd 1996b: 2). As, *Love-Letters* is heavily influenced by French Romances, the innovative status of *Clarissa* is understandable, due to less proximity with these novels. While Richardson dominates studies on fictional epistolary style, studies on Behn mainly concern her status as a female writer and, to a lesser extent, as a royalist writer. However, it is her very social constraints as a female, Tory royalist that makes her work ripe for an historical pragmatic analysis. In this way, arguably, she is of more interest than Richardson.

### 1.7.3 Behn and *Love-Letters*

Three main issues arise when researching Behn: firstly, her life was poorly documented, thus, any assertions regarding Behn need to be understood with an awareness that any information about her may be unreliable; secondly, Behn's attributed works are usually anonymous or signed *A.B.*, and further authorship evidence is deficient; thirdly, certain past studies are problematic, as they are affected by the gender and political biases of their authors.

The most prolific Behn scholar has to be Janet Todd. Whilst her works offer objective views, her amount of Behn studies and the way in which she discusses Behn, suggests Todd champions Behn's work. Todd's *The Secret Life of Aphra Behn* (1996b) and her edited selection of essays *Aphra Behn* (1999) highlight the lack of representational evidence on Behn's life, stating outright that information on Behn must be 'constructed from the works [attributed to Behn], for there is almost nowhere else to search' (Todd 1996b: 1). In acknowledging this, Todd effectively warns that research on Behn must be regarded with caution. Todd also offers potential historical factors which may be associated with Behn, for instance, with regards to Behn's class, '[i]f she were firmly aristocratic there would be a county seat to visit in hope of contemplating an oak which the child Aphra might have climbed [...]. But she is not and there is no such house' (*ibid.*). Two key comprehensive social biographies of Behn's life are those by Maureen Duffy and Angela Goreau. Both Duffy and Goreau's feminist works - *The Passionate Shepherdess: Aphra Behn* (1977) and *Reconstructing Aphra: A Social Biography of Aphra Behn* (1980) - offer possible illuminating information regarding Behn. However, Goreau and Duffy 'disagree, occasionally to a considerable extent, on certain biographical details' (*ibid.* 296); thus, Todd appears to be a more reliable resource.

In contrast to Todd's acknowledgement of inconclusive data, in the article "'Hieroglifck'd" History in Aphra Behn's Love-Letters between a Nobleman and His Sister' in *Studies in the Novel*, Rivero states that '[t]here is no reason to question' the attribution of Behn to *Love-Letters*, 'especially since *Love-Letters* is consistent with Behn's other works of prose fiction' (1998: 127). Although Rivero's point is understandable, as having at least one author is a faster and clearer way to understand a text's provenance, I believe that the most sensible stance to take is to always regard the most likely candidate for an anonymous text with caution, as new information may suggest a different candidate.

Linguistic analysis can be motivated by historical events and prominent figures – studying aspects of language in alignment with salient retrospective events, in order to observe whether such events have shaped our current language, or if an event marks a certain point in language – and in this way, literary merit is of little concern. My own interest in *Love-Letters* is with it being arguably the first English epistolary novel. And so, although this thesis seeks to divorce itself from a subjective viewpoint on Behn's literary merit, I feel it is important to acknowledge past and present literary criticism, as I believe that this is, at least partly, responsible for the lack of linguistic analysis.

In her edited book *Aphra Behn*, Todd (1999: 1-11) offers a brief but insightful overview of the changing views towards Behn throughout history (see also Goreau 1980: 14-15; Hutner 1993: 1-3). Posthumously Behn's perceived literary merit declined, from post-Stuarts reacting against her Royalist-Stuart sentiment, to social conservative Victorians against her lewd themes. This negative criticism is still noticeable even in Robert A. Day's 1966 work *Told in Letters: Epistolary Fiction before Richardson*, passively Day gestures towards *Love-Letters* when he states that the period 1660-1740 began by offering 'nothing more remarkable than conceit-laden translations of French romances, [and] heavy-handed imitations of them' (1966: 3). Also noticeable is that Day never refers to Behn's forename; instead she is always noted as 'Mrs. Behn', whereas Eliza Haywood is mentioned by her forename.

Negative criticism wanes towards the late 19<sup>th</sup> century; Behn is often regarded in, debatable, factual terms – the first female professional writer, the first English novelist, the first female professional playwright. In this regard, Behn is noted as a social figure; her works require no criticism, but when criticisms are made, her works are again judged as lacking merit. Behn is perhaps best known to the modern general public for being referenced by Virginia Woolf in her feminist work *A Room of One's Own*, where she states that 'All women together ought to let flowers fall upon the tomb grave of Aphra Behn, [...] for it was she who earned them the right to speak their minds' (cited in Todd 1996b: 3). However, to some extent, this is a rather misunderstood quote; Woolf praised Behn for her accomplishment of writing as a woman not her actual literary output (*ibid.*). Towards the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, literary criticism on Behn has increased. She continues to feature in feminist criticism, as reflected by the prominent modern feminist figures Germaine Greer (Hutner 1993: 3). By the early 1990s, Behn entered the literary canon (*ibid.* 1).

#### **1.7.4 Recent Socio-cultural and Pragmatic-linguistic, and Historical Pragmatic studies**

As noted in Section 1.1, this present study aims to analyse *Secretary* and *Love-Letters* from an historical pragmatic perspective. As historical pragmatics comprises and covers the analysis of the pragmatic-linguistics, in view of contextual information pertaining to social, cultural and historical factors, studies analysing socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistics, and historical pragmatics will help inform and guide this present study's analysis.

Kádár & Haugh's and Leech's 2013 and 2014 respective studies mentioned in Section 1.4, offer updated discussions on Gricean Theory and Politeness Theory. As discussed in the aforementioned section, collectively, their stances differ from Grice, and particularly Brown & Levinson's 1987 framework. Kádár & Haugh's notions of "incrementality" and "sequentiality" and focus on contextual information being more at the forefront in comparison to Brown & Levinson's framework, along with Leech's updated work on "face" in relation to "pos-politeness" and "neg-politeness" will be used in Sections 2.3 and 3.6. The historical discussions within both texts will also be used to inform this present study.

Tanskanen's 2003 paper "'Best patterns for your imitation': Early Modern Letter-Writing Instruction and Real Correspondence" is similar to this study in that it compares 17<sup>th</sup> century epistolary manuals with letters, however, as the paper's title indicates, real correspondence rather than fictitious correspondence is analysed. In this way, Tanskanen's paper is an insight into and reflection of 17<sup>th</sup> century epistolary practices. I will use these findings to see how they compare with my own results, particularly in Section 3.6; although I will not be able to achieve a comprehensive answer, I may be able to glean some light on another question: how far do the socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features of *Secretary* and *Love-Letters* align with 17<sup>th</sup> century epistolary practices?

### **1.7.5 The Space this Study Occupies**

1.7.1-1.7.3 demonstrates that there remains a shortage of studies on 17<sup>th</sup> century epistolary-related texts, particularly the mid to late 17<sup>th</sup> century; studies on epistolary fiction focus on Richardson's *Clarissa*; and studies on *Love-Letters* and Aphra Behn are literary rather than linguistic, in their approach. Therefore, as a language study focusing on *Secretary* and its application in comparison with *Love-Letters*, this study occupies currently deficient spaces.

## Chapter 2: Letter Manuals

This chapter discusses: the pedagogy of letter writing prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century (2.1); the state of epistolary culture in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (2.2); it concludes with a discussion and analysis of *Secretary* (2.3).

### 2.1 Pedagogy of Letter Writing prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century

Letter manuals, with their prescriptive instructions or letter models, document the pedagogy of letter writing. However, the pedagogy in England roots from the art of rhetoric. Therefore, an attempt to focus and constrain a study on epistolary theory in England collapses, due to the influence of the classical Greco-Roman traditions and the European, in particular French, manuals. This section discusses the pedagogy of letter writing prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century in terms of: *ars rhetorica* (2.1.1), *ars dictaminis* (2.1.2), Cicero and Renaissance humanism (2.1.3), and the emergence of the English letter manual (2.1.4).

#### 2.1.1 *Ars Rhetorica*

One of the earliest models for letter writing, in classical epistolary theory, is the letters of Isocrates (c. 400 B.C). Intended for his students, Isocrates' models contain features familiar to a modern observer - such as the framing devices of opening with a formal term of address for the receiver, and closing by signing off by the sender. Sullivan (2007: 8-11) notes the formulaic features of Isocratean epistolary theory, and one point is that:

Letters have particular symmetries and stylistics: they should be short, personal, and written in a simpler style than other *logoi*. They should not be impertinent, ostentatious, or excessively elaborate.  
(*ibid.* 11)

Such an instruction resembles Grice's maxims, and its brevity and level of complexity implies a focus on a letter being a rhetorical device for the sender's particular interest (*ibid.* 16).

Isocrates' letter models exemplify that, during Greco-Roman antiquity, the art of letter writing was considered a sub-field of the art of rhetoric, or *ars rhetorica*. With ancient epistolary theory in Greco-Roman antiquity, 'we must be aware that preceptive manuals were, in fact, a relatively minor component of epistolary instruction' (Poster 2007a: 22). This can be represented by such epistolary theory being found in: epistolary

manuals in literary tradition, instruction in grammar manuals, rhetorical instruction, documentary educational papyri, literary letters and documentary letters (*ibid.* 21).

### 2.1.2 *Ars Dictaminis*

By the medieval period, the art of rhetoric was interpreted to satisfy the social, legal and business practical demands of the public (Green 2007: 102; see also, Newbold 2007: 130). As a result, the art of letter writing or *ars dictaminis*, ‘as an independent subject or study [to the *ars rhetorica*], only gradually emerged, in the shape of a number of treatises formulating hard and fast rules for writing every kind of letter’ (Robertson 1942: 9). Robertson’s labelling of these manuals as ‘treatises’ shows that, rather than suggestive guides, the *ars dictaminis* provided rules and models which were to be used as doctrines governing letter writing. This restrictiveness is corroborated by Newbold (2007: 130) who states that ‘[o]riginality was discouraged; letter writers had to observe social hierarchies and protocols. Forms and formulae were the touchstones of the art. Shorter prepared passages could be inserted into letters whole, and, in some cases, only the merest data such as names and dates would be unique’ (see also Haskins 1923: 103 as cited in Hornbeck 1934: viii).

Influenced by Cicerian rhetoric, Alberic of Monte Cassino (c. 1075) is regarded as the ‘earliest known formulator’ of the *ars dictaminis* in Western culture (Robertson 1942:9; see also Richardson 2007: 52). Following Cassino, ‘[t]he earliest set of [epistolary] rules compiled in England was that prepared by Giovanni di Bologna, a notary for the use of John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury’ during the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Robertson 1942: 10); manual production increased during the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. During the Renaissance, the most famous manual Erasmus’ *Libellus de conscribendis epistolis* was written for ‘Englishman, Robert Fisher, the author’s pupil’, and was ‘first printed in England.’ This manual would go on to be adapted by Angel Day to form his manual *The English Secretary* (*ibid.*).

### 2.1.3 Cicero and Renaissance Humanism

As the practical culture of the *ars dictaminis* continued during the medieval period, Renaissance humanism sought further back to Cicero; and, thus, reengaged with the *ars rhetorica*, as a means to ‘project the human presence of the writer’ (Green 2007: 102). Renaissance humanism was influenced by Erasmus, and ‘sought diligently to promote Ciceronian eloquence in letter writing’; in this way, ‘the letter becomes an “oration,” and correspondence between “absent friends” becomes the forum for eloquence’, and therefore

‘style was a priority’ (Newbold 2007: 130). Interest in Cicero, and engagement with the Continent by the English humanists, is demonstrated by: the demand for imports and publication of his letters, his inclusion in the ‘standard grammar-school curriculum [...] for both study and emulation’, and ‘active correspondence with Continental writers’ (Green 2007: 106; see also *ibid.* 107-109).

#### **2.1.4 The Emergence of English Letter-writing Manuals**

With the influence of the *ars rhetorica* and the *ars dictaminis*, accordingly, ‘[p]ublication in [Early Modern] England on the subject of letter writing took place in a culture of literacy that was more Latin than English, more Continental than native, more orientated toward manuscript than toward print, and heavily reliant upon imported imprints’ (*ibid.* 102). The absence of epistolary theory in English is likely due to the theory ‘that those educated enough to write letters could have managed with existing Latin aids’. Therefore, the need for the English epistolary manuals came from the vernacular reader of the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century; consequently, the key mid-16<sup>th</sup> century manuals, William Fulwood’s *The Enemy of Idleness* (1568) and Angel Day’s *The English Secretary* (1586), were developed (Newbold 2007: 127).

## **2.2 The state of Epistolary Culture in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century**

Following the discussion of the pedagogy of letter writing prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century (2.1), this section focuses on the state of epistolary culture in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The potential readership of manuals may have been literate people, who were able to compose letters, and the financial and social means (the latter pertaining to access to messengers) to send and receive letters. The 17<sup>th</sup> century saw changes in social order and conduct, and consequently changes to epistolary practices. A key factor affecting epistolary practices is the state of the postal services; ‘there is undoubtedly a causal relationship between the postal facilities of a country and the bulk of its correspondence’ (Hornbeck 1934: 82). This section discusses the: the state of England (2.2.1); the expansion of epistolary spaces by the postal services (2.2.2); the influence of French culture (2.2.3); and a popular type of letter manual, of which *Secretary* is a part, the *Academies of Complements* (2.2.4).

### **2.2.1 The State of England**

In light of the execution of Charles I, the interregnum, and the Restoration of Charles II, it seems no surprise that society was in a state of confusion and in need of

direction with regards to social conduct; the reaction to these events was ‘a larger cultural movement toward locating moral value, law, and order in the individual’ (Ballaster 1993: 188). With their inherent social conduct values, epistolary manuals were another potential source of direction other than conspicuous behavioural manuals.

### **2.2.2 The Expansion of Epistolary Spaces by the Postal Services**

As well as the changes in societal rule, the 17<sup>th</sup> century saw an expansion of epistolary spaces as more people were able to read and write and, perhaps, more importantly, exchange letters. Correspondence relied upon the role of a private messenger or relatives and friends; but with the establishment of the national Post Office, which opened up more postal routes, and William Dockwra’s London Penny Post in 1680, more people were able to exchange letters (How 2003: 4-11; see also, Hornbeck 1934: 82-84). With this potential for more people to correspond, people did indeed increase their epistolary practices; this is reflected by the fact that Charles II established the General Post Office in 1660, because he saw that the public demand in more postal routes was high enough to be financially profitable (How 2003: 52). Now, although more people had the ability to be involved in epistolary practices, for some, letter writing was a new form of written expression; they would therefore seek guidance on letter construction, in terms of form and social conventions. This new form exposed and ‘suggested to letter writers and readers new ways of conducting their lives’; how one conducts themselves in the physical world may not necessarily be applicable in the epistolary world. Thus, manuals became a guide for unknown propriety where users were conscious of ‘finding out just how they could behave, [and] just what was newly possible in the world of letter writing and reading’ (*ibid.* 5).

