

Opposition in a pre-Republican Age?
The Spanish Match and Jacobean Political
Thought, 1618-1624

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Abstract

Seventeenth-century English political thought was once viewed as insular and bound by a common law mentality. Significant work has been done to revise this picture and highlight the role played by continental religious resistance theory and what has been termed 'classical republicanism'. In addition to identifying these wider influences, recent work has focused upon the development of a public sphere that reveals a more socially diverse engagement with politics, authority and opposition than has hitherto been acknowledged. Yet for the period before the Civil War our understanding of the way that several intellectual influences were interacting to inform a politically alert 'public' is unclear, and expressions of political opposition are often tied to a pre-determined category of religious affiliation. As religious tension erupted into conflict on the continent, James I's pursuit of a Spanish bride for Prince Charles and determination to follow a diplomatic solution to the war put his policy direction at odds with a dominant swathe of public opinion. During the last years of his reign, therefore, James experienced an unprecedented amount of opposition to his government of England. This opposition was articulated through a variety of media, and began to raise questions beyond the conduct of policy in addressing fundamental issues of political authority. By examining the deployment of political ideas during the domestic crisis of the early 1620s, this thesis seeks to uncover the varied ways in which differing discourses upon authority and obedience were being articulated against royal government. In particular, it suggests that confessional politics interacted with a broader culture of opposition developing throughout the Jacobean period to create a potent form of critical public discourse.

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Abbreviations

APC	<i>Acts of the Privy Council of England in the Reign of James I</i> (Germany, 4 vols, reprint 1974)
Arber, TR	E. Arber (ed.), <i>A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640</i> (New York, 5 vols, 1875-94, reprint 1950)
BIHR	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>
BL	British Library
Cogswell, BR	Thomas Cogswell, <i>The Blessed Revolution: English Politics and the Coming of War, 1621-1624</i> (Cambridge, 1989)
Cust, 'Public Man'	Richard Cust, 'The "Public Man" in Late Tudor and Early Stuart England', in Peter Lake and Steve Pincus (eds.), <i>The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England</i> (Manchester, 2007), pp. 116-143
CSPD	<i>Calendar of State Papers Domestic, James I, 1619-23</i> (London, 1858).
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
ELR	<i>English Literary Renaissance</i>
G&S, Republicanism	Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner (eds.), <i>Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage</i> (Cambridge, 2 vols, 2002)
HJ	<i>Historical Journal</i>
HLQ	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly</i>
JBS	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
KJV	<i>The Holy Bible, conteyning the Old Testament, and the New: Newly Translated out of the Originall tongues: & with the former Translations diligently compared and reuised by his Maiesties speciall Comandement</i> (London, 1611)
L&P, PS	Peter Lake and Steve Pincus (eds.), <i>The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England</i> (Manchester, 2007)
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
P&P	<i>Past and Present</i>

<i>PMLA</i>	<i>Publications of the Modern language Association of America</i>
<i>RPCS</i>	<i>The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland, First ser., eds. J. H. Burton and D. Masson (Edinburgh, 14 vols, 1877-98)</i>
<i>RQ</i>	<i>Renaissance Quarterly</i>
<i>SPD</i>	<i>The Complete State Papers Domestic, series 1, James I (Harvester Microform, 1980)</i>
<i>SPF</i>	State Papers Foreign, The National Archives
<i>TRHS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>

Notes on the Text

All quotations of biblical text taken from KJV, unless otherwise stated.

In quotations from original printed or manuscript text, original spelling and punctuation have been retained, with contractions expanded in square brackets. {} indicates words interlined. Words struck through indicate words deleted (where discernable) in the original. Dates follow Old Style, unless otherwise stated, except the year, which is taken to begin on January 1.

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Introduction

‘The plaine truth is’, James I publicly explained early in 1622, ‘That Wee cannot with patience endure Our Subjects to vse such Antimonarchicall words to Vs concerning their Liberties’.¹ James’s immediate point of reference here was the ‘carping wits’ in the House of Commons, who had entered into a fractious exchange with the king at the end of the 1621 Parliament following their petition concerning religion, Prince Charles’s prospective marriage and the continental war.² Yet, taken more broadly, James’s statement neatly reflects the widespread reaction provoked by the king’s dynastic and foreign policy between 1618 and 1624, and succinctly epitomises the predominant royal understanding of such public opposition. Varying media were employed to articulate dissent over James’s pursuit of a Spanish bride for his son, and, as many contemporaries recognised, the criticism of the king’s policy increasingly began to address questions about political authority. Even a cursory glance at much of the critical literature generated during the early 1620s reveals that it was not just a jealous Commons who were becoming defensive over their liberties.³ As the direction of royal policy clashed with the demands of Reformed unity in the face of international confessional warfare, an increasing number of appeals were being framed in public terms, which often sought to educate and call upon a politically alert ‘public’, as much as the ruling elite.

The notion of a ‘public sphere’ in early modern England has been adapted and redeployed from Jürgen Habermas’s late seventeenth-century bourgeois, coffee house culture.⁴ An ‘occasional’ relationship has been identified between the public and politics, whereby an increasingly participatory reaction to moments of crises

¹ James VI and I, *His Majesties Declaration touching his Proceedings in the Late Assembly and Convention of Parliament* (London, 1622), p. 47; Thomas C. Fulton, “‘The True and Naturall Constitution of that Mixed Government’: Massinger’s *The Bondman* and the influence of Dutch Republicanism”, *Studies in Philology*, 99 (2002), 152-178, 157.

² James I, *His Majesties Declaration*, p. 44; for contrasting interpretations of this parliamentary episode see Robert Zaller, *The Parliament of 1621: A Study in Constitutional Conflict* (Berkeley, 1971); Brennan C. Pursell, ‘James I, Gondomar and the Dissolution of the Parliament of 1621’, *History*, 85 (2000), 428-445; Richard Cust, ‘Prince Charles and the Second Session of the 1621 Parliament’, *EHR*, 122 (2007), 427-441.

³ For this view of the Commons ‘desperately defending embattled freedoms’, see Zaller, *Parliament of 1621*, p. 179.

⁴ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, tr. T. Burger and F. Lawrence (Cambridge, 1989); Peter Lake and Michael Questier, ‘Puritans, Papists, and the “Public Sphere” in Early Modern England: The Edmund Campion Affair in Context’, *Journal of Modern History*, 72 (2000), 587-627; Peter Lake, and Steve Pincus, ‘Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England’, *JBS*, 45 (2006), 270-292; L&P, *PS*.

contributed to the establishment of a more politically aware and active populace.⁵ The explosion of news, pamphlets, libels and ballads that accompanied the Spanish match negotiations stands as one clear example of this trend, where Protestant pitches to a 'patriot' readership could invoke the manifest righteousness of the Reformed cause against governmental policy, and so encourage a startlingly oppositional 'public opinion'. The literature of the Spanish match thereby provides an opportunity to interrogate the multifaceted character of early Stuart political culture and develop our understanding of the ways that policy, political languages and public opinion were interacting during this period. Building upon the seminal work of Thomas Cogswell, this thesis will demonstrate in several unexplored areas how the diverse reactions to the match reveal a culture of opposition that permeated Jacobean political society.⁶ In appropriately contextualising these responses, this thesis will question the utility of employing a predominantly confessional framework in approaching the articulation of political thought during the height of the match negotiations.

I

The elector Palatine's ill-advised acceptance of his election to the Bohemian crown in September 1619 sparked the religious war that many observers predicted it would.⁷ The conflict in Bohemia had been ceremoniously provoked over a year before when disaffected Protestant nobles threw two regents and a secretary from the council chamber window in Prague and took control of the government.⁸ The deposition of Ferdinand of Styria and election of Frederick V in his place in August 1619 confirmed the conflict's escalation to pan-European proportions. Frederick's widely-criticised move had grave implications for the popularity of James's Spanish marriage negotiations, which were already causing some level of consternation with those of his apocalyptically-minded Protestant subjects as the long-heralded

⁵ Peter Lake and Steve Pincus, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England', in L&P, *PS*, pp. 1-30, pp. 1-8.

⁶ Cogswell, *BR*; Thomas Cogswell, 'England and the Spanish Match', in Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (eds.), *Conflict in Early Stuart England* (London, 1989), pp. 107-133.

⁷ James himself was aggrieved at the news of his son-in-law's acceptance, and observed the continental struggles were now undoubtedly 'a war of religion'. Brennan C. Pursell, *The Winter King: Frederick V of the Palatinate and the Coming of the Thirty Years' War* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 80-81.

⁸ Samuel R. Gardiner, *History of England from the Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War, 1603-1642* (London, 10 vols, 1893-1895), iii., 271; Brennan, *Winter King*, p. 43.

confessional showdown seemed finally to have arrived. No match for the Catholic-Habsburg forces, however, the 'winter' king and queen, Frederick and Elizabeth, were first ejected from Prague before having their own hereditary territory of the Palatinate confiscated, enforcing them to seek asylum at The Hague in April 1621, just as the Dutch-Spanish truce expired. The confessional battle lines were, therefore, firmly underscored as the Bohemian rebellion and the Netherlands' fight for independence became inexorably subsumed in the cause of the Reformed Church. James, who was resolute against assuming the mantle of spearheading the Protestant side to victory, sought to secure peace through diplomacy.

In continuing his attempt to broker peace in Europe, James was fulfilling his ambition to be *rex pacificus*. His dynastic policy reflected this desire to reunite the denominationally divided Christendom. Through the marriage of his children to the foremost Catholic and Protestant houses, James sought to lay the foundations for religious peace. A Spanish match had long been on the table and following Elizabeth's marriage to Frederick in 1613, which had threateningly provided the dynastic foundation for a potential international Protestant alliance, Spain dispatched Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, the future Count of Gondomar, as ambassador to England to explore more firmly the possibilities for an alliance.⁹ James is perceived to have turned more decidedly towards a match with the Infanta Maria, daughter of Philip III of Spain, and away from the prospect of a French match, after the Addled Parliament of 1614. According to this view, the coffers of gold brought by a Spanish dowry could free the king from his reliance upon that meddlesome institution for relief of his financial requirements. However politically motivated it was, the promise of a large dowry to the perennially insolvent king certainly functioned on one level to encourage the negotiations.¹⁰ It was the outbreak of war during 1618 to 1619, however, that gave the negotiations with Spain additional impetus as both parties had a vested political interest in maintaining peace. The Habsburg invasion of the Palatinate brought one further dimension to the marriage talks at the end of 1620,

⁹ Cogswell, *BR*, p. 15; Glyn Redworth, *The Prince and the Infanta: The Cultural Politics of the Spanish Match* (New Haven, 2003), pp. 7-8, 12-13; Zaller, *Parliament of 1621*, p. 7; William B. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge, 1997).

¹⁰ Cogswell, 'England and the Spanish Match', p. 111; Redworth, *Prince and the Infanta*, p. 15. This belief of the king's intent was also cause for much criticism and anxiety over the inherent prognosis for parliament. Cogswell, *BR*, p. 42.

as James, although much enraged by the confiscation of the Palatinate, still resolved on an initial policy of restitution through diplomacy.¹¹

A recent resurgence in the historiography upon the 'high politics' of the Spanish match has centred upon the issue of the Palatinate as a prime motivator behind both England's continued commitment to the negotiations after 1620, and particularly in prompting Prince Charles and Buckingham's notorious journey to Madrid in 1623. Glyn Redworth's reinterpretation of the match's ultimate failure has challenged the view, propounded most recently by Brennan Pursell, that 'the marriage and the restoration of the Palatinate had become inexorably intertwined', and that ultimately 'in 1623 the Palatine crisis had ruined the Anglo-Spanish match, and thereafter it would bring an end to the Anglo-Spanish peace as well.'¹² Instead, Redworth offers an analysis based upon his reading of the 'cultural politics' of the match, asserting that the key reason for the alliance's failure lay in the grave misunderstandings of what the Spanish had expected from Charles; principally, his conversion to Catholicism. In Redworth's view, the Palatinate issue played only a secondary role in motivating the trip to Madrid and 'degenerated into not much more than a face-saving formula' by Buckingham and the prince when their miscalculations became apparent, allowing it to become 'a twisted excuse for a war of vanity.'¹³

Whilst Redworth's interpretation has met with some sharp criticism, particularly with regard to the 'series of evidentiary manoeuvres' upon which he is judged to have based his most controversial points, the study suitably demonstrates the centrality of the Spanish match to our understanding of early Stuart political culture and is likely to keep the 'high political' debate alive for some time to come.¹⁴ The historical significance attributable to the match has been further underlined in a recent scholarly collection centred upon Charles's journey to Madrid that provides a

¹¹ Zaller, *Parliament of 1621*, pp. 16-18; Cogswell, 'England and the Spanish Match', p. 114.

¹² Brennan C. Pursell, 'The End of the Spanish Match', *HJ*, 45 (2002), 69-726, 701, 724; Brennan, *Winter King*, pp. 195-211. See also Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, 1992), pp. 3-5.

¹³ Redworth, *Prince and the Infanta*, pp. 3-5.

¹⁴ Robert Cross, 'Review: Pretense and Perception in the Spanish Match, or History in a Fake Beard', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 37 (2007), 563-573, 571; R. Malcolm Smuts, 'Book Review: *The Prince and the Infanta: The Cultural Politics of the Spanish Match and The Winter King: Frederick V of the Palatinate and the Coming of the Thirty Years' War*', at <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/smuts.html>.

clear example of the benefits to be gained from an interdisciplinary approach.¹⁵ Charles's *incognito* journey to Spain with Buckingham in February 1623, often seen as 'one of the most madcap of political adventures', may well have been intended to force the issue of the match with Spain, but was widely condemned as foolhardy by anxious contemporaries concerned over both the spiritual and physical welfare of the heir to the throne.¹⁶ Alexander Samson's interdisciplinary volume certainly provides a 'breath of fresh air' in its attempt to broaden the ways through which 'this unusual historical event is perceived, portrayed and discussed.'¹⁷ Yet in their diverse efforts to focus upon the 'cultural, social and material exchanges' that the prince's surprise visit engendered between the Spanish and English courts, the disparate essays fail to present a conclusion on anything more wide-reaching than a demonstration of the value to be found in interdisciplinary research, and an agreement that the journey to Madrid in 1623 was significant in some respect.¹⁸ As Alexander Samson outlines at the start of the volume, historiographical focus has centred predominantly upon the public euphoria that greeted Charles upon his return, and the issues the episode raised 'about English foreign policy, the nature of dynasticism, monarchy and the dangers or advantages of interfaith marriage'.¹⁹ Whilst recognising the breadth of investigation that the period of the Spanish match offers the historian, this statement nevertheless assumes a scholarship of depth and consensus in response, which is not an accurate reflection of the field. Therefore, in taking a great deal from the manifold advantages gained from an interdisciplinary approach, this thesis seeks to contribute significantly to an understanding of the political reverberations of the king's dynastic and foreign policy.

¹⁵ Alexander Samson (ed.), *The Spanish Match: Prince Charles's Journey to Madrid, 1623* (Aldershot, 2006).

¹⁶ Conrad Russell, *The Crisis of Parliaments: English History 1509-1660* (Oxford, 1971), p. 297; Richard Cust, *Charles I: A Political Life* (London, 2005), p. 33.

¹⁷ Kimberley J. Hackett, 'Review: *The Spanish Match: Prince Charles's Journey to Madrid, 1623* ed. Alexander Samson', *Seventeenth Century*, 23 (2008), 162-163.

¹⁸ Samson, 'Introduction: The Spanish Match', in Samson, *Spanish Match*, pp. 1-7, p. 2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1. Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 6-53; Cogswell, 'England and the Spanish Match'. See also Louis B. Wright, 'Propaganda against James I's "Appeasement" of Spain', *HLQ*, 6 (1943), 149-92; Roberta Anderson, "'Well disposed to the affairs of Spain?'" James VI and I and the Propagandists', *Recusant History*, 25 (2000-2001), 613-635; Martina Mittag, 'National Identity and the Sovereign in Anti-Spanish Pamphlets 1558-1625', *Costerus*, 137 (2001), 109-130.

II

The issue of Catholic toleration had always lurked just beneath the surface of the Spanish match. But as the negotiations assumed a central role in international diplomacy, they progressed with an increased vigour that saw James beginning to make the necessary concessions to his Catholic subjects.²⁰ Relaxing the execution of the penal laws against Catholics created an atmosphere of *de facto* toleration during the early years of the 1620s that contributed to a growing perception that the king's policies were increasingly diverging from the interests of the commonwealth.²¹ This gave rise to an ominous foreboding for religion in England, should the match be concluded, that has led Cogswell to read the episode in the context of popular anti-Catholicism, defining it as 'a Catholic scare with an important difference; for the first time the monarch was involved.'²² Cogswell's definitive survey of the Protestant opposition to the Spanish match thus uncovers the tightly-woven relationship between politics and religion, and poses a challenge to the revisionist emphasis upon ideological consensus by seeking political opinion beyond the confines of Westminster. In the protests evoked by the king's policies in these years, Cogswell identifies a polarisation of politics that 'became a model to which contemporaries reverted again and again in the years before the Civil War.'²³ Cogswell's study, therefore, is premised upon the influential insights of 'post-revisionism' in early Stuart historiography.²⁴

In countering both the Marxist structural-sociological re-evaluation of the long-term causes of the Civil War, and the older Whig teleological constitutional explanation, a loosely defined 'revisionist' school, spearheaded by Conrad Russell, sought in diverse ways to demonstrate the contingent character of the political crises that arose from what was essentially a society governed by political consensus. Sidelining the political significance of parliament, promoting an overriding preoccupation with local over national concerns – and factional politics over ideological divisions – and insisting above all on the primacy of archival sources as providing the most effective method of recovering the 'true' picture of the period,

²⁰ Gardiner, *History of England*, iii., 345-346; Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 30, 37-38.

²¹ Cogswell, 'England and the Spanish Match', p. 129.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 129.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 110; Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 3-5.

²⁴ A salient illustration of this scholarship is provided in Cust and Hughes, *Conflict*; see also Richard Cust, *The Forced Loan and English Politics 1626-1628* (Oxford, 1987).

the revisionists radically transformed early Stuart historiography; they had done this so convincingly, in fact, that by 1987 Russell could confidently claim they had 'won the debate'.²⁵

Whilst accepting many revisionist premises, the post-revisionist response found significant problems in the rejection of any long-term ideological conflict, which ultimately necessitated explaining how the Civil War came about at all.²⁶ Continuing to discard the Whiggish dichotomy between crown and opposition, defined as the House of Commons, which depicted the Civil War as an inevitable step on the laudable road towards constitutionalism, historians such as Cogswell, Richard Cust and Peter Lake, to name just a few, have asserted a 'view of early Stuart England as seriously divided over intertwined, fundamental questions of religion and politics.'²⁷ It is this emphasis upon the inseparability of religion and politics, upon the view that a pervasive attitude of anti-popery informed the alignment of certain virtuous political and religious values with the Protestant self-image, that has informed Cogswell's interpretation of the furore over the Spanish match, and which has been given influential expression by Peter Lake.²⁸ Yet if the revisionists saw religion as 'a phenomenon hermetically sealed from other aspects of life', then, perhaps necessarily, subsequent scholarship has tended to over right the wheel.²⁹

Anthony Milton has rightly qualified this emphasis and its tendency to assume 'the existence of an anti-Catholic ideological straitjacket, from which Protestant Englishmen were neither able nor willing to escape, and which impelled

²⁵ Russell cited in Cogswell, *BR*, p. 3. Some key examples of revisionist scholarship are Conrad Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics, 1621-1629* (Oxford, 1979); Kevin Sharpe (ed.), *Faction and Parliament: Essays on Early Stuart History* (Oxford, 1978); Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, 1992). The new trend was met with a fierce, but ultimately ineffectual, defence of some central Whig formulations. See for example Theodore K. Rabb, 'Revisionism Revised: The Role of the Commons', *P&P*, 92 (1981), 55-78; Derek Hirst, 'Revisionism Revised: The Place of Principle', *P&P*, 92 (1981), 79-99. For a useful overview of the historiographical topography see Richard Cust and Ann Hughes, 'Introduction: After Revisionism', in Cust and Hughes, *Conflict*, pp. 1-46; Glenn Burgess, 'On Revisionism: An Analysis of Early Stuart Historiography in the 1970s and 1980s', *HJ*, 33 (1990), 609-627; John Kenyon 'Review: Revisionism and Post-Revisionism in Early Stuart History', *The Journal of Modern History*, 64 (1992), 686-699.

²⁶ Cust and Hughes, 'Introduction', pp. 11-15; Peter Lake, 'Anti-popery: the Structure of a Prejudice', in Cust and Hughes, *Conflict*, pp. 72-106, 73.

²⁷ Cust and Hughes, 'Introduction', pp. 17, 26; Johann P. Sommerville, 'English and European Political Ideas in the Early Seventeenth Century: Revisionism and the Case of Absolutism', *JBS*, 35 (1996), 168-194, 169.

²⁸ Lake, 'Anti-popery', pp. 73-74; Peter Lake, 'Constitutional Consensus and Puritan Opposition in the 1620s: Thomas Scott and the Spanish Match,' *HJ*, 25 (1982), 805-825.

²⁹ Cust and Hughes, 'Introduction', p. 26.

them into an allergic response to all things and people who carried the slightest taint of Roman Catholicism.³⁰ Milton's analysis provides a cautionary corrective that demonstrates the nuanced interplay of confessional relationships to enable a more contextualised understanding of the political function played by the 'absolute confessional imperatives' of the 'papophobic' worldview.³¹ In this view, the dichotomous discourse of anti-papery is seen as just one of the many languages of anti-Catholicism, and one that could be manipulated and polemically deployed at times of political crisis.³² But it is also clear that we must approach political expression during this period in a similar way.

Cogswell's analysis of the political ramifications of the match is structured by his perception that Jacobean political society for the most part thought in denominational terms. Thus he outlines that, as anxieties over James's association with the Catholic threat increased, 'so too blind loyalty from James's Protestant subjects became questionable.'³³ Cogswell's breadth of examples undoubtedly reflects that the match provoked the expression of oppositional views that were grounded upon a binary understanding of international religious politics. In further dissecting the varied character of this opposition, however, it becomes evident that we need to widen our view of the 'oppositional' mindset. Cogswell's statement here hints at two assumptions, which can first be questioned when considering the match criticism. Firstly, the confessional terms that govern his evaluation mean that Cogswell presents the view of a Protestant monolith of oppositional thought that was swayed by the tide of policy. In doing so, secondly he would seem to suggest that political thought more widely was contingent upon religious politics.

In filling a glaring gap in scholarship with his exploration of Catholic responses to Jacobean policy and politics, and the match in particular, Michael Questier has revised the perception of Catholic political inertia to reveal 'a crucial (Catholic) component of "public-sphere" politics' in the 'opinions and discourses which were deployed in reaction to the Stuart court's highly controversial' pursuit of

³⁰ Anthony Milton, 'A Qualified Intolerance: the Limits and Ambiguities of Early Stuart Anti-Catholicism', in A. F. Marotti (ed.), *Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism in Early Modern English Texts* (Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 85-115, p. 86.

³¹ Milton, 'Qualified Intolerance', p. 109.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 106-110.

³³ Cogswell, 'England and the Spanish Match', p. 129.

the Spanish infanta.³⁴ Questier adeptly outlines the Catholic loyal posturing enabled by royal policy during the match, explaining: ‘Catholics knew what they were doing when they warned against the quasi-republican dangers represented by the Bohemian party in England.’ Thus in similarly invoking Lake’s confessionally-rent understanding of political society, Questier’s analysis draws firm links between political allegiance and the religious implications of foreign and dynastic policy.³⁵ Like Milton, I do not wish to mount a challenge to this valid and fruitful research that employs the framework of an anti-popish mentality to evaluate early Stuart religious and political society. Rather, with this thesis, I hope to demonstrate that the language of confessional conflict and allegiance that dominated responses to the Spanish match was not only reflective of that mindset, and in fact, in their articulations of political ideas many commentators on the match negotiations demonstrate an engagement with a variety of political discourses that were not informed by confession alone. This contention builds to some extent on Markku Peltonen’s reassessment of Thomas Scott’s pamphlets in the context of a tradition of classical humanist and republican thought that he identifies in early modern England.³⁶

In pursuing this alternative approach, Peltonen’s study participates in the lively, contested and varied field of early Stuart political thought, to which this thesis aims to contribute. In responding to the revisionists’ reliance upon contingent explanations for conflict, Johann Sommerville has sought to put the ideology back into politics by presenting a convincing portrait of an intellectual community where rival ideologies upon the nature of English political authority provide the contextual backdrop for the attacks on royal policy and government.³⁷ In addition, he has placed considerable emphasis upon the currency of continental thought in England, suggesting that continental theories of absolutism were certainly known, and were

³⁴ Michael C. Questier (ed.), *Stuart Dynastic Policy and Religious Politics, 1621-1625*, Camden Society, Fifth Series, 35 (Cambridge, forthcoming 2009), p. 2. I am most grateful to Professor Questier for allowing me the opportunity to preview his book before publication. Time constraints have prevented me from making use of the valuable source material the volume contains, which I am sure will contribute significantly to our understanding of the many varying responses to the match. See also Michael C. Questier, ‘Catholic Loyalty in Early Stuart England’, *EHR*, 123 (2008), 1132-1165.