### **2.2.3 The influence of French culture**

The readership of manuals of this time was mainly targeted at the gentrified upper class, amongst whom the desire for and maintenance of high standards was prevalent. Aesthetically French culture equalled sophistication, and this is still seen in present culture as I can describe this interest as being “in vogue”, or even “en vogue”, with my best French accent only on this phrase to highlight my use of a French term. Britain held its overseas neighbour in high esteem and sought to emulate their standards, with an ‘international relationship, with France as teacher and England as pupil’ (Hornbeck 1934: 50). Thus, by the 1640s, French academies began to dominate the epistolary market with imports and ‘repeated reprints of English translations of manuals and letters’ (Bannet 2008:

xx; see also Robertson 1942: 7; Green 2007: 113 & 115). Furthermore, the Restoration of Charles II, who had been exiled in France, meant royal approval for, and even facilitation of, the interest in French culture (see Todd 1996b: 9).

#### **2.2.4 Academies of Complements**

The English *Academies of Complements* largely consisted of model letters which were also ‘juxtaposed with models of conversation, lists of rhetorical phrases, and the words of fashionable songs’ (Bannet 2008: xiii). In this way, the *ars rhetorica* is evoked; thus, model letters were rich in metaphorical language. As their name suggests, they focused on polite behaviour within social and romantic courtship; in particular, the models feature compliments as stylised by the elite gentry; ‘*Academies of Complements* modelled such compliments as might be exchanged orally or in writing by courtiers or gentlemen, as well as compliments and letters that gentlemen and gentlewomen might exchange in wooing’ (*ibid.* xiv; see also, *ibid.* xix; Robertson 1942: 39).

### **2.3 Discussion of *Secretary***

This section discusses: the edition of *Secretary* used in this (2.3.1), biographical information on Massinger the translator of *Secretary* (2.3.2), the content and structure of *Secretary* (2.3.3), *Secretary*’s dedicatory letters (2.3.4), the prescriptive elements of the manual (2.3.5), which concern matter (3.3.6) and form (3.3.7); it concludes by comparing *Secretary* with general 17<sup>th</sup> century epistolary practices (3.3.8).

#### **2.3.1 The Edition Used in this Study**

*Secretary* is an English translation of Jean-Puget de la Serre’s French epistolary manual *Secrétaire à la mode* (1625). Serre, born in Toulouse (c. 1600-65), was a popular author in France ‘of over a hundred plays and historical and devotional works, as well as of conduct literature and letter manuals’ (Bannet 2008: 17). *Secretary* was clearly a popular manual, as it ‘was reprinted six times in just over forty years, and was copied and/or imitated in English *Academies of complement* well into the eighteenth century’; moreover, ‘successive editions [...] tried to keep up with reigning fashions in England for volumes of this kind’ (*ibid.*). The version used in this thesis is an electronic reproduction of the 4<sup>th</sup> edition (1668), wherein the title page reveals Serre as the ‘Chief Hiftoriographer to the

King of *FRANCE*' and apparently 'the moſt Refined Wits of *France*' (Serre 1668: [3r])<sup>4</sup>; it is not clear who asserted the latter term.

### 2.3.2 Massinger

The title page also shows that *Secretary* was printed for J.M., attributed to John Massinger, and to be sold by 'Rowland Reynolds at the Sun and Bible in Poſtern-ftreet near *Moor-gate*', London (*ibid.*). Not much is known about Massinger beyond this book, although another notable person of this surname is the English dramatist Philip Massinger (1583-1640); however, in terms of his own immediate family, there is little information bar his parentage and wife (Garrett 2004), and there is no information to ascertain whether or not they are relatives. The dedicatory letter to the reader from the translator is signed J.M., therefore the translation is attributed to Massinger (Serre 1668: [4r]). However, in the notes of this edition on the *Historical Texts* database a 'Jean de la Quintinie' is also noted as the translator; none of the other editions feature this disclosure, and from perusing the contents of this manual I cannot find this name. Although, there was a Jean-Baptiste de la Quintinie, gardener for King Louis XIV (see Friedland, 2008: 158), who was a contemporary of this curious phantom; no further connections can be made, with this or any other Quintinie and this manual. Quintinie may have helped with the translation, or indeed have been the actual translator; however, for the purposes of this study, Massinger will be regarded as the translator.

It is understandable, when the role of the translator is over looked and discussed simply as "the translator"; in this regard, Massinger is merely the person who has made *Secretary* accessible to English readers who are cannot read French. However, Massinger was also the compiler of this manual, which meant that he reconfigured the manual in order to suit his ideals. Compilations would reuse single letters or entire manuals which were altered accordingly to suit a particular social situation or regional audience, or adapted to fit contemporary tastes (see Bannet 2008: xvii-xx). It should be noted that compilation was not viewed as a low-grade process of dismantling and reassembling another's work; rather, 'from the middle ages to the end of the eighteenth-century, compilation was [...] viewed as a genuine form of writing [...], because its methods of selection, collection and reordering created new meanings by decontextualizing, reordering and recontextualizing recycled materials' (*ibid.* xviii). Thus, Massinger influenced the selection of the instructions, letters, and the organisation of the manual.

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<sup>4</sup> Citations which include square brackets refer to cases where no page number is provided; the numbers refer to the image number of the scan, whilst 'v' or 'r' refers to verso or recto, respectively.

### 2.3.3 Content and Structure

The full title presents *Secretary* as an epistolary guide for elegance, boasting ‘all manner of *LETTERS*’ (Serre 1668: [3r]); this suggests that *Secretary* is the only manual one should need, owing to its provision of letters for every occasion. Massinger’s dedicatory letter further asserts that *Secretary* comprises epistles which ‘give lessons of Courtship and Civility’ (*ibid.* [4r]). The title also reflects its self-proclaimed fashionable status, and the of 17<sup>th</sup> century taste for French culture as it advertises: ‘Some new Additions to the Complements and Elegancies of the *French* Tongue: Never Publifh’d before’ (*ibid.* [3r]). This, attempts to persuade not only new readers, but also owners of previous editions. By looking at the contents and the structure of the manual, the ratio of “prescriptive content: model letters” can be observed.

The structure of the manual is as follows:

Cover Title page (1 page)

Engraved Title page (1 page)

Inside Title page (1 page)

Dedicatory letter to Thomas Berney, Gentleman of Grayes-Inn from Massinger (1 page)

Dedicatory letter to the Abbot of France, from Serre. (1 page)

Letter to the reader from the translator (4 pages)

Instructions for writing of letters:

The first part, of the subject or matter of letters (19 pages)

The second part, of the form of letters (7 pages)

Letter models:

Part 1, letters of complement (52 pages)

Part 2, letters of the secretary in fashion (33 pages)

Contents page on the first and second parts (3 pages)

Part 3, letters on moral letters (110 pages)

Contents page on the third part (2 pages)

Part 3, continued, letters on French complements and French elegance (38 pages)

Contents on the aforementioned letters (2 pages)

Part 4, letters on French complements (54 pages) [no contents pages included]

Total frequency of pages (omitting blank pages) = 339 pages

Thus, the prescriptive content of the book (total 26 pages), which concerns the matter and form of letters, makes up approximately 8% of the overall content. In

comparison, the model letters (total 287 pages) makes up the majority of the manual at 85% of the overall content.

The model letters include various examples concerning different subject matters; additionally, various examples of letter model responses are given. The logic of the structure is somewhat confusing, owing to the irregular system of the contents page and the organisation of the letter models into parts. In general, the contents pages are positioned after the letter models to which they correspond; this is typical of the ‘French manner’ (Bannet 2008: xx). However, for whatever reason, Part 4 has no contents page. I had hoped that this had either fallen or been torn out, or was not scanned; but, with the inclusion of ‘FINIS’ on the same page as the final letter model of Part 4, it simply appears to be the case that no contents page was made (Serre 1668: [167v]). With regards to Part 4, entitled ‘The Complements of the French Tongue’ (*ibid.* [140r]), one would expect that Part 3’s section on French complements and elegancy, entitled ‘The Complements & Elegancy of the French Tongue’ (*ibid.* [120r]), which is given a separate contents page, would be in Part 4 not Part 3. In the header of the pages concerning this section, ‘Part 3’ is marked, and I wonder if this has been an error by the printers (*ibid.* [120r-139v]).

### 2.3.4 Dedicatory letters

The manual is prefaced by two dedicatory letters, one to Master Thomas Berney, Gentleman of Grayes-Inn, from Massinger, followed by one to from Serre to the Abbot of Dorack, one of the King of France’s ‘Privy Counfellors, and ‘Treasurer of the Holy Chappel at *Paris*’ (*ibid.* [5v]). Massinger’s letter parallels Serre’s; both are typical dedicatory letters, as they reflect the social relationship where the addressee is the superior of the author. This is illustrated by the use of: the address form ‘My Lord’ by Serre and ‘*SIR*’ by Massinger, the deferential form of the second person singular pronouns which denotes politeness, and the self-referential address term ‘Your moft humble, and moft faithful fervant’, where the adjectives are reinforced by the superlative ‘most’ (*ibid.* [4r-5v]) . However, Serre’s tone is more humble than Massinger’s. The Abbot is praised as ‘*one of the moft lively*’ and ‘*one of the moft accomplished Prelates of this Age*’, whose ‘*Eloquence of Actions*’ is superior to Serre’s discourse. In comparison, Serre describes himself as lower ranking, when he concedes that his manual is an ambitious attempt but not ‘*strong enough to follow Vertue*’ (*ibid.* [5v]). Whereas, although he describes himself, like Serre, as having an ‘ambitious humour’, Massinger refers to Berney as part of ‘the moft refined Spirits of this Age’, and admits that he ‘may seem both Ignorant and Indifcreeet to promise any new thing’, Massinger is less acquiescent than Serre when he

states that he ‘deserves’ both pardon and approbation (*ibid.* [4r]). Moreover, he states ‘that nothing is here but what might either have been written by you, or to you’ (*ibid.*); suggesting common ground between Massinger and Berney.

Leech’s description of trivalent politeness comprises “power” and “distance” between speaker, or in this case the writer, and the addressee, and the “weightiness” of a transaction which is dependent upon a range of socio-cultural factors. (2014: 11-15). Both Massinger and Serre are clearly both less powerful than their addressees, Berney and the Abbot of Dorack, respectively, and therefore the distance, determined by each writer’s relationship with their respective addressees, appears to be for both cases certainly not an intimate one. Taking into account the “weightiness” of this transaction, both addressees are likely to be patronages for *Secretary*, and as such, the “distance” between the writers and the addressees is a professional one. Moreover, praise attributed to the addressees and the use of deferential second person pronouns are ‘(by present-day standards)’ examples of ‘extremely deferential communicative behaviour’ which reflects ‘great gulf between the low status of the speaker [or writer] and the high status of the addressee’; the writers are in effect trying to ‘ingratiate’ themselves ‘with influential patronage’ (*ibid.* 289). Taking into account the imposition of this transaction, the use of this “extremely deferential communicative behaviour” exhibited by both writers is an example of neg-politeness functioning to mitigate the imposition of passively asking for financial support for the publication and distribution *Secretary*; which in hand, is an example of pos-politeness when the addressee’s “faces” are enhanced with such language devices. With this in mind, as Massinger’s lack of acquiescence superficially implies a balanced “power” and social relationship with Berney, and contradicts the contemporary socio-cultural factor that he is requesting financial backing and thus an imposition is a marked feature.

Whether or not this lack of a distinct acquiescent level was noticed by Berney or the reader is an unknown answer to the modern reader; what can be observed is that Massinger’s questionable tone and self-assurance is also seen in his letter to the reader (Serre 1668: [5r-7v]). In contrast to Berney, the reader is referred by the non-deferential form of the second person singular pronouns – thou, thee, thy – which may denote impoliteness, if Massinger is of a lower rank to the reader. It opens pleasantly enough as he states that: ‘*I Here present thee with a Cornucopia of Knowledge and Expreffion.*’ But then in sharp contrast to this, the readers, having only made it to the second sentence, find themselves threatened with ‘*two Cornucopia’s of Ignominy, to adorn thy forehead*’ and reading Angel Day’s *The English Secretary* for the rest of their life, should they fail to

'receive it [the manual] with an acknowledgement proportioned to the worth of such a Gift' (*ibid.* [5r]). Not only does this reveal that Massinger believes his service is great, to the extent that others should praise him or be cursed if they do not praise him, it also reflects his disdain for Day's Elizabethan Humanist manual, when he encapsulates it as part of his threat. By switching to a threat so early in his address, I wonder if Massinger is reacting to previously published work which received negative criticism. Furthermore, should the reader act accordingly to his opinion, then, the esteemed Commonwealth will bow and pay 'Homage' to him. Comparatively, the reader is 'a Mole-hill', a rather unnecessary comment (*ibid.*) It would seem that no one, except royalty, would equate themselves as being nothing more than a mole-hill, apart from Massinger; this suggests that Massinger sets himself apart from the reader.

Massinger then criticises other manual writers, Balzaac and Breton. The reader is simply assumed to have read these writers, and described as being 'blear-eyed with reading Mounſieur Balzaac, and the Packet of Letters.' And, although his tone appears to change when he states: 'Forgive me, good Reader, I ask thee moſt humbly Mercy', the verb usage of 'forgive', the adjective 'good' and the adverb 'humbly' imply sincerity; this may, however, be condescending in tone when 'forgive' is used as an imperative rather than as a request. Also, in the very same sentence, he reverts back to damnation when the reader is reminded of Massinger's 'former Imprecation' of the coronets and condemnation of reading Day. Reading Monsieur Balzaac and Breton is compared with acts of 'malice', where the reader will 'learneſt nothing but to ſpeak Baudy with a good Grace' (*ibid.* [6v]) Furthermore, Massinger reveals himself as religious when he remonstrates these manuals as Atheist; the reader is 'ſuckeſt in the principles of Atheiſm, there of Ignorance' which instruct people 'to preach in an Epistle, there to Court thy friends in a Sermon'. Accordingly, they are lowly works 'with Engliſh not worth the ſtealing', where 'one commands thee to violate the Laws of all antient Rhetorick, the other to obſerve none'; suggesting Serre, and Massinger's choice of picking Serre, is worthy. It also suggests Massinger highly regards the art of rhetoric, which is presumably found in *Secretary*; *Secretary* is a 'piece of excellent workmanſhip (which the Gods themſelves did hammer and frame in the Head of Mounſieur La Sere)' (*ibid.*), and Massinger contemplates, in his rhetorical question, 'What Rhetorick is more pleaſing than' *Secretary*? (*ibid.* [6r]).

If we employ Leech's trivalent politeness model with regards to Massinger and the contemporary reader, in view of the "Gift", that is *Secretary*, that he has ready to bestow upon the reader and the ceremonial praise he believes should be provided to him by the

reader, Massinger places a high sense of “power” in comparison to the reader. However, in term of the “weightiness” of the transaction, Massinger requires the reader to possibly buy *Secretary*, and certainly, owing to his disdain of other letter manuals, wants *Secretary* not only to be read but also be the primary source of epistolary guidance for the contemporary audience. On one level Massinger is enhancing the reader with such a gift of a manual – he is trying to “better” the reader, however he is expressing this in a manner which is affecting the reader’s negative face. Where Massinger displays pos-politeness, for example when addressing the reader as good, there is an imbalance between the amount of praise versus reprimand, and also the degree of the reprehensive language aimed at the reader which affects their negative face and the expected praise for Massinger. That said, there may not actually be an imbalance when we consider Massinger’s intended readership; if this contemporary readership is at a lower social ranking than Massinger, his use of language is in fact acceptable and appropriate.

With regards to Massinger’s intended readership, he may have been aware *Secretary* would attract the elite class, known to read the likes of Balzac and Breton, interested in French culture; thus, he felt it necessary to remonstrate their reading of these writers. He may also have been acknowledging the potential lower ranking readership who, although *Secretary* was directed towards the gentry, would have been able to access the manual. With his high regard for classical rhetoric, and references to Ephemerides, philosophy and astronomy, I would assume that Massinger had a university education, which would have exposed him to such classical studies. Therefore, though he addresses himself as ‘servant’, he may have been upper class; this may explain, his unusual tone, in both this letter and the dedicatory.

### **2.3.5 Prescriptive elements of the manual**

The actual manual begins with ‘INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITING OF LETTERS’ (*ibid.* [7r]). Letter writing is a common practice, but that ‘to fet them forth well, is not fo common’. Thus, *Secretary* has a niche and purpose, with the target readership being ‘ignorant men [the illiterate] as well as Literate’ – the latter being separate from ‘Learned men’ who are the only ones able to ‘perform it handfomly.’ The way in which readers should be taught, and how *Secretary* will teach, is through imitating ‘fair examples’ and with the guidance of ‘precepts’; therefore, readers ‘ought, to take care of two things; namely, the Matter, and the Form’ of a letter (*ibid.*).

### 2.3.6 Matter

‘Matter’ denotes the subject types or situations which a letter may discuss, and these are ‘any thing that may be discoursed of, without exception’ (*ibid.*); this relates to the title page claim that *Secretary* is a ‘*Compendious* way of Writing all manner of *LETTERS* [sic.]’ (*ibid.* [3r]). Interestingly, the limitations of privacy are highlighted; ‘it is not alwayes fitting to trust a secret to a Paper’, owing to the possibility that letters ‘may be lost and fall into a strangers hands’ (*ibid.* [8v]). Thus, although one can write whatever one wishes, writers should self-police and be aware of the reactionary effects of a letter on their reputation. By mentioning ‘strangers’, Serre highlights the impact between the levels of intimacy and distance on how language can be perceived; this aligns with politeness theory, which takes into account the social status and social distance between participants of a discourse. The inclusion of this in the compilation, suggests Massinger’s awareness of the state of the postal systems and government intervention of letters.

The ‘matter’ is differentiated into two main types, letters concerning ‘business, or Complements’ (*ibid.*) ‘Letters of business, are those that treat of things that concern us’, these include letters of: advice (which in this sense denotes news or information), counsel, remonstrance, command, entreaty, recommendation, offering assistance, complaint, reproof, and excuse (*ibid.* [8v-13v]) . Letters concerning complements include: conciliation, visits, congratulation, consolation, thanks, and merriment (*ibid.* [13v-16v]).

Matters are explained by telling the reader who the addressee is, what the type of letter is, the skill needed for it, and additional notes. For instance, letters of advice are addressed to friends, and relay the writer’s perspective on the letter’s subject. Being the most common type of letter, and therefore the most plain in style, a low the level of skill is needed; readers should refer to how they would relay this type of business when speaking, i.e. concisely and clearly. Also, the reader is warned not to write anything ‘rashly [...] as you may do you or your friends wrong [...] especially when you speak of great men or state-business’ (*ibid.* [8v]). These instructions align with Grice’s maxims of quantity and relation, and “negative face”, and therefore also Leech’s concept of neg-politeness.

Also noted are ‘mixt’ (mixed) letters, which are an amalgamation of more than one matter; Serre notes that they are the most common letter, ‘for we seldom write any Letters upon one only subject’ (*ibid.* [16v]). No rules are given for these letters, as one should consult their constituent matters; writers are expected to determine how to form these letters. Finally, letters of answers, i.e. the responses, are described (*ibid.* [16r]); some of the

matters already mentioned are responses to other matters, such as letters of excuse in answer to letters of complaint or reproof. But in general, previous matters concern initiating letters. As with mixed letters, no rules are given to these letters; one should be able to use the guidance from the previous letter types, in order to configure an appropriate answer. However, the reader is warned about the effects of the paralinguistic factors concerning the time with which a response is given; a long delay may imply offence and laziness. However, if writers find the initial letter offensive, they may want to ‘defer the answer a while’ to avoid writing an offensive response – thereby preserving both their positive and negative face – and to allow time for the initial writer to potentially re-evaluate what they have written, and therefore write another letter. Although, writers may not always be able to reply swiftly, as they need more time to consider their reply; in such cases, writers are advised to ‘send him a word or two to signify unto him that you will not forget to satisfy his request so soon as possibly you can’ (*ibid.*). From a Gricean perspective, writers are avoiding the opportunity to flout or violate the maxims. As well as this, when looking at letters which are not the initial letter in a set of correspondence, Kádár & Haugh’s analytical notions of incrementality and sequentiality can be addressed; where changes in the writer’s language adapt and react to the previous letter, and also where an analyst might infer that the writer is conditioning their language in view of the letter response by the addressee (2013: 112).

### 2.3.7 Form

Form refers to ‘all that is required in Letters (beside the matter) to frame them well’ (Serre: 1668: . [17v]). The adjective ‘well’ reflects that form is restricted by arbitrary terms. Form is split into 7 categories: 1) parts of the letter, which include the superscription, subscription, exordium, conclusion, and discourse, 2) style, 3) seemliness, 4) brevity, 5) plainness, which refers to clarity, 6) fairness, which refers to the layout of the letter 7) letter sealing practices. A description of each of these categories is given, followed by their range of choices according to the person whom the letter is addressed (*ibid.* [17v-20v]).

The **superscription** is perhaps better recognised as the opening of letters. With high ranking members of society, such as royalty, the superscription must be ‘Lord’ followed by their titles (*ibid.* [17v]). For example: ‘To my Lord, | the Lord, N. | Chancellor of France, | other titles | At Paris, Lyons’ (*ibid.* [17r]). Following this, ‘there must be as great a distance as may be between the first and second line, because the further they are distant, the greater respect they signify.’ Down the social hierarchy, ‘Mr.’ replaces ‘Lord’

but titles are still included, and the superscription's distance from the content may be the same or reduced accordingly to how much respect a writer intends to show. To those considered as 'our inferior[s]', abbreviation is used, such as Master, Mr., or Mr. N., and the content of the letter may run straight after the superscription. This scalar system is also used when addressing women, where: Lady replaces Lord, Mistress replaces Master, lower ranks are addressed as Madam, or abbreviations are used such as 'La. La. N, or to the meanest, to Dame N' (*ibid.*). Similarly, for the **subscription**, which is perhaps better recognised as the closing salutation of a letter, writers are advised to accordingly follow this advice:

in writing to great ones must be framed in this Kind. Your most humble and most obedient servant, N. Or, Your most obedient and most obliged servant, To those of lesser degree, Your most humble, and most affectionate servant, Or, your humble and affectionate servant. And to those of yet meaner condition. Your affectionate, to do you ay courtesie.

(*ibid.* [18v-18r])

Again, the subscription's distance from between the content visually indicates paralinguistic levels of respect. By offering a range of address terms, as well as advice on how to present the body of the letter in proximity to the superscription and subscription, in accordance to the social hierarchy of the period, this indicates that social rank has a great bearing on language use. In fact, Serre states that titles are the most important factor, as he refers to them as 'the chief thing [of which] we must take care' (*ibid.* [17v]). By detracting from these conventions, writers run the risk of 'breed[ing] distaste' and therefore offending the reader; in other words, this evokes an FTA, as the positive faces of the reader and writer are impeded.

The **exordium** is featured 'only in long Letters [...] which speak of affairs of concernment', and is essentially an explanatory introduction for a letter (*ibid.* [18r]). Thus, addressees are given a more immediate indication of the importance of the letter and the amount of attention they should give. Writers are told to include 'some small Complement to inlinate your self into his favour to whom you write' (*ibid.*). Complimentary content evokes positive politeness of the writer's positive face, by making themselves look favourable. In turn, this maintains negative politeness in terms of the addressee's negative face, as making the writer favourable redresses the imposition made on the addressee; an FTA is avoided. Similarly, **conclusions** are used 'to testify our affection, and set down our hearty wishes, or prayers for his prosperity, to whom we write' (*ibid.* [19v]). In doing so,

the writer maintains their positive face and also that of the addressee, therefore, exhibiting pos-politeness.

**Discourse** is the subject matter of the letter. Besides following the instructions on matter (see 2.3.6), the only other advice is that the writer may order the letter as they please, ‘unless sometimes in Letters of answer we follow the order of those Letters [to] which we write an answer’ (*ibid.* [19v]); this aligns with Grice’s maxim of manner.

**Style** should differ little ‘from our ordinary manner of speaking’, and ‘in all Letters there must be some Elegance and grace’ (*ibid.*); this evokes the *ars rhetorica*. Thus, the addressee is invited to read a letter ‘with some consideration’, and the writer avoids ‘rusticity or Barbarous and improper words or Phrases’ (*ibid.*); consequently, the writer’s positive face is maintained and the addressee’s negative face is not impeded.

**Seemliness** denotes appropriateness; it refers to a letter’s appropriate register. Writers are advised that they ‘must seriously consider what befits the things we speak of, and the time, and place wherein we live. Also the persons of those as write, as well as of those to whom we write’ (*ibid.* [19r]). Seemliness concerns social rank, age, and other variables such as gender and professions. Serre explicitly asserts that ‘it would not be seemly to write to a great person in the same manner as you would write to your equal’, and failing to use the correct register may be deemed as ‘unseemly and offensive’ (*ibid.*); seemliness can be rephrased as Grice’s maxim of manner.

The **brevity** of a letter is regarded as ‘very commendable’; letters should be ‘neither too short nor too long’ (*ibid.*). To judge these boundaries, letters should be proportional ‘to the matter, which sometimes ought to be enlarged, and sometimes refrained’. This is somewhat obscure and not objective. Thus, the brevity of a letter is left to the discretion of the letter writer, however they are advised to avoid ‘superfluity’ and ‘tautologies’, and that ‘there must be nothing omitted which may conduce to the explaining of the business in hand’ (*ibid.*) Thus, brevity can be rephrased as Grice’s maxims of quantity and relation.

Similar to the seemliness of a letter, the **plainness** of a letter relates to how a letter should be phrased. Writers are told that letters ‘must be written in a plain Language, easy to be understood’ (*ibid.*); this also aligns with Grice’s maxim of manner.

The **fairness** of a letter concerns the letter’s composition, with regards to handwriting, layout, and the type of paper used (*ibid.* [20v]). Writers should take care and

pay attention to detail, to form neat handwriting and avoid any ‘blots’; the avoidance of ‘blots’ implies that one should not apply too much pressure when writing and write at a steady pace. Letters should be composed so that they do ‘not tire the Readers eyes, but be written so fair that it may delight the sight with looking upon it’ (*ibid.*). Not only does fairness maintain the writer’s positive face by demonstrating their skill and care, but it also maintains the addressee’s positive and negative face, as they are being shown respect. However, fairness does not just concern elegant composition; poor handwriting and composition may cause the addressee to overlook vital information, thus Grice’s maxim of manner is evoked.

### 2.3.8 Comparison with 17<sup>th</sup> Century Epistolary Practices

If we compare *Secretary* with general epistolary practices of the 17<sup>th</sup> century we observe that it is very much typical of the era. The obvious point is that it is a French manual, albeit a translation, and although the order has been rearranged by Massinger, this compilation still follows the French style of organising the contents at the back of the letters to which they refer. Additionally, there are model letters regarding ‘Complements & Elegancy of the French Tongue’ (total 92 pages) which make up a significant 27% of *Secretary*’s overall content. Whilst this relay Massinger’s opinion of these authors’ works, it also appears to align with the 17<sup>th</sup> century emergence of letter manuals intended to promote literacy among the vernacular, thereby enabling them to follow Scriptures (Newbold 2007: 136). Furthermore, manuals’ contents usually incorporated guidance on how one should behave within and beyond the scope of letters in society; *Secretary* includes model letters concerning morals which account for 38% of the model letters, and 32% of *Secretary*’s overall content.

The title page boasts every type of letter, and the range of manners and model letters strengthen this claim; as an advertising device, this also reflects the readership’s demand for more inclusive manuals. Thus, *Secretary* reflects contemporary expansions of epistolary spaces, and therefore the expansion of letters being used as a medium of communication. As more postal routes opened, the exchange of letters would become more accessible; and, one could use letters as a medium to correspond about a multitude of matters to more people.

*Secretary* falls into the genre of the *Academies of Complements*, not just because of the inclusion of model letters, but also as it advises writers to write in the style which follows the *ars rhetorica*; furthermore the prescriptive content and model letters are

directed towards the male gentry. If we observe the instructions of fairness and sealing, the writer is advised to use ‘perfumed and gilded Paper’, and to seal the letters with silk and Spanish wax (Serre 1668: [20v]); all of these are clearly unaffordable items for the lower classes. And, as writers are advised to compose their letters with large margins, this would mean the use of more paper per letter; this suggests that the writer possesses considerable quantities of paper, or rather expensive paper. The majority of the model letters concern scenarios amongst men, indeed, Bannet describes Part 1 of *Secretary*’s model letters as ‘masculine courtship letters’ (2008: 17). Exchanges between men and women are typically amatory letters; however, no model letters feature exchanges between exclusively women. Though, the male target audience is not explicit, the content of the model letters and also the manual’s prescriptive content marginalises women. The guidance on form is firstly given to men, in descending order of social rank, then to women down their social hierarchy. The subscriptions for men are several, whereas: ‘If it be a woman that writes, she shall say, Your servant, &c’ (Serre 1668: [18r]). Notice the noun phrase ‘a woman’, whereas other directions do not direct the reader by the phrase “if you are a man”; this suggests that the target audience is assumed to be male.

## Chapter 3: *Love-Letters*

This chapter discusses *Love-Letters* in terms of: the inspiration for *Love-Letters* (3.1), the publisher (3.2), the anonymous author (3.3), contextual information on Behn (3.4), Behn as the author (3.5); it concludes with an analysis of the letters (3.6), which includes an overview of the letters (3.6.1), a discussion on each selected letter (3.6.2-3.6.8<sup>5</sup>), a general discussion of all the selected letters with regards to other variables affecting the epistolary style (3.6.9), and ends with a brief comparison of the letters with real 17<sup>th</sup> century correspondence.

### 3.1 The Inspiration for *Love-Letters*

In 1682, George Berkeley advertised, in the *London Gazette*, a £200 reward for the return of his daughter Lady Henrietta Berkeley: ‘a young lady of a fair complexion, fair haired, full-breasted and indifferent tall’ (cited in Todd 1996b: 299; see also Ballaster 1999: 149; Pollak 1999: 158). The events that would transpire were that Lady Henrietta had run off with her sister’s husband, Ford Lord Grey, to continue an affair which was already part of the gossip ether; their affair initiated three years earlier to Lady Henrietta’s disappearance (Gardiner 1989: 212). The scandal was of further interest, due to Grey being ‘ostensibly the Duke of Monmouth’s ardent supporter’ (Todd 1996b: 299); indeed, he would later be associated with the Rye House Plot and as a key Whig conspirator of the Monmouth Rebellion in 1685. Moreover, Grey’s wife apparently had an extramarital affair with Monmouth; and contemporary ‘lampoons portrayed him [Grey] as pimp more than cuckold’ (*ibid.*).