³⁵ Questier, *Stuart Dynastic Policy*, pp. 8, 13, 129; Questier, ‘Catholic Loyalty’, 1164.

³⁶ Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 231-270.

³⁷ Johann P. Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology in England, 1603-1640* (London, 1986).

being circulated and propounded throughout the Jacobean period.³⁸ In exploring these trends of thought, Sommerville follows on the path of many investigations into pre-Civil War political thought in primarily seeking to identify the ideological origins of that conflict. In moving away from a traditional focus upon the ‘canonical’ thinkers of the Civil War and Interregnum, and a tendency to characterise early seventeenth-century thought as insular and bound by a common law mentality, scholarship benefitting from the methodological revisions of the Cambridge school has uncovered the diverse deployment of classical and continental political languages.³⁹

One particularly contested area of scholarship centres upon the definition, prevalence and political deployment of the language of republicanism in pre-Civil War England. As Sommerville has recently noted, the growing body of work exploring ‘neo-Roman’ ideas during this period has sought to challenge ‘the claim... that the history of English republicanism really begins only in 1649, when the country became a republic.’⁴⁰ Blair Worden stands as representative of this claim in

³⁸ Sommerville defines this terminology, explaining: ‘the theory of absolutism vested sovereign power in the ruler alone and forbade disobedience to the sovereign’s commands unless they contradicted the injunctions of God Himself’. Sommerville, ‘English and European Political Ideas’, 168. Cf. Glenn Burgess, *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution: An Introduction to English Political Thought, 1603-1642* (Basingstoke, 1992). Burgess identifies a broad ideological consensus governing the application of political languages, enabling him to view the political strife experienced during the 1620s as more a matter of policy than ideology.

³⁹ See Zera Fink, *The Classical Republicans: An Essay in the Recovery of a Pattern of Thought in Seventeenth-Century England* (Evanston, 2nd edn, 1962); Margaret A. Judson, *The Crisis of the Constitution* (New York, 1949). The Cambridge school insisted on reading works of political philosophy in the context, and more specifically the linguistic context, in which they were written. Three seminal pieces exemplifying the revisions of the school are J. G. A. Pocock, ‘The History of Political Thought: A Methodological Enquiry’, in P. Laslett and W. G. Runciman (eds.) *Philosophy, Politics and Society* (Oxford, 1962), 183-202; Quentin Skinner, ‘Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas’, *History and Theory*, 8 (1969), 3-53; John Dunn, ‘The Identity of the History of Ideas’, in J. Dunn, *Political Obligation in its Historical Context: Essays in Political Theory* (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 13-28. For a useful overview of the methodological revisions and their continued impact on the discipline see David Runciman, ‘History of Political Thought: The State of the Discipline’, *Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 3 (2001), 84-104. For the historiographical response (to Skinner in particular) see James Tully (ed.), *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics* (Princeton, 1988); Annabel Brett and James Tully (eds.) *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2006). For major examples of this approach see Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2 vols, 1978); Anthony Pagden (ed.) *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1987); David Armitage (ed.) *British Political Thought in History, Literature and Theory, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 2006). For this approach to interpreting pre-Civil War English thought see Peltonen, *Classical Humanism*; Quentin Skinner, ‘Classical Liberty and the Coming of the English Civil War’, in G&S, *Republicanism*, ii., pp. 9-28.

⁴⁰ Johann P. Sommerville, ‘English and Roman Liberty in the Monarchical Republic of Early Stuart England’, in J. F. McDiarmid (ed.), *The Monarchical Republic of Early Modern England: Essays in Response to Patrick Collinson* (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 201-216, p. 202.

perceiving that 'it was only after the execution of the king that the aim of emulating [classical constitutions] was extensively canvassed.'⁴¹ For Quentin Skinner, however, it was ideas on Roman liberty and servitude that provided 'one of the most potent sources of radical thinking about the English polity in the years immediately preceding the outbreak of civil war in 1642'.⁴² Sommerville himself contests this challenge, perceiving that the ideas upon liberty that were being expressed derived from English common law thought, and suggesting that 'there was nothing particularly republican' about the central values that have been consistently used to define this neo-Romanism.⁴³ What this sentiment nicely encapsulates is the complex set of meanings attached to the term 'republicanism', which has obfuscated exactly what it is that historians are attempting to show when unveiling the existence of republican ideas in England before 1649.

Peltonen and others are surely right to identify civic consciousness, and its associated attachment to the ideas of *negotium* and the public good as paramount, well in advance of the Civil War. Furthermore, a focus upon the currency and use of classical political ideas, and more recently contemporary continental precedent, significantly adds to our understanding of the influences informing early Stuart political thinking.⁴⁴ Yet if, as Sommerville suggests, such values 'were not seen as specifically republican in the early modern period, but quite compatible with the idea of monarchical sovereignty', as Peltonen himself seems reluctant to deny, then it becomes unclear as to what meaning is being conveyed by defining the trend as republican.⁴⁵ Thus, whilst it is clear that identifying the articulation and promotion of

⁴¹ Blair Worden, 'English Republicanism', in J. H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450-1700* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 443-475, pp. 445-449. See also Blair Worden, 'Republicanism, Regicide and Republic: The English Experience', in G&S, *Republicanism*, i., pp. 307-328.

⁴² Quentin Skinner, 'Classical Liberty', p. 14; Sommerville, 'English and Roman Liberty', p. 202.

⁴³ Sommerville, 'English and Roman Liberty', pp. 203-204.

⁴⁴ See also Malcolm Smuts, 'Court-Centred Politics and the Uses of Roman Historians, c. 1590-1630', pp. 21-43 and David Norbrook, 'Lucan, Thomas May, and the Creation of a Literary Republican Culture', pp. 45-66, both in K. Sharpe and P. Lake, *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Basingstoke, 1994); Paulina Kewes, 'Julius Caesar in Jacobean England', *Seventeenth Century*, 17 (2002), 155-186; Paulina Kewes, 'Contemporary Europe in Elizabethan and Early Stuart Drama', in A. Hadfield and P. Hammond (eds.), *Shakespeare and Renaissance Europe* (London, 2004), pp. 150-192.

⁴⁵ Sommerville, 'English and Roman Liberty', pp. 204, 211; Peltonen, *Classical Humanism*, pp. 11-12. These problems of meaning and definition are given extended treatment by David Wootton. See David Wootton, 'The True Origins of Republicanism: The Disciples of Baron and the Counter-Example of Venturi', in M. Albertone (ed.), *Il Repubblicanesimo Moderno. L'idea di Repubblica Nella Riflessione Storica di Franco Venturi* (Naples, 2006), pp. 271-304.

these virtues in early Stuart England does not straightforwardly demonstrate the existence of a meaningful form of republicanism, this thesis will show that some of the ways in which these virtues were being promulgated during the period of the Spanish match reveal the increasing currency of the new language of 'strict' republicanism, that viewed monarchical government as antithetical to the preservation of civic liberty.

In so doing, this thesis will continue to expand upon our understanding of the nuanced and multifaceted composition of Jacobean political culture that has been significantly advanced through the fruitful labours of interdisciplinary research.⁴⁶ Whilst the same issues surrounding the advocacy of republicanism, as discussed above, arise in David Norbrook's work on sixteenth and seventeenth-century literary-political society, he has nevertheless produced a convincing portrait of 'the suppressed radicalism of Renaissance poetry', identifying an 'opposition' culture in the Jacobean period that employed the political implications of poetic form to express anti-court criticism.⁴⁷ This culture has been fleshed out in several directions in recent studies that have employed a diverse range of source material to demonstrate that political criticism was prevalent right across the social spectrum. Whilst the outbreak of the Thirty Years War has long been linked to the explosion of news in England in the early 1620s, Richard Cust has been influential in demonstrating the politicising impact of a variety of news media upon an increasingly politically aware public.⁴⁸ Both Alastair Bellany and Cogswell have expanded upon this focus and have convincingly made the case for studying libels by

⁴⁶ For a word of caution against the utter conflation of the disciplines of history and literary criticism in studies on political thought that questions the limited 'disputatious' aspect of literary sources, but which also reads as the last cries of an old-guard defence in its final hour, see J. G. A. Pocock, Gordon Schochet and Lois G. Schworer, 'The History of British Political Thought: A Field and its Futures', in Armitage, *British Political Thought*, pp. 10-19, pp. 15-16. The volume does contain, however, two essays that engagingly highlight the dividends paid in employing literary sources in political history: Stephen N. Zwicker, 'Irony, Disguise and Deceit: What Literature Teaches us About Politics', pp. 145-167; Karen O'Brien, 'Poetry and Political Thought: Liberty and Benevolence in the Case of the British Empire c. 1680-1800', pp. 168-187.

⁴⁷ David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (Oxford, 2002 rev. ed.), pp. 14, 173-223; Kevin Sharpe, *Politics and Ideas in Early Stuart England: Essays and Studies* (London, 1989), p. 269. See also Michelle O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation': Jacobean Spenserians and Early Stuart Political Culture* (Oxford, 2000).

⁴⁸ Richard Cust, 'News and Politics in Early Seventeenth-Century England', *P&P*, 112 (1986), 60-90. For an example of the subsequent developments in this field see C. John Sommerville, *The News Revolution in England: Cultural Dynamics of Daily Information* (Oxford, 1996); Joad Raymond (ed.), *News, Newspapers, and Society in Early Modern Britain* (London, 1999); Brendan Dooley and Sabrina Baron (eds.), *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2001).

highlighting the provocative role that such defamatory verses played in politicising public opinion.⁴⁹ The subsequent work profiting from these inroads into Jacobean political culture continues to explore the relationship between polemical bids for public support and a growing widespread engagement with politics that has underwritten the scholarship on a nascent ‘public sphere’ in early modern England.⁵⁰

The ‘occasional’ post-Reformation public sphere defined by Peter Lake and Steve Pincus is similarly premised upon their perception of the indivisible relationship between religion and politics.⁵¹ Where appeals to popular anti-Catholic feeling, they argue, had initially developed as part of an attempt by the Elizabethan regime to defend itself and force the queen into action at times of political crisis, the regime’s use of the mode enabled Catholic responses in the same vein, and subsequently allowed puritan dissenters to employ it, in turn, against the government.⁵² But it is also clear that through the polemical, religious terms that characterised these pitches to the public, which undoubtedly exploited a widely perceived dichotomous confessional framework for understanding politics, further appeals were being made to an identifiable trope of political ideas and criticisms that transcended confession.⁵³ These appeals thereby provide us with an opportunity to seek beyond the sometimes-shallow posturing to investigate the ideas upon authority, obedience and government that were being communicated at a public level.

III

In attempting to weave the tapestry of political culture observable in the diverse responses to the match, this thesis engages with, draws upon and is indebted to the

⁴⁹ Alastair Bellany, “‘Raylinge Rymes and Vaunting Verse’: Libellous Politics in Early Stuart England, 1603-1628”, in Sharpe and Lake, *Culture and Politics*, pp. 285-310; Thomas Cogswell, ‘Underground Verse and the Transformation of Early Stuart Political Culture’, in S. D. Amussen and M. A. Kishlansky (eds.), *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 1995), pp. 277-300.

⁵⁰ Pauline Croft, ‘Libels, Popular Literacy and Public Opinion in Early Modern England’, *Historical Research*, 68 (1995), 266-285; Adam Fox, ‘Rumour, News and Popular Political Opinion in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England’, *HJ*, 40 (1997), 597-620; Andrew McRae, ‘The Literary Culture of Early Stuart Libelling’, *Modern Philology*, 97 (2000), 364-392.

⁵¹ Lake and Pincus, ‘Rethinking the Public Sphere’ (2007), pp. 2-4.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 4; Peter Lake, ‘The Politics of ‘Popularity’ and the Public Sphere: the “Monarchical Republic” of Elizabeth I defends Itself’, in L&P, *PS*, pp. 59-94.

⁵³ A timely word of caution about an increasing vogue in historical study to assume these appeals were seeking to incite public support for an oppositional stance is offered in Anthony Milton, ‘Marketing a Massacre: Amboyna, the East India Company and the Public Sphere in Early Stuart England’, in L&P, *PS*, pp. 168-190. See below, ch. 6, p. 216.

several approaches to reading the politics of the period as outlined above. Working from the premise that early Stuart political ideology was divided in its subscription to and application of classical, continental and common law languages, I build upon the insights of interdisciplinary scholarship through a focus upon an array of poetry, drama, religious treatises and polemical pamphlets. Throughout this range of public articulations we can identify individual and collective efforts both to impact upon the direction of policy through appeals to the king and those who should be his counsellors, as well as to educate and advise a varyingly perceived 'public opinion' in matters of authority and the role of the citizen. What arises from these responses is a view of a variegated engagement with a range of political languages that were being deployed in more public and politically active ways as a result of the crises engendered by the match politics.

I explore the textual reactions to the match in three principal ways. Firstly, I investigate how the questions raised by the match over allegiance conditioned several responses to the unpopular royal policies. As we have seen, the manifest religious ramifications of James's refusal to head the Protestant Union against the Catholic League after Frederick had ignited continent-wide conflict in 1619, and instead continue on course to unite dynastically with that league's ambitious premier power, predictably elicited public responses that could employ a polemical understanding of confessional allegiance to articulate their support or opposition. Those in support of the king were therefore able to associate the widespread criticism of the marriage negotiations and calls for military action with the pernicious and subversive intentions of the 'puritans', whose assumed predilection for a Presbyterian form of church government led James to suspect them of democratic political tendencies more widely.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, not able to resist the opportunity to show themselves in contrast to the rabble-rousing puritans, English Catholics were able to present their loyalist credentials in offering the king unqualified support for his policies. In response, those voicing criticism of the match emphasised the confluence of their position with 'patriot' opinion acting in the best interests of the commonwealth against the potent threat of Catholic Spain, and which was ultimately concerned with safeguarding public welfare.

⁵⁴ Cust, 'Prince Charles', 433-434.

This influence of religious ideology, and particularly anti-popery, as a driving force in English political activism during the Spanish match is reassessed in chapter one through a survey of the pamphlets, tracts and treatises frequently cited to demonstrate 'Protestant opposition' and loyal support during the match. The strict alignment of confession and allegiance is revealed as an overly forced categorisation, as the texts examined illustrate a consistency of political thought that drew upon a vibrant and diverse political culture, which accordingly demonstrates the need to more closely explore the responses to the match beyond the polemicist rhetoric enabled by the match politics. The difficulties and contradictions of allegiance established by the confessional exploitation of the match politics are explicitly displayed through the works of John Taylor. Therefore, building upon a revival of cross-disciplinary interest in Taylor, in chapter two I examine how the Thames water-poet manipulated his literary expression in order to resolve the problems posed by both his Protestantism and his commitment to loyalty. Revealing clear concern over the populist potential of the exploding news and libel culture, Taylor's religious criticism became more ambivalent as he too aligned the inflammatory match opposition with the archetypal radical separatist. At the same time, however, as part of Taylor's experimentation with genre that reflected his literary aspirations, I point to the consciously subtle ways in which the water-poet expressed his political anxieties without participating within a publicly critical mode that he held in contempt.

Next, I go on to examine the more overt criticism voiced in literature composed during the match. As Norbrook and Michelle O'Callaghan have shown, Jacobean literary culture was suffused with oppositional discourse.⁵⁵ A close investigation of some key literary responses to the match identifies continuity with the criticisms of an early Jacobean political culture, whilst highlighting the ways in which the match impacted upon the articulation of political criticism and, most significantly, the function that this articulation sought to achieve. Chapter three focuses upon the poetry of George Wither. Renowned for his controversial satire in 1621 that earned the poet a spell in prison, Wither has frequently been employed as demonstrative of the 'Protestant match opposition'. Yet this neat categorisation currently relies on neglecting Wither's religious poetry, which constituted by far the

⁵⁵ Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*; O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*.

bulk of his literary output in the 1620s. In reconciling the political function of his denominationally uncharacteristic biblical verse with that underwriting his pastoral poetry, this chapter establishes a consistency of thought in Wither's works and continues to challenge the monolithic depiction of the match opposition as puritan or 'hot' Protestant.

Philip Massinger's independent career as a playwright commenced at the height of the match negotiations. In chapter four I survey his exploration of authority and civic responsibility in his first four plays of sole authorship, composed between 1621 and 1624, that reveal his response to the political crises engendered by the match. Intending his plays to function in an instructive capacity to encourage a self-interested political elite into fulfilling their civic responsibilities, Massinger's political anxieties reflected those of Wither and identify the common culture of opposition that both were participating in. Arising from his ambiguous religious profession, however, Massinger's criticism was not conducted through the rhetoric of religious polemic. Therefore, this allows his political thought to be firmly detached from the immediate concerns of confessional politics, and shown as illustrative of a wider interest in investigating political authority that assumed applicatory relevance during the match crises.

Following on from this conclusion, in the final part I evaluate the precedential role played by the Dutch Republic within this explorative political culture. As discussed, recent studies on pre-Civil War political thought have emphasised its wider engagement with the ideas and languages of classical and continental thought. Yet the relationship between the ideas and practical arrangement of the Dutch Republic on one side and English political thinking on the other remains understudied and vague in our understanding before the mid-seventeenth century. In chapter five, I provide a new reading of Massinger and John Fletcher's tragedy based upon the fall of Holland's advocate, John van Oldenbarnevelt, which reveals how the increasing currency of classical ideology in England shaped the playwrights' representation of the Dutch Republic, and, in turn, translated its lessons to an English context. Furthermore, in discarding the dichotomous religious interpretation that shaped a widespread reception of the execution, the play continues to emphasise the limited utility of the prevailing confessional framework through which the match politics are understood.

The expiry of the Dutch-Spanish truce meant that the Netherlands joined in battle with the beleaguered German Protestants against the Habsburgs, which to many in England underlined the religious character of the conflict that the king was still refusing to enter. In revisiting the contemporary exploitation of confessionalised politics, chapter six examines how the Dutch Republic was understood and represented in England during the match crisis through a pamphlet exchange between the Catholic intelligencer, Richard Verstegan, and a loose affiliation of English Protestants resident in the Netherlands. Concerned to garner the support of an English reading-public either for or against the Dutch war with Spain, these pamphlets employed the justificatory literature of the Dutch Revolt that enabled them to engage with a discourse on authority and resistance. Whilst Verstegan's vitriol against radical Protestantism continued to emphasise the subversive connotations that were traditionally associated with popular forms of government, the antithetical equations drawn by the Protestant pamphleteers between the Spanish monarchy and slavery on one side, and the Dutch Republic and liberty on the other assumed more universal significance in the context of the match politics. These pamphlets, therefore, suggest the ways in which the new language of republicanism, that enabled the conceptual equation of virtuous politics solely with popular government, could be deployed with hints of an applicatory message for the English state.⁵⁶

This thesis, therefore, clarifies and enhances our understanding of the role that the match politics played in the formulation and expression of political opinion in early Stuart England. It achieves this through the contextualisation of ideas within both the tense climate of the match negotiations, as well as within the broader trends that continued to inform political thought. The approach followed here questions the frequently applied confessional categorisations, instead emphasising the need for recognising the complexity that dictated loyalty, obedience and opposition within the literature that exploited confessional stereotypes for partisan circumstances.

It is necessary to briefly note that in using the term 'opposition culture' to describe the environment in which I locate much of the criticism of the Spanish match and James's conduct of government, I do not intend to re-establish the Whig

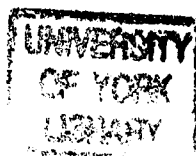
⁵⁶ For this definition of the new language of republicanism see Wootton, 'True Origins of Republicanism'.

dichotomous formulation of a monolithic, Commons-based ‘opposition’ against an equally homogenous ‘government’.⁵⁷ Rather, the term here defines the shared criticisms and explorative political ideas, increasingly drawing upon a range of classical and continental sources, which were being articulated through varying media as part of a demonstration of dissent against differing aspects of royal policy and political authority.

Therefore, in drawing together these differing approaches to early Stuart political culture through an examination of the responses to the Spanish match, this thesis seeks to investigate the nuances of Jacobean political thought and ultimately question the assumption that this was opposition in a *pre-republican* age. In 1989 Thomas Cogswell outlined the justifications for his now-seminal exploration of the match period in the hope they ‘would excuse another work on the 1620s’.⁵⁸ Twenty years – and many further studies – later, I hope here to have done the same.

⁵⁷ Cust and Hughes, ‘Introduction’, p. 17.

⁵⁸ Cogswell, *BR*, p. 5.



Divided Allegiance: Catholic and Protestant during the Spanish Match

‘While it was not necessary to be a Catholic to support an alliance with Spain, it was impossible to be a Puritan’.¹ Simon Adams’s evaluation of religion’s role in governing political opinion in the 1620s neatly characterises the principal framework through which the politics of the Spanish match have been viewed. It has long been recognised that James’s dynastic and foreign policy decisions after 1618 confused notions of loyalty and religion within England. Where it had been comfortable and easy to identify Catholics as traitors following the papal bull of 1570, by the close of James’s reign the more radical end of the Protestant spectrum experienced a reversal of fortunes as they railed against their lawful sovereign. In December 1622, the Flemish ambassador outlined the mood in London in just such terms, judging that ‘most would contest and dispute the king’s authority. It may prove necessary to avert an imminent revolution threatened by the puritans.’² A significant proportion of the Protestant opposition to the match attempted to negotiate the conflict inherent in protesting against the policy whilst claiming unreserved loyalty and obedience to the crown. Conversely, many Catholics took the opportunity to exploit the advantages the match politics offered them by pointing to the seditious opposition of the puritans and contrasting it with their own obedience and support for the king.

Yet an overreliance upon a predominantly religious interpretation of allegiance and loyalty during the crisis years of the Spanish match, which attaches political thought to the sway of policy, misrepresents political conviction and disregards the more nuanced interplay of varying ideas informing English political thought. In neglecting the wider influences, such a perspective can over establish the role played by James and the match in the *creation* of a political opposition. It is therefore necessary to contextualise the responses to the match within a broader culture of political critique to determine the formative influence of events. This chapter thus re-examines the traditional alignment of Catholic and Protestant during the match to assess the extent to which religious

¹ Simon L. Adams, ‘Foreign Policy and the Parliaments of 1621 and 1624’, in K. Sharpe (ed.), *Faction and Parliament: Essays on Early Stuart History* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 139-173, p. 141.

² *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, eds. J. F. Larkin and P. L. Hughes (Oxford, 2 vols, 1973), i., p. 562.

considerations shaped the articulation of political thought in reaction to the king's policies.

I

In April 1622 Henry de Vere, earl of Oxford, was imprisoned for 'ydle and vnfit speaches touching the King and his government'.³ Such loose talk by a peer of the realm was markedly subversive to royal authority and in clear contravention of the two proclamations that had been issued in the preceding eighteen months against lavish and licentious speech. In December 1620 James had commanded his subjects 'from the highest to the lowest, to take heede, how they intermeddle by Penne, or Speech, with causes of State, and secrets of Empire.'⁴ James's address to every level of society, not simply a meddling Commons or his tiresome judges, reveals the increasing range of public discussion on policy and government following the continental disturbances. The reissue of the same proclamation in July 1621, stating that contrary to the previous warning 'the inordinate libertie of unreuerent speech, touching matters of high nature, unfit for vulgar discourse, doth dayly more and more increase', along with Oxford's arrest some months later, uncovers the futility of the royal effort to stem the tide of the public discussion upon the king's controversial foreign policy.⁵

Thomas Cogswell's masterful survey of the opposition generated by the Spanish match and continental war convincingly justifies his conclusion that the crises of the early 1620s constituted 'a serious outbreak of anti-Catholicism roughly equal to those of 1605 and 1638-42'.⁶ He has identified the key role that preaching played in contributing to this oppositional, anti-Catholic discourse surrounding the match, which ultimately prompted James to issue the well-known directions to preachers in August 1622 that limited the subject matter the clergy could broach in their sermons.⁷ Even following James's issue of these directions, as late as March 1623, Chamberlain related to Carleton that the

³ Chamberlain to Carleton, 27 Apr. 1622, SPD 14/129, fo. 101.