In November 1682, Grey was brought to trial, with George Jeffreys leading the proceedings. He was accused of kidnapping and ruining Lady Henrietta, who under the age of 18 was considered a minor. Furthermore, the concept of sibling-in-laws was yet to be established; instead, as Lady Henrietta was actually considered Grey’s sister, their relationship was deemed incestuous. Lady Henrietta was ordered to return to her rightful “owner”, her father; however, another revelation came, when she revealed that she was the “property” of her husband, William Turner. The court and her family were to learn that she had married Turner, Lord Grey’s servant, as a matter of convenience. Of course she could not marry Lord Grey as he would be charged with bigamy, but by marrying his servant she was prevented from legal obligation to return to her parental home; thus, they would be able to continue their affair. In 1683, the Rye House Plot was intercepted, with Lord Grey

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<sup>5</sup> For the transcriptions of the selected letters, see the Appendix.

amongst the alleged conspirators; the accused were sent the Tower, tortured, or killed. However, after being arrested and denying the allegations, Grey had managed to escape and flee England to the continent, calling for Lady Henrietta to join him (Todd 1996b: 300; see also Ballaster 1999: 149).

The scandal's farcical nature made it ripe for satires and lampoons, and apt for adapting into fiction; in 1684 *Love-Letters* was published. Although set in France and containing the correspondence of Philander and Silvia, much of the storyline is easily identifiable as an elaboration of Lord Grey and Lady Henrietta's scandal.

### 3.2 Publisher

*Love-Letters* was '[I]icensed on 20<sup>th</sup> October 1683' (Todd 1996b: 310). The title page states it was published in 1684, and printed and sold by Randal Taylor near Stationer's Hall, London (Anon. 1684: [1r]). *Historical Texts*, accessed at <https://data.historicaltexts.jisc.ac.uk>, shows Randal Taylor published around 200 works, the earliest dating from 1671 (*Flagellum, or The Life and Death, Birth and Burial or O. Cromwell The Late Usurper* by James Heath) and the latest dating c.1700 (*A Brief Examination of Some Passages in the Chronicle Part of a Letter, Written to Dr Sherlock in his Vindication* by John Milner); the works include subjects concerning: religion, the monarchy, letters, social commentaries, politics, trials, philosophy, Scotland, France, novels, poetry, lampoons, Nostradamus, and even zoology. With such a diverse range of genres, that had no bias to specific politics or religion, Randal Taylor's publication of *Love-Letters* does not appear out of place.

### 3.3 Anonymous Author

No author is provided in the title page or the dedicatory letter; the likely reason for this appears to be the political climate concerning the monarchy. In 1678, the anti-Catholic Titus Oates alleged the Popish Plot, where supposed Catholic conspirators planned Charles II's assassination and the accession of the Duke of York to the throne. Alongside this, there were growing rumours of a Whig-uprising, which planned for Charles II's illegitimate son the Duke of Monmouth to take the crown. Given the execution of his father and his own resulting exile, Charles II sought to halt anything that would heighten political unrest (see Goreau 1980: 240). Many of the accused Popish Plot conspirators were arrested and murdered; therefore anonymity for *Love-Letters* was perhaps a safety measure. And yet, despite the anonymity, one of the likely candidates rumoured by the contemporary readership was Aphra Behn, who is currently accepted as the most likely author.

### 3.4 Contextual Information on Behn

As an historical pragmatic analysis takes into account contextual information, such information pertaining to Behn, may elucidate the reasoning behind her stylistic choices. In other words, when looking at the epistolary features of the fictitious letters in *Love-Letters* are these informed by epistolary practices as laid out in manuals such as *Secretary*, or are they also influenced by contextual information relating to Behn?

‘What is securely known about Aphra Behn outside her works could be summed up in a page’ (Todd 1996b: 1). Born c.1640, Behn grew up under Puritan rule, and then spent her adult life under the Restoration wherein her writing career took place between the 1670s and 80s; she died in 1689. She is said to have been spy agent 160 (code name Astrea) for Charles II, in Antwerp and the Netherlands (*ibid.* 5; Hutner 1993: 3); this may explain the lack of existing evidence regarding her life. Behn was a Pro-Stuart Tory Royalist supporter, particularly of Charles II, and was amongst the first English female professional playwrights, poets, and fiction writers. Attributed works celebrate Tory views, and beyond propaganda or perhaps, as a result of this, explore themes of sexuality.

‘Behn was the most prolific writer of the Restoration after John Dryden’ (Finke 1993: 18). One wonders why Behn wrote to such an extent, and, indeed, why she wrote in the first place. Often claimed to be the ‘first female professional writer’ (see Chalmers 2004: 7; Gallagher 1999: 12; Owen 1999: 57); what can be said is that Behn, at the time, would be amongst the first women writing professionally. However, what should be investigated is why she would write professionally. If she were to have come from an aristocratic family, an income was unnecessary; Behn’s works are, generally, dedicated to people who funded her writing, if she had money to her own name then she would not need these dedications. This does not necessarily rule out Behn as upper class, as it is possible that her family became bankrupt, or that she left her family in circumstances that meant that she could not inherit any money. There is ‘no sense that she wrote because [she was] impelled by some inner force. She wrote because she was good at it and made money’ (Todd 1996b: 4). Thus, if Behn had been a great seamstress or great at any profession other than writing, then she would have done so if it made money; she was a pragmatic person.

### 3.5 Behn as the Author

In Section 3.4, the question as to whether or not contextual information relating to Behn had a bearing on the epistolary features in *Love-Letters* was posed. The issue with this question is the validity of Behn’s authorship of *Love-Letters*. Essentially, contextual

information relating to Behn is a pointless task to discuss if Behn is not actually the author. Therefore, indicators found in *Love-Letters* which suggest the contextual information on the author will now be discussed.

Within the dedicatory letter, there are qualities which one would attribute to a Pro-Stuart, Tory propagandist. In the novel Philander is revealed to be rather foolish, unmoral and disloyal, and the author describes him as a ‘French Whigg [...] and a most apparent Traytor’, whereas the naive Silvia is a ‘true Tory in every part’ (Anon. 1684 [5r & 7r]). Also, Philander is incomparable with the honourable and credible qualities of the dedicatee, Thomas Condon, who, in light of these qualities, is ‘far distant to’ Philander (*ibid.* [6r]). Moreover, reverence is given to being ‘hardned in Torifim’, and the Royal cause – i.e. the reign of Charles II – is described as a ‘glorious subject’ (*ibid.* [5r-6v]). This suggests that the author is an anti-Whig and Tory royalist, qualities attributable with Behn. Of course, these qualities are not restricted to just Behn, however she has a connection with Randal Taylor; in 1688 Taylor published *A poem to Sir Roger L’Estrange, on his Third Part of the History of the Times, relating to the Death of Sir Edmund Bury-Godfrey*, whose title page conspicuously prints the author as a ‘Mrs. A. Behn’.

Another indicator, and perhaps the strongest, is Behn’s association with the Duke of Monmouth, who in *Love-Letters* is the character Cesario; of course Cesario is not explicitly said to be Monmouth, however Cesario has an affair with Philander’s wife which resembles Monmouth’s affair with Grey’s wife. Furthermore, the dedicatory letter describes Cesario as a ‘parallel to that of a modern Prince in our Age’ who surely is Monmouth (*ibid.* [2r-3v]). Despite the consequences of the Popish Plot, including the arrest of her friend ‘Henry Neville (Payne), a well-known Catholic’ (Goreau 1980: 243), Behn continued writing plays of a political nature. In August 1682, Behn’s epilogue for *Romulus and Hersilia* attacked and accused Monmouth as traitor and deserter of his father. One might assume that her royal support would be enough to secure Behn from harm’s way, but Charles II openly acknowledged Monmouth as his illegitimate son and, spoilt and supported Monmouth’s general character. To attack Monmouth was to attack Charles II. Despite being anonymous, all paths led back to Behn; thus both, she and the actress who addressed the epilogue, Lady Slingsby, were arrested by the Lord Chamberlain, as reported in the *Newdigate Newsletter* and the *True Protestant Mercury* (*ibid.* 247; see also Day 1966: 223; Finke 1993: 37; Ballaster 1993: 208).

Behn’s arrest in late 1682 led to her being ‘issued [with] a libel warrant for Tory propaganda’ (Gardiner 1989: 209), and along with the financial destitute faced by the

London theatres, also a result of the Popish Plot, Behn departed from the stage until 1686 (see Ballaster 1993: 187). Although she needed a low profile, Behn still needed to support herself. However, her only marketable skills were in writing, and so, it would seem, she had little choice but to turn her hand to writing fiction. The need to earn a living for Behn is an important factor to consider. It would seem likely that had Behn felt able to continue writing for the stage, she would have done so; as earning a living from fiction was a lowly activity, especially in comparison to that earned by a playwright (see *ibid.*; see also Day 1966: 79). Thus, if Behn was to become a writer of fiction, it would have to be on a topic that would attract public demand.

Being a savvy pragmatist, the popular scandal of Lord Grey and Lady Henrietta makes Behn's author attribution understandable; this makes her, at the very least, a possible candidate for *Love-Letters*' authorship. Furthermore, with the cause of her arrest and subsequent absence from the theatre resulting from her attack on Monmouth's character, surely the public made the link that it may be Behn discrediting Monmouth through Cesario, to seek retribution. Additionally, Behn was a known admirer of libertine culture, particularly of the rakish Earl of Rochester, and also Lucretius and La Rochefoucault (see Finke 1993: 27; Todd 1994: 277; see also Chalmers 2004: 14). As well as their allegiance to the Whig cause, Monmouth and Lord Grey were known for their numerous love affairs, coupled with their supposed handsome looks and dashing qualities as 'skittish cavalier[s]' (Todd 1996b: 223). Also, Behn was experienced playwright on sexual themes. With this knowledge, authorship may point to Behn or at least another known admirer or writer of libertine culture.

The novel's themes are clearly aimed at the populace – it is based upon a popular scandal; it is set in France; romance is a main theme, was a popular genre; and, of course, politics is another main theme, a daily source of popular concern in 17<sup>th</sup> century society (see Keeble 2001: 1; for readership tastes see Gardiner 1989: 208). By aiming to such a readership, one would maximise their profit yield; and Behn, in her financial state, fits the bill as someone with an impetus to write such a novel of potential financial gain. Furthermore, Behn was a fiction reader of the European romances Gauthier de Costas' *La Calprenède*, Alemán's *Guzman and Lazarillo*, L'Estrange's *Lettres Portugaises*, and works by Brémond (Todd 1996b: 20 & 302-303; see also Gardiner 1989: 217; Day 1966: 23-27); therefore, she was also part of the audience who found romances interesting, thus, aware of the romantic style which is seen in *Love-Letters*.

In summary, *Love-Letters* is: pro-Tories, anti-Whigs, Royalist, involves Monmouth, concerns Libertine culture, and contains popular themes in demand by the contemporary readership. All of this is a strong argument for Behn as the author, especially as the style is similar to other attributed works. However, this does not establish Behn's authorship; perhaps an admirer wanted to imitate Behn; or perhaps an anti-Tory imitated her style to incriminate Behn.

### 3.6 Analysis of the Letters

#### 3.6.1 The Letters

In terms of an analysis which does not use take into account contextual information, the selected letters are English translations which are part of a French epistolary novel entitled *L'Intregue de Philander & Silvia*, which comprises of 57 letters in total. No dates are given for this book, however in the dedication the translator states that they came across the book, in Paris, 'last Spring' (Anon. 1684 [2r]); therefore we can date the letters being as late as the start of the 1680s, and no later than 1684. The concluding paragraph of the preface, entitled 'The ARGUMENT', claims that the letters were found in the cabinets of the titular characters, at their house (*ibid.* [13v]). Therefore, the letters are only those which Philander and Silvia have in their possession; their responses to other people are not shown. *Love-Letters* consists of mainly informal, intimate letters which vary in length.

In context, *L'Intregue de Philander & Silvia* does not exist (Todd 1996a: 3). Given the popularity of French novels, the readership of *Love-Letters* presumably would have been aware of the novel's false existence. Thus, the letters were either taken as: wholly fictitious, partly fictitious, or wholly real. With the parallels between Philander and Silvia, against Lord Grey and Lady Henrietta, people took the letters to be a commentary on the scandal and thus partly fictitious, however some people took the letters to be real, where character names are pseudonyms (Gardiner 1989: 203).

#### 3.6.2 Text 1

Text (1) is part of a correspondence between Philander and Silvia, where Philander is the writer and Silvia is the addressee. However this does not necessarily mean that this is the initial letter of their correspondence. In the postscript, Philander states '*I have liv'd a whole day / and yet no Letter from my Silvia*', this suggests that it has been a day since Silvia wrote a letter to Philander, however one may also infer that it has been a day since

Silvia spoke to Philander and said that she would send a letter, another possibility is that it has been a day since Philander sent another letter to Silvia, prior to Text (1).

If we compare the practices of *Secretary*, the superscription ‘To Silvia’ superficially indicates that the letter is addressed to a social inferior, owing to lack of title attributed to Silvia and the use of solely her forename. Yet in spite of this informality, the deferential form of the second person pronoun is being used by Philander; this is interesting as the absence of titles suggests the addressee is a social inferior; however, the deferential form is not used to address to a social inferior. Being a man, it would be socially acceptable for Philander to address Silvia with the non-deferential usage, as women were deemed social inferiors; unless Silvia ranks higher than Philander – for example, if she were of noble rank and he were of the non-gentry. Therefore, superficially, Silvia is either of higher social status than Philander or they are the same social rank. What may be occurring is that Philander is insulting Silvia; if she is of higher social rank then the superscription is an insult, and the deferential form is being used in mock respect, whether she is of higher or lower social rank. However, the letter’s tone and content suggest no apparent sarcasm or explicit insults. Instead, the content concerns Philander’s love and lust for Silvia. This is reflected when Philander addresses Silvia by her name and by the term ‘maid’, pre-modified by the complimentary adjectives: ‘charming’, ‘adorable’, ‘lovely’ and ‘divine’. With this in mind, and the knowledge that Philander and Silvia are both of noble rank, we can discount that Philander is insulting Silvia, and instead, conclude that the informality of the superscription indicates intimacy and the deferential form indicates respect; therefore Philander and Silvia have a close relationship. In context, the author’s dedicatory letter states that the correspondence between Philander and Silvia comprises of letters which ‘art loft and amorous’. Also, the preface, “argument”, reveals that these characters are involved in a love affair (Anon. 1684: [11v-13v]). Thus, the letter’s personal and intimate nature is elucidated.

The letter’s content reveals that Philander is torn between Silvia’s ‘impossible commands’ for him to stop his romantic pursuit and his desire for her. The tone mimics a romantic tragedy of love, but more specifically of denied love; thus, the tone is both romantic and whining. The latter is observed through Philander’s use of hyperbole, such as: ‘a Thoufand conflicts between | Love and Honour’, and the concluding sentence which describes Philander perishing, ‘pale and bleeding’, from heartache, where after Philander’s subscription reads ‘The loft Phlander’. In terms of brevity, this letter flouts the maxims of quantity and relation, with the extensive sentences describing Philander’s heartache and

passion for Silvia, and Silvia's beauty. Pragmatically this has been done, as with the use of hyperbole, as a rhetorical device to express Philander's strong and intense love for Silvia. If we look at this letter in terms of politeness theory, the description of Philander's heartache can be seen as Philander impeding on Silvia's negative face. However, it seems fair to infer that Philander wants to continue a correspondence with Silvia, and the potential FTAs are redressed when Philander maintains Silvia's positive face by his use of complimentary language. Having said this, if we combine the description of Philander's supposed pain with his complimentary language, we can argue that Philander's intention is to make Silvia feel guilty for the one she loves, Philander.