⁴ Francis Bacon is thought to have been the author of the proclamation. Larkin and Hughes, *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, i., pp. 495-496.

⁵ Larkin and Hughes, *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, i., p. 520. See Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 20-27.

⁶ Cogswell, *BR*, p. 51. See also Roberta Anderson, "'Well disposed to the affairs of Spain?' James VI and I and the Propagandists', *Recusant History*, 25 (2000-2001), 613-635.

⁷ Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 27-35. The role of preaching as a rhetorical tool for communicating ideas with the public at large has been a key feature of recent scholarship. See Mary Morrissey, 'Interdisciplinarity and the study of Early Modern Sermons', *HJ*, 42 (1999), 1111-1123.

preachers could hardly be restrained from talking about the match, citing one incident where a minister had been sung down with a psalm when he began to address controversial issues.⁸ These contentious sermons were met by a wave of preaching and publications in defence of royal authority that reminded the people of the obedience due to their sovereign and reasserted that policy direction lay within the bounds of monarchy, and was not an issue to be discussed at liberty by the people.⁹ It was within the context of these refuted challenges to authority that a discussion upon Calvinist resistance theory could emerge.¹⁰

Elnathan Parr's *A Plaine Exposition vpon the whole 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th chapters of the Epistle of St Paul to the Romans* was published in 1622. Parr's exposition can be situated within this royalist reaction to the widespread criticism, as he unpicked the contested meaning of Romans 13 to castigate disobedience, resistance and rebellion. Romans 13 stood as a key founding block for the divinely derived powers of civil authority and the subsequent obedience required by the people. During the sixteenth century, however, the difficult position that many of the Reformed religion found themselves in, living under the authority of Catholic princes, prompted theories of resistance to develop that sought to overcome the Pauline injunction 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.'¹¹ (Rom. 13:1) Such theories claimed that the government Paul had implied was that of the ruler, the superior magistrate, and the remainder of the ruling elite who comprised the inferior magistrates. Obedience was still

⁸ *CSPD*, x., p. 533. Chamberlain's correspondence would question to some extent Cogswell's view that 'at the end of 1622... James had reasserted control and had ridden out a particularly alarming storm of popular criticism.' Cogswell, *BR*, p. 34, cf. also p. 44.

⁹ Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 27-35.

¹⁰ Jeanne Shami argues that the sermons both in opposition to and in support of royal authority during the Spanish match crisis represent a struggle for control of the public sphere and contributed to the development of more controversial political debates within what had been a conformist centre of the Church of England. Jeanne Shami, *John Donne and Conformity in Crisis in the Late Jacobean Pulpit* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 36-74.

¹¹ For an overview of this development see Robert M. Kingdon, 'Calvinism and Resistance Theory, 1550-1580', in J. H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450-1700* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 193-218; for John Knox's engagement with Romans 13 and contribution to development of resistance theory see John Knox, *On Rebellion*, ed. R. A. Mason (Cambridge, repr. 1999), Introduction, pp. xvii-xix. For a comparative account of Calvin and Beza's exegesis of Romans 13 that de-emphasises the political role the biblical chapter played in resistance theories see Richard A. Muller, 'Calvin, Beza, and the Exegetical History of Romans 13:1-7', in J. B. Roney and M. I. Klauber, (eds.), *The Identity of Geneva: the Christian Commonwealth, 1564-1864* (Westport, 1998), pp. 39-56.

always required of private individuals, but the inferior magistrates retained the right (and even obligation in some cases) of resistance against the ruler.¹²

Parr's refutation of the right of resistance for an inferior magistracy formed a central part of his exegesis of Romans 13:1-7 and followed on from his direct exhortation to obey James. Revealing his resolute opinion of the notorious Calvinist theory, he condemned it 'not lawfull by any humane or divine law reuealed for a subiect or inferior Magistrate to take armes against his Prince, though a wicked man.'¹³ Although he openly condemned the papal deposing power, and in so doing continued to consolidate the link between resistance and Catholicism, Parr was evidently aiming the thrust of his rhetoric towards James's dissenting Protestant subjects, and particularly the ministers.¹⁴ Considering that, in the time of the apostles, obedience had been given to rulers who were persecutors and heretics, Parr stated 'how much more are wee to preach *obedience* to the godly and religious Magistrates' and asked 'Must *Nero* be obeyed, and ought not much more King *Iames*, Defender of the Faith, a Nursing Father of the Church?'¹⁵ He linked disobedience unmistakably to a conceived 'puritan' faction through a reference to their opposition to church conformity, which 'hath caused the Gospell to be disgraced as a profession denying *obedience* to Magistrates' and pre-empted James's own commandments in his directions to preachers in warning against the subversion found in texts tending towards rebellion, particularly the *Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos*.¹⁶ Parr's text draws consistently upon classical, biblical and recent historical example, suggesting a lively engagement with contemporary political discourse, and not just conformity to a supposed Jacobean orthodoxy. The exposition thus serves to underline the link that was being made between the vocal opposition to James's

¹² For a discussion of the context and development of these ideas see Robert M. Kingdon, 'The Political Resistance of the Calvinists in France and the Low Countries', *Church History*, 27 (1958), 220-233. George Buchanan's much more secular political theories negotiated Romans 13 by placing emphasis upon the context in which Paul was writing, thus calling into question direct contemporary application. See George Buchanan, *George Buchanan's Law of Kingship: De Jure Regni Apud Scotos Dialogus*, tr. and ed. R. A. Mason and M. S. Smith (Edinburgh, 2006), pp. 9-10.

¹³ Elnathan Parr, *A Plaine Exposition vpon the whole 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th chapters of the Epistle of St Paul to the Romans* (London, 1622), p. 13.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 9

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 13, 20, 29.

policies and a more threatening, underlying consideration of continental political resistance upon grounds of religion.

Parr's concerns were somewhat confirmed only months after his exposition had been entered in the register by the infamous delivery of a sermon at Oxford in April 1622 by John Knight.¹⁷ The sermon was founded upon the Latin commentary on Romans 13 by the German Calvinist, David Pareus. In a letter to the Privy Council, Archbishop George Abbot and twelve other bishops related that Pareus taught from Paul how the 'subordinate magistrate might and ought to turne the poynt of that sword committed unto him by his gracious soueraigne against the brest of his Liege Lord and master' in matters of religion.¹⁸ This Calvinist reading of Romans took on added contemporary significance when preached in Knight's sermon as, not only did it contradict James's view of allegiance and sovereignty, but in light of the religious implications of James's policies, it manifested unsubtle undertones of rebellion. In response, Knight was imprisoned and Pareus's books were publicly burnt, which only served to raise the profile and widen the readership of his work.¹⁹ The clerics' report concluded that Knight preached 'a wicked sermon tending to no lesse than sedition, treason, and rebellion against Princes,'²⁰ and declared judgment upon Pareus's doctrines as seditious and against scripture, the counsels, the Church Fathers and the laws of the realm. Instructions were then sent to Oxford and Cambridge for the educating of students in scripture first and foremost, and an injunction given against the works of Jesuits and puritans 'who are known to be medlers in matters of state and monarchy.'²¹

The government's interpretation of Knight's case provides a well-known illustration of the constructed association between opposition to the royal policies, seditious political theory and the malignant influence of preaching.²² Yet Parr's exposition, which predated Knight's notorious sermon, reveals that the associations were already being made in response to the opposition, and

¹⁷ Parr's *Plaine Exposition* was entered in the register for Samuel Man on 20 Sept. 1621. Arber, *TR*, iv., p. 21. For a lengthy discussion of Knight's case see Shami, *John Donne*, pp. 36-74; see also Clegg, *PC*, pp. 85, 169.

¹⁸ Abbot and prelates to the Privy Council, 22 May 1622, SPD 14/130, fos. 137-139.

¹⁹ For example, in 1622 the clergyman Matthew Nicholas desired a copy of Pareus's commentary on the Romans, which he later requested should be sent safely. *CSPD*, x., pp. 411, 421.

²⁰ SPD 14/130, fos. 137-139.

²¹ James to Oxford University, 24 Apr. 1622, SPD 14/129, fo. 97.

²² Clegg, *PC*, pp. 169, 216.

independently from the government. The comments of the diarist John Rous upon the anti-court, militantly Protestant pamphlet *The Interpreter* supports this notion as he invoked the same biblical passages that Parr had done in reproving the rebellious nature of the opposition.²³ Parr's intention in publishing a commentary on this controversial biblical chapter was to reinforce subjection to magistrates in 'these declining times' and, implicitly, to rehabilitate the reputation of the Reformed religion in the same way that Paul had endeavoured to do as much for Christianity in his own age, which 'had gotten a very ill report, it being put into the eares of Emperours and Princes, that Christianity allowed not of Magistracie.'²⁴ Whilst Parr's and Knight's engagement with resistance theory reveals on one level the provocative effects of James's policy upon the expression of religiously grounded opposition, the extent to which this represented a wider trend can be questioned by an examination of some further voices in defence of the king.

II

One facet of the king's ideology that had a continuous impact upon the direction of policy throughout the reign was his commitment to peace. The Treaty of London, concluded in 1604, ended the war between England and Spain and followed only a year after James's succession to the English throne. Although there were strong economic arguments for the continuance of peace throughout the reign, it is evident from his works, and his support for the anti-duelling campaign in England, that James upheld peace as a genuine Christian principle to be glorified in the place of war. He made this explicit in his speech to the Parliament in 1604 by uniting himself personally with the peace he brought to England upon his succession, both internationally by ending the Spanish war, and domestically through uniting the two kingdoms of England and Scotland under one crown.²⁵

²³ Cf. BL Additional MS 28640, Diary of Rev. John Rous, fo. 123 and Parr, *Plaine Exposition*, pp. 10, 29. Both cite Pro. 24:21 'My sonne, feare thou the Lord, and the king: and medle not with them that are giuen to change.' Both Parr and Rous use 'seditious' to understand 'them that are giuen to change'; and Eccl. 10:20 'Curse not the king, no not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber: for a bird of the aire shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.'

²⁴ Parr, *Plaine Exposition*, sig. A3, p. 1.

²⁵ James VI and I, *The Workes of the most High and Mightie Prince, James by the Grace of God, King of Great Britaine, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith &c* (London, 1616), pp. 486-

An anti-duelling tract entitled *The Peace-Maker or Great Brittaines Blessing* was published anonymously with royal licence in 1618, and comprises a brief discourse on peace and honour that tacitly promoted James's ideology for diplomacy in the face of continental war. Thomas Middleton has been identified as the author, and Gary Taylor has suggested that the playwright may have received a commission to compose the tract following the performance at court of his collaborative play with William Rowley, *The Fair Quarrel*, which investigated the honour in duelling.²⁶ Markku Peltonen has seen in the work evidence of royal support for Francis Bacon's strategy to eradicate duelling by undermining the concept of honour that it was associated with.²⁷ It exhorts the reader against succumbing to the enemies of peace through passion, exhibiting a stoical tone, and ultimately against seeking honour in fighting: 'flatter not thy soule then to her euerlasting ruine, in thinking Reputation consists in Bloudshedding.'²⁸ Whilst Peltonen's argument is solid within the sphere he is concentrating on, it seems reasonable to suggest that the popularity of the tract – that was in its third edition by 1621 – was additionally given royal assent because of its inherent implications for international peace that entirely supported James's own opinions.²⁹

In the introductory passages of *The Peace-Maker* England is upheld as the refuge from the bloody stage of continental war, under the auspices of the king of Peace who is equated with Solomon. The picture painted of Jacobean England reflects James's ambition to be recognised as *Rex Pacificus* internationally, a desire that guided his foreign policy until Charles returned from Spain.³⁰ The tract continues to judge unity as the foundation upon which all is built, admonishing that those who 'in the madnesse of thy bloud, attemptest to

487. James did not inextricably link himself to peace, pledging to go to war if forced 'either for the reparation of the honour of the Kingdom, or else by necessitie for the weale and preservation of the same.' p. 487.

²⁶ Gary Taylor, 'Middleton, Thomas (bap. 1580, d. 1627)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn 2006, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18682>, accessed 4 Jan 2007].

²⁷ Markku Peltonen, 'Francis Bacon, the Earl of Northampton, and the Jacobean Anti-duelling Campaign', *HJ*, 44 (2001), 1-28.

²⁸ [Thomas Middleton], *The Peace-Maker or Great Brittaines Blessing* (London, 1618), p. 31.

²⁹ James Doelman, *King James I and the Religious Culture of England* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 89-92.

³⁰ William B. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge, 1997). Patterson adds a more spiritual emphasis to the traditional concept of Jacobean foreign policy – essentially a politic balancing act on James's behalf between the leading Catholic and Protestant powers on the Continent – by outlining James's efforts and conviction for a reunion of the divided churches.

destroy Vnitie... seekest to destroy that which Heaven and Earth is sustained by.’³¹ Whilst the warning in its immediate context is most relevant to those fighting private combats, the destruction of unity through violence and the consequent collapse of order that this passage alludes to could have been equally well applied to those seeking to fight on the continent when the tract was republished in 1619, and again in 1621. The concept of unity and stability through the maintenance of peace had always been part of James’s governmental practice. However, in sponsoring the publication of *The Peace Maker* James was publicly promoting his ideology as the calls for a military solution to the crisis on the continent rang ever more loudly within England.

A moderate work of concordant theology that promoted peace and unity within the state was published in 1622 and assumes a position on kingly authority in line with that of James. Thomas Adams’s *Eirenopolis: The Citie of Peace* has been classed as one of the Church of England clergyman’s significant body of sermons; however, this is unlikely to be the case, suggesting added significance to the publication of the work in 1622.³² In contrast to the publication of many of Adams’s sermons, the title-page of *Eirenopolis* bears no reference to its status as a sermon, or the location at which it was preached, nor does it originally cite a verse of biblical text, which the remainder of the work is committed to explaining.³³ Furthermore, in the preface to the reader Adams himself makes no reference to its origination as a sermon, which he does in sermons elsewhere, and instead describes the work as a ‘Tractate’ addressing the disturbers of *Pax Politica*: civil peace.³⁴ It can therefore be suggested that this

³¹ Middleton, *The Peace-Maker*, p. 34

³² See J. Sears McGee, ‘On Misidentifying Puritans: The Case of Thomas Adams’, *Albion*, 30 (1998), 401-418, 412. McGee identifies the work as a sermon, and misdates it to 1630. William Mulder cites *Eirenopolis* as Adams’s best known figure sermon. William Mulder, ‘Style and the Man: Thomas Adams, Prose Shakespeare of Puritan Divines’, *The Harvard Theological Review*, 48 (1955), 129-152, 149.

³³ Cf. Thomas Adams, *The Barren Tree* (London, 1623), *The Devils Banket* (London, 1614) and *The Gallants Burden* (London, 1614). In Adams’s *Workes* the text 2. Cor. 13:11 ‘Liue in Peace, and the God of loue and Peace shall be with you’ prefaces *Eirenopolis*, which is presumably why it has been classed as a sermon to date. This text is taken from the main body of the tract, which uses the command of the verse to explore the reasons for, and possibility of, living in peace. Thomas Adams, *The Workes of Thomas Adams, being the Summe of his Sermons, Meditations, and other Divine and Morall Discourses* (London, 1630), p. 995.

³⁴ Thomas Adams, *Eirenopolis: The Citie of Peace* (London, 1622), sig. A4. For an example of his in-text references to sermons see the preface and dedication in Adams, *The Barren Tree*.

work is instead part of the smaller body of Adams's 'other divine and moral discourses.'³⁵

Adams's Calvinist, if not puritan, outlook coloured his opinions against the wisdom of the Spanish marriage.³⁶ The dedication of some of his works, including his 1630 compilation, to William Herbert, earl of Pembroke, suggests a level of agreement with the anti-Spanish, international Protestant faction that Pembroke represented in the early 1620s. Additionally, Adams's other works and sermons demonstrate this viewpoint, particularly the 1624 sermon *The Temple*, in which Adams discussed Solomon's love of idolatrous women in clear reference to the pursuit of a Catholic bride.³⁷ Yet, despite the clear anti-Catholicism penetrating his works, including *Eirenopolis*, the tract maintains a vision of state that would meet royal approval and contributed to the literature supporting James's pacific policies, therefore presenting an example of the vague and permeable boundaries dictating factions during the Spanish match.

In the course of describing the city, which is paralleled with London, Adams used the natural and politic body analogy to enunciate his perception of unity as the foundation of an ideal state. His allusion to the city walls as representing Unity consolidates this view, and in a clear exhortation towards obedience and loyalty, Adams stated 'he that doth not what he can to mainetaine the walles doth what he can to betray the Citie'³⁸, tacitly classing disobedience as treason. He presented a Jamesian theory of sovereignty in his discussion upon the city's governor, stating that 'God is an invisible king, the King is a visible god,'³⁹ whom all must obey, and judged hereditary succession as the best form of monarchy.

However, the clearest message that Adams delivered with the work is that of the blessing of peace that England had enjoyed since the accession of the king who 'hath shut the rustie door of Ianus Temple.'⁴⁰ To further demonstrate the

³⁵ Adams, *Workes* (title page). Another example of this category is Thomas Adams, *Diseases of the Soule a Discourse, Divine, Morall, and Physicall* (London, 1616).

³⁶ Until recently challenged by McGee, Adams has been rather straightforwardly viewed as puritan in his religious position. McGee, 'On Misidentifying Puritans.'

³⁷ J. Sears McGee, 'Adams, Thomas (1583-1652)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn 2006, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/131>, accessed 5 Jan 2007].

³⁸ Adams, *Eirenopolis*, p. 36.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

advantages of maintaining peace, Adams dramatically painted a picture of war, stating that England saw

no rotting in Dungeons, no ruining of Monuments, no swelling the Channels with blood, no fiering of Cities, no Rapes of Virgines, no dashing of Babes against the stones, nor casting them as they droppe from their Mothers wombs, into their Mothers flames.⁴¹

The graphic images that Adams presented with this passage create a premonitory tone matching that of the entire tract that contrasted the happy state of peace with the horrors of war. The vision could be appropriated and applied to England and the continent respectively, thus serving as a lesson to those who disturbed peace both domestically and advocated foreign war. Whilst Adams's anti-papal sentiments prevented him from encouraging the Spanish marriage negotiations, it did not detract from his ideology regarding regal authority or lead him to an endorsement of military action against the Catholic powers and an encouragement of questioning the king. It was perhaps his commitment to obedience and harmony that motivated the publication of this discourse upon peace in 1622, in order to counter the deafening chorus of opposition voices that frequently couched their criticism in a patriotic tone of allegiance.

III

The worrying implications posed by the royal policies for the unity of religious practice, and the more general welfare of the Reformed religion internationally, uncovered a divergence of opinion between James and his Protestant subjects on what was in the best interest of the commonwealth. The commitment to defending such interests thus shaped much of the opposition into an expression of patriot opinion: the voice of the true subject. In espousing a view that highlighted the divorce between the king's policies and the welfare of the commonwealth, however, critics were open to the charge of disobedience and disloyalty, and could be banded together as an example of puritan separatism.⁴²

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.171.

⁴² For the charges of dissent and rebellion that were levelled at critics of crown policy see Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 29-32. See also Michael Questier, 'Catholic Loyalty in Early Stuart

Therefore, the opposition literature is often characterised by attempts to negotiate the contentions inherent in voicing opposition by presenting its petitions, criticisms and entreaties as the expressions of loyal subjects.

One central way of achieving this was to contrast the care and obedience of Protestant subjects with the notorious political theories and practices of Catholics.⁴³ This pragmatic manipulation of a confessional profile is revealed in a 1622 anonymous consideration of the proposed marriage. The tract's main concern is to refute the possible advantages of the match, and articulate as many reasons again in opposition to it, which it does with an unreserved hostility towards Spain, Catholicism and the pope in particular. The short work espouses a resoundingly Reformed understanding of international confessional politics, whereby the eldest adopted son of Rome (the Spanish king) together with the pope were seen as aiming at universal domination and conversion.⁴⁴ In maintaining the position of the true and loyal subject, the author happily exploited the alien and treacherous nature of Catholic subjects who owe their first allegiance to a foreign enemy. Without any perception of hypocrisy, the tract embellishes the picture of Catholic disloyalty by invoking the spectre of Jesuit political theory and the example of its consequent enactment upon Henri IV, 'for at these things the Papistes are excellent, [and] can never wante instrumentes for theyr divelish Enterprizes.'⁴⁵

Thomas Alured's letter to Buckingham in June 1620, which earned the author a spell in the Fleet, was widely circulated in manuscript form and its notoriety is confirmed through John Reynolds's reference to its suppression in his anti-match tract, *Vox Coeli*.⁴⁶ In this request to the then marquis of Buckingham to speak out against the match, Alured employed a range of biblical

England', *EHR*, 123 (2008), 1132-1165, 1154-1159; Cust, 'Public Man', pp. 136-137. For a contemporary attack on the categorisation of 'the puritan' as a political threat, who should instead be viewed as the archetypal virtuous citizen, see *The Interpreter* (1622), pp. 2-7.

⁴³ Reciprocal accusations of the inherency of sedition and rebellion within their respective confessions had long been a feature of polemical exchange between Protestants (of many denominations) and Roman Catholics. See Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 515-517.

⁴⁴ See, for example, BL Egerton MS 783, pp. 2, 10-15

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 21.

⁴⁶ [John Reynolds], *Vox Coeli* (1624), sig. A4. See also David Colclough, *Freedom of Speech in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 109; Simon Healy, 'Alured, Thomas (bap. 1583, d. 1638)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/70628>, accessed 26 March 2009]

and historical parallels to demonstrate the grim outlook for England following Charles's marriage to both a Catholic and a Spaniard. Keenly aware of the dangerous ground upon which he was treading, Alured exonerated his presumption in giving counsel as it was well-intended and concerned the general good of the country.⁴⁷ Furthermore, he offered a spiritual justification for the widespread concern over the match negotiations, concluding that 'as every true Christian hath an interest in the marriage of the kings son of heaven, soe every good subject hath an interest in the marriage, and well fare of the kings sonn, here on earth'⁴⁸ and so indicating that the public interest was not a manifestation of disobedience. Alured's use of language worked throughout to distinguish himself, as a representative of the true, loyal view, from the alien and threatening Catholics. The traditional suspicion of the latter confession is quickly alluded to as Alured purveyed his hope for a divine prevention of Romish mischief, followed by a 'triall [of] theire affections'.⁴⁹ The assassinations of Henri III and Henri IV of France are subsequently called upon to reveal the likely answer to any such trial: if they should murder these French kings only upon suspicion of favouring the Protestants, 'how doe they burne in malice ag[ains]t him that hath soe professed him selfe'.⁵⁰ Both this letter and the manuscript tract thus reveal how some protesters negotiated the reversal of political allegiance that the religious implications of the king's policies had created.

In tracing some of these sentiments, however, Cogswell's tight focus on the religious politics ties political opposition manifestly to the sway of religious policy.⁵¹ Although Cogswell recounts that much opposition literature attacked the king's conduct, and the prerogative that entitled him to behave as he did, his broad-based exploration of the political thought expressed through such literature allows him to perceive the opposition as a creation of the match politics rather than as the match allowing an expression of many existing, but underlying, concerns and opinions. By delving deeper into the views on political authority

⁴⁷ For a discussion upon the ways in which published tracts negotiated the view that such counsel-giving methods were illicit and tended towards the incitement of mass opinion see Peter Lake, 'The Politics of 'Popularity' and the Public Sphere: the 'Monarchical Republic' of Elizabeth I defends Itself', in L&P, *PS*, pp. 59-94, pp. 86-88.

⁴⁸ Alured to Buckingham, [10] Jun 1620, SPD 14/115, fo. 102.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, fo. 102.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, fo. 102.

⁵¹ Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 50-52.

and its origins we can examine the wider basis of the existing political culture that was pulled into the public domain by the politics of the match.