This lack of brevity is also observed in terms of the style of the letter, which when looking at the punctuation reflects rhetorical practices rather than grammatical. For instance, in Present Day English, one would expect the use of exclamation and interrogation marks to indicate the end of a sentence, which is also indicated by the use of *litterae notabiliores* (capital letters) to mark the initial letter of the proceeding sentence's opening word. However this is not always the case, as observed in the sentences: '[...] Heavenly Beauty! loofe, | wanton [...]' and '[...] by cuftome? what is it [...]'. This is because both cases are part of lists; the first is a list regarding the qualities which Philander strongly admires of Silvia, and the second is a list questioning their relationship's immorality and incestuous labelling. In this way, these punctuation marks indicate intonation – exclamatory and interrogating respectively – and a lack of pausing that is associated with these punctuation marks, when used to mark the end of a sentence. By reflecting rhetorical practices, one could argue that the letter is following *Secretary* which advocates that style should replicate speech. However, the use of lists and hyperbole are arguably more associated with dramatic speech observed in plays, rather than in everyday conversations; therefore, Text (1) appears more akin to a soliloquy, and the interrogate list which questions their relationship's immorality, is less an invitation for Silvia to respond and rather an argument for Philander's opinion.

### 3.6.3 Text 2

Text (2) is the also part of the correspondence between Philander and Silvia, however Silvia is the writer and Philander is the addressee. The letter is dated '*Wednesday Morning*', however as Text (1) is not dated, its position in the correspondence is obscure. One might assume that, as this is the second letter presented in the book, this is the direct response to Text (1), however this may be a response to another letter or a combination of another letter and Text (1). *Secretary* advises that the discourse of a responding letter

should address and answer, where appropriate, and from looking at the content of the letter Silvia appears to be addressing points made by Philander in Text (1). Therefore, as Silvia's response appears to be exhibiting sequentiality, it seems highly likely that this letter is a direct response to Text (1); however, as Philander and Silvia clearly have a personal and intimate relationship, it may even be the initiating letter of the correspondence and a response to a spoken conversation between the two. The form and style of the letter parallels that of Philander: the superscription 'To *Philander*' lacks titles, the deferential second person pronoun is used, the use of punctuation is rhetorical, and the subscription ends 'Unfortunate *Silvia*'. As with all the letters, this reveals interesting points regarding Silvia's character, to be discussed later in 3.6.9.

### 3.6.4 Text 3

Text (3) is part of the correspondence between Philander and Silvia, where Philander is the writer and Silvia is the addressee. It is the twenty-second letter presented in the book and is preceded by a letter to Silvia from Philander, which in turn is preceded by a letter to Philander from Silvia.

In contrast to Text (1), the superscription reads: '*To my fair Charmer*'. This term of address is interesting in that it is obviously an unofficial title – certainly not one seen within *Secretary* – but the use of the *litterae notabiliores* of 'Charmer' turns this common noun into a proper noun. It is a pseudo-title given to Silvia by Philander, which is pre-modified by the adjective 'fair'. This appears to be used to show respect in line with *Secretary*'s advice on the use of titles; however the use of a non-official title, in place of Silvia's actual titles, appears to be due to Philander not wanting to be formal but intimate. The body of the letter shows that Philander is trying to persuade Silvia that she is his priority, rather than his political cause. With the tone of the letter being persuasive, the use of a title for the superscription indicating respect becomes clear; in this way, Philander's pos-politeness, and therefore enhancement through such addresses for Silvia, is trying to maintain Silvia's positive face.

In terms of brevity, this letter flouts the maxims of quantity and then incidentally the maxim of relation, as the letter is longer than necessary, in terms of Philander's point. Silvia is told that Philander received a letter, and that this is enclosed with this letter. The need to tell Silvia that the other letter has been enclosed on the one hand is unnecessary, as surely she would be able to find this letter and know of its addition. On the other hand, one could argue that Philander has added this information as a precaution, should the letter not

be found along with Text (3), or it could be that he is simply reminding Silvia to check for the letter. He states that the letter's inclusion is to prove to Silvia 'how little' he regards 'the mighty revolution', and this sufficiently illustrates his point; however, he continues that he would 'let the busy unregarded Rout perish', and, furthermore, that he would let 'the Cause fall'. Similarly, he tells Silvia how much she means to him; she is compared as far greater than his political cause with 'her adorable face' and this in itself is sufficiently illustrates his point. However he continues, describing her 'Charming Tongue', 'her tender heart', and states that 'one moments joy [...] surmounts an age of dull Empire'; notice also, the exclamative 'Oh wondrous Miracle of Beauty!' which acts as a parenthetical aside. The obvious reason for this over-informative letter is that Philander is using repetition, as a rhetorical persuasive device, to reinforce his argument that Silvia is his priority. The use the exclamation 'Oh!' is also unnecessary, but again its inclusion makes sense as it expresses Philander's apparently forlorn and desperate tone.

In terms of style, Philander again appears to be writing as if he were speaking, albeit perhaps not in the way which Serre recommended. The sentences comprise of two very long sentences and one short sentence. The first two could easily be broken up, however the use of commas and semi-colons reflects Philander's continuous speech; this indicates the desperate nature of the text. By not breaking up these sentences, Philander continues his point by adding more points; thus it would seem that he is disallowing Silvia from easily processing the information, and preventing her from questioning the integrity and sincerity of his point. Had this been a transcript of a face-to-face conversation, it would appear that Silvia is unable to get a word in; thus, she is unable to express her opinion in the exchange. The closing shorter sentence, which makes up the subscription, features an exclamatory 'Oh!' preceding a relatively longer exclamatory sentence which ends 'PHILANDER!'

### **3.6.5 Text 4**

Text (4) is originally part of a correspondence between Cesario and Philander, where Cesario is the writer and Philander is the addressee. However, Philander, as stated in 3.6.4, enclosed Text (4) along with Text (3); therefore this letter belongs not to Philander but to Silvia. Despite being presented as the twenty-third letter, we can date it as being written earlier than Text (3). It is not altogether clear as to whether or not this is part of an on-going correspondence between Cesario and Philander, or if Cesario is the initiating writer of the correspondence. One might assume that, as there are no other letters from Cesario, this is the initial letter; however other letters may have been destroyed by

Philander. In other words, the letter may only exist because of it was in Silvia's possession; the postscript of the fifteenth letter to Silvia from Philander states '*I conjure you burn this, | for writing in haste, I have not counterfeited my hand*' (Anon. 1684: 151). The verb 'conjure' denotes Philander imploring, and the verb 'counterfeited' indicates the urgency and necessity for the letter's destruction; yet despite this, Silvia kept the letter.

Out of context, the superscription '*To the Count of—*' reveals Philander to be part of the noble rank of the Gentry, and the use of titles follows the practices discussed in *Secretary*. This usage, along with the use of the deferential second person pronoun, indicates that Philander and Cesario have a formal relationship. Little ceremony is given to the subscription, as it is signed '*Your CESARIO*'. Although, this usage, with regards to *Secretary*, suggests that Cesario is of higher social ranking than Philander, or he at least considers himself so. In context, the prefacing dedicatory letter explains that Cesario is a prince and Philander's leader of their political cause. Thus, the lack of flourishes to the subscription is at an appropriate level, considering that Cesario is not only Philander's social superior but also his sovereign. Being royalty, Cesario is part of an establishment which is considered to have divine right; with such power it would be acceptable for Cesario to by-pass social convention and expectation for him to maintain Philander's positive or negative face.

But the use of the title, when referring to Philander, indicates Cesario is a gentleman who upholds certain social conventions of politeness.

The letter begins abruptly, and, in terms of brevity, is short and to the point. The main point is that Cesario requests Philander's presence, and the secondary subject matter is Cesario admonishing Philander's absence due to Silvia (although, one could argue that, the opening lines, wherein Cesario states that he allows Philander to be distracted by Silvia, is between friends. In one respect Philander's personal life has nothing to do with Cesario, and Cesario himself had a love affair with Philander's wife; however, Cesario is Philander's superior, and when Philander's personal life infringes on their cause, it does become Cesario's business). The brevity of the letter may be due to its nature concerning their political cause, which is indicated by the terms 'Glory' and 'Advancers'. Cesario's request for Philander's presence by the next morning suggests that something urgent is occurring, and, that Cesario is considerably busy and has little time to spend on this letter. Furthermore, Cesario is likely to have been conscious of the potential risk of interception and thus certain details are left obscure, such as: Philander's full title in the superscription,

the names of the advancers, and news which Cesario wants to share with Philander, which must be of significance as he believes that it will surprise Philander.

The seamliness of the letter indicates that, while the tone is business-like in one respect, it is also intimate in another respect. This is reflected when Cesario refers to Philander as ‘Dear’, and the postscript reveals that, with respect to Philander’s absence when Cesario went to visit him, Cesario ‘*foon imagin’d*’ Philander’s location. The adverb ‘soon’ denotes a short amount of time, and this suggests that Cesario would need to have a personal relationship with Philander, in order to be able to so quickly discern his location. Notice also, the clause ‘let me find you in my | Arms’ parallels intimate language more associated with love. However, the intimacy of their relationship is not a simple matter of them being friends and to that effect equals; Cesario addresses Philander with language which suggests that, although they have a familiar relationship, Cesario is still higher ranking than Philander, as reflected by possessive language. Possession is indicated by the possessive pronoun ‘my’ which pre-modifies ‘Dear’, when referencing Philander. Also the possessive pre-modification of verbs ‘allow’ and ‘permit’, by the contracted phrases of ‘I will’ (‘I’ll’ and ‘I’ll), denotes permission; where the pre-modification of the modal verb ‘will’, by the first person pronoun, denotes Cesario’s consent. Also, the imperatives ‘make | no delay’, ‘let me’, ‘teach ‘em’, ‘be careful’, and ‘let nothing hinder’ are explicit markers of orders, which imply no options or need for Philander’s consent, and therefore control by Cesario over Philander. Power is also observed when Cesario withholds information from Philander, when he states ‘I have something | that will surprize you to relate to | you’.

### 3.6.6 Text 5

Text (5) is part of a correspondence between Mertilla and Silvia, where Mertilla is the writer and Silvia is the addressee. It is the twenty-ninth letter and the only letter presented in the book from Mertilla; though it is not clear as to whether it is in response to a letter by Silvia, as Silvia is in the habit of keeping letters which is illustrated by the inclusion of Text (4), one assumes that this is either the initial letter of the correspondence, or a reply to an initial letter by Silvia.

The superscription, which reads, ‘*To the Lady*———— | *Dear Child,*’ and the subscription ‘*Dearest Child,* | *Your affectionate Sister*’ are in accordance with the practices laid out in *Secretary*, which states that when addressing ‘[t]hose who are of Kin, add, after the Title of Master of Mistrefs, their degree of Kindred; as Sir, and most loving uncle; or Mistrefs, and most loving Coufin’. The terms of address show that Mertilla and Silvia are

sisters, but also that Silvia is Mertilla's younger sister due to the term of address 'Child'. Both the deferential and the non-deferential second person pronoun forms are used; however the dominating form is the non-deferential form, which is appropriate owing to their sibling relationship, and Mertilla's status as elder sister, and thus Silvia's superior. Interestingly, Silvia is never referred to by her name, but instead by her relationship to Mertilla – sister or child. She is even referred to as a 'fond heedless girl', where the insult of being called careless and being referred to as a girl rather than a woman is perhaps redressed by the use of the adjective 'fond'.

The letter begins with Mertilla speculating that Silvia is distressed, and she relays how she has always disapproved of her 'dangerous passion' with Philander. She then states that, though she has never told their parents about this affair, she fears that she must; this is essentially a threat which is redressed by her use of the verb 'fear' which indicates her reluctance to do so. The subject matter is perhaps best described as a mixture of a letter of counsel, a letter of remonstrance and even complaint; Mertilla is counselling Silvia to stop her love affair with Philander, remonstrating Silvia's conduct, and complaining how Silvia's conduct has affected both their reputation and that of their family. *Secretary* notes that letters of counsel are either addressed to those who 'defire your Counfel' but also to those who 'do not expect it' (Serre 1668: [8v]). From looking at the content of the letter, Mertilla does not mention that she is responding to a letter wherein Silvia has requested her counsel; thus it seems likely, owing to her framing of the letter, that Mertilla has not received such a request from Silvia, as it would be social convention to mention this. Therefore, this type of counsel is more appropriately described as a letter of counsel Silvia does not necessarily expect. *Secretary* states that letters of remonstrance are addressed to those who 'have committed some fault, to caufe them to acknowledge it, or induce them to make amends for it' (*ibid.* [9v]); whereas letters of complaint are addressed 'to one as hath done us an injury, to make him acknowledge his fault, or to reprove him for his ingratitude' (*ibid.* [11r]). For both, the writer must tell the addressee 'how grievoufly he hath offended God'; though not as explicit, Mertilla's disapproval and advice is expressed in relation to religious language: Silvia is told how 'with tears' Mertilla has prayed for Silvia, 'Heaven' is considered as a domain that has been and will be ruined, and should be consulted, and faith and sins are also mentioned.

Mertilla's advice is expressed through imperative sentences which are intertwined with remonstrance and complaint. She advises Silvia to consider the shame of her actions; it is bad enough that she is conducting an extramarital affair, but more severely is that it is

with Mertilla's husband, Silvia's "brother", and thus unlawful. She is also told to consider the shame she will bring on their 'noble house', i.e. their family. Should Silvia ignore Mertilla's advice, Silvia is warned that she will be viewed as a prostitute and have to go into hiding. The use of imperative verbs 'consider', 'think', 'remember' denote the mental process of evaluation. 'Consider' is used before three pieces of advice, and in this way mimics a set of rules. 'Think' is also used three times, once independently and repeatedly in the sentence 'Think, think of this'; notice how in the second scenario the phrase 'think of this' is superfluous, however its presence, as with these types of imperative verbs, is a rhetorical device which highlights the importance of the surrounding information. These verbs contrast with the imperative verbs 'retire' 'fly' and 'haste', observed in the phrase 'retire from | ruine; haste, fly from destruction | which pursues thee fast; haste, | haste, and save thy parents'. These verbs denote physical actions of movement; while Silvia is asked to evaluate her circumstances in detail, Mertilla advises, or rather instructs, Silvia to leave Philander in a relatively shorter clause. The use of imperatives appears to be an FTA; however, owing their sibling relationship, the use is socially acceptable. So although Mertilla is impeding Silvia's positive and negative face, this is redressed by social convention. In fact, *Secretary* advises that letters of remonstrance are straight-forward, when 'we have any power over the Person which we reprove' (*ibid.* [9v]).