To return briefly to the pieces examined above, in probing beyond the convenient assignation of resistance theory to the Catholics, we can identify additional political concerns. The anonymous manuscript used the example of Henri IV's murder to deliver a stark warning for James to heed, lest 'too late Repentaunce shoulde conclude with losse of bloode yea of life.'⁵² James's policies were endangering the Reformed religion through both the domestic threat of a Catholic bride and the international consequences of his failure to assist Frederick and Elizabeth. In this context, the reference to Henri's assassination in an advisory tone suggests the king's actions and public opinion had diverged to such an extent that the author considered there were sufficient grounds for serious resistance. Yet, in articulating the concerns about the recent failure of parliament to provide the counsel that was so desperately needed, the author deferred to Tacitus's authority in claiming that no prince can hold all wisdom within himself.⁵³ The author's appeal to the political axioms of Tacitus in reaction to the broken channels of communication between the king and his subjects, which had been blocked since 1614, contextualises the tract within the culture of anti-court critique that spanned religious confession.⁵⁴

Alured's controversial letter also exhibits evidence to suggest the author similarly engaged with contemporary criticism of court corruption, where attacks upon the king's favourites often carried an implicit assault upon the royal prerogative.⁵⁵ This mode of critique drew upon the principles of classical humanist philosophy in advocating the responsibility of the virtuous citizen to provide counsel and the duty of the prince to receive it. It employed classical, biblical and recent historical example as precedents throughout a range of media, including drama, poetry and histories. Alured's letter participates in this discourse in his effort to persuade Buckingham to make use of his elevated

⁵² BL Eg. 783, p. 2.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁵⁴ This culture is further examined below. See ch. 3-6.

⁵⁵ Curtis Perry, "If Proclamations Will Not Serve": The Late Manuscript Poetry of James I and the Culture of Libel', in D. Fischlin and M. Fortier (eds.), *Royal Subjects: Essays on the Writings of James VI and I* (Detroit, 2002), pp. 205-232, pp. 215-217; Michelle O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation': Jacobean Spenserians and Early Stuart Political Culture* (Oxford, 2000), p. 196. See below, ch. 3, p. 114.

position and recognise himself as God's instrument. The letter conveys a resigned attitude to the inevitability of favourites that reveals a twofold understanding of kingship: 'for as they comand nations as they are kings: yett are they sub[jec]t to theire passions as they are men'.⁵⁶ The people's expectations had thus fallen to Buckingham in the hope that he would avoid the temptation that had seduced such of his predecessors as Somerset, and perceive that his

owne fortunes are not for your owne ends alone, or for any ill [e]nd at all, wee haue lately seene the ends of th[e]se whoe haue proposed such ends, for promotion neyther comes from the east nor the west as a Casuall thing; but as gods prouidence extends to the fall of a sparrow, soe much mo[re] to the rising of a seruant.⁵⁷

In this understanding, Alured proposed that Buckingham's rise and dominance was an integral part of England's delivery from the spiritual dearth and famine that threatened it, paralleling the marquis with the biblical figures of Joseph and Esther. Yet, in having recourse to Buckingham by way of a private letter in order to make the people's grievances known to the king, Alured highlighted one of the significant problems with James's style of government: the political impotency of the virtuous citizen.

One royal response that immediately reflects the widespread engagement with political ideas about authority and government is the well-known poem 'The Wiper of the people's teares / The drier vp of doubttes and feares', purported to be by James himself.⁵⁸ Allusions within the text indicate that James was answering a libel that attacked his conduct of government.⁵⁹ Therefore, the

⁵⁶ SPD 14/115, fo. 103.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, fo. 103v.

⁵⁸ Full text of the poem in James Craigie, 'The Last Poems of James VI', *Scottish Historical Review*, 29 (1950), 134-142. Subsequent references to this text. On the authorship of the poem see Alastair Bellany and Andrew McRae (eds.), 'Early Stuart Libels: An Edition of Poetry from Manuscript Sources', *Early Modern Literary Studies Text Series 1* (2005) <<http://purl.oclc.org/emls/texts/libels/>> Nv1; BL Harl. 389 fo. 287; Chamberlain to Carleton, 23 Jan. 1623, SPD 14/137, fo. 52.

⁵⁹ Craigie suggests the poem was a response to those who criticised James's 1620 and 1621 proclamations against licentious speech, and in particular to a set of verses that lent James's poem its opening lines. Through additional manuscript evidence Bellany and McRae have cited one particular libel which this poem may have been answering, 'The Comon's teares'; sadly no copy of this libel has been located. 'Early Stuart Libels', Nv1. See also Perry, 'Late Manuscript Poetry', pp. 212-217; Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 31-32.

aggressive defence of royal authority displayed in this poem has been employed to demonstrate both the increasingly candid expression of subversive political ideas through manuscript libels and the king's recognition of the danger such a medium posed.⁶⁰ James's elucidation of the nature of kingship presented a familiar picture of his absolute authority as derived from God. He closely guarded the *arcana imperii*, reprimanding those who would deride royal designs and dare to offer unsolicited counsel.⁶¹ The poem negates the need for counsel at all, saying of kings: 'They need no helpers in their choice / their best advice is their own voice' (ll. 162-163). Thus the king reminded his subjects that they were too shallow to treat of kingly matters and should remember their obedience unto him. As James's delineation of kingship functions as a defence against the libel, the poem is revealing in its indication of what the opposition verses were exploring.⁶² The king's exclamation, 'Oh what a calling were a king / if he must give or take no thing / but such as you shall to him bring' (ll. 43-44), suggests that the vision of monarchical authority provided in the libel was of a significantly more limited nature than James could countenance.⁶³ Whilst manuscript libel certainly offered a more covert medium through which contentious political ideas could be discussed, it becomes apparent that many of these ideas penetrated through much of the opposition literature that is often read as another Protestant attack on policy. Such evidence builds upon the recent libel scholarship to reveal that the diverse and explorative political culture identified in verse can be more widely applied.⁶⁴

Classed as anti-Spanish, anti-Catholic and driven by an ideology of divine providence, a collection of oppositional pamphlets produced during the early 1620s are often mined for examples of the Protestant response to the match.⁶⁵ Chief amongst the pamphleteers examined is Thomas Scott, the rector

⁶⁰ Perry, 'Late Manuscript Poetry', pp. 212-217. The value of manuscript libel as a window into a more expressive and critical political culture in this period has been widely recognised in recent scholarship and is discussed in more detail below, ch. 2, pp. 65-72.

⁶¹ See ll. 23-5, 78-80, 154-61; Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 31-32.

⁶² Perry, 'Late Manuscript Poetry', p. 211.

⁶³ Cf. Perry, 'Late Manuscript Poetry', p. 214.

⁶⁴ See for example Alastair Bellany, "'Raylinge Rymes and Vaunting Verse': Libellous Politics in Early Stuart England, 1603-1628", in K. Sharpe and P. Lake (eds.), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Basingstoke, 1994), pp. 285-310; Andrew McRae, 'The Literary Culture of Early Stuart Libelling', *Modern Philology*, 97 (2000), 364-392.

⁶⁵ Louis B. Wright, 'Propaganda against James I's "Appeasement" of Spain', *HLQ*, 6 (1943), 149-92; Anderson, 'James I and the Propagandists', 613-615.

of St Saviour's in Norwich, whose controversial works resulted in his flight to the United Provinces in 1620 where he lived, preaching and pamphleteering, until his assassination in 1626. Scott wrote and collaborated upon a wealth of works against the match and in favour of fighting for the Reformed cause.⁶⁶ His sensational debut, *Vox Populi or Newes from Spayne*, constitutes a widely studied example of literature that combined an attack on policy with constitutional thought. In *Vox Populi*, Scott uncovered his perception of parliament as a crucial component in government, and held that the marriage of Charles, as a public person, was 'of crucial importance and quite legitimate interest to the whole Commonwealth.'⁶⁷ In seeking to redress the emphasis on the influence of anti-popery and puritanism upon Scott's political thought, that has dominated interpretations of his works, Peltonen has situated Scott's numerous pamphlets within a tradition of classical humanist thought.⁶⁸ Whilst this approach tends to supplant one influence for another, rather than weaving an understanding that reflects the more nuanced composition of political ideas, Peltonen is right to recognise the broader basis from which some of the opposition literature originated.⁶⁹

David Colclough has judged another familiar tract in the 'canon' of the Protestant opposition, as also informed by such classical humanist ideas. He perceives that John Reynolds's *Vox Coeli* was motivated as much by anxieties about the correct and free exercise of authority as it was by the threatening direction of policy.⁷⁰ The tract is laid out as a royal symposium in Heaven

⁶⁶ A number of Scott's works published before and during 1624, along with several pieces by other authors, are included in *The Workes of the Most Famous and Reverend Divine Mr. Thomas Scot Bachelier in Diuinitie. Sometimes Preacher in Norwich* (Utrecht, 1624). See below, ch. 6, pp. 216-220.

⁶⁷ Peter Lake, 'Constitutional Consensus and Puritan Opposition in the 1620s: Thomas Scott and the Spanish match,' *HJ*, 25 (1982), 805-825, 811.

⁶⁸ Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 229-70. For a discussion of Peltonen's reading of Scott's republicanism in relation to his conception of the United Provinces see below, ch. 6, pp. 235-237. Cf. Lake, 'Constitutional consensus' and Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, pp. 102-119.

⁶⁹ In examining the ideas on free speech employed in Scott's pamphlets, David Colclough recognises the dual importance of the religious and classical humanist influences upon Scott's thought, noting 'it would be impossible – and foolhardy – to attempt to separate out these two discourses as if they were useful resources that Scott drew on for argumentative effect: together his pamphlets make a strong argument that the values he promulgates hold together naturally.' Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, pp. 102-103.

⁷⁰ Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, p. 110. See also Clegg, *PC*, p. 75; Martina Mittag, 'National Identity and the Sovereign in Anti-Spanish Pamphlets 1558-1625', *Costerus*, 137 (2001), 109-130. Mittag situates *Vox Coeli* within a 'democratising' trend of pamphlets, although mistakenly

between England's recent monarchs, who discuss the various implications of the match with Spain. But the dedication of the work to parliament, and the association of Queen Mary's marriage to Philip II with the royal prerogative and non-parliamentary assent reveal Reynolds's political sympathies.⁷¹ Claiming to have composed the work some three years before, Reynolds explained that he had waited to publish it until 1624 for fear of governmental retribution.⁷² His patience was not rewarded, however, as Reynolds was soon hauled before the Privy Council and imprisoned on account of both *Vox Coeli* and his equally critical tract of the same year, *Votivae Angliae*.⁷³ Despite attempts to promote the loyal and patriotic duty behind the publication of such tracts, their inflammatory potential contributed to the growing concern over the populist character of the match opposition, which consequently afforded James's Catholic subjects with an opportunity to exploit the reversed association of treason with puritan opposition.

IV

The discovery of the Gunpowder Plot in November 1605 reinforced the supposed link between treason and Catholicism, and prompted a new statute the following summer to determine the civil obedience of James's Catholic subjects. The oath of allegiance required recusants to attest their loyalty to the crown and deny the civil authority of the pope over the king by renouncing the papal deposing power: a doctrine that assumed limitations upon James's regal prerogative, and in the king's opinion, gave free licence to the liberated subjects of a deposed king to kill him.⁷⁴ Taking the oath became a particularly difficult choice for English

attributes the pamphlet to Scott in a long-established, but erroneous, tradition. See Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 290-291. Cf. Anderson, 'James I and the Propagandists', 622, who likewise views Scott as the author.

⁷¹ Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, p. 110.

⁷² Reynolds, *Vox Coeli*, sig. A4.

⁷³ Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 290-291; Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, pp. 110-111.

⁷⁴ The oath required the swearers to testify: 'That I doe from my heart abhorre, detest, and abiure as impious and hereticall, this damnable doctrine, and position, That Princes which bee excommunicated or deprived by the Pope, may bee deposed or murdered by their subiects, or any other whatsoever.' [Richard Mocket], *God and the King*, (Cambridge, 1616), p. 23. This was a controversial statement as, although the papal deposing power was not certified Catholic doctrine, it questioned the authority of the pope and intimated the heretical nature of papist doctrine. Indeed, both Cardinal Bellarmine, and the English Jesuit, Robert Parsons, identified that the oath renounced the deposing power and tyrannicide 'as if the two went hand in hand', H. Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State c. 1540-1630* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 323. For contrasting analyses of the oath as stemming from a secular concern to test

Catholics following its condemnation by two papal breves in 1606 and 1607. The intellectual debate that the oath provoked, along with the assassination of Henri IV in 1610, reinforced popular Protestant perceptions of the Roman Catholic Church's position upon regicide, and addressed issues of authority and treason within confessional boundaries.⁷⁵

In their efforts to deny the papal deposing power, defenders of the oath of allegiance derived civil authority from natural law, theoretically disallowing anyone the right of deposition as authority was granted directly to the ruler by God.⁷⁶ This argument denied that sovereignty was located with the people to transfer as they desired, often aligning the power of kings with that of fathers, who had natural authority over the family. The duty of obedience of the subjects towards the sovereign ruler was also explained through natural law, and supported with scriptural evidence. James I, in his own defence *Triplici Nodo, Triplex Cuneus*, cited the New Testament command to give unto Caesar what was his, and stated: 'for how the profession of the naturall Allegiance of Subiects to their Prince can be directly opposite to the faith and saluation of soules, is...farre beyond my simple reading in Divinitie'⁷⁷, thereby reprimanding the charge that taking the oath required a renunciation of faith, as his Catholic opponents, and the papal breve implied.

The king's ideology informs the anonymous defence of the oath of allegiance entitled *God and the King*. It was endorsed by royal proclamation and is wholly representative of James's own views concerning authority.⁷⁸ In justifying and explaining the several parts of the oath, the argument within the

Catholic loyalty or a covert effort to effect religious persecution see Johann P. Sommerville, 'Papalist Political Thought and the Controversy over the Jacobean Oath of Allegiance', in E. Shagan (ed.) *Catholics and the Protestant Nation* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 162-184; Michael C. Questier, 'Loyalty, Religion and State Power in Early Modern England: English Romanism and the Jacobean Oath of Allegiance', *HJ*, 40 (1997), 311-329; Questier, 'Catholic Loyalty'.

⁷⁵ It was believed that Henri's assassinator, François Ravaillac, had been inspired by the Jesuit Juan Mariana's *De Rege et Regis Institutione* (1598) as the text allowed for the deposition of a tyrant. Following Henri's assassination the parlement of Paris condemned and burnt the *De Rege* in 1610 and 1614. Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought*, p. 321.

⁷⁶ The main body of those defending the oath were Protestant including James I, members of the clergy such as Lancelot Andrewes and John Donne, and foreign Protestants including Pierre du Moulin and Isaac Casaubon. There were some Catholic supporters of the oath, however, such as the Benedictine Thomas Preston and the Gallicised Scot, William Barclay. See Johann P. Sommerville, 'Jacobean Political Thought and the Controversy over the Oath of Allegiance' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Cambridge, 1981), pp. 138-188 for an overview of the key contributors and their arguments.

⁷⁷ King James VI and I, *Political Writings*, ed. J. P. Sommerville (Cambridge, 1994), p. 93.

⁷⁸ Glenn Burgess, *British Political Thought, 1500-1660* (Basingstoke, 2009), pp. 149-152.

book is reduced down to two pillars of ideology: that the king has no superior except God, and that the bond between a subject and a prince is inviolable to the extent that even in the event of tyranny 'the onely meanes we [the people] have to appease their [tyrants'] fury is serious repentance for our sinnes, which have brought this chastisement vpon vs.'⁷⁹ The international context of theological debate accounts to an extent for the uncompromisingly articulated 'absolutist' tone of this work, as James fought by pen to justify his ultimate authority within England against the threat of papal deposition and endorsement of tyrannicide that this was perceived to entail. Yet it is also clear that the book reflected the basic tenets of James's ideology in all contexts, and his command for its use in educating the young underwrites the widely applicable character of such works of religio-political theory.⁸⁰

As Charles left for Spain and the possibility that England would have a Spanish princess appeared ever more likely, Catholics could capitalise on the reversal of allegiance and pass the new 'litmus test of loyalty', defined as support for the king's policies, with 'flying colours'.⁸¹ The probable toleration clauses that would be part of the dynastic alliance resulted in a partial revival of Catholicism: at court a catholic circle can be identified with the Lords Vaux, Windsor and Morley; the duke of Buckingham's wife and mother openly converted; and the newly appointed bishop of Chalcedon was said to have paraded around the Midlands in full Episcopal attire.⁸² In such an atmosphere, rumours of Charles's imminent conversion in Spain became rife, prompting Irish Catholics to taunt Protestants with the quip 'you have a king, but we have a prince.'⁸³ The examinations of two men in July 1620, when the negotiations were still at an early stage, reveal that the potential advantages the match offered to Catholics were well-perceived. James Bryndely, a recusant, was accused of

⁷⁹ It has been attributed to Archbishop Abbot's chaplain, Richard Mocket, although firm evidence to support this is lacking. Mocket, *God and the King*, p. 84.

⁸⁰ James VI and I, *By the King. A Proclamation for the Confirmation of all Authorised Orders, Tending to the Vniuersal Publishing and Teaching, of a Certaine Religious Treatise, Compiled by Authority, and Intituled by the Name of God and the King. 8 November 1615* (London, 1615). The proclamation refers to the original Latin edition. It was translated into English and published the following year. Johann P. Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology in England, 1603-1640* (London, 1986), p. 12. Cf. Glenn Burgess, *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution: An Introduction to English Political Thought, 1603-1642* (Basingstoke, 1992), pp. 135-136.

⁸¹ Michael C. Questier (ed.), *Stuart Dynastic Policy and Religious Politics, 1621-1625*, Camden Society, Fifth Series, 35 (Cambridge, forthcoming 2009), p. 32.

⁸² Cogswell, *BR*, p. 37.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-50.

telling one Francis Poker that if the Spanish match were to go ahead religion in England would change, to which Poker was purported to have expressed the hope that they would see Mass in Ticknall church before Michaelmas day.⁸⁴

The outcry from the Commons, the pulpits and the presses during the time of the match reflects this relaxation of the penal laws that accompanied the marriage negotiations. In a letter to Sir Dudley Carleton in early 1621, John Chamberlain reported that the chief issue in hand in the Parliament was the state of religion, specifically the recusants ‘which being so multiplied *by connivance*, yt is more than time to put the statutes in execution that are already in force.’⁸⁵ The infamous letter sent to James in 1623, falsely attributed to Archbishop Abbot, defines the English Protestant position well: the letter urges James to think through the consequences of his toleration that risks the reestablishment of ‘that most damnable abhominable [and] hereticall doctrine of the Church of Roome the whore of Babilon’, an idolatrous and superstitious religion, which if allowed to proliferate would bring the wrath of God upon the country that had for so long been blessed by divine providence. Furthermore, the letter insinuates that James would have to counter parliament in order to enact toleration, ‘vnles yo[u]r ma[jes]tie: will lett your subiects see that yow will take unto yo[u]rselfe a liberty to throw downe the laws of the land at yo[u]r pleasure.’⁸⁶ Although the letter was not from the archbishop himself, the sentiments were not far removed from his own.⁸⁷

As we have seen, the publications intent on stirring up popular anti-Catholic sentiment invoked the long-standing disloyal reputation of Catholicism, which could be further augmented by associating the threat they were seen to pose with that of Spain, a country embedded in the national memory as duplicitous and determined to subjugate England both temporally and spiritually.⁸⁸ In answer, pamphlets rolled off the presses from Douai and St Omer, including Richard Broughton’s *English Protestants Plea* (1621) that

⁸⁴ The examinations of Francis Poker and James Bryndley, 7 Jul. 1620, SPD 14/116, fo. 14.

⁸⁵ Chamberlain to Carleton, 17 Feb. 1620, SPD 14/119, fo. 215. Italics mine.

⁸⁶ BL Additional MS 52585, fo. 19.

⁸⁷ In 1613 Abbot purportedly remarked to the king that if he granted toleration he would become the betrayer, not the defender of the faith. Thomas Fuller, *The Church History of Britain from the Birth of Jesus Christ until 1648*, ed. J. S. Brewer (Oxford, 6 vols, 1845), v., p. 548.

⁸⁸ See for example Thomas Scott, *Vox Populi* (1620); Thomas Gataker, *A Sparke toward the Kindling of Sorrow for Sion* (London, 1621).

addressed the Parliament then in session, condemning the persecution of Catholics and particularly the ‘anti-monarchical puritanism’ infecting the Commons, who prevented James from establishing the toleration suggested in his 1604 speech.⁸⁹ The work asserts the truth of the Catholic faith, demonstrates a clear lack of tolerance for certain Protestants, denouncing John Knox as a ‘traitor to God’, and outlines the tenuous basis for Protestantism as evidenced by the lack of learned divines to answer Catholic works.⁹⁰ This political atmosphere engendered by the match politics therefore certainly enabled English Catholics to ‘posture as supporters of the Stuart court’s foreign policy,’ in the hope of achieving a much coveted toleration.⁹¹ That they ‘found loyalty convenient’ in the 1620s, however, did not of course suggest a complete Catholic subscription to James’s understanding of royal authority.⁹²

V

John Floyd’s 1619 *Deus et Rex* comprises an explicit statement of English Catholic thought in reply to the royally sponsored *God and the King*.⁹³ Floyd made sure to illustrate the sedition inherent in Protestant political theory that contrasted with the conservatism and loyalty of Catholicism, assigning the slur of democracy to the former, and so partaking in a well-established Catholic tradition that attributed popular resistance theories to radical Protestants, whilst promoting the essentially conservative facets of Catholic theory.⁹⁴ However, the tract is no appeal to James’s vanity. In ‘a skilful Latin parody’ of the royal tract, Floyd highlighted the equal danger to princes arising from the form of absolute authority advocated in Mocket’s *God and the King*.⁹⁵ Floyd thereby continued to develop his presentation of the origins and nature of political society, allowing earthly limitations on kingly power, advocating the supremacy of priests, and permitting resistance as a last resort ‘for crymes exorbitant which tend to the

⁸⁹ Questier, *Stuart Dynastic Policy*, p. 27.

⁹⁰ Richard Broughton, *The English Protestants Plea, and Petition for English Priests and Papists*, (1621), p. 10.

⁹¹ Questier, ‘Catholic Loyalism’, 1156.

⁹² Sommerville, ‘Papalist Political Thought’, p. 178.

⁹³ Mocket, *God and the King*, pp. 9, 13.

⁹⁴ Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, pp. 515-517; John N. King, ‘Religious Writing’, in A. F. Kinney (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1500-1600* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 104-131, p. 108; see a further discussion upon this trend below, ch. 6, pp. 232-233.

⁹⁵ Peter Milward, *Religious Controversies of the Jacobean Age* (London, 1978), p. 118; Burgess, *British Political Thought*, p. 151.

destruction of the whole state.’⁹⁶ Furthermore, the tract establishes the concept of natural rights and liberties that the portrayal of monarchy in *God and the King* does not allow the subjects to defend. Floyd decried their condition as worse than that of slaves if no self-defence were permitted, should the king even send all to their deaths.⁹⁷ It is clear that Floyd was not advocating popular rule in this tract, but his endorsement of papal deposing power aligns him with the ‘treacherous’ subjects James’s oath intended to seek out.⁹⁸ This comprehensive statement of Jesuit thought was translated into English in 1620, and published at the English College press in St Omer. The initial masquerade that promised a discourse revealing Catholic subjects’ allegiance to James must have only contributed to the association of theorising Catholics with monarchomach ideology.

In 1623 the English Catholic priest Matthew Pattenson employed such techniques in his *The Image of Bothe Churches* in order to take polemical advantage of the match politics and to augment the recently improved toleration of Catholicism, as he urged Charles to ‘be a *Mecaenas* to religion, (yf not to geue it priuilege, yet to get it libertie...).’⁹⁹ Composed following Charles’s departure to Spain, and before his return, the work views the marriage as a *fait accompli* and consequently presents itself almost as an epithalamion. But, with direct reference to inflammatory tracts, such as Thomas Alured’s notorious letter to Buckingham and Thomas Scott’s *Vox Populi*, the tract outlines its express purpose to ‘stopp the mouth of Polipragmus, and draw this flood of discourses into the right chanel, that neither the course, nor the cawse may be mistaken and that men may learn rather to obey, then dispute of *Arcana Imperij*’.¹⁰⁰ In taking his title from John Bale’s widely influential *The Image of Both Churches* (1545), Pattenson immediately uncovered the intent for his tract to function on one level as a response to the applicatory apocalyptic worldview established by Bale and

⁹⁶ John Floyd, *God and the King*, ed. D. M. Rogers, *English Recusant Literature*, 9 (Menston, 1969), p. 83.

⁹⁷ Floyd, *God and the King*, p. 19.

⁹⁸ Burgess, *British Political Thought*, p. 152.

⁹⁹ [Matthew Pattenson], *The Image of Bothe Churches, Hierusalem and Babel, Vnitie and Confusion, Obedience and Sedition* (Tournai, 1623), sig. a2v; for this trend in Catholic views more widely see Questier, ‘Catholic Loyalism’, 1154-1156.

¹⁰⁰ Pattenson, *Image of Bothe Churches*, sig. a2r-v, p. 1; Cogswell, *BR*, p. 50.

enshrined by Foxe.¹⁰¹ In response to this tradition, the lengthy volume traces the history of Protestant sedition and, like Floyd, emphasises its inherently subversive nature in manifest contrast to the loyalism of the true Catholic faith.

The prefixed extract from Samuel Daniels's Lucanic rendering of the Wars of the Roses reinforces this purpose as Pattenson can clearly be seen as attempting to exploit the populist reputation that the king attached to a perceived 'puritan' opposition.¹⁰² In the chosen extract, printing and guns are identified as the 'two fatal instruments' employed to effect civil discord. The intimated topical application of the former tool's impact is transparent: 'Sedition vnder fayr pretences sowne: / Whereby the vulgar may become so wise / That with a self presumption ouergrown / They may of deapest misteries debate, / Controule ther betters, censure acts of state.' The implicit consequence, employing 'gonnes' to 'scourge each other in so strainge a wise / As tyme or tyrants neuer could deuise', thereby underscores the association between the vocal opposition, seen as meddling in the affairs of state, and the miserable estate of civil war and strife.¹⁰³ The work exhibits familiarity with many contemporary controversialists and commentators including Jean Bodin, George Buchanan, the contemporary pamphleteer Thomas Scott and the author of the *Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos*, which book Pattenson described as the 'catechism of sedition...fitt to mantaine Rauillac.'¹⁰⁴

Pattenson's linking of the infamous Huguenot tract and Henri IV's assassinator was part of his attempt to exonerate Catholic ideology from the charge of treason by attributing seditious and influential theories to Protestants alone, which he further underlined by invoking the topical example of David Pareus. Directly linking the work of the German theologian to the Bohemian revolt, Pattenson remarked how Pareus's commentary upon Romans 13 taught that 'Subjects may depriue ther Princes, when they degenerate from a royal

¹⁰¹ For Bale's *Image of Both Churches* and its influence upon English Protestant writing see King, 'Religious Writing', pp. 107-108; John N. King, *English Reformation Literature: The Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition* (Princeton, 1982), pp. 61-64, 373, 436-438.

¹⁰² Pattenson can therefore be identified with those Catholic parties and factions that Questier has defined as posing 'as the bulwarks of the monarchy, the regime, and the state, of order, security, and authority'. Questier, *Stuart Dynastic Policy*, p. 6. See also Cust, 'Public Man'; Richard Cust, 'Prince Charles and the Second Session of the 1621 Parliament', *EHR*, 122 (2007), 427-441, 433-434.

¹⁰³ Pattenson, *Image of Bothe Churches*, sig. a4v.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 105. Pattenson identifies the author of the *Vindiciae* as Theodore Beza.

gouverne[n]t and become tyrants; o[r] yf they compel ther subiects, to Idolatrize', which Pareus 'ded ring as the... Alarum bell to Bohemia'. Approvingly, however, Pattenson could note that 'these opinions I need not condemn, and aggrauate the dainger thereof; yf it be trew, that I haue hard: that in Powles Churchyard, the fyre confuted them, and that worthilie.'¹⁰⁵ His intent was to prove the loyalty of James's Catholic subjects by emphasising the manifest correspondence in Catholic thought and royal ideology, whilst highlighting that the opposition to the Spanish match evolved from the Protestant political theories of resistance. Therefore, Pattenson's *Image of Bothe Churches* represents to an extent some of the political opportunities offered to Catholics by the perceived 'puritan' outcry against the negotiations, and underwrites the optimism with which they could view the implications of the marriage.¹⁰⁶

In order to achieve his chief motivation of presenting a moderate Catholic perception of authority, however, it was necessary for Pattenson to omit certain key areas of his political theory. Pattenson countered the arguments of Protestants confidently and with sound responses: thus, in discussing the question of whether deposition is justified if a king breaks his oath, he denounces the suggestion as 'a doctrine onlie fitt for the schools of Conspiracie.'¹⁰⁷ He then continued to claim that neither common law nor covenant binds a prince, suggesting that he held sovereignty as attached to the office, and not transferred by the people. By making specific reference to the common law and its jurisdiction over the prince, Pattenson was essentially siding with the king in the recent constitutional struggles over the royal prerogative in 1616 and 1621, and throughout the work intimated that his position reflected moderate Catholics worldwide.¹⁰⁸

Pattenson demonstrated his belief that the king has absolute temporal authority, stating 'the Crown of England is independent (for his *iura regalia*)

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 225-228.

¹⁰⁶ Questier, 'Catholic Loyalism'. See for example [Michael Du Val], *Rosa Hispani-Anglica seu Malum Punicam Angl'Hispanicum* (1622), which exalts James's commitment to peace in a lavishly flattering tone, and promotes the match as part of the king's plan to restore a united Church in Christendom. See Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 39-43; Eroulla Demetriou, 'Michael Du Val and Count Gondomar: An Approximation towards the Authorship of *The Spanish-English Rose or the English-Spanish Pomgranet*', *Sederi*, 14 (2004), 53-64.

¹⁰⁷ Pattenson, *Image of Bothe Churches*, pp. 202-203.

¹⁰⁸ Mark Fortier, 'Equity and Ideas: Coke, Ellesmere and James I', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 51 (1998), 1255-1281.

holden of no Lord, but the Lord of heauen: so it can not escheat to anie being holden of none'.¹⁰⁹ This statement alone would be sufficient to class Pattenson's concept of royal authority as ideologically synonymous with James's. However, the bracketed condition of this assertion, that it concerns the *regal* authority of the king, immediately qualifies the statement as the spiritual authority is left unmentioned. Pattenson does not explicitly discuss the spiritual superiority of the pope, but as his biographer notes, 'the book defends the Jesuits' special vow of obedience to all commands bearing on the salvation of souls, widely held to include orders to murder or depose excommunicated princes; neither king nor prince could possibly have approved it.'¹¹⁰ In rhetorically asking if the king appoints judges, who is to judge him 'or censure his counsellors of state, and *politike temporall* actions?'¹¹¹ Pattenson supported the king's position, yet implicitly intimated the existence of an earthly power who could judge his spiritual actions. Furthermore, his attempt to exonerate notorious Catholic controversialists from professing regicidal opinions continues to make problematic Pattenson's effort to pose as a Jamesian loyalist. In countering the accusation that Cardinal William taught 'men to murder princes', Pattenson can only rather weakly contrast the severity of Calvinist arguments. Where 'Goodman warrants the peopl to execut ther Princ', Allen, Pattenson claimed, 'showes what resistanc may be warranted, but incites not to resist.'¹¹² Pattenson does distance himself and the Catholic religion from the central tenets infamously propounded by Juan Mariana. Yet in a token effort to disassociate the Jesuit from the most indicting doctrines attributed to him, Mariana's 'question', we are told by Pattenson, 'was not, for killing of kings, but for killing tyrants (which is to be noted as a great differenc.)'¹¹³ Undoubtedly so, but not a difference that James would have permitted to justify deposition or resistance.¹¹⁴ *The Image of Bothe Churches* therefore demonstrates that although the match politics offered a polemical advantage to Catholics, the difficulty of the position

¹⁰⁹ Pattenson, *Image of Bothe Churches*, p. 171.

¹¹⁰ Stephen Wright, 'Pattenson, Matthew (fl. 1623)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn 2006, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21574>, accessed 5 Jan 2007].

¹¹¹ Pattenson, *Image of Bothe Churches*, p. 172. Italics mine.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 357-358.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 366.

¹¹⁴ See for example Mocket, *God and the King*, p. 84; James I, *Workes*, p. 531.

still remained in protesting loyalty to a king who perceived loyalty to lie in subscribing to his complete earthly authority.

The policies that James pursued in the 1620s certainly encouraged a broadening of political opinion within England. Increasing protestations in defence of parliamentary prerogative were met by a body of literature in defence of the king, premised on the paramount importance of loyalty and obedience. Yet the efforts to suppress the numerous modes of criticism only served to increase concern over the manner in which to express the nation's grievances, especially following the dissolution of the Parliament in 1621. Investigations into, and articulations upon, political authority in this period, as expressed through publications in verse, prose and proclamations, circulating manuscripts, and surviving sermons, were evidently tied to government policy in a reactionary way. This is particularly identifiable in the 1622 topical discussion upon Romans 13, through which we can identify how the religious implications of James's policies allowed an engagement with continental resistance theory. Yet there is also a level of caution to be applied when approaching the political thought of the match in too strictly confessional terms. The range of political languages that the match literature drew upon transcended religious affiliation and is demonstrative of an existing lively and explorative political culture that was stimulated further by the domestic crises of the 1620s. Furthermore, the varying reactions to the match question the primacy of policy as a dictating factor in deciding allegiance and conditioning political thought. Rather than defining a directly causal relationship between policy and developments in political thought, then, the following chapters will investigate how the match politics engendered differing responses that could invoke the languages, ideas and precedents dominating contemporary political culture.

Hidden Depths:

Recovering the Meaning of John Taylor's Works in Context, 1618-1624

The period from 1621 to 1624 was the most prolific so far for John Taylor as he joined many contemporaries in voicing his opinion on international events. The Thames waterman had embarked upon a literary career in 1612 and had worked consistently to popularise his name through a number of sensational publishing activities.¹ When war erupted on the continent, Taylor was quick to throw the weight of his minor celebrity behind the cause of international Protestantism through the publication of two tracts: *An English-Mans Love to Bohemia* (1620) and *Taylor his Trauels: From the City of London in England, to the City of Prague in Bohemia* (1620). Whilst avoiding a critical approach, Taylor stated his belief in the absolutely just and godly nature of the Protestant cause with proud martial sentiment, invoking the memory of an Elizabethan golden age in his address to the English soldiers: 'Remember you who are sonnes vnto such sires / Whose sacred memories the world admires, / Make your names fearefull to your foes againe / Like Talbot to the French, or Drake to Spaine.'² For tracts such as these, and short pieces celebrating the 1621 Parliament and Charles's return from Spain in 1623, Taylor has been recruited into the ranks of the militantly Protestant opponents of the Spanish match.³

Unlike many contemporaries, however, the water-poet's stance upon the match did not inherently question the nature of James's authority within English government, or even openly criticise the king's policy. Whilst this deferential tone has led some to suggest that Taylor's pamphlets reflect popular political naivety, it is more readily agreed that his uncritical position in the 'campaigning journalism' of the 1620s constituted more of a 'damning silence'.⁴ Yet there are a number of indicators to suggest that Taylor found himself bound by the situation of the early 1620s; a number of his works demonstrate his fierce pride

¹ Taylor's range of publications is show-cased in the 1630 collection of his works. For the most full and recent account of his varied career see Bernard Capp, *The World of John Taylor the Water-Poet 1578-1653* (Oxford, 1994).

² John Taylor, *An English-Mans Love to Bohemia* (Dort, 1620), p. 4.

³ Capp, *Taylor*, p. 130.

⁴ See Clare Wikeley on Jerzy Limon's reading of *Prince Charles His Welcome from Spain*. Clare Wikeley, 'Honour Conceal'd; Strangely Reveal'd: The Fool and the Water-Poet', in A. Samson (ed.), *The Spanish Match: Prince Charles's Journey to Madrid, 1623* (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 189-208, pp. 191, 207; Capp, *Taylor*, pp. 126-128.

in England's Elizabethan martial heritage and commitment to an eschatological world-view, yet he could not escape his adherence to the hierarchical model of his own society, at the head of which was the king who had been placed there by the hand of God. Whilst Taylor's royalism is often just projected backwards from his role as a royalist pamphleteer in the 1640s, his earlier works reveal that he had adopted Jamesian rhetoric regarding monarchical authority and denounced rebellion as treason against the king – in thought, word and deed – with continuous vehemence. The contradiction that holding both of these convictions engendered by the 1620s was one faced by many of James's loyal, Protestant subjects and reflects the complexities of allegiance created by the king's unpopular pursuit of a Spanish marriage following the outbreak of war on the continent. Through a contextual reading of Taylor's works during the Spanish match negotiations, this chapter will explore how the water-poet responded to the increasingly public, tense political climate.

It will be shown that, whilst his allegiance to the king never faltered, Taylor began to veil his oppositional opinion beneath stylistic devices for two primary reasons. Taylor was desperate to participate in the literary culture of the day, producing reams of epigrams, elegies and imitating contemporary and classic styles, whilst continually criticising the vogue for libel and scurrilous verse: he detested that libelling should be thought of as wit, and found the popular taste for libels, ballads and cheap rhymes quite incomprehensible. But Taylor's criticism also operated on a political level against those who threatened the unity of the country. In reaction to the politicising climate of false news, rumour and sedition, I suggest that Taylor participated within the tide of retaliation against the threatening increase in 'popularity' seen in the growing expression of a so-called 'patriot' opinion that claimed to work in the greater interest of the commonwealth.⁵ He thus affirmed his loyalty loudly to counter the destabilising effect of the oppositional literature. Secondly, in employing literary devices to obscure the implications of his oppositional sentiment, Taylor sought to negotiate the intimidating government measures against critical literary

⁵ The contemporary identification of vocal puritan dissent with an anti-authoritarian, democratic sentiment gained particular currency during the reign of James I. On this trend see Richard Cust, 'Prince Charles and the Second Session of the 1621 Parliament', *EHR*, 122 (2007), 427-441, 433-434 and Cust, 'Public Man', p. 136; Peter Lake, 'The Politics of "Popularity" and the Public Sphere: the "Monarchical Republic of Elizabeth I defends Itself"', in *ibid.*, pp. 59-94.

expression and to communicate his frustration at the failings of diplomacy and peace.

This study is situated within a recent revival of interest in Taylor and his voluminous works that seek to detach him from the literary prejudice handed down from his own times, and to rehabilitate his writing and its commentary on and contribution to early Stuart society.⁶ In particular, his travel writing has received the lion's share of the attention, with studies ranging from hospitality to analyses of the entrepreneurial advances made by his subscription-style publications within a nascent public sphere.⁷ Yet I believe this work is often too quick to categorise both Taylor and his writing, and often adopts a broad chronological approach in assessing both of these things. I aim here to contextualise Taylor's works sufficiently by focusing on works composed up until 1625, with particular focus on those composed between 1618 and 1623, in order to draw accurate conclusions about Taylor's contribution to the increasingly politicised literary environment.

I

Taylor's scornful attitude towards Protestant extremists, especially during the Civil War, is well-known – so much so that his earlier anti-Catholicism is often overlooked by historians.⁸ Bernard Capp is more generous, and in his attempt to classify Taylor's religious outlook he reluctantly admits that the focus of the poet's attacks altered over time. He loosely categorises Taylor's attitude as initially anti-Catholic, then directing his polemic against Jesuit and separatist alike, before adopting his chief position against puritans and separatists by the 1640s.⁹ But Capp largely suppresses this brief analysis to claim that Taylor's outlook was mostly characterised by an Anglican consistency. This view tends to neglect the contextual significance of Taylor's confessionalism, which was

⁶ See for example Capp, *Taylor*; Katherine Craik, 'John Taylor's Pot-Poetry', *Seventeenth Century*, 20 (2005), 185-203; Wikeley, 'The Fool and the Water-Poet'.

⁷ See John Chandler (ed.), *Travels Through Stuart Britain: The Adventures of John Taylor, The Water Poet* (Stroud, 1999); Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1990); Alexandra Halasz, *The Market Place of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1997).

⁸ Tessa Watt judges Taylor to have been consistently anti-Puritan, using evidence such as his 1620 verse summary of the Virgin Mary's life to claim that it is therefore unsurprising to see him accused of popish views in 1641. Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety 1550-1640* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 292.

⁹ Capp, *Taylor*, p. 138.

manifestly shaped by differing influences. By a closer look at a wider range of Taylor's texts in the early 1620s, in comparison to his earlier work, we can more clearly gauge the influence of the changing political atmosphere upon the religious polemic expressed in his works. Whilst his self-confessed Protestantism is not in doubt, his transition from the staunchly anti-papist position that characterised his first publications to his recognition of the ominous potential of religious extremism, whatever the creed, that becomes evident in the early 1620s, reflects the influence upon Taylor's thought of the ideology of consensus and obedience that pervaded the Jacobean defence of its authority during the match crises.

The work most vehemently expressing Taylor's anti-Catholicism is also his first published piece, which Robert Dow has suggested as at least one reason why *The Sculler* made its way into publication in 1612.¹⁰ The recent assassination of Henri IV had revitalised the issue of Catholic loyalty in England, which the ongoing controversy over the oath of allegiance continued to make vital.¹¹ Capitalising upon this popular anti-Catholic sentiment, in this first text Taylor left no question as to who the enemy was as he addressed his epigrams to all Catholics: 'To you from faire and sweetly sliding Thames, / A popomasticke Sculler warre proclaimes'.¹² Taylor reaffirmed this judgement in a subsequent epigram that considered the claim of truth held by all the varying religious groups. From amongst these sects he chose to pick out Catholicism for closer attention, explaining 'Since from it two vertues springs, / That they may eat their God, and kill their Kings',¹³ so revealing his exploitation of the polemical climate that knotted the spiritual to the political and condemned Catholics as traitors. Taylor did not here distinguish between any more extreme orders of Catholics, instead lumping them all together, whilst his references to puritans and schismatics at this point were fleeting and largely innocuous.

Capp has identified Taylor's consistent desire to distinguish between what he determined a 'knave's Puritan' who was simply a misjudged, pious man,

¹⁰ R. B. Dow, 'The Life and Times of John Taylor the Water-Poet' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Harvard, 1930), p. 70.

¹¹ See above, ch. 1, pp. 42-43.

¹² John Taylor, *All the Workes of Iohn Taylor the Water Poet* (1630, facsimile reprint, London, 1973), iii. 16. Taylor republished *The Sculler* in 1614 under the title *Taylor's Water-Work* and it was that which was reproduced in the 1630 folio from where these quotations are taken.

¹³ Taylor, *Workes*, iii. 18. See also Capp, *Taylor*, p. 122.

and a 'Knave Puritan' who was the subject of Taylor's satire.¹⁴ This had become apparent in 1614 nestled within a wave of criticism against contemporary vices. In *The Nipping and Snipping of Abuses* Taylor was concerned to promote recognition of this distinction and inveighed against the hypocritical separatists, whom he called 'Amsterdammers', for their interpretation of scripture that neglected the place of good works.¹⁵ Yet the overwhelming brunt of Taylor's satirical force still came down upon Catholics. As well as a sonnet against the Gunpowder Plot, Taylor's attack on tobacco detailed the collusion of the devil with 66 popes and cardinals, such well-known Catholic traitors as Guy Fawkes and François Ravallac, and other notorious villains for the propagation of the corrupting substance.¹⁶

Taylor did not reject this earlier view against Catholicism in his subsequent writings, but it is clear that by 1620 he increasingly drew the distinction between Jesuits and lay-folk that Capp assigns as a consistent opinion.¹⁷ As Taylor began to show some sympathy towards Catholics he also began to redirect his fire more consistently towards the Protestant extremists in reaction to the religious climate engendered by James's policies and the vociferous opposition to them from 1619.

This development in attitude is seen clearly in an unusual publication reminiscent of the Catholic tradition of saints' lives, *The Life and Death of the Most Blessed among Women, the Virgin Mary Mother of our Lord Iesvs* (1620). Taylor had already versified Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* and composed a verse summary of the Bible, yet the water-poet still felt obliged to justify this latest religious poem. Conscious of accusations of popish sympathies which were suggested by the subject matter, Taylor made his religious persuasion clear early on in the poem by refusing to pray to the Virgin Mary for intercession.¹⁸ The dedication also carried a justificatory tone, which uncovers his mounting contempt for separatists, and more moderate attitude towards Catholics, for the first significant time. In hoping Protestants and 'charitable Catholikes' would

¹⁴ Capp, *Taylor*, p. 138.

¹⁵ Taylor, *The Nipping and Snipping of Abuses* (London, 1614), sigs. H4v, Kv. Capp, *Taylor*, pp. 123-124.

¹⁶ Taylor, *Nipping and Snipping*, sig. D2.

¹⁷ Capp, *Taylor*, p. 125.

¹⁸ John Taylor, *The Life and Death of the Most Blessed Among Women, the Virgin Mary Mother of our Lord Iesvs* (London, 1620), sig. A8v-B.

accept the work, Taylor pre-empted criticism by claiming he knew the ‘dogmaticall Amsterdammattists’ would not judge it well.¹⁹ Although Taylor admitted the error of Catholics in their attitude towards Mary, stating ‘the Romanists doe dishonour her much by their superstitious *honourable seeming* attributes’, he believed the greater error was in forgetting or dishonouring her, which harboured clear criticism of the radical attitude adopted by many Protestants.²⁰ His benign perception of the Catholic error reveals that Taylor did not view Catholic practices as menacing, whilst his contemptuous attitude towards the separatists demonstrates the reverse. By 1624 Taylor was still critical of Catholic practices, but was willing to view the adherents to the old religion with less venom and more sympathy, describing them in one pamphlet as ‘the poore seduced ignorant Romanists.’²¹

Taylor’s changing emphasis upon Jesuits and separatists is revealed in his 1622 satire *The Water Cormorant* where the two characters are placed first and second respectively in Taylor’s list of unsavoury figures. It was now Jesuits, and not Catholics as a whole, who were accused of king-killing tendencies, whilst the separatists came under fire for their hypocrisy and schismatical activities. The extent of Taylor’s feeling is demonstrated by his comparison of such separatists with Catholics: ‘And sure I hold some *Romane* Catholikes / Much better then these selfe-wild schismatickes. / For Papists haue good affability, / And some haue learning, most haue Charity.’ His regard of Catholics here represents a genuine change from that of his earlier works as he was willing to give them credit where he felt it due. Yet he further blackened the image of the separatists by continuing: ‘Except a *Iesuit*, whom I thinke a man, / May terme a right *Papistick Puritan*. / And for the *Sep’ratist* I justly call, / A *Scismatick Impuritanicall*.’²² By equating the two so closely Taylor revealed his belief that they represented the same level of threat and his emphasis on the schismatic potential of the separatists outlines exactly what nature this threat embodied.

Taylor’s familiarity with the king’s own writings, which he highly regarded for both their poetical skill and international scholarly renown, suggests

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, sig. A5v-A6.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, sig. A7. Italics mine.

²¹ Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 92 (mis-pag. as 92 for the second time). Capp, *Taylor*, p. 125.

²² Taylor, *Workes*, iii. 3.

one source for the changing emphasis in the water-poet's religious attitude.²³ Whilst the oath of allegiance controversy still dominated the intellectual climate, the controversial doctrine of papal supremacy and religious resistance theory continued to cast a shadow over any who professed Catholicism. Taylor both reflected and participated in this political atmosphere with his first publications by attacking all Catholics with ferocity and consistently associating them with infamous contemporary conspirators, as well as notorious historical traitors such as Judas and Achitophel. By 1620, the *de facto* toleration of Catholicism, that was intended to grease the passage of the marriage negotiations,²⁴ allowed many crypto-Catholics to emerge from the woodwork to the great chagrin of a significant proportion of the population. Such a tense political climate inevitably revitalised the king's own distaste for puritan extremism and cultivated his increasingly irenic position towards religious doctrine and matters of conscience.²⁵ Therefore, the balancing position we see Taylor adopting in his treatment of Jesuits and separatists on the one hand, and distinguishing between Jesuits and lay Catholics on the other, may well have been influenced by the king's view.

Taylor's charge of 'innovation' aimed at the Protestant radicals may have always been present, but by the 1620s the frequency and nature of his pointed attacks suggest he had developed his views regarding their threat. His consistent employment of terminology that linked Protestant radicalism to Amsterdam drew attention to the potential of such 'schismatics' for creating civil disruption, which can only have been compounded as James began to encounter vociferous opposition from his Protestant subjects who were desperate to fight the Catholic

²³ For example, Taylor referred to James's excellent poetry and his sentiment against tobacco mirrored the king's: Taylor, *Nipping and Snipping*, sigs. Bv, C4v-D3. In his elegy for James, Taylor praised the late king's learning as displayed through his works: Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 323. The publication of James's works in 1616 made the king's written views available to a much wider audience.

²⁴ Brennan C. Pursell, 'The End of the Spanish Match', *HJ*, 45 (2002), 699-726.