One could, also, argue that this is in fact a letter of command owing to the use of imperatives, and according to *Secretary* these letters are only directed to those 'over whom we have some power, [such] as Children' (*ibid.* [9r]). What is interesting is that due to this power dynamic, *Secretary* states that a writer does not necessarily need 'to use any reasons to persuade them to it, the Authority of the Writer standing for a reason' (*ibid.* [10v]). Therefore, it would be socially acceptable for Mertilla to command Silvia to stop her love affair; however, the reasons behind her elaborating may be due to the extent of the affair, previous attempts have failed, or because she wants to avoid threatening Silvia's face as much as possible due to their familial bond.

An attempt to buffer potential offence is also seen in the closing paragraph, when Mertilla asks Silvia to: 'Forgive, dear Child, this advice | and pursue it'. This aligns with *Secretary*, which states that for letters of counsel writers may excuse themselves 'for intruding to give counsel', and states that they are unable to restrain themselves from intervening as they 'are bound unto it by the bonds of friendship' (*ibid.* [8r]). Mertilla passively apologises, in the form of a request, with the imperative 'forgive'; her familial love, and therefore justification for impeding Silvia's face, is reflected by: the term of

address 'dear Child', her then stating that she is not angry with Silvia, and that Philander will never 'yet have power | to banish that of filth from my | soul'. Although Mertilla states that her letter is a piece of advice, her use of imperatives throughout the letter, particularly the verb 'pursue', implies that it is more in line with a letter of command.

### 3.6.7 Text 6

Text (6) is part of the correspondence between Silvia and Philander, where Silvia is the writer and Philander is the addressee. Although there is no explicit evidence, due to its content one assumes that it is written after Text (5); indicated by Silvia's change of tone.

Silvia denies her acceptance of the affair, in the letter's opening: 'ASK me not, my dearest Brother, the reason of this sudden change, ask me no more from whence proceeds this strange coldness, or why this alteration'. Notice how Silvia uses the deferential form, and addresses Philander 'Brother'. In contrast to Text (2), which is contemplative in tone owing to the use of interrogatives – as marked by the relative pronouns 'why', 'what' and 'who' – Text (6) opens with two imperative declaratives. The content mirrors Text (5), as it mentions 'Heaven' and 'honour' which aligns with Mertilla asking Silvia, in Text (5), to '[c]onfider, oh young noble Maid, | the infamy of being a Prostitute!'. She also passively references Mertilla, with the use of 'wife' which is pre-modified by the adjective 'noble' denoting Silvia's respect. And as Mertilla told Silvia to consider Philander's marriage to Mertilla, Silvia also uses the imperative when she asks Philander to 'remember' his marriage vows.

Although we can relate the content of Text (6) as a response to Text (5), Silvia's reaction is not explicitly explained. Silvia fears the threat that Mertilla implies, that her affair may be revealed to her parents and thus she is fearful of how her parents will treat her. Or perhaps she realises the enormity of the situation in which she has found herself, and therefore realises the extent of the shame it will bring to herself and her family. Or perhaps, when Mertilla describes to Silvia how Philander acted in the same fashion early in their relationship, she distrusts Philander and the sincerity of his love.

### 3.6.8 Text 7

Text (7) is part of the correspondence between Melinda and Philander, where Melinda is the writer and Philander is the addressee; it appears that these two characters are not involved in a frequent correspondence. It is the only letter in the novel from Melinda and is presented as the nineteenth letter in the novel. The reason for its inception

and appearance is that Silvia tore up letter 18, to Philander from Silvia, which Melinda subsequently repaired (Anon. 1684: 161); Text (7) explains these events.

Text (7) is an interesting letter as, in comparison with the other letters, Melinda is the only character who has a lower social status than the other letter writers. She is Silvia's maid and confidant, the latter is inferred from her awareness of the extramarital affair and her occasional responsibility for delivering Silvia's letters. The superscription reads: 'To *Monfeur* the count of— | *My Lord*', whilst the subscription reads: '*My Lord, | Your Lordships moft humble | and moft obedient Servant, | MELINDA*'. This aligns with the social conventions as advised in *Secretary*. Melinda also refers to all of her superiors by their title: 'Lord', 'Lordship', 'Lady', 'Duchess' and 'Madam', and unsurprisingly never by name; furthermore she addresses Philander using the deferential second person pronoun. Thus, Melinda is using appropriate social conventions, and her letter reveals that she is a person who accords to social convention, when she states: 'I thought it my duty to give | your Lordship this account'. The issue with this appropriate usage of form is that, if Melinda is a person of lower status and manuals such as *Secretary* are directed not at the lower classes, but that of the gentry, then how does Melinda know these conventions? Of course, it would not be impossible for Melinda to access such a manual, especially owing to her workplace; it may also be that owing to her position as a servant for the upper class she is familiar with these epistolary practices; it is perhaps better explained if we take the responsibility of her epistolary style away from Melinda and place it onto the author, which will be discussed in 3.6.9.

The content of the letter is descriptive in tone, which is appropriate considering Melinda is explaining the condition of letter 18. In this way, Melinda becomes a narrator, also relaying the conversational discourse between the female characters. Her memory is curiously sharp as she uses declaratives when relaying speech, which include no indicators of doubt on what has been said; we are told characters 'cry'd' and then the speech is followed by dashes. It would seem that Melinda takes on the guise of the narrator perhaps more than is necessary; she flouts the maxims of quantity and relation. It is revealed that when she was attempting to reconstruct letter 18, she is interrupted by Silvia's father. Furthermore, Melinda mentions that Silvia's father has 'long fol- | licted me for favours', and that to stop his wandering hands she told him to go to the Grove. This information serves no purpose for Philander, and therefore its presence appears random. However, letter 22, from Philander to Silvia, later reveals that Philander, in a farcical manner, happens upon Silvia's father whilst the former is disguised in women's clothing.

Therefore, the inclusion of the information in Text (7) is a narrative foreshadowing device by the actual author; other variables affecting epistolary style will now be discussed.

### 3.6.9 Other Variables Affecting Epistolary Style

From a modern perspective, it is perhaps easy to assert that these letters are fictional but based upon real events. The novel's contemporary readership, however, believed that these letters were actually real (Gardiner 1989: 203). Features which constitute the form of a letter - such as superscriptions as described in *Secretary* - 'are generic markers' which 'make a letter immediately recognizable *as* a letter' (Bannet 2008: 1).

Further to this, the employment of features which reflect social status add credibility to the characters of *Love-Letters* and in this way, also enhance the "realness" of these characters and therefore of the letters. Tanskanen's discussion on 17<sup>th</sup> century manuals and letters states that 'the hierarchy of early modern English society was one of the central factors to be taken into consideration in the process of letter-writing' (2001: 179). The author of *Love-Letters*, through the guise of the social inferior, Melinda (see Section 3.6.8) and the social superior (see Section 3.6.5) in comparison to Philander, and of Mertilla the social superior of Silvia (see Section 3.6.6), employs this "consideration". The letters penned by Mertilla, Cesario, and Melinda, as discussed in their respective analyses, illustrate the contemporary social hierarchy primarily through: the differing terms of address and use of second person pronouns particularly, and the use of imperatives by the social superiors Mertilla and Cesario and the lack of imperatives but prominence of descriptive declaratives by the social inferior Melinda.

However, other features such as spatiotemporal features also further develop the "realness" of a letter away from being recognised as fiction. The spatial and temporal planes of a letter, real or fictitious, express the language of the writer/fictional writer from their perspective and thus their proximity within and to the world in which they exist; these planes are encoded by deictic markers such as: pronouns, relative pronouns, demonstrative pronouns/indexicals, prepositions, and also nouns, verbs and adverbs which denote time, direction and position, such as: go, here, and today (for information on spatiotemporal planes see Fitzmaurice 2002: 36-38; for information regarding indexicals see Nevala 2012: 264). In this way, as an observer, we are lead to believe that we are following not only the perspective of the letter writer but also that of the addressee; second person pronouns, proper nouns and other terms of address are addressed to the reader, and also the content of

a letter is at times obscure to an observer, due to the shared presuppositions between the writer and addressee. If we look at all the selected letters, we see these spatiotemporal features. Furthermore, Text (4), (5) and (6) omit names of the addressees; if we look at these letters from a fictional perspective these omissions seem unnecessary, in so far as if they are fictional then surely it does not matter if their full titles are revealed – these omissions seem to be used as a stylistic device which authenticates these letters as if they were real.

Although these spatiotemporal features are observed in the letters, there are also deviations from normative features expected between correspondents, namely the use of asides and when the letters appear more akin to dramatic soliloquies. For instance, in Text (1) Philander states ‘*Silvia* came in view! | her unrefutable *Idea!*’ and in Text (6) Silvia states ‘Oh whither | was I going?’, whilst it is arguable that these utterances are directed towards the addressee, the lack of the second person pronoun, the use of the female third person pronoun and a rhetorical person alludes to each writer talking to themselves rather than addressing the intended addressee. These comments are more descriptive with their narration and elucidate the writers’ personal psychological planes, which is perhaps unnecessary in correspondences wherein the participants already have shared presuppositions. Therefore, these pieces of information seem to be more directed towards the reader of the novel; consequently, the fictitious status of the letters is brought to the foreground. With regards to the brevity of the letters not adhering to *Secretary*’ practices to be concise, again it could be that the author is trying to supplement the reader with extra information and thus reduce the obscurity of the content. The use of asides and soliloquies also makes sense if we attribute *Love-Letters* to Behn, an established playwright. However, it may also be the case that whilst brevity as instructed in *Secretary* is given as advice, this advice may not be applicable to amatory letters or indeed personal letters in general. Interestingly, Serre jokingly comments that long letters ‘may better be termed Books than Letters’, with this in mind, perhaps the length and relevant information of these letters is justified as they are fictitious (Serre 1668: [19r]).

Seemingly extraneous information is perceived as flouting Grice’s maxims of quantity and quality. If we take Text (7), as an example, the extra information given by Melinda makes sense when we regard the letters as fictitious and instruments for propaganda. All the letters, except perhaps Text (7), reveal Philander to be of poor character; with the knowledge that Philander is supposed to be Lord Grey, *Love-Letters* is not just a romance but also a work of satire, as Lord Grey and therefore the Whig cause is

ridiculed. The organisation of the letters is interesting, because from the outset Text (1), though an amatory letter which reveals Philander persuading Silvia to succumb to their love affair, reflects Philander's disdain towards social convention with regards to the nature of their affair. Moreover, he even tries to justify incestuous love with religion when he states: 'let us love like | the first race of men, nearest | allied to God, promiscuously | they lov'd'. The contemporary readership, who were likely to be religious and either disapproving of or amused by the scandal of Lord Grey and Lady Henrietta, would perhaps view Philander, and thus Lord Grey, as a man with poor religious morals and social conduct; this is also seen in Text (5) when his own wife calls him faithless. Furthermore, Text (3) reveals Philander prioritises Silvia over the political cause as he gives her the letter he received from Cesario, which would no doubt be seen as incriminating evidence against Philander and Cesario; and in Text (4), Cesario states to Philander: 'You were last night expect- | ed at---It behoves you to give | no Umbrage to Persons who's In- | terest renders 'em enough jealous'. As Lord Grey was viewed as a key supporter of Monmouth, both of these texts present Grey as a character who lacks loyalty; when one of the key supporters of a political cause does not prioritise the cause, then one would infer that the Whigs are not a strong party.

With regards to Silvia, and therefore Lady Henrietta, Philander describes her beauty and youth in Text (1), (4) and (5). In her letters, Text (2) and (5), she reveals herself to be at times a confused person, as in Text (2), ultimately in love with Philander. However, Text (1), (2) and (5) reflect that she is more resistant to their affair than Philander; in other words, Lord Grey, a key Whig supporter, is weaker than the child Lady Henrietta. In the patriarchal society, as she is a woman, being presented as weaker than Lady Henrietta is an extra insult to Grey. And of course, as Silvia, and therefore Lady Henrietta, is a Tory, the Tory cause is presented as better than the Whig cause. Contrasting to this bias towards the Tory cause, Text (7) reveals that Melinda is involved in an affair with Silvia's father; as he is a Tory, one wonders why such an affair is included as this is not in favour of the Tory cause. However, if we take the perspective that the author of *Love-Letters* is a fan of Libertinism, and also needed to earn money and therefore saw the monetary benefits of erotic descriptions, then perhaps this makes sense.

### **3.6.10 A Brief comparison with real 17<sup>th</sup> century Correspondence**

'The Tixall Letters consists of 40 letters between the Aston family in England and their kinswoman Winefrid Thimelby' the head of an English Augustinian nunnery (Tanskanen 2003: 174). The most common superscription, of the Tixall letters, follows the

simple form of ‘*Dear N.*’ (*ibid.* 183). The exchanges in Texts (1), (2) and (6) between Philander and Silvia, perhaps best parallel this, with their simple ‘To [forename]’ form. As stated in the Sections 3.6.2 and 3.6.3 the use of such informal superscriptions may lead one to infer that the addressees are social inferiors, as with the Tixall letters, however the close relationship of Silvia and Philander as lovers, and the close familial relationship of the Astons and Winefrid Thimelby qualifies this apparent informality as a reflection of these close relationships. The superscription in Text (5) between Silvia and her sister Mertilla, parallels the examples given between Thimelby and her brother Herbert Aston ‘Hond. Deare Brother’, and Thimelby and her nieces and nephews ‘My dear Children [...]’ (*ibid.* 184); Thimelby’s address to her brother, with the abbreviated ‘Hond.’, for honourable, is akin to Mertilla initially addressing Silvia as ‘the lady’, and the more affectionate use of ‘dear’ in these 3 examples reflects the kinship between the writers and the addressees. In the cases of superscription in Texts (3), (4) and (7), do not parallel the Tixall correspondence; this is accounted for by the amatory nature of ‘*To my fair charmer*’ in Text (3), and the polar social statuses of the letter writers in Text (4) and (7) which account for their respective superscriptions of ‘*To the Count of---*’ and ‘*To Monseur the count of- | My Lord*’. That said, the title of “Count” is akin to Thimelby addressing her brother as Hond.

In terms of the subscriptions, some of the Tixall letters are said to ‘voice affection’ for instance ‘*Your most affectionate*’; the amatory nature of the exchanges between Silvia and Philander affect the subscriptions in Texts (1), (2), (3) and (6) from paralleling this type of affection, however affection is displayed by Mertilla in Text (5) with ‘*Your affectionate Sister*’, and the term of endearment “dear” in the subscription of Text (4) by Cesario. The social distance between Melinda and Philander accounts for the subscription, as discussed in Section 3.6.8, and whilst the social distances between the participants in the Tixall letters are relatively shorter than that of Melinda and Philander, Eliza Cottington to her uncle Aston closes her letter with the subscription ‘Your humble servant, Deare uncle, Ever to command’. Without seeing the full letter and knowing more about the relationship between Eliza and her uncle, the reasoning behind the similarity of this subscription and that of Text (7) is unclear. However, the use of the adjective ‘humble’ in comparison with the adjective ‘deare’, and the noun ‘servant’ along with the assertion where Eliza proclaims and accepts Aston status to command, appears to be an act of pos-politeness; there is clearly a level of respect, perhaps relating to Aston being Eliza’s financial benefactor or simply a level of familial respect to an elder, which is nearly on par with the social distance

and subscription of Text (7) with the exception of the adjective 'deare' which implies affection.

## Chapter 4: Conclusion

This chapter concludes the dissertation by addressing the research questions laid out in Chapter 1, Section 1.2 (4.1); consequently, this chapter discusses: if Behn read and used epistolary manuals (4.2), further comments regarding the results of this study (4.3), and finally the limitations of this study and further lines of enquiry (4.4).