²⁵ In his speech to Parliament in 1604 James expressed his opinion on matters of conscience, stating that he 'would be sorry to punish their bodies for the error of their minds, the reformation whereof must onely come of God and the trew Spirit'. He later reaffirmed this, stating to the 1621 Parliament that 'it was not by severity or compulsion that the consciences of men were to be ruled': James VI and I, *Political Writings*, ed. J. P. Sommerville (Cambridge, 1994), p. 140; M. A. Tierney, *Dodd's Church History* (London, 6 vols., 1839), vol. 5, p. 117. For James's religious thought see Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake, 'The Ecclesiastical Policy of King James I', *JBS*, 24 (1985), 169-207; William B. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge, 1997).

powers of Spain and Rome.²⁶ Whilst Taylor did not endorse James's pro-Spanish policy and was quite eager to promote the international Protestant cause, it is evident that he continually strove in his works to avoid provoking disloyalty to the king, and took a strong line against those who did. In his attacks against the radicals of both Christian confessions in the 1620s it is possible to identify both a long-standing and ingrained fear of treason and xenophobia, but also a new and uncertain anxiety over zealous schismatics who fomented open opposition to the government and therefore threatened stability.²⁷ As shall be shown, as far as Taylor did agree that war should be waged, he only wished to convey this clandestinely, whilst maintaining his position against those who questioned James's authority.

II

Taylor's articulated political thought during the match was consistent with his earlier expressions and firmly echoed the basic themes of royal ideology. This can be examined in a number of his works composed in the period up until 1624: from his treatment of tyrants and deposed kings in his brief histories of the English monarchy to clear statements upon the origins of royal authority found in his moral satires. This demonstrates the penetration of Jamesian ideology throughout early Stuart society, which would support the emphasis of the revisionist scholarship upon the essential consensus underpinning Jacobean political thought.²⁸ Yet it is clear that by the 1620s Taylor's continued adherence to this concept of authority was not a reflection of nationwide intellectual opinion as opposition to James's policies led to a deeper questioning of the nature of his authority. Therefore, the consistency in Taylor's opinion during the 1620s can be viewed more as a conscious reaffirmation of his loyalties and beliefs than as a simple parroting of popular ideas.

²⁶ The conflict between the Calvinist contra-Remonstrants and Arminian Remonstrants had been followed closely in England and in 1620 had only recently been settled by the execution of John van Oldenbarnevelt and suppression of Remonstrant influence. Taylor's journey across Europe at this time would have allowed him to gain a closer insight: Taylor, *Virgin Mary*, sig. A5; John Taylor, *Taylor his Trauels: From the City of London in England, to the City of Prague in Bohemia* (London, 1620); Capp, *Taylor*, p. 125. The civil turmoil in the United Provinces, and its impact and representation in England, is treated at length in ch. 5 and 6.

²⁷ This anxiety reflects the developing perception of radical Protestant opinion as promoting a form of political 'popularity'. See above, p. 53.

²⁸ For example Glenn Burgess, *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution: An Introduction to English Political Thought, 1603-1642* (Hampshire, 1992). See above, introduction, pp. 13-14, 17.

Taylor's belief that royal authority derived directly from God is evident in three texts composed in 1621. In *The Subjects Ioy, for the Parliament* Taylor presented his account of how and why kings were in command. As man was naturally inclined to corruption it was necessary for God's laws to be propagated and enforced, thus Taylor continued: 'For this cause did the power of Heauen ordaine, / That Kings (*like Gods*) on Earth should Rule and Raigne'.²⁹ Leaving all ideas of election and the temporary transfer of sovereignty to the likes of George Buchanan, Taylor here not only affirmed the godly appointment of the monarchy, but likened royal power to divine as James himself was wont to do.³⁰ This is reaffirmed in *Taylor's Motto* where the water-poet examined a king's relation to divine status: 'And though he *want* the art of making breath, / Hee's like a Demy-God, of life and death. / And as Kings (before God) are all but men, / So before men, they are all Gods agen.'³¹ The tone of Taylor's depiction is reverent and explicitly outlines his perception of monarchy. Yet it also carries a premonitory voice for princes that James promoted himself.³² Taylor was keen to stress kings' mortality and eventual judgement by God to temper the extent of power he first presented them with.

This didactic tone is evident in the earlier *Superbiae Flagellum* where Taylor used biblical examples to inveigh against the sin of pride and demonstrate the consequences: 'For Pride, to Tyre and Zidons wicked Kings / The Prophet a most iust destruction brings.'³³ Royalty was not an excuse for immorality, despite the lack of any earthly restraints upon authority. Taylor was well aware of the licence granted him by his comic style of poetry to educate princes; he

²⁹ John Taylor, *The Subjects Ioy, for the Parliament* (London, 1621). Italics mine.

³⁰ For example, James I, *The Workes of the most High and Mightie Prince, James by the Grace of God, King of Great Britaine, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith &c* (London, 1616), p. 529.

³¹ Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 51.

³² The king tempered the implications of his political theory with a heavy emphasis upon the reciprocal duty between a king and his subjects in general, and affirming his belief in the rule of law when addressing the nation specifically. This was based upon the principle that a good king ruled in the interests of his kingdom and subjects, and not for his own personal gain and pleasure that would render him a tyrant. The accountability of kings to God would enforce the conscience of any rational ruler to observe this principle and govern according to God's laws. See for example James VI, *Basilikon Doron* (Edinburgh, 1599) p. 3; James I, *Workes* (1616), p. 494; James I, *The Workes of the most High and Mightie Prince, James by the Grace of God, King of Great Britaine, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith &c* (London, 1620), p. 621.

³³ Taylor, *Workes*, i. 29.

lauded the value of comedy as an instrument through which kings could be told things ‘Which none but Poets dare to speake for feare’.³⁴

Taylor’s interpretation of tyranny and deposition allows further investigation into his perception of royal authority, as the origins of government advocated by the Stuarts often contradicted the lessons revealed in history. In his verse summary of the Virgin Mary’s life, Taylor’s definition of a tyrant was made apparent in his depiction of Herod. In the water-poet’s view, Herod qualified for tyranny through both his position as a usurper *and* through his behaviour towards the Judeans whom he held in a slavery of fear.³⁵ Taylor then aligned himself with a maxim upon bad government: ‘For ’tis most true: “A Prince that’s fear’d of many, / “Must many feare, and scarce be lou’d of any.”’³⁶ This served as an encouragement towards a loving and benevolent style of government through the threatening spectre of the oppressed multitude and through which we can again see Taylor utilising an edifying style of writing.

This sentiment was employed in Taylor’s *A Memorial of all the English Monarchs, being in Number 150. From Brute to King Iames*.³⁷ Upon coming across wicked and tyrannical kings in his sources, true to the style of the period, Taylor put his history to didactic use by moralising on their varying fortunes through his verse. Thus he portrayed one King Mempricius as both a usurper and lewd-liver who reaped what he had sown: ‘*Mempricius* base, his Brother *Manlius* slew, / And got the Crowne, by murder, not as dew: / Maides, wiues, & widdowes, he by force deflowr’d / He liu’d a Beast, and dy’d, by Beasts deuour’d.’³⁸ Mempricius’s unlawful and violent seizure of the crown is here presented as an explanatory clause for his subsequent tyrannical behaviour,

³⁴ *Ibid.*, ii. 48.

³⁵ James most concisely outlined this dual understanding of tyranny in 1619, stating in his advice to Charles: ‘For you must remember that there bee two sorts of tyrants, the one by vsurpation, the other by their forme of gouernment, or rather misgouernment.’, *Workes* (1620), p. 604. For this understanding in seventeenth-century literary culture see Rebecca W. Bushnell, *Tragedies of Tyrants: Political Thought and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca, 1990), pp. 53-76.

³⁶ Taylor, *Virgin Mary*, sig. B5v.

³⁷ John Taylor, *A Memorial of all the English Monarchs* (London, 1622). This version extended the scope of the collection that Taylor produced in 1618, entitled *A Briefe Remembrance of all the English Monarchs from the Normans Conquest vntill this Present*, but lacked the detailed engravings and higher quality presentation of the earlier piece. *A Briefe Remembrance* was republished in 1621 and 1622, the latter alongside *A Memorial*.

³⁸ Taylor, *A Memorial*, sig. B2v.

which is a connection that Taylor frequently made when depicting tyrants.³⁹ In pursuing his animal passion at the expense of reason, Mempricius made himself akin to a beast and was punished accordingly – Taylor informs the reader with a marginal note that he was eaten by wolves whilst hunting.⁴⁰

The reigns of Henry IV and Henry VII provided potential to demonstrate recent examples of usurpation. Following a host of Tudor historians, playwrights and propagandists, Taylor chose to view the accession of James's forebear, Henry VII, as the will of God so proved in battle.⁴¹ His depiction of Henry IV's usurpation followed the historiographical tradition that held Richard II's deposition to blame for the ensuing Wars of the Roses.⁴² Whilst Taylor viewed the deposition as the result of both the king's failings and his subjects' actions, identifying a key problem in the king's lack of – or no regard for – good counsel, he emphatically countered any understanding of the reign that might lend itself to prescribing limits upon the king's authority. As Richard had ascended the throne legally, which Taylor was at pains to point out in the margin of his text, his regal conduct and consequent deposition could not be attributed to the tyranny of usurpation. Taylor did not shy away from admitting the young Richard II's faults, but was keen to demonstrate he held little sympathy with the uprisings and sad demise of his reign: 'The Commons rose in Armies, Routes, & throngs, / And by *foule treason*, would redresse foule wrongs,... / Oppression on oppression, breedes Confusion, / Bad Prologue, bad Proceeding, bad Conclusion.'⁴³ By classifying the subjects' actions against Richard as treason, despite the king's equally transgressive behaviour, Taylor committed himself to a

³⁹ See *ibid.*, sigs. C, C2, D2r-v for further examples of kings whose dubious acquisition of the crown preceded a troubled rule, followed by deposition or grisly death. The major source for the earlier reigns, until Cadwallader, was most probably John Stow, *The Abridgement or Summarie of the English Chronicle* (London, 1607). Taylor followed Stow closely in chronology, name and detail in contrast to other available sources such as John Speed, *The History of Great Britain*, which differs considerably to Taylor until 857 AD. Despite Taylor's imitation of Stow, his tone does differ significantly enough, especially when relating tyrants' reigns, to distinguish Taylor's opinion from Stow's relation.

⁴⁰ Taylor, *A Memorial*, sig. B2v.

⁴¹ Included in this tradition, but not all straightforwardly, are Thomas More, Edward Hall, Polydore Vergil, and of course William Shakespeare. There is a lengthy historiography over Shakespeare's perpetuation of the 'Tudor myth' in his history plays. See Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare* (New York, 2nd edn, 1989), pp. 89-92.

⁴² Taylor, *A Memorial*, sigs. F1v-F2, E7v. See Anthony Goodman, 'Introduction', in A. Goodman and J. L. Gillespie (eds.), *Richard II: The Art of Kingship* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 1-14, p. 3.

⁴³ Taylor, *A Memorial*, sig. E7. Italics mine.

thoroughly Jamesian view of the subject's (non-existent) right of resistance.⁴⁴ Taylor's depiction of Edward II reaffirms this as the king is seen as the innocent, wretched victim of his cruel queen.⁴⁵

The subject's right of resistance was a controversial topic in a state where stability depended on obedience. In 1622 the challenge to James's authority from the Commons and the opposition to his policies in print and manuscript circulation provoked the publication of texts exhorting subjects to obedience.⁴⁶ Both accounts of Richard II and Edward II's reigns differ slightly from their counterparts in Taylor's earlier *A Briefe Remembrance*, where the rebellion against Richard is translated as 'mad' rather than traitorous. Furthermore, Edward II's alienation of his subjects by his relationship with Piers Gaveston and his defeat at Bannockburn are mentioned, although Taylor still attributed his death to his scheming queen. The style is briefer in *A Memorial*, but the differences may also be due to the change in political atmosphere that had polarised since 1618, causing Taylor to give additional emphasis to his analysis in support of royal authority in the presentation of these controversial reigns.

It is therefore clear that Taylor upheld the theory of monarchy by divine right and as part of this he maintained the requirement for a mutually reciprocal relationship between a king and his subjects: 'So good Kings, and true Subjects, always proue / To suck from each, protection, feare and loue.'⁴⁷ Thus the relationship required both 'good' kings, seemingly defined as neither usurpers nor those ruled by passion, and 'true' subjects, which represented the loyal and obedient. Taylor consistently denounced disloyalty and treason and he echoed James's own thinking in proclaiming against popular interference in state matters. This often conflicted with Taylor's own opinion regarding English policy in the 1620s, but he did not desert this conviction before James's death in 1625; in 1623, amidst the heady climate of elation that accompanied Charles's

⁴⁴ This view is evident in a work endorsed by royal proclamation during the oath of allegiance controversy. The work holds the bond between a subject and a prince to be inviolable to the extent that even in the event of tyranny 'the onely meanes we [the people] have to appease their [tyrants'] fury is serious repentance for our sinnes, which have brought this chastisement vpon vs.' [R. Mocket], *God and the King* (London, 1616), p. 84.

⁴⁵ Taylor, *A Memorial*, sigs. E6r-v.

⁴⁶ See above, ch. 1, p. 28; Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 29-31.

⁴⁷ Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 54. See also *Superbiae Flagellum* for a further example, where Taylor gave his account for why the hierarchy was so ordained: '...he (God) did not bestow his bounteous Grace, / To make great men proud, or meane men base; / Aboundant wealth he to the Rich doth lend, / That they the poore should succour and defend.' Taylor, *Workes*, i. 30.

safe return from Madrid, Taylor promoted obedience to God and the king's will with humble supplication: 'Then let not any man presume so farre, / To search what the *Almighties* counceles are... / Let not Pleibeans be inquisitiue, / Or into any profound State-businesse diue.'⁴⁸ In doing this he tacitly attacked his like-minded compatriots who had vociferously contributed their own opinions against James's guarded principle of *arcana imperii*. Yet Taylor also subtly reprimanded the folly of the trip by listing the magnificent princes of England, who had died prematurely, before coming to Charles's journey: 'True loue and honour made his Highnesse please, / Aduenturously to passe ore Land and Seas. / With hazard of his royall person and / In that, the hope of all our happy Land.'⁴⁹ Maintaining his persistently deferential tone, Taylor revealed his affront at the risk Charles had taken by travelling to Spain as the prince had remained England's hope since Henry's death in 1612.

In the Protestant, pro-war relation of his trip to Bohemia in 1620, *Taylor his Trauels*, the water-poet supported the *arcana imperii* whilst acknowledging that it was often flouted. He commenced his introductory verse with an explanation of why he did not discuss political business, stating: 'My Muse dares not ascend the lofty staires / Of State, or write of Princes great affaires'.⁵⁰ Taylor's belief in the maintenance of the social hierarchy encouraged the perception that his pen was too humble to interfere in such matters.⁵¹ Additionally, his appreciation of the risk involved in publishing political tracts is transparent. Although unable to resist a quick jibe against Frederick's enemies in the verse, Taylor nevertheless concluded his short foray into explicit political propaganda: 'Thus leauing warres, and matters of high state, / To those that dare, and knows how to relate / I'le onely write how I past heere and there, / And what I haue obserued euerywhere'.⁵² Taylor felt he had neither the courage nor sufficient knowledge to venture further. Whilst the pamphlet as a whole does represent Taylor's attempt to buoy the spirits of the Protestant supporters and

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, iii. 105. Capp, *Taylor*, p. 98. See n. 45.

⁴⁹ Taylor, *Workes*, iii. 105.

⁵⁰ Taylor, *Taylor his Trauels*, sig. A4. For a brief analysis see Capp, *Taylor*, pp. 25, 126-127.

⁵¹ Although Capp's analysis suffers from his detachment of the immediate context as an influence upon Taylor's writing, he does identify certain consistent attitudes, of which, Taylor's respect for social hierarchy – and his attack against its neglect or abuse – is of relevance here. Capp, *Taylor*, pp. 98-100.

⁵² Taylor, *Taylor his Trauels*, sig. A4v.

demoralise the enemy, thus functioning tacitly against his stated intent, the pamphlet's silence on English policy can be attributed to his adherence to his principles.

III

The influential work of historians such as Richard Cust has led the way in a growing area of study that is concerned with assessing the relationship between literature, news and politics in the early Stuart period and examining the development of public opinion as a result of this relationship. Cust's analysis demonstrated that the language of conflict purveyed through differing news media was at variance to the promotion of consensus and harmony that was central to official rhetoric. Highlighting the improved distribution and increasing centralisation of the news, Cust gauged its impact upon public opinion, concluding that it contributed to a developing polarisation of political thought.⁵³

Cust's study laid a firm foundation on which to build. This has been achieved to some extent by work seeking to uncover the role of verse libel in politicising public opinion and widening the examination of the receptive audience to encompass a broader representation of the social spectrum.⁵⁴ In essence this scholarship agrees in its conclusion that the polemical nature, increased production and extensive circulation of both printed and manuscript literature in this period was strongly linked to a growing popular awareness of political issues and the consequent development of a polarised public opinion.

This effect can be viewed with increasing significance from the early 1620s when the thirst for foreign news prompted the regular publication of *corantos* and the tense political atmosphere made the expression of opinion irrepressible. It was during these years that many contemporaries commented

⁵³ Richard Cust, 'News and Politics in Early Seventeenth-Century England', *P&P*, 112 (1986), 60-90.

⁵⁴ See Alastair Bellany, "'Raylinge Rymes and Vaunting Verse": Libellous Politics in Early Stuart England, 1603-1628', in K. Sharpe and P. Lake (eds.), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Basingstoke, 1994), pp. 285-310; Thomas Cogswell, 'Underground Verse and the Transformation of Early Stuart Political Culture', in S. D. Amussen and M. A. Kishlansky (eds.), *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 1995), pp. 277-300; Pauline Croft, 'Libels, Popular Literacy and Public Opinion in Early Modern England', *Historical Research*, 68 (1995), 266-285; Adam Fox, 'Rumour, News and Popular Political Opinion in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England', *HJ*, 40 (1997), 597-620; Andrew McRae, 'The Literary Culture of Early Stuart Libelling', *Modern Philology*, 97 (2000), 364-392.

negatively upon the fever for news that had gripped the country. This criticism attacked the sheer volume of news available, its commodification, and its notorious unreliability, often expressing concern over the effect of the craze upon the gullible masses.⁵⁵ Ben Jonson's familiar criticism was conveyed through his 1620 masque *Newes from the New World Discover'd in the Moon* and his 1625 play *The Staple of News*, in which he satirised the false authority of the popular news culture and its commodification respectively.⁵⁶ His disdain for news was matched by his concern for the tastes of popular readership that he referred to in his work.⁵⁷ Jonson bemoaned the culture whereby genuine literary works were being subordinated to the vulgar rhyming of pot-poets and ballad-makers, amongst whom he included Taylor.⁵⁸

It was not just Jonson who equated Taylor's poetry with the coarse outpouring of print for the commoner sort. Timothy Raylor has demonstrated the social anxiety of such figures as John Mennes and James Smith. He proposes that their awkward social positions within the literary world motivated them to lampoon the less-well educated poets in order 'to construct a distinction that might not otherwise be perceived between themselves and the likes of Saltonsall and Taylor.'⁵⁹ We can identify this same anxiety reflected in Taylor's frequent attacks upon balladeers and uneducated rhymers as he too strove to separate himself from the class of poetry that literary society thrust him into.⁶⁰ There are some contradictions in Taylor's work as he aimed for literary recognition above

⁵⁵ Robert Burton, Abraham Holland, Joseph Mead and Ben Jonson were amongst such contemporary critics. See Stuart Sherman, 'Eyes and Ears, News and Plays: The Argument of Ben Jonson's *Staple*', in B. Dooley and S. Baron (eds.), *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2001), pp. 23-40; C. John Sommerville, *The News Revolution in England: Cultural Dynamics of Daily Information* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 28-30; David Randall, 'Joseph Mead, Novellante: News, Sociability, and Credibility in Early Stuart England,' *JBS*, 45 (2006), 293-312.

⁵⁶ For *Newes from the New World* discussed in this context see Curtis Perry, "'If Proclamations Will Not Serve": The Late Manuscript Poetry of James I and the Culture of Libel', in D. Fischlin and M. Fortier (eds.), *Royal Subjects: Essays on the Writings of James VI and I* (Detroit, 2002), pp. 205-232. For a nuanced reading of *The Staple* see Sherman, 'Ben Jonson's *Staple*'.

⁵⁷ Nigel Wheale, *Writing and Society: Literacy, Print and Politics in Britain 1590-1660* (London, 1999), p. 88; Craik, 'Taylor's Pot-Poetry', 186.

⁵⁸ In what Craik calls Jonson's 'famously withering assessment of Taylor' in his posthumously published *Timber, or Discoveries* we can see both Jonson's long-lasting contempt for popular literature and Taylor's place within it: 'if it were put to the question of the Water-rimers workes, against *Spencers*; I doubt not, but they would find more *Suffrages*; because the most favour common vices, out of a Prerogative the vulgar have, to lose their judgements, and like that which is naught.' Craik, 'Taylor's Pot-Poetry', 186.

⁵⁹ Timothy Raylor, *Cavaliers, Clubs, and Literary Culture: Sir John Mennes, James Smith, and the Order of the Fancy* (Newark, 1994), p. 153.

⁶⁰ Capp, *Taylor*, pp. 52-54, 68.

common popularity whilst often striking blows at the very structure upon which this rested.⁶¹ Katharine Craik has attempted to demonstrate that Taylor's writing revealed an attitude towards poetry that challenged the disdainful judgement of such literary figures as Jonson because of Taylor's social position. In Craik's view, Taylor consequently put the value of poetry upon the labour it required rather than the social position of the poet who produced it.⁶² There is certainly some strength in this interpretation, revealed by Taylor's consistent criticism of the literary elite. But it neglects Taylor's equally vociferous condemnation of ballads, broadsheets and popular rhymers that Craik suggests he attempted to rehabilitate at the elite's expense, thus failing to appreciate Taylor's determination to participate in the contemporary literary culture and emulate the masters of the craft.⁶³

This is certainly demonstrable in the imitative, if complex, relationship between Taylor and the Spenserian poet George Wither, whose participation in a lively literary community may have represented the ambition Taylor sought for his own poetic output. The water-poet was evidently seeking to ride the wave of Wither's notoriety in publishing *The Nipping and Snipping of Abuses* and *Taylor's Motto* amidst the official furore created by Wither's own *Abuses Stript, and Whipt* (1613) and *Wither's Motto* (1621).⁶⁴ Furthermore, Taylor's nominal foray into the genre of pastoral in 1624 reflected Wither's brief public return to this poetic form with *Faire-Virtue* (1622) and the collection of his early satires and pastorals, *Iuuenilia* (1622). Yet, as with several of his literary relationships, Taylor's imitation of Wither carried significant criticism, which in this case related to Wither's politically controversial style. Where Wither's works gained the poet widespread renown for their contemporary critique and thinly veiled

⁶¹ Capp addresses these contradictions effectively, describing Taylor as something of a social and literary amphibian. Bernard Capp, 'John Taylor 'the Water-Poet': A Cultural Amphibian in 17th-Century England', *History of European Ideas*, 11 (1989), 537-544.

⁶² Craik, 'Taylor's Pot-Poetry'.

⁶³ Noel Malcolm situates Taylor firmly within a vibrant literary culture in his account of the development of English nonsense verse. Taylor can be seen responding to and enlarging upon the work of more established literary figures such as Sir John Hoskyns: Noel Malcolm, *The Origins of English Nonsense* (London, 1998), pp. 18-24, 49. Furthermore, the influences of Shakespeare, Jonson and Thomas Nashe that are evident in Taylor's work reveal a familiarity with and certain respect for these figures, whilst his style is clearly influenced by Jacobean literary trends, which he both utilises and parodies. See, for example, John Taylor, *Taylor's Pastorall being both Historicall and Satyricall* (London, 1624); his use of the popular epigram in Taylor, *Nipping and Snipping*. See also Capp, *Taylor*, pp. 48-54, 68. For the literary vogue for epigrams see Cogswell, 'Underground verse', pp. 279-281.

⁶⁴ See below, pp. 78-80 and ch. 3, pp. 106-109.

topical allusion, Taylor's equivalent pieces mocked such libellous practices before taking up a position in defence of royal authority and obedience – although this to some extent masked Taylor's own subtle criticism of the often oppressive political environment in which they were both writing.⁶⁵ Perhaps donning his rose-tinted spectacles in a retrospective evaluation during the Civil War, Taylor saw in these early topical verses a more innocuous attempt by Wither to gain fame through writing biting satires and libels, that in the 1640s he was chastising for their incendiary effect.⁶⁶

Thus Taylor's self-definition, literary imitations and aspirations, in part, uncover the social anxiety that penetrated his criticism and satire of the news and cheap-print culture. Yet the relationship between literary culture and political commentary is inextricable, as outlined above, and it becomes apparent that Taylor's commentary on the news and ballad culture, in the period when the political situation prompted a news explosion, also originated from his political commitment to order and obedience.

The 1620s marks a point of development in the generation of news. The past forty years or so had seen an occasional news culture where a spate of ballads, libels and pamphlets largely followed significant events, such as the Armada or the earthquake of 1580.⁶⁷ Many of these were didactic in purpose, which reflects the genre of the 'news relation' that centred upon specific events to demonstrate a supposed moral truth and was not, therefore, dependent on factual accuracy.⁶⁸ These often sensational relations catered for popular taste and usually dealt with tales of witches, miracles, prodigies, murders and freak weather conditions. Yet Sandra Clark has identified a shift around the turn of the century that began to place increasing significance on the factual accuracy of news, demonstrated by a growing appeal to 'truth' in the attention-grabbing titles of news publications.⁶⁹ Thus, when the Thirty Years War broke out on the continent, supply rapidly developed to meet the demand for an accurate relation

⁶⁵ See Taylor, *Nipping and Snipping*, sig. B2 and below, pp. 78-80.

⁶⁶ John Taylor, *Aquamusae* (Oxford, 1645), p. 8. See also ch. 3, pp. 105-106.

⁶⁷ Fritz Levy, 'The Decorum of News', in J. Raymond (ed.), *News, Newspapers, and Society in Early Modern Britain* (London, 1999) pp. 12-38, pp. 32-34. Sommerville identifies 32 extant ballads on the Armada and 15 on the earthquake. Sommerville, *News Revolution*, pp. 18-19.

⁶⁸ Sandra Clark, *The Elizabethan Pamphleteers: Popular Moralistic Pamphlets 1580-1640* (London, 1983), pp. 97-99.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-101. This contrasts with Sommerville's judgement that it was the periodisation of news that forced 'truth': Sommerville, *News Revolution*, pp. 18-19.

of current events. The Dutch initially supplied translated *corantos* and this was soon followed by a royal licence for their production in England.⁷⁰

In order to establish exactly what Taylor was criticising in his 1620s pamphlets and investigate the reason he was doing so, it is first necessary to address Taylor's own participation in the news genre to exonerate him from the charge of hypocrisy for the criticism he made against the news. Several of his works have been described as a strand of reportorial writing in the fashion of the popular newsbooks.⁷¹ Yet a closer look at the chief pamphlets identified in this way demonstrates that such categorisation does not always fit the picture.

A number of Taylor's pamphlets that served an ephemeral purpose can be more readily located within a body of literature produced for the same reason. He was among the first to publish an elegy on the death of Prince Henry in 1612 and to celebrate the return of Prince Charles from Spain in 1623. Taylor also composed a pamphlet detailing the celebrations held for the Princess Elizabeth's wedding to the Elector Palatine in 1613, and wrote a piece upon the outbreak of plague in 1625. A portion of these publications were aimed at the lower end of the market, yet Taylor's pieces most often illustrate his attempts to prove himself literarily.

More than contributing to the cruder style of news relation, these pamphlets demonstrate that Taylor was striving to participate within his literary environment, often imitating more renowned figures. This was certainly the case with his first travel pamphlet *Three Weekes, Three Daies, and Three Hours Obseruations and Trauel* that was less of a news book than an homage to Thomas Coryate.⁷² Although the pamphlet did include relations of certain fascinations that Taylor had seen whilst in Germany, the influence of Coryate is unmistakable.⁷³ Henry's elegy was the first among many funeral elegies that

⁷⁰ Levy, 'Decorum of News', p. 34; Folke Dahl, *A Bibliography of English Corantos and Periodical Newsbooks 1620-1642* (London, 1952), pp. 18-20, 31.

⁷¹ Dow, 'John Taylor', pp. 90-92, 136-137. Mitchell Stephens's examination of sensational news includes Taylor's *The Vnnaturall Father* among the examples of murder pamphlets, which he describes as 'one of the more explicit newsbooks'. Mitchell Stephens, *A History of News: From the Drum to the Satellite* (New York, 1988), p. 115.

⁷² Dow termed this piece as 'news book' stuff, which he clumped together with the 'adventure-upon-return' style of travel writing without acknowledging Coryate's influence. Dow, 'John Taylor', p. 144.

⁷³ Michael Strachan, *The Life and Adventures of Thomas Coryate* (London, 1962); Warren Wooden, 'The Peculiar Peregrinations of John Taylor the Water-Poet: A Study in Seventeenth Century British Travel Literature', *Prose Studies*, 6:1 (1983) 3-21, 4-5. The pamphlet is dedicated

Taylor wrote, and whilst his hasty production of the pamphlet reveals a mercantile attitude, the content is similar in approach to George Chapman's and Thomas Heywood's funeral elegies for the Prince.⁷⁴ Taylor even appended verses by William Rowley to some versions, without the playwright's authorisation, to boost the credentials of his work.⁷⁵ Taylor's pamphlet on Elizabeth's marriage also need not be considered as cheap hack work for the publisher, even though it was more directly aimed at the lesser educated, provincial reader.⁷⁶ In addition to ensuring reliability by presenting the reports through the mouths of those who had devised the celebrations, Taylor attached a collection of triumphal verses that betray the influence of Wither.⁷⁷ It is probably true that these pamphlets enjoyed a popular audience and I do not deny that Taylor was, in part, attempting to attract a large body of readers through his appeals to fashionable topics. But I challenge the notion that Taylor intended these works as popular news books, as he used his comic and honest persona to speak through his pamphlets, thereby providing his readers with confidence in the authority of the relations.⁷⁸

Taylor's criticism of balladeers and rough print was consistent throughout his early career. But it was in the early 1620s that he began to satirise the mad news culture, in clear response to the heightened circulation of false news and rumours. The power of falsely spread rumours is evident from the governmental concern to suppress seditious chatter through laws and proclamations. The treason law could be brought against actions, writing and speech and was

to Coryate and both Strachan and Wooden suggest it was in imitation of Coryate's *Coriats Crudities*.

⁷⁴ John Taylor, *Great Britaine, all in Blacke for the Incomparable Losse of Henry, our Late Worthy Prince* (London, 1612). Cf. George Chapman, *An Epiced or Funerall Song on the Most Disastrous Death, of the High-borne Prince of Men, Henry Prince of Wales* (London, 1613) and Thomas Heywood, *A Funerall Elegie vpon the Death of the Late Most Hopefull and Illustrious Prince, Henry, Prince of Wales* (London, 1613).

⁷⁵ Taylor, *Great Britaine, all in Blacke*, sig. C2.

⁷⁶ The explanatory footnotes throughout the triumphal verses indicate that Taylor presumed his audience's grasp of classical knowledge was not as extensive as his own. Taylor, *Workes*, iii. 115, 121-123. Capp, *Taylor*, p. 69.

⁷⁷ Cf. George Wither, *Epithalmia* (London, 1613). Capp suggests the accounts of the Master Gunners gave the piece a quasi-official character. Capp, *Taylor*, p. 61.

⁷⁸ Wooden, 'Peculiar Peregrinations', 6-7. Wooden identifies this persona as emerging through Taylor's travel writings, but I believe that it extended throughout his work and functioned to set his works apart from the multitude of cheap print. See Taylor's *The Vnnaturall Father*, where the water-poet's moralising report of an infanticide appears to authorise the information by attaching the condemned's prayer, arraignment, confession and judgement: John Taylor, *The Vnnaturall Father* (London, 1621), sigs. C2-C4.

extended throughout the sixteenth century.⁷⁹ The rapid dissemination of wild rumours, that Adam Fox identifies as ‘bred of insecurity and nurtured in ignorance’, often featured fantastical stories about the monarch and their advisors. The panic and fear this political insecurity generated could even culminate in uprisings and active discontent.⁸⁰ Just following the outbreak of the continental war, rumours were rife about London regarding the fate and fortune of the Protestant army. John Chamberlain and a young Simonds D’Ewes commented on these rumours, with the latter recording conflicting reports over the Battle of White Mountain.⁸¹

Taylor showed his awareness of the impact of libelling and ballad-making, which he often lumped together, most notably in a trio of pamphlets all composed in 1621. He commented upon the literary fad for libellous epitaphs that did not distinguish between manuscript and print, or between libels and ballads, revealing the fluidity of these popular forms in their intention and circulation. In *The Great O’Toole* Taylor revealed his disdain for the publishers, or patrons, of slanderous verse as he bitterly noted that soldiers ended up at Tyburn ‘Whilst lowzy Ballad-mongers gape and look out, / To set some riming song, or Roguing Booke out, / Where more then all is ’gainst the dead imputed, / By which meanes men are doubly executed.’⁸² Taylor charged these defamatory verses with killing the reputation of a man following his death. The degradation of honour in early Stuart society was not taken lightly and was considered destabilising to the social hierarchy.⁸³ Taylor had earlier inveighed against the insult to honour that libellers caused in *Superbiae Flagellum*, revealing both his contempt for their popularity and recognition as ‘wits’, and their use of anonymity that he saw as cowardly.⁸⁴

It is clear from *Taylor’s Motto* that the water-poet’s dislike of ballads and libels stemmed as much from an envy of their popularity and money-making

⁷⁹ Fox, ‘Rumour, News and Popular Political Opinion’, 599.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 613-616.

⁸¹ Levy, ‘Decorum of News’, p. 12.

⁸² Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 19.

⁸³ Bellany, ‘Libellous Politics’, pp. 293-294. Bellany highlights the restatement of the seditious libel law following the discovery of puritan libel in 1604-1605 as evidence of both the importance of honour in this society and its association with stability. See also Richard Cust, ‘Honour and Politics in Early Stuart England: The Case of Beaumont v. Hastings’, *P&P*, 149 (1995), 57-94, esp. 87.

⁸⁴ Taylor, *Workes*, i. 37.

potential, as from their social consequences. Yet even his jealous criticism reveals the nature and extent of this literary form: ‘Yet for mine eares price I could vndertake / To buy as much as would a lybell make: / Or I could haue as much, as fits these times / With worthless lests, or beastly scuruy Rimes.’⁸⁵ Like Jonson, Taylor lamented the decline of literary standards as high-grade work was overlooked in favour of seditious and slanderous poetry and worth was becoming increasingly defined by demand. In his *Motto* Taylor also revealed the depth of his feeling against the publishing of lies and their impact upon honour. He first stressed that the man who published ‘Prophaned lines, or obscene beastlinesse, / Scurrility, or knowne apparent lyes’ was to be most abhorred, before judging that ‘...he’s the greatest murderer aliue, / That doth a man of his good name depriue / With base calumnious slanders and false lies: / Tis the worst villany of villanies.’⁸⁶ These passages illustrate that Taylor’s disdain for libellers and balladeers originated from more than a determination to be classed above them and more than professional envy at the popularity and success of the genre. They show that Taylor despised the purpose of poetry that sought to spread rumour to defame the honour of both the dead and the living. Taylor perceived the destabilising danger that the explosion of these verses created in the fraught political climate of 1621. His attack on the false news and rumour culture, that sprang into existence after 1619, built upon this long-standing animosity towards libels.

Taylor criticised this culture both directly in his pamphlets and by the use of mock imitations of the style in which the news was conveyed. He succinctly expressed his opinion regarding the style and content of the news in his 1623 tirade against coaches, *The World Runnes on Wheelles*. In a passage that does not lack tinges of Taylor’s dry humour, the water-poet assessed the pamphlet market through the voice of one trying to place the current pamphlet within it:

I like em better that are plaine and merrily written to a *good intent*, than those who are purposely stuffed and studyed, to deceiue the world, and vndo a country, that tell us of Proiects beyond the Moon, of Golden

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, ii. 51.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, ii. 47, 56.

Mines, of Deuices to make the Thames run on the North side of London...⁸⁷

The complaint echoes that of Jonson's *Newes from the New World*: both ridiculing the ludicrous ideas propagated by these pamphlets and recognising the ill-intent that accompanied some.⁸⁸

The earliest pamphlet that transparently conveyed this opinion was *Taylor his Trauels* that Capp describes as 'a package of news and propaganda designed to hearten a worried public'.⁸⁹ I agree with Capp's interpretation of Taylor's intent behind the Prague pamphlet but suggest here that it also functioned as part of Taylor's judgement upon the false rumours and news in circulation. Using his, by now, distinctive persona that had been honed by his previous travels to Germany and Scotland,⁹⁰ Taylor separated himself from the anonymous and conflicting relations pouring into England. He set this up immediately in an introductory verse to the reader that promised truth in contrast to the many lies in circulation, before continuing to describe how he had distinguished his own work from the rest: 'I pray you take notice of my plaine dealing, for I haue not giuen my booke a swelling bumbasted title, of a promising inside of news'.⁹¹ Taylor's self-referencing title was used as both a selling point and a mark of authority on what was found inside and, unlike many unfounded tales, Taylor's came from eye-witness experience. Addressing this at the very start of his relation, Taylor illustrated the absurdity of the news to give his account an additional air of authority: '...as for newes of battells, or of War, / Were *England* from *Bohemia* thrice as far: / Yet we do know (or seeme to know) more here / Then was, is, or will euer be knowne there.'⁹²

Taylor also satirised the news culture in two pieces that attacked its false or sensational style and the frenzied public desire that had developed for it.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, ii. 234. Italics mine.

⁸⁸ Perry, 'Late Manuscript poetry of James I', pp. 206-210. Perry locates Jonson's masque in the atmosphere of speculation created by the crisis in Bohemia.

⁸⁹ Capp, *Taylor*, p. 25. Dow also perceived *Taylor his Trauels* to be a piece of journalism, but he located it more actively within the 'gossip context' regarding Frederick's possible defeat by suggesting that Taylor sought to confound Frederick's enemies with an exaggerated picture of Prague's defences and supplies. Dow, 'John Taylor', p. 187.

⁹⁰ Wooden, 'Peculiar Peregrinations', 6-7.

⁹¹ Taylor, *Taylor his Trauels*, sig. A2.

⁹² *Ibid.*, sig. A4.

Honour Conceal'd; Strangely Reveal'd is an entirely fabricated relation of the diplomatic activities of James's court jester, Archibald Armstrong, in France.⁹³ The significance of this within a news context is revealed at the end of the short text where it is shown how the revelation of Archy's merits would enable the jester's fame to spread through the news network. Taylor's depiction of the tale's dissemination mocked both the news itself and its methods of circulation: 'The tongues confusion in our braue *Exchange* / Shall *Babell* like declare thy [Archy's] story strange, / The newes of thee shall fill the Barbers shops, / And at the Bake-Houses, as thicke as hops / The tatling women as they mold their bread / Shall with their dough thy fourefold praises knead...'⁹⁴ The role of the stereotypical gossip outlets in circulating this pack of lies reveals Taylor's judgement upon the untrustworthy climate of rumour relating to political events.⁹⁵ With this text, Taylor's attitude can again be aligned with that of Jonson, who twice invoked the distinctive reputation of the court fool in his parodies of the new news culture.⁹⁶

Sir Gregory Nonsense His Newes from No Place effectively parodied the news genre through its nonsense form. The premise of the verse is the relation of Sir Gregory Nonsense's news, which, like much news in Taylor's day, turns out to be a lot of hot air. Within the verse itself, Taylor further developed this notion through a description of Sir Gregory's rumour-mongering. Following Gregory's reception of some nonsensical news, the knight continues that he hurried off to Pimlico: 'T'informe great *Prester Iohn*, and the *Mogull*, / What exlent Oysters were at *Billingsgate*. / The *Mogull* (all intraged with these newes,) / Sent a blacke snaile post to *Tartaria*, / To tell the Irishmen in *Saxony*, / The dismall downfall of old *Charing Crosse*.'⁹⁷ By situating this description of fantastical news within his nonsense verse, Taylor was able to use the form as a parody. As well as demonstrating its absurd nature, Taylor also portrayed the swelling effect of rumour – that here changes the news completely from person to person – and the extent of feeling it generated as Gregory sped off to Pimlico and the Mogull

⁹³ Taylor, *Workes*, iii. 111. See below pp. 85-89 for a fuller discussion of this text.

⁹⁴ Taylor, *Workes*, iii. 114.

⁹⁵ Fox, 'Rumour, News and Popular Political Opinion', 604; Sherman, 'Ben Jonson's *Staple*', p. 30.

⁹⁶ See John Southworth, *Fools and Jesters at the English Court* (Stroud, 1998), p. 184; Wikeley, 'The Fool and the Water-Poet', pp. 195-197.

⁹⁷ Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 1.

became enraged with the news he received. Only the wise Prester John appeared to have no reaction this ludicrous tale.

The period of the Spanish match negotiations encouraged Taylor to confess his unswerving loyalty and obedience, and denounce traitors and disturbers of the peace who became bold through verse. This is most apparent in his *Motto* where Taylor first pronounced firmly upon loyalty generally before applying the taint of treachery to rhymers. In a lengthy passage that used powerful language, suggesting a polemical intent, Taylor testified:

I *haue* a King whom I am bound vnto,
To doe him *all the seruice I can doe*:
To whom when I shall in Alegeance faile,
Let all the Diuels in hell my soule assaile;
If any in his gouernment abide,
In whom foule Treacherous malice doth recide
'Gainst him, his Royall off-spring, or his friends,
I wish that Halters may be all their ends.
And those that cannot most vnfainedly
Say this, and sweare, as confident as I:
Of what degree soe'r, I wish (one houre)
They were in some kind skilfull Hangmans power.⁹⁸

Taylor assured his readers of his complete allegiance in 1621 when many about him were questioning James's motives for the match and his clandestine method of conducting his government. If this had been composed ten years earlier, the intended recipients of the message Taylor conveyed – allegiance and obedience above everything – would have undoubtedly been Catholic. But by 1621 the boundaries of allegiance were much more nebulous, so Taylor's sentiment could have tweaked the consciences of many Protestants – libellers and balladeers not least among these – as Taylor drew out further on. The water-poet again presented his view of the base nature of such literature, speculating that he too could write treason enough to land himself in the Tower. But in answering why

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, ii. 47.

he chose not to, Taylor rebuked charges of cowardice and affirmed his honest character: 'But that for the loue of goodnesse I forbear, / And not for any seruile slauish feare.'⁹⁹

IV

In 1625 Taylor published an elegy on James that included an extensive discussion upon the theme of peace and war and which I believe sums up the conflicting nature of Taylor's feelings during the early 1620s. In a statement that is critical, though not unsympathetic, Taylor targets James's opponents: 'His [James's] gouernment both *God* and *men* did please, / Except such spirits, as might of *Ease*, / Repining Passions wearied with much *Rest*, / The want to be *molested*, might *molest* / Such men thinke *peace* a torment, and no *trouble* / Is worse then *trouble*, though it should come double.'¹⁰⁰ The sentiment here echoes that of those who called for obedience and celebrated the bounty of peace before James's death. Taylor clearly does not identify himself with such 'Repining Passions' as the slightly scornful tone here and the remainder of the elegy makes apparent. The suggestion of fractious potential lurking in such spirits, furthermore, reflects his perception of the disharmony caused by the opposition to royal policy in James's last years. But the changed political atmosphere in which Taylor was writing by 1625 clearly emboldened his own spirit as he continued to reflect upon the issue: 'I speake of such as with our peace were cloyd, / Though *War* I think might well haue bin imploy'd. / True *Britaines* wish iust warres to entertaine, / (I meane no aide for *Spinola* or *Spaine*).'¹⁰¹ Taylor still distanced himself from a charge of disobedience or disloyalty by again identifying his subjects. But almost in an effort to exonerate himself from the slur of siding with the pro-Spanish faction he aligned with those he had criticised in support of a 'just' war, clarified by the bracketed clause, one that was evidently desired by all 'True Britaines'.

Taylor then finally ruminated over it all; displaying his commitment to obedience, his providential outlook, and his political opinion regarding God and the king, he finished: 'But time and troubles would not suffer it, / Nor *Gods*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, ii. 47.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, ii. 323.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, ii. 323. 'Cloyd' here means 'burdened'.

appointment would the same permit. / He is inscrutable in all his waies, / And at his pleasure humbleth and will raise, / For *patience* is a virtue he regardeth, / And in the end with victory rewardeth.¹⁰² Taylor generously split the onus of responsibility from James's sole discretion to a combination of the king's refusal and the vague notion of 'time and troubles' which could encompass a multitude of reasons including the Spanish marriage, the failed Parliament of 1621 and the treasury's continual cash-flow shortage. He also reaffirmed James's authority by underlining its divine origin and justified the king's unpopular actions through the inexplicable 'will of God'. Although it becomes clear in the last two lines that the Almighty is Taylor's subject, the middle section of the extract could function with dual meaning, applicable to both God and James, thus re-emphasising the right of the debated prerogative power.

Returning to Taylor's broadsheet, *The Subjects Loy for the Parliament* as the title suggests reflected the public joy at James's convention of parliament. It brought great relief to James's subjects for three key reasons: to call for war upon the Spanish, to enforce the legislation against the English Catholics and to crush the corruption of monopolists. In amongst his laudatory treatment of monarchy, Taylor broached all three of these complaints partly through a biblically infused discussion of laws and partly through an address to God. This setup provided Taylor with an avenue to present the nation's grievances without criticising the king. Therefore, Taylor could blame the nature of man, rather than the king, for the neglect of laws whilst subtly denouncing peace as the cause: 'And now these Eightene yeares a blessed Peace, / Hath made our sinnes (more than our thanks) increase'.¹⁰³ To further direct fire away from James, Taylor passes judgement on the king's decision, stating 'Our Gracious King, these euils to preuent, / Assembled hath a Royall Parliament.'

As God was perceived to have a special regard for Britain and the continuance of the Protestant cause, it was uncontroversial for Taylor to ask Him 'To beate downe Vice, and Vertue to defend: / Thy Gospell to increase and propagate,' and furthermore to 'Plucke Heresies vp by the very Roote / And tread proude *Antichrist* quite vnder foote'. But in context this translates easily as a reference to the *de facto* toleration of English Catholics with the concomitant

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, ii. 323.

¹⁰³ This and subsequent quotations, Taylor, *The Subjects Loy*.

decline of enforcing recusancy laws, which is reinforced by Taylor's emphasis throughout on the neglected laws. Finally, Taylor mentioned the Prince and Princess Palatine and asked God to 'Defend them Against all that them oppose, / And fight their Battels still against their Foes.' Taylor earlier conflated divine and regal rule, stating of James 'Who all his Lawes and Statutes doth encline, / Conformable vnto the Lawes Divine'. Thus, I suggest that Taylor's prayer to God to foment these things, as conformable to his will, is synonymous with asking the same thing of James, whom Taylor prayed would continue to 'bee a man according to Gods heart.' So, by aligning his hopes for the Parliament's progress alongside his perception of the divine will in the poem, Taylor used the text as a request to James to uphold the laws and defend his daughter and son-in-law against their Catholic enemies.

The Subjects Ioy provides an illustration of Taylor upholding his loyalty and allegiance to the king, but also highlights his increasing difficulty in doing so in light of his support for military intervention. There are two examples where I believe Taylor is actively commenting on the complexities of writing within his specific literary environment in the early 1620s, and I perceive that he consequently reacted to this in a conscious and direct way.

On 18 June 1621 Henry Gosson entered *Taylor's Motto* into the Stationers' Register, thus following only two days after *Wither's Motto* had been re-entered with the note that it was to be printed as it stood corrected by Taverner.¹⁰⁴ On the 27 June Wither was examined before the House of Lords and was imprisoned, for a second time on account of his poetry, as he had again caused offence in high places with the topical criticism in his *Motto*. This certainly complicates the issue of Taylor's imitation in light of the water-poet's articulated contempt for such a critical mode. That his *Motto* was spawned off Wither's can be in little doubt. Taylor's extended title *Et habeo, et careo, et curo* almost functions as a riposte to the *Nec habeo, nec careo, nec curo* of Wither's, and Taylor himself admitted 'This Motto in my head, at first I tooke, / In imitation of a better Booke'.¹⁰⁵ But herein lies the problem as he mischievously

¹⁰⁴ I take this to be John Taverner, secretary from 1611 to 1621 to John King, Bishop of London. *Wither's Motto* was first entered 14 May 1621 with the proviso that it required authority before being printed. For an extended discussion of the controversy over *Wither's Motto*, see ch. 3, pp. 106-109.