### 4.1 Research Questions

- 1) What are the socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features represented in *Secretary in Fashion*?

The characteristic linguistic features of *Secretary* instruct the readership on form and matter. These prescriptive elements of the manual align with the social conventions of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, in relation to the gentry and the social hierarchy. In this way, along with the model letters, *Secretary* is a typical manual the English *Academies of Complements* genre which were popular manuals of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The landscape of the epistolary spaces available for the 17<sup>th</sup> society was affected by the literacy of the public and also the postal services; most of the letters which have been preserved from the 17<sup>th</sup> century come from that of the gentry. Thus, in answer to the question, the socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features represented in *Secretary* adhere and entertain the social conventions of the gentry. That being said, its actual usage as a manual remains unclear.

- 2) What are the socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features represented in *Love-Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister*, and do any of these features correlate with the features represented in *Secretary in Fashion*?

The socio-cultural and pragmatic-linguistic features of *Love-Letters* which correlate with the practices recommended by *Secretary* can be observed in the use of form, particularly the prescriptive practices relating to the superscription and subscription, and also subject matter seen in Text (5). In this way, we can say that these features correlate with one another; however there are deviations from the style *Secretary* recommends, with regards to length and relevant information. This appears to be due to the narrative force affecting the style, but also it is also a comment that the practices advised in *Secretary* are guides, they 'throw light on the preferred epistolary practices' (Tanskanen 2003: 167). When it comes to the hands of the letter writers, form and style are mainly affected by many paralinguistic variables such as: when the letter is written, the type of letter that is

being written, the letter writer, and the relationship between the letter writer and the addressee.

## 4.2 Did Behn Read and Use Epistolary Manuals?

Unfortunately, neither of the research questions answers whether or not *Secretary* was used as a manual. If we take Behn as the author of *Love-Letters*, there is little evidence that conclusively proves or disproves that she read and used epistolary manuals, let alone if she specifically used *Secretary*. It would seem that Behn may not have followed Massinger's version of *Secretary* due to its religiously condemning nature; although, that said, she may have read this version as a source of amusement by being curious of Massinger's direction for social conduct, in contrast to the salacious narrative of *Love-Letters*. If Behn did not read Massinger's version, she may have read Serre's original French version. Whilst she may have lacked a university education to follow classical direction, Behn was a translator of French authors such as Fontenelle and La Rochefoucault (Todd 1994: 277; see also Day 1966: 30). Furthermore, Goodman offers an interesting suggestion that *Secretary*'s popularity by the European elites, within and beyond France, was due to their interest and curiosity in a foreign culture which gave them 'narratives of love requited and spurned', rather than the desire 'to learn how to write a proper letter in the French style' (1999: 25). Although we do not know whether or not Behn was a member of the elite society, as a translator of French works and a reader of French romances, she was clearly enamoured with French culture. With this in mind, the amatory model letters in *Secretary*, in a similar fashion to Nicholas Breton's *A Poste with a Packet of Madde Letters*, may have served as a substitute for these fictional novels. Therefore, although she may not have directly used *Secretary* as a guide, it may have been that she did read it as a source of entertainment.

Todd (1999: 1) points out that in Behn's preface of *The Dutch Lover*, Behn reacted to negative criticism regarding her nonconformity to 'the classical rules of drama, the three unites of time, place and action' by (as Todd describes) mocking that these rules were 'absurd pedantry devised by learned but nonsensical men who failed to understand that pedantry had no place in the popular theatre.' This demonstrates Behn's disregard for abiding by rules and her desire to keep the wants of the populace in mind as her target audience. Therefore, it seems likely that Behn would not bother following a letter manual due to her low opinion of rules, and the lack of financial gain from learning these manuals; as rules would not meet the tastes of the public for whom she was writing, and earning money. However, it may also be that this disregard came from an insecurity of not having

the means to be able to follow such instruction (see Goreau 1980: 30); what Behn does, in this preface, is actually gesture towards a lack of a formal university education that would have informed her of classical studies and techniques required to follow the Latin formulary traditions featured in *Academies of Complement*, such as *Secretary*.

Consequently, it seems probable that Behn's epistolary style would not align with epistolary manuals, however if this is the case then how does this explain the epistolary style of *Love-Letters* with regards to the features which align with *Secretary*? On the one hand, we might then conclude that this suggests that Behn did not write *Love-Letters*; however, on the other hand, if we regard letter manuals as just one source of learning epistolary style rather than being the only source, this makes sense. Other manuals and books during the 17<sup>th</sup> century were aimed at women, and so perhaps Behn used these as references; however, '[e]vidence of female readership of epistolary manuals is slight [...] instead women's familiarity with conventions, as Alison Truelove suggests, is more likely to stem from contact with the form, through receiving letters' (Daybell 2001: 7; see also Knoppers 2009: 186). And while evidence of female readership of manuals is lacking, in terms of actual epistolary practice, letters of the 17<sup>th</sup> century show a 'socially diversified area of female activity' with women corresponding to both men and other women (Daybell 2001: 3; see also O'Day 2001: 137).

### 4.3 Further Comments

This study has been able to show the practices of epistolary style by two (or arguably three) writers – Behn, Serre, and Massinger. These writers reveal how the 17<sup>th</sup> century English language, of at least their letters, is affected by socialisation in terms of arbitrary conventions concerning social rank, age, and gender; in this way, they ultimately reveal variation between writers. As well as this, their popularity as books reveals the interests and tastes of the 17<sup>th</sup> century readership, particularly that of the gentry. Interest in letters, surely piques the interest of the modern reader as to why letters were interesting. Owing to the expanding epistolary spaces, where composing and sending letters was becoming more accessible and thus an innovative medium for some people, logically this makes sense. Private letters could contain an author's most intimate thoughts, and the expansion of epistolary spaces led to more people writing letters; these writers were therefore becoming more active participants in history, as social commentators and even influencers. Letters, being a text form, were a medium which people employed to document and recount events and actions from their point of view (Day 1966: 6). The 17<sup>th</sup> century readership clearly observed letters as a source of value, as any letters pertaining to

a person in whom the readership was interested were ‘seized’ and presented to the public (*ibid.* 98). Consequently, letters are abundant sources of social commentary which contain evidence on epistolary style, and thus letters are useful resources for historical linguistic analysis.

#### 4.4 Limitations and Further lines of Enquiry

As with any historical text, having as much context in terms of the compositors further benefits an historical analysis. With *Love-Letters*, the lack of definitive author has certainly limited this study and at times led to a lack of focus, due to the unavailable evidence needed to aid focusing the analysis when looking at paralinguistic variables which may affect the text – such as the author’s age, gender, political views and social background. When answering a question that concerns “how far...?”, the most useful answer is perhaps a statistical answer which is elaborated and explained by the philological insights of a qualitative analysis. Therefore, this study would be improved by a quantitative analysis of all the letters of *Love-Letters* as this would show the general trends, for instance of the use of superscriptions, and then be used as a relative guide when analysing specific letters.

It would have also been useful to look at the original manuscript of *Love-Letters* as perhaps this would have given an insight to features of layout, and furthermore we would be able to analyse the stylistic choices of the author in better detail. As a printed novel, the intervention of the printers can be seen as an affecting factor on style and form; common errors by the printer are seen such as inverted letters and letters such as a “v” being duplicated to represent a “w” (“vv”). But more interestingly, the catchword, on page 31 ‘worthy’, following clause ‘Love at worft is’, does not correspond to the word ‘pity’ on page 33. This presents the reader with two alternative sentences, ‘Love at worft is worthy’ or ‘Love at worft is pity’, where the adjectives denote polarised meanings.

*Love-Letters* is the first part of a novel, and it would be interesting to analyse and compare if there are any differences between the letters of each part, particularly as Parts 2 and 3 include a narrator. As well as this, Part 2 came out a year later in 1685, and Part 3 came out a further three years later in 1688, therefore it would be interesting to see if historical events corresponding to these dates affect epistolary style. Furthermore, another type of epistolary manual, the English *Secretaries* began to emerge in the 1680s and 1690s. They differed to the English *Academies* mainly in two ways: firstly, they focused on matters of commerce, and secondly, as a result of this, they were more socially inclusive as

they reached beyond the gentry to merchants and further to the working classes. Whilst the *Academies* evoked the spirit of the *ars rhetorica*, the *Secretaries* evoked *ars dictaminis*; being more pragmatic and inclusive they presented less metaphorical rhetoric as seen in the *Academies*. Consequently, they ‘generally consisted of collections of heterogeneous model letters in ‘proper’ English: a short grammar, rules for punctuation and capitalization, brief directions for letter writing, a guide to the forms of polite address for people at different ranks, and instructions for the formatting, appearance and folding of letters’ (Bannet 2008: xiii). Their emergence was concurrent with developments in national and international commerce, and the letter types of some manuals show they were also meeting the concerns of business in much more localised matters such as the running of a household (see *ibid.* xiv). As a result of this, and the further developments in postal systems, their target readership expanded and ‘taught men and women at all ranks the manners and morals appropriate for each gender, rank and condition in society, and how to conduct their ordinary domestic, social, professional and commercial business in writing’ (*ibid.*). In this way, their instruction aided the vernacular reader and by doing so, *Secretaries* were a source of further education. Thus, it would be interesting to conduct a diachronic analysis which compares the features of *Secretary* and that of an English *Academy*, such as John Hill’s *The Young Secretary’s Guide* (1687), with all parts of the novel to see if they have any bearing on the date.

Finally, another further line of enquiry is to look at gender. One could compare the practices of *Secretary* with a books directed at women such as Jacques du Bosque’s *The Secretary of Ladies* (1638), Samuel Sheppard’s *The Secretaries Studie* (1652), Henry Care’s *The Female Secretary* (1671), or Hannah Woolley’s social conduct manual *The Gentlewoman’s Companion* (1672) which featured a chapter on epistolary instruction (see Knoppers 2009: 186; see also, Green 2007: 112). In light of the anonymous author, one might observe whether *Love-Letters* correlates more with a male orientated manual or a female orientated manual, and therefore see if this sheds any light on the gender of the author and the author attribution of Behn. As well as this, Pearson makes an interesting comment that the language of Silvia and Philander reflects inequalities relating to gender and socialisation (1999: 114); therefore, these manuals could be used to see if the gender of the characters reflects different practices and align to the gender audience of the manuals.

## Appendix

### Transcriptions of Texts (1-7)

Notes on transcription conventions:

- Spellings have been copied, as observed in the facsimiles.
- ‘|’ represent line endings
- ‘||’ represent indented paragraphs
- **Bold letters** represent drop caps
- The use of dashes is inconsistent; however the general rule is that ‘-’ represents hyphenated words such as ‘off-spring’, and the continuation of a single word which has been split between 2 lines. The wider ‘—’ is used for other cases, such as: the omission of proper nouns, to indicate breathes, or reported speech; in some cases more than one dash, together ‘——’ or separated ‘- -’, is used where visually appropriate.
- The long ‘s’ is viz. as ‘ſ’ purely for aesthetic reasons, however its usage may prove useful for anyone wanting to study the graphemes of the letters; certain typological ligatures were not included, ‘ct’, ‘fl’ and ‘ft’, due to a lack of availability.

#### Text 1

To *Silvia*. | **T**Hough I parted from | you resolv'd to obey | your impossible com- | mands, yet know, oh char- | ming *Silvia* ! that after a Thousand conflicts between | Love and Honour, I found the | God (too mighty for the Idol) | reign absolute Monarch in | my Soul, and soon Banish't that | Tyrant thence. That cruel | Councillor that would suggest | to you a Thousand fond Ar- | guments to hinder my noble | pursuit; *Silvia* came in view! | her unresistable *Idea!* with | all the charms of blooming | youth with all the attractions | of Heavenly Beauty! loose, | wanton, gay, all flowing | her bright hair, and languish- | ing her lovely eyes, her drefs | all negligent as when I saw | her last, discovering a Thou- | sand ravishing Graces, round | white small Brest's, delicate | Neck, and rising Bosome, | heav'd with sighs she wou'd in | vain conceal ; and all besides, that nicest fancy can imagine | surprizing — Oh I dare not | think on, lest my desires | grow mad and raving ; let it | suffice, oh adorable *Silvia!* I | think and know enough to | justify that flame in me, which | our weak alliance of Brother | and Sister has render'd so | criminal ; but he that adores *Silvia*, shou'd do it at an un- | common rate ; 'tis not enough | to sacrifice a single heart, to | give you a simple Passion, | your Beauty shou'd like it self | produce wondrous effects ; | it shou'd force all

obligations, | all laws, all tyes even of | Natures self : You my lovely | Maid, were not born  
to | be obtain'd the dull | methods of ordinary loving; | and 'tis in vain to pre- | scribe me  
measures; and | oh much more in vain to | urge the nearness of our | Relation. What Kin my  
| charming *Silva* are you to | me? No tyes of blood forbid | my Passion; and what's a |  
Ceremony impos'd on man | by custome? what is it to | my Divine *Silvia*, that the | Priest  
took my hand and | gave it to your Sister? What | Alliance can that create? why | shou'd a  
trick devis'd by the | wary old. Only to make pro- | vision for posterity, tye me to eternal  
slavery. No, | no my charming Maid, tis | nonsense all; let us (born for | mightier joys) scorn  
the dull | *beaten road*, but let us love like | the first race of men, nearest | allied to God,  
promiscuously | they lov'd, and possess'd, | Father and Daughter, Brother | and Sister met,  
and reap'd | the joys of Love without | control, and counted it Re- | ligious coupling, and  
'twas | encourag'd too by Heav'n it | self: Therefore start not (too | nice and lovely Maid) at  
| shadows of things that can | but frighten fools. Put me | not off with these delays! Rather  
say you but dissembl'd | Love all this while, than now 'tis born, to let it dy | again with a  
poor fright of | nonsense. A fit of Honour! | a fantome imaginary and no | more; no, no  
represent me | to your soul more favourably, | think you see me languishing | at your feet,  
breathing out | my last in sighs and kind | reproaches, on the pityless | *Silvia*; reflect when I  
am | dead, which will be the more | afflicting object, the Ghost (as | you are pleas'd to call  
it) of | your Murder'd Honour, or | the pale and bleeding one | of | The lost *Philander*. | *I*  
*have liv'd a whole day | and yet no Letter from my Silvia.*

## Text 2

TO *Philander*. | **OH** why will you make | me own (oh too impor- | tunate *Philander* !) with  
what | regret I made you promise | to prefer my Honour before | your Love. || I Confess with  
blushes, | which you might then see | kindling in my face, that I was | not at all pleas'd with  
the | Vows you made me, to en- | deavour to obey me, and I | then even wist you wou'd |  
obstinately have deny'd obe- | dience to my just commands ; | have pursu'd your criminal |  
flame, and have left me raving | on my undoing: For when | you were gone and I had |  
leisure to look into my heart, | alas! I found whether you | oblig'd or not, whether Love, | or  
Honour were prefer'd, I | unhappy I, was either way | inevitably lost. Oh what | pityless  
God, fond of his | wondrous power, made us | the objects of his Almighty | vanity? oh why  
were we two | made the first presidents of | his new found revenge ? for | sure no Brother  
ever lov'd a | Sister with so criminal a flame | before: At least my unexpe- | rienc'd  
innocence ne're met | with so fatal a story : And 'tis | in vain (my too charming | Brother) to  
make me insen- | sible of our Alliance; to | persuade me I am a stran- | ger to all but your

eyes and | Soul. || Alas your fatally kind In- | dustry is all in vain. You | grew up a Brother  
with me; | the title was fixt in my heart, | when I was too young to | understand your subtle  
di- | stinctions, and there it thriv'd | and spread; and 'tis now too | late to transplant it, or  
alter | its Native Property: Who | can graft a flower on a con- | trary stalk? The Rose will |  
bear no Tulips, nor the Hya- | cinth the Poppy; no more | will the Brother the name of |  
 Lover. O spoil not the na- | tural sweetness and innocence | we now retain, by an endea- |  
vour fruitless and destructive; | no, no *Philander*, dress your | self in what Charms you | will,  
be powerfull as Love | can make you in your soft | argument, —yet, oh yet | you are my  
Brother still, —But | why, oh cruel and eternal | Powers, was not *Philander* | my Lover  
before you destined | him a Brother? or why being | a Brother did you mali- | cious and  
spightful powers | destine him a Lover! oh take, | either title from him, or | from me a life  
which can | render me no satisfaction, | since your cruel laws per- | mit it not for *Philander*,  
nor | his to blefs the now | Unfortunate *Silvia*. | *Wednesday Morning*.

### Text 3

*To my fair Charmer*. | **W**hen I had seal'd the in- | clos'd, my Page whom I | had ordr'd to  
come to me with an | account of any business extraor- | dinary, is this Morning arriv'd |  
with a Letter from *Cesario*, which | I have sent here inclos'd, that my | *Silvia* may see how  
little I regard | the world, or the mighty revolu- | tion in hand; when set in compe- | ition  
with the least hope of be- | holding her adorable face, or | hearing her Charming Tongue |  
when it whispers the soft dictates | of her tender heart into my ra- | vish'd soul; one  
moments joy like | that surmounts an age of dull Em- | pire. No, let the busy unregarded |  
Rout perish, the Cause fall or stand | alone for me: Give me but Love, | Love and my *Silvia*;  
I ask no | more of Heaven; to which vast | joy could you but imagine (Oh | wondrous  
Miracle of Beauty!) | how poor and little I esteem the | valued trifles of the world, you |  
would in return contemn your | part of it, and live with me in fi- | lent Shades for ever.  
Oh! *Silvia*, | what hast thou this night to add to | the Soul of thy | PHILANDER!

### Text 4

*To the Count of—* | **I**'Le allow you, my Dear, to be | very fond of so much Beauty | as the  
world must own adorns the | Lovely *Silvia* I'll, permit Love too | to Rival me in your heart,  
but not | out-rival Glory; hast then my | Dear to the advance of that, make | no delay, but  
with the Mornings | dawne, let me find you in my | Arms, where I have something | that  
will surprize you to relate to | you: You were last night expect- | ed at—It behoves you to  
give | no Umbrage to Persons who's In- | terest renders 'em enough jealous. | We have two

new Advancers | come in of Youth and Money, | teach 'em not negligence; be | careful and  
 let nothing hinder | you from taking Horfe imme- | diately, as you value the repofe | and  
 fortune of | *My Dear, / Your CESARIO.* || *I call'd laft night on you, and your | Page*  
*following me to my Coach, whif- | p'd me—if I had any earneft bufi- | nefes with you, he*  
*knew where to find | you; I foon imagin'd where, and bid | him call within an hour for this,*  
*and | poft with it immediately, though dark.*

### Text 5

*To the Lady*——— | *Dear Child,* | LONG forefeeing the misery | whereto you muft arrive  
 by | this fatal correspondence with my | unhappy Lord, I have often, with | tears and  
 prayers, implor'd you | to decline fo dangerous a paffion; | I have never yet acquainted our  
 pa- | rents with your misfortunes, but I | fear I muft at laft make ufe of their | Authority for  
 the prevention of | your ruine. 'Tis not, my deareft | Child, that part of this unhappy | ftory  
 that relates to me, that grieves | me, but purely that of thine. || Confider, oh young noble  
 Maid, | the infamy of being a Proftitute! | and yet the act it felf in this fatal | Amour is not  
 the greateft fin, but | the manner which carries an un- | ufual horreur with it; for 'tis a |  
 Brother too, my Child, as well as | a lover, one that has lain by thy | unhappy Sifter's fide fo  
 many ten- | der years, by whom he has a dear | and lovely off-fpring, by which he | has  
 more fixt himfelf to thee by | relation and blood; Confider this, | oh fond heedlefs girl! and  
 fuffer | not a momentary joy to rob thee | of the eternal fame, me of my e- | ternal repofe,  
 and fix a brand up- | on our noble houfe, and fo undoe | us all.—Alas, confider after an |  
 action fo fhamefull, thou muft ob- | fcure thy felf in fome remote cor- | ner of the world,  
 where honefty | and honour never are heard of: No | thou canft not fhew thy face, but |  
 'twill be pointed at for something | monftrous: for a hundred ages | may not produce a ftory  
 fo leudly | infamous and loofe as thine. Per- | haps (fond as you are) you ima- | gin the fole  
 joy of being belov'd | by him, will atone for thofe af- | fronts and reproaches you will |  
 meet with in the cenfuring world: | But Child, remember and believe | me, there is no  
 lafting faith in fin; | he that has broke his Vows with | Heaven and me, will be again per- |  
 jur'd to Heaven and thee, and all | the world!——he once thought | me as lovely, lay at my  
 feet, and | figh'd away his foul, and told fuch | pityous ftories of his sufferings, | fuch fad,  
 fuch mournfull tales of | his departed reft, his broken heart | and everlafting Love, that fure I  
 | thought it had been a fin not to | have credited his charming perju- | ries; in fuch a way he  
 fware, with | fuch a grace he figh'd, fo artfully | he mov'd, fo tenderly he look'd. | Alas,  
 dear Child, then all he faid | was new, unufual with him, ne- | ver told before, now 'tis a  
 beaten | road, 'tis learn'd by heart, and ea- | fily addref't to any fond believing | woman, the

tatter'd, worn-out | fragments of my Trophies, the | dregs of what I long since drain'd |  
 from off his fickle heart; then it | was fine, then it was brisk and new, | now pall'd and  
 dull'd by being re- | peated often. Think, my Child, | what your victorious beauty me-  
 rits, the victim of a heart uncon- | quer'd by any but your eyes: Alas, | he has been my  
 captive, my hum- | ble whining slave, disdain to put | him on your fetters now; alas, | he can  
 say no new thing of his | heart to thee, 'tis love at second | hand, worn out, and all its gaudy  
 | lustre tarnish'd; besides, my Child, | if thou hadst no religion binding | enough, no honour  
 that could stay | thy fatal course, yet nature should | oblige thee, and give a check to | the  
 unreasonable enterprise. The | griefs and dishonour of our noble | Parents, who have been  
 eminent | for virtue and piety, oh suffer 'em | not to be regarded in this cenfu- | ring world  
 as the most unhappy | of all the race of old nobility; thou | art the darling child, the joy of  
 all. | the last hope left, the refuge of | their sorrow; for they, alas, have | had but unkind stars  
 to influence | their unadvis'd off-spring no want | of virtue in their education, but | this last  
 blow of fate must strike | 'em dead: Think, think of this, | my Child, and yet retire from |  
 ruine; haste, fly from destruction | which pursues thee fast; haste, | haste, and save thy  
 parents and a | sister, or what's more dear, thy | fame; mine has already receiv'd | but too  
 many desperate wounds, | and all through my unkind Lord's | growing passion for thee,  
 which | was most fatally founded on my | ruine, and nothing but my ruine | could advance  
 it; and when my | Sister, thou hast run thy race, made | thy self loath'd, undone and infa- |  
 mous as hell, despis'd scorn'd and | abandoned by all, lampoon'd, per- | haps diseas'd; this  
 faithless man, | this cause of all will leave thee too, | grow weary of thee, nauseated by | use,  
 he may perhaps consider what | sins, what evils, and what inconve- | niences and flames  
 thou'st brought | him to, and will not be the last | shall loath and hate thee: For | though  
 youth fancy it have a | mighty race to run of pleasing | vice and vanity, the course will | end,  
 the goal will arriv'd to at | the last, where they will sighing | stand, look back and view the |  
 length of pretious time they've | fool'd away; when travers'd o'er | with honour and  
 discretion, how | glorious were the journey, and | with what joy the wearied travel- | ler lies  
 down and basks beneath the | shades that ends the happy course. || Forgive, dear Child, this  
 advice | and pursue it, 'tis the effect on my | pity, not anger, nor could the | name of rival  
 ever yet have power | to banish that of sister from my | soul—farewell, remember me; |  
 pray Heaven thou hast not this | night made a forfeit of thy honour | and that this which  
 comes from a | tender bleeding heart may have | the fortune to inspire thee with | grace to  
 avoid all temptations for | the future, since they must end in | sorrow, which is the eternal  
 pray- | er of, | *Dearest Child, | Your affectionate Sister.*

### Text 6

To *Philander*. | ASk me not, my dearest Bro- | ther, the reason of this sud- | den change, ask  
me no more from | whence proceeds this strange cold- | ness, or why this alteration; it is |  
enough my destiny has not de- | creed me for *Philander*: Alas, I | see my error, and  
looking round | about me, find nothing but ap- | proaching horror and confusion | in my  
pursuit of love: Oh whither | was I going? to what dark paths, | what everlasting shades had  
mi- | ning love betray'd me had I pursu'd | him farther; but I at last have | subdu'd his force,  
and the fond | Charmer shall no more renew his | arts and flatteries; for I'm resolv'd | as  
Heaven, as fixt as fate and | death, and I conjure you, trouble | my repose no more, for if  
you do | (regardless of my honour, which | if you lov'd you wou'd preserve) | I'll do a deed  
shall free me from | your importunities, that shall a- | maze and cool your vicious flame: | no  
more—remember you have a | noble wife, companion of your | vows, and I have honour,  
both | which are worth preserving, and | for which, though you want ge- | nerous love,  
you'll find neither | that nor courage wanting in | *Silvia*.

### Text 7

To *Monfieur* the count of— | *My Lord*, THESE Pieces of Paper which | I have put together as  
well | as I could, were writ by my Lady | to have been sent by *Dorinda*, | when on a sudden  
she rose in rage | from her seat, tore first the Pa- | per, and then her Robes and Hair, | and  
indeed nothing has escap'd | the violence of her Passion; nor | could my Prayers or Tears re-  
| trieve them or calm her: 'tis how- | ever chang'd at last to mighty | passions of weeping in  
which | imployment I have left her on her | repose, being commanded away. | I thought it  
my duty to give | your Lordship this account, and | to send the pieces of Paper, that | your  
Lordship may guess at the | occasion of the sudden storm | which ever rises in that fatal |  
quar- | ter; but in putting 'em in order, | I had like to have been surpriz'd | by my Lady's  
Father, for my | Lord the Count having long fol- | licited me for favours, and taking | all  
opportunities of entertaining me, | found me alone in my Cham- | ber, employed in serving  
your | Lordship; I had only time to hide | the Papers, and to get rid of him) | have given  
him an Assignation | to night in the Garden Grove to | give him the hearing to what he | says  
he has to propose to me: | Pray Heaven all things go right | to your Lordships with this E- |  
vening, for many ominous things | happen'd to day. Madam, the | Countess had like to have  
taken | a Letter writ for your Lordship | to day; for the Dutchess of— | coming to make her  
a visit, came | on a sudden with her into my | Lady's Apartment, and surpriz'd | her writing  
in her Dressing Room, | giving her only time to slip the | Paper into her comb-box. The |  
first Ceremonies being past, as | Madam the Dutchess uses not | much, she fell to Commend

my | Lady's dressing Plate, and taking | up the Box and opening it, found | the Letter, and  
Laughing cry'd, | Oh have I found you making | Love? At which my Lady with | an infinite  
confusion would have | retriev'd it,—But the Dutchess | not quitting her hold, Cry'd— |  
Nay I am resolv'd to see in what | manner you write to a Lover, | and whether you have a  
Heart | tender or cruel; at which she be- | gan to read aloud, My Lady to | blush and change  
Colour a Hun- | dred times in a minute; I ready | to dye with fear; Madam the | Countess in  
infinite amazement, | my Lady interrupting every word | the Dutchess read by Prayers and |  
Intreaties, which heighten'd her | Curiosity, and being young and | airy, regarded not the  
Indecency, | to which she prefer'd her Curio- | sity, who still Laughing, cry'd | she was  
resolv'd to read it out, | and know the constitution of her | heart; when my Lady, whose wit |  
never fail'd her, Cry'd, I beseech | you Madam, let us have so much | compliance for  
*Melinda* to ask her | consent in this affair, and then I | am pleas'd you should see what |  
Love I can make upon occasion: | I took the hint, and with a real | confusion, Cry'd—I  
implore you | Madam not to discover my weak- | nesses to Madam the Dutchess; I | would not  
for the World—Be | thought to love so passionately as | your Ladyship in favour of *Alexis* |  
has made me profess under the | name *Silvia* to *Philander*. This | encourag'd my Lady, who  
began | to say a thousand pleasant things | of *Alexis Dorillus* his Son, and my | Lover as  
your Lordship knows, | and who is no inconsiderable for- | tune for a Maid enrich'd only by  
| your Lordships Bounty. My Lady | after this took the Letter, and all | being resolv'd it  
should be read, | she herself did it. And turn'd | it so prettily into Burlesque Love | by her  
manner of reading it, that | made Madam the Dutchess laugh | extremely; who at the end of  
it | cry'd to my Lady— — VVell Madam | I am satisfied you have not a heart | wholly  
insensible of Love, that | could so well express it for ano- | ther. Thus they rallied on, 'till |  
careful of my Lovers repose, the | Dutchess urg'd the Letter might | be immediately sent  
away, at | which my Lady readily doing up | the Letter, writ, For the constant | *Alexis* on  
the out-side: I took it. | and beg'd I might have leave to | retire to write it over in my own |  
hand, they permitted me, and I car- | ried it after sealing it to *Dorillus*, | who waited for it,  
and wondering | to find his Sons name on it, Cry'd | —Mistress *Melinda*, I doubt you | have  
mistook my present business, | I wait for a Letter from my Lady | to my Lord, and you give  
me one | from yourself to my Son *Alexis*; | 'twill be very welcome to *Alexis* | I confess, but  
at this time I had | rather oblige my Lord than my | Son; I laughing, reply'd he was |  
mistaken, that *Alexis* at this time | meant no other than my Lord, | which pleas'd the good  
man ex- | tremely, who thought it a good | omen for his Son, and so went his | way satisfy'd;  
as every body was | except the Countess, who fancy'd | something more in it than my |  
Lady's inditing for me; and after | Madam the Dutchess was gone she | went ruminating and

penfive | to her Chamber from whence I am | confident she will not depart to | night, and  
will possible set Spies | in every corner; at least 'tis good to fear the worst, that we may |  
prevent all things that would hin- | der this nights assignation: As | soon as the Coast is  
clear, I'll wait | on your Lordship, and be your | Conductor, and in all things else | am ready  
to show my self, | *My Lord, | Your Lordships most humble | and most obedient Servant,* |  
MELINDA. | *Silvia has order to wait | on your Lordship as soon as | all is clear.*

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