¹⁰⁵ Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 44.

continued to ask of the reader how he could cause offence by following good examples, which he would rather do 'Then wilfully into a fault to runne'.¹⁰⁶ Although *Taylor's Motto* was entered nine days before Wither was examined, it is likely that Taylor was well-aware of the implications of the book he was imitating. The publication history of *Wither's Motto* suggests that the book gained rapid notoriety as several individuals colluded in disseminating the unlicensed copy in the weeks preceding the second entry into the register. The pecuniary punishment meted out to four publishers and booksellers on 4 June 1621, who had all played a part in disseminating printed versions of *Wither's Motto*, suggests that Taylor would not only have been able to see the controversial book in print, but would additionally have been aware of the stir it was beginning to create.¹⁰⁷

Taylor compounded this potentially subversive streak when he continued to describe what his book did not do in what can be perceived as a reference to Wither specifically, and the nature of libel literary culture more generally: 'I haue not here reuil'd against my betters, / which makes me fear no dungeon, bolts or fetters: / For be he ne'r so great, that doth apply / My lines vnto himselfe, is worse than I.'¹⁰⁸ Wither's own publications had loudly protested about the injustice of his previous imprisonment, from March until June 1614, as he claimed he had been wrongly accused of libelling a peer in his satire *Abuses Stript, and Whipt*.¹⁰⁹ Taylor's lines can therefore be read in support of Wither, so contributing to the contemporary criticism of the over-censorious times and the heightened sensitivity of those who increasingly made recourse to the courts in reaction to perceived libel.¹¹⁰ Taylor then drew a final reference to *Wither's Motto* in outlining what topics his work would not address: amongst such topics

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, ii. 45.

¹⁰⁷ William A. Jackson (ed.), *Records of the Court of the Stationers Company 1602-1640* (London, 1957), p. 135. See ch. 3, p. 108. Whilst Capp does identify Wither's influence over *Taylor's Motto*, he does not take account of this publication history and so concludes that Taylor must have seen a manuscript copy of *Wither's Motto*. Capp, *Taylor*, p. 44.

¹⁰⁸ Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 45.

¹⁰⁹ It has been suggested that it was the earl of Northampton who took such offence at *Abuses*. Wither's imprisonment also coincided with the Addled Parliament of 1614, thus generating speculation that the incarceration functioned additionally as a measure to curb opposition in such a politically tense climate. See Allan Pritchard, 'Abuses Stript and Whipt and Wither's Imprisonment', *The Review of English Studies*, New Ser., 14 (1963), 337-345, p. 344; David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (Oxford, rev. ed., 2002), p. 188. This is discussed more fully in ch. 3, p. 106.

¹¹⁰ See ch. 3, p. 109.

he would not mention were ‘*Spinola, or any Ambassador*’ – who would have been immediately identifiable as the unpopular Gondomar. Unlike the disingenuous claim about its topicality in *Wither’s Motto*, *Taylor’s Motto* delivers what it promises and refrains from any further overt political commentary.¹¹¹ But in the recognition and subtle subversion of authority comprised in Taylor’s reference to Wither, *Taylor’s Motto* continues to uncover the complex interaction of the water-poet with the culture of opposition being increasingly vocalised at this time, so supporting the idea that he began to develop an expressive style which would allow him to speak more freely, but without the repercussions.

The second example is in Taylor’s remarks upon literary censorship in the closing pages of his 1622 pamphlet entitled *A Common Whore*. In the comparison between a book and a whore, Taylor addresses the common punishment of both: ‘Some *Bookes* and *Whores* to wicked purpose bent, / Doe, for their faults, receiue one punishment. / As *Bookes* are often burnt, and quite forgotten, / So *Whores* are ouer-stew’d, or rosted rotten.’¹¹² Taylor’s sweeping suggestion that burning books was an effective method of censorship contains more than a hint of irony. His own work had itself been subject to the punishment in 1613 when his squib against Thomas Coryate, *Laugh and be Fat*, was burnt by the common hangman after Coryate had complained against it. Far from causing the book to enter the realm of oblivion the event created enough of a stir for two further successful pamphlets against Coryate the same year that went some way towards establishing Taylor’s name.¹¹³

His subsequent comments on censorship indicate Taylor’s frustration with the heightened sensitivity towards literary expression that had been necessitated by the increasing climate of opposition, and again demonstrates his decision to alter the way in which he approached writing upon topical matters. It was with a derisory tone that he described the practice whereby ‘There’s not a

¹¹¹ Clare Wikeley judges Taylor’s imitative response to Wither’s disclaimer in both his own *Motto*, which she perceives as Taylor’s effort ‘to establish his own unquestioning loyalty to the crown’, and in the later mock encomium, *Honour Conceal’d; Strangely Reveal’d*, to function critically, which underplays the political anxiety shown here in Taylor’s works: Wikeley, ‘The Fool and the Water-Poet’, pp. 201-202; Capp, *Taylor*, p. 61. Cf. George Wither, *Wither’s Motto. Nec Habeo, Nec Careo, Nec Curo* (London, 1621), sig. A6v and Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 45.

¹¹² Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 112-113.

¹¹³ Capp, *Taylor*, pp. 13-14. Strachan, *Thomas Coryate*, pp. 152-154. Strachan suggests rather plausibly that the cause of the burning was due to an earlier copy being produced unlicensed for which the Stationers’ Company exacted punishment. When the licence was obtained in 1613 it was republished.

Sheet, a Leafe, a Page, a Verse, / A Word, or sillable, or letter (scarce)' that escapes judgement 'Lest in a Phrase, or word, there lurke a scandall.'¹¹⁴ It is unsurprising that in 1622 a book entitled *A Common Whore* would undergo the censor's knife, due to the immediate inference that could be made to the papacy. Taylor related the treatment his work underwent with regret: 'And my poore *Whore* in this hath not beene spar'd / Her skirts were curtaild, & her nayles were par'd.'¹¹⁵ There are a few unfavourable references to the papacy and a lengthy presentation of kings and princes that were inclined to lust. But we are left guessing as to the respect in which the book could have seriously offended, as is suggested by Taylor's footnote that without censorship 'she [the book] would haue scratched else'.¹¹⁶

V

It becomes clear that from 1622 Taylor began to cloak his oppositional sentiment beneath his own comic persona and certain literary devices; this is particularly apparent in the celebrated nonsense poem of 1622, *Sir Gregory Nonsense*, and the curious piece included in Taylor's works, *Honour Conceal'd; Strangely Reveal'd*, cited by Taylor as written in 1623 but for which no original copy can be located. The critical messages contained within these two books contrast with the more obvious comment found in Taylor's mock eulogy upon the martial achievements of the enigmatic court personality, Arthur O'Toole. Only 1622 editions of *The Great O'Toole* are now extant, but Taylor lists this piece amongst his other works in *Taylor's Motto*, which suggests it was written sometime before June 1621. Although Taylor used a comic façade in *O'Toole*, the cloak barely covers the meaning at all, which becomes transparent when it is read in context. Taylor genuinely lamented the decline of England's glory and pleaded for O'Toole to bring about a change: 'And now base Cowardize doth seeme to rust vs, / Into some worthy busines, quickly thrust vs'.¹¹⁷ *O'Toole* has been recognised by historians as a comment upon England's inactive military stance, particularly by Capp who has identified not only Taylor's accompanying request to read between the lines but also his apology for overreaching so far at the

¹¹⁴ Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 113.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, ii. 113.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, ii. 113.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, ii. 19.

end.¹¹⁸ This request was used again in *Sir Gregory* and *Honour Conceal'd*, but the apology was no longer necessary.

Sir Gregory marked the high point so far in Taylor's nonsense career – P. N. Hartle claims its publication 'made Taylor the Mr Nonsense of the Stuart age', illustrated to an extent by its influence over the publication of a nonsense poem in 1633 entitled *The Legend of Sir Leonard Lack-wit Sonne in Law to Sir Gregory Nonesence*.¹¹⁹ Taylor's extensive nonsense verse is recognised for its literary value through the influential work of Noel Malcolm. He describes Taylor's nonsense as 'a highly literary phenomenon, closely tied to the literary culture which it parodied and celebrated', despite Taylor's lowly social position.¹²⁰ As the predominant focus of Malcolm's study is to establish the literary value of nonsense, he tends to sweep away the ideological potential of the genre.¹²¹ Hartle has recently challenged this by demonstrating the political function of Taylor's nonsense during the Civil War, but he falls short of viewing the earlier verse in this manner because the validity of his argument rests on identifying the 1620s as a stable political and social climate.¹²² For Hartle, nonsense works best as a light-hearted literary genre when the readers and the author share a common concept of *good sense*.¹²³ Whilst I think the foundations of this argument are solid, he misrepresents the context in which *Sir Gregory* was composed, which results in an underestimation of the political tension that is reflected in the verse.

As much as it is a jovial adventure through the mad world of nonsense for Taylor, it is clear that the nonsense poem functions in the main part as a lampoon of both literary styles and scholarly 'attitudes', as well as part of Taylor's wider commentary and criticism of the new mad fashion for news. But in addition it is evident that Taylor's development of his nonsense verse allowed him to reflect and comment upon topical issues that he would otherwise refrain from addressing. In a poem full of paradoxes, Taylor's loud protestations against the sense and meaning in the poem invited his readers to make what sense of it they

¹¹⁸ Capp, *Taylor*, p. 127.

¹¹⁹ P. N. Hartle, "'All his Works Sir': John Taylor's Nonsense', *Neophilologus*, 86:1 (2002), 155-169, 157. Capp attributes the pamphlet to Martin Parker. Capp, *Taylor*, p. 45.

¹²⁰ Malcolm, *English Nonsense*, p. 49.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

¹²² Hartle, 'Taylor's Nonsense', 159-163.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 158.

could. Demonstrating his own delight with this work for both its literary achievement and its potential to confound any who would try to understand it, Taylor remarked at the end of the poem to scholars who wrote in Greek and Latin: 'Here I in *English* haue imployd my pen, / To be read by the learnedest Englishmen, / Wherein the meanest Scholler plaine may see, / I vnderstand their tongue, as they doe me.'¹²⁴ Taylor made such references throughout, starting at the dedication to Sir Trim Tram Senceles, a man of authority in Gotham, the city of fools, where he stated: 'I am ignorantly perswaded, that your wisdom can picke as much matter out of this Booke in one day, as both the Vniuersities can in twelue moneths, and thirteene Moones, with six times foure yeeres to boot.'¹²⁵ Then again in the letter to the reader, addressed 'To Nobody', Taylor explained that he here presented a translation

in which if the Printer hath placed any line, letter or sillable, whereby this large volume may be made guilty to be vnderstood by any man, I would haue the Reader not to impute the fault to the Author, for it was farre from his purpose to write to any purpose.¹²⁶

And finally in the context of the 'story' being related in the poem Taylor reaffirms all of this stating: 'My care is that no captious Reader beare hence, / My vnderstanding, wit, or reason here-hence. / On purpose to no purpose I did write all, / And so at noone, I bid you here good night all.'¹²⁷ Through these instances, in conjunction with his ending words to scholars, we can therefore see that Taylor was goading his readers in to drawing out the meaning he professed was not there, and to make sense of the nonsensical.

The topical references in *Sir Gregory* did not extend to Taylor's questioning James's authority or abandoning his loudly professed loyalty. Rather, Taylor used his cloak of nonsense to express his dissatisfaction and, in doing so, he could complain about James's policies without provoking accusations of disobedience or inciting any readers to such action. Initially, just as we see Taylor's rather sulky reaction to the censorship of *A Common Whore*,

¹²⁴ Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 5.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, ii. sig. Aa.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, ii. sig. AaV.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, ii. 4.

we can likewise identify a negative perspective on James's oppressive proclamations against excess speech, issued in December 1620 and reissued seven months later.¹²⁸ Writing within a period that witnessed a jealous grasp upon the expression of ideas by an insulted monarch, Taylor alluded to the repressive proclamations using his mouthpiece of nonsense in a vein he would have avoided in the more open style of his other works. Relating a strange vision, Taylor stated: 'Then with a voyce erected to the ground, / Lifting aloft his hands vnto his feet, / He thus beganne, Cease friendly cutting throtes, / Clamor the Promulgation of your tongues, / And yeeld to Demagorgons policy.'¹²⁹ Echoing the sentiment of James's proclamations through the comic nonsense form, this passage came as close to criticism of James's government as Taylor had ever ventured. The final line of the extract conveys Taylor's opinion of the oppressive nature of the proclamations as the creature demands all to yield to the policy of the mysterious and terrible infernal deity, Demogorgon.¹³⁰

As the verse continues we encounter a judgement upon the poor standing of valour in England, which by 1622 was becoming an increasingly risky line to take as James continued to pursue the Spanish marriage and attempt to resolve the Palatinate crisis diplomatically. Through the mouth of Proteus, a Greek sea-god, Taylor asked: 'shall we whose Ancestors were war-like, / Whose rich Perfumes were only Leeks and Garlike, / Whose noble deeds nocturnall and diurnall, / Great Towns and Towers did topsie turuy turne al, / Shall all their valour be in vs extinguish'd? / Great *Ioue* forbid, there should be such a thing wish'd.'¹³¹ In this passage, which continues on to echo many of his moral complaints as featured in his less masked satires, Taylor showed his disgust that anyone should wish to perpetuate peace. In the remark upon perfume, he also criticised the growth of a 'feminine' culture that went hand-in-hand with the decline of martial spirit. Taylor even included a stab at the pope and Catholicism by stating: 'he that ore the world would be cheife Primat, / May giue occasion for wise men to rime at.'¹³² By the intimation, Taylor here perceived wisdom in deriding the pope. Thus *Sir Gregory* shows the continuation of Taylor's thought

¹²⁸ J. F. Larkin and P. L. Hughes (eds.), *Stuart Royal Proclamations* (Oxford, 2 vols., 1973), vol. 1, pp. 495-496.

¹²⁹ Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 1.

¹³⁰ See the entry under 'Demogorgon' in the *Oxford English Dictionary* for this definition.

¹³¹ Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 4.

¹³² *Ibid.*, ii. 4.

into 1622 and unlike in many other pieces it did not conclude with an apology for speaking out of turn or contain any lengthy discourse upon the divine ordination of the king's authority. In developing his skill in this genre Taylor discovered a medium through which he could express his thoughts more freely and escape the seeming paradox that James created for his loyal subjects.

Yet even more complex than Taylor's nonsense is the mock encomium *Honour Conceal'd; Strangely Reveal'd* in which Taylor praised the king's fool, Archy Armstrong, for his achievements in mediating peace in France. Robert Dow found the text inexplicable; the furthest he went was to possibly link the piece to Archy's trip to Madrid with Charles in 1623.¹³³ The subtitle of *Honour Conceal'd, The Peace of France with the Praise of Archy*, immediately questions Taylor's plea to the reader in 1630 not to understand the poem in the context of recent events, as it had been written in 1623. He claimed "'Tis not the Warres of late I write vpon / In France, at the Iles of Rhea or Olleron".¹³⁴ There is no evidence for the individual publication of this piece and only Taylor's word that it was composed in 1623. Yet it is located in the *Workes* alongside the bulk of his pamphlets relating to the political events of the early 1620s, including *Taylor his Trauels* and the celebration of Charles's return, which suggests a unity of purpose.¹³⁵

Honour Conceal'd is first and foremost a personal attack on Archy. Taylor gave a now characteristic hint at his obvious intent in the dedication 'to the Reader or Vnderstander' by promising they would 'see Worth emblazed, Desert praised, Valour aduanced, Wit described, Art commended, and all this (Paradoxically) apply'd, to the person and successful Industry, of... Archiball Armestrong...'¹³⁶ Indeed, his envy and contempt for the court fool is transparent and Taylor's use of paradox is most powerful in conveying this sentiment when considering the overarching surface messages of the poem. Taylor repeatedly stated his intent was to give honour where it is due in order to make the case that

¹³³ Dow, 'John Taylor', p. 227.

¹³⁴ Taylor, *Workes*, iii. 111. Wikeley explores a range of potential influences over the text which could date its composition to as late as 1628, but ultimately maintains that it is best understood, even retrospectively, in the cultural and political significance of the year 1623. Wikeley, 'The Fool and the Water-Poet', pp. 206-207.

¹³⁵ Wikeley makes an extended and insightful link between *Honour Conceal'd* and *Prince Charles his Welcome from Spain*. *Ibid.*, pp. 191-194, 205-208.

¹³⁶ Taylor, *Workes*, iii. 111.

Archy's achievements had gone unrecognised in Britain. The main achievement described is a great feat of diplomatic negotiation in brokering peace between the French king and the Huguenots. So by applying the suggested paradox it is evident that Taylor's bitterness amounted to resentment towards the financial success and popularity of Archy for what he deemed fool's work.¹³⁷

Yet, as with *O'Toole*, Taylor also used the form for political expression. As far as contemporary events go it was 1622, not 1623, that saw a peace accord between Louis XIII and the Huguenots at Montpellier. Taylor's depiction of Archy's actions does locate him in France in the correct months,¹³⁸ but whilst contemporary news books informed English popular opinion of the events in France it would have been clear to all that the king's fool had no part in the eventual outcome.¹³⁹ As I have suggested, I think one function of the piece was to comment on a false news culture, but the content also sheds light on Taylor's topical thought in 1623.

I consider the political commentary in *Honour Conceal'd* to represent two of Taylor's ideological positions in 1623 that explain an apparent contradiction in the developing tone of the pamphlet. Most significantly, I believe Taylor used the premise of the peace to criticise the ideology driving royal policy. The Spanish marriage negotiations were part of James's attempt at a diplomatic solution to the Palatinate crisis and this was something that Charles hoped to resolve whilst in Spain.¹⁴⁰ Therefore the positions of the French king and the Huguenots in *Honour Conceal'd* can be loosely equated with those of the Habsburg monarchy and the Protestant cause, as headed by Frederick. Echoing the complaint in the earlier broadsheet poem *The Subjects Ioy*, Taylor unveiled his belief that peacemaking had opened the door to vice and sin. He contemptuously congratulated Archy, stating '*Mars, and Bellona from thy presence fled / And Bacchus with faire Venus came in stead,*'¹⁴¹ before

¹³⁷ Wikeley also reaches this conclusion: 'The Fool and the Water-Poet', pp. 195, 199.

¹³⁸ 'Tis certaine that thou foundst them all vnruely / Within the Month of *August*, or of *July*: / And in *September*, or I thinke *October* / Thou lefst them all in peace, some drunke, some sober.' *Workes*, iii. 112 (mis-pag. as 124).

¹³⁹ See, for example, *A Relation of a Sea-Fight betweene the Duke of Guise and the Rochellers, the 27 of October, 1622* (London, 1622); *A Relation of the Late occurents which haue happened in Christendome* (London, 1622).

¹⁴⁰ Pursell, 'End of the Spanish Match'.

¹⁴¹ Taylor, *Workes*, iii. 114.

continuing to describe how soldiers had exchanged war wounds for the pox and licentious activities such as drinking, dicing and pandering.

As has been shown, this attitude is not an exception for Taylor, who joined many of his contemporaries in decrying the effeminate culture of the Jacobean court. But here it functions more than as a lament for the decline of martial glory as Taylor covertly intimated the failure of peace as a solution to the religious conflict. In the couplet preceding his description of the flawed bounty of peace, Taylor stated 'But whether doth my Muse thus Rambling run, / 'Tis knowne the Warres in *France* are past and done.'¹⁴² Just as the 1622 Treaty of Montpellier would prove short-lived for Louis and the Huguenots, so would the 1623 ceasefire negotiated by James and the Infanta Isabella on the continent. In this reading, the critical treatment of Archy's peacemaking actions are revealed in *Honour Conceal'd* as an attack upon the intentions accompanying the trip to Madrid, and more widely James's determination to pursue diplomacy and not military action.

The use of Archy to achieve this function is intriguing. Archy was known to have questioned not only the wisdom of the Spanish marriage, but more particularly the sojourn in Spain. Although he returned in 1623 with a pension from Philip IV, he did not cease to use his privileged court position to speak against the match and the royal favourite, by then the Duke of Buckingham.¹⁴³ Yet reports that Archy was well-ingratiated into Spanish court life, from other officials and Archy himself, suggests an extent to which the fool played an ambassadorial role.¹⁴⁴ I thus perceive that Taylor used Archy as an illustrative symbol: whilst the fool played the diplomat, the diplomats were playing fools.

The second strand evident in this text demonstrates the tussle for allegiance that the loyal-hearted Taylor experienced during the match negotiations. Taylor's sincere tone cannot be mistaken in a part of *Honour Conceal'd* that views the French conflict as a civil war and reflects upon his consideration of James's opposition. Taylor's elegy for James most explicitly reveals the poet's view of civil war as unnatural and detrimental to state stability.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, iii. 114.

¹⁴³ R. Malcolm Smuts, 'Archibald Armstrong (d. 1672)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn 2006, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/653>, accessed 12 July 2007].

¹⁴⁴ Southworth, *Fools and Jesters*, pp. 180-184; Wikeley, 'The Fool and the Water-Poet', pp. 194-195.

In a passage nearly 60 lines in length that is devoted to the theme of war and peace, Taylor presented the glories of peace to further eulogise upon the late king. But the contrast he used was not the so-far disastrous Protestant battle against the Habsburg Catholic power; he instead used the woeful example of France that was broken by civil war: ‘When brother against brother, kinne ‘gainst kinne; / Through death and danger did destruction winne. / When murders mercilesse, and beastly Rapes / Theft, famine (miseries in sundry shapes) / While mischiefs thus great kingdoms ouerwhelm, / Our prudent *steersman* held great *Britaines* helme.’¹⁴⁵ The passage reflects the tone of the literature supporting James and promoting peace as we see Taylor painting a stark picture of wars’ horrors to be compared by the reader to England’s tranquil experience.¹⁴⁶ To emphasise this distinction, but also to again demonstrate his partisanship, Taylor added in ‘Nor doe I here inueigh against iust Armes, / But ‘gainst vniust, vnnaturall Alarmes’¹⁴⁷ making it clear that he did not perceive all war as evil and unnecessary.

This attitude is also evident in *Honour Conceal’d* where he used violent martial imagery to make the point:

When many a Mother childlesse there was made
 And sire ‘gainst son oppos’d with trenchant blade,...
 ...When smoake eclipsing *Sol*, made skyes look dim,
 And murd’ring bullets seuer’d lim from lim;
 Then didst thou [Archy] come, and happy was thy coming
 For then they left their Gunning and their Drumming.
 And let the world of thee say what it list,
 God will blesse him that made the warre desist.¹⁴⁸

Despite the spurious actions of Archy that Taylor referenced in this passage his sentiment against the war in France does seem genuine. Thus the text in part forms a commentary by Taylor on irresolvable conflict in France. But it also

¹⁴⁵ Taylor, *Workes*, ii. 324.

¹⁴⁶ cf. Thomas Adams, *Eirenopolis: The Citie of Peace* (London, 1622). See ch. 1, pp. 33-35 for a discussion of this text.

¹⁴⁷ Taylor, *Workes*, ii, 324.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, iii. 112 (mis-pag. as 124).

criticises the staunch and outspoken opposition to James that created an atmosphere of instability, especially in London, when the match appeared to be imminent, as Taylor first stated: ‘Then thou didst boldly shew them, what a Vice / It was for Subjects to prouoke their King, / By their Rebellion their owne deaths to bring.’¹⁴⁹ The water-poet thus warned against emulating the French in civil conflict simultaneously as he promoted a more feasible solution to the Palatinate crisis. It is in this text that we see both Taylor’s fear of inciting rebellion, encouraging his efforts to bury his meaning, yet also his frustration at the direction of policy, which forced his subtle expression of opinion.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, iii. 112 (mis-pag. as 124).

**Politics and the ‘Heauenly Sonnets’:
George Wither’s Religious Verse, 1619-1625¹**

George Wither’s long and controversial career as poet, pamphleteer and hymn composer generated numerous works that have been widely employed in a range of studies, from Jacobean literary culture to English hymnody. Yet, for all of these many invocations, few studies have attempted to paint a complete picture of Wither. In consequence, certain inconsistencies can be identified in differing accounts of the poet and his work and these are especially evident in the scholarship on Wither during the match crises in the early 1620s. Wither’s participation in the literary community producing anti-court pastoral at the time of the Addled Parliament in 1614, when he was imprisoned on account of his youthful satire *Abuses Stript, and Whipt*, marks his oppositional tendencies from early in his career. His prolific contribution to Civil War pamphlet polemic on the parliamentarian behalf would seem to confirm a consistency of opinion. Considering this rather progressive looking career from anti-court satirist to published parliamentarian thirty years later, it may be easily assumed that during the politically tense years between 1619 and 1623 Wither would have remained as critically outspoken as he had proved himself to be so far. Yet this is not quite how it appears currently. In fact, from 1619, it seems at times as if George Wither was in fact two different people. Whilst Wither’s topical self-representation in *Wither’s Motto* (1621) and his criticism in the 1628 poem, *Britains Remembrancer*, reveal continuity with the candid satire of his earlier poetry, Wither’s simultaneous versification of biblical texts appears uncharacteristic. His biblical songs and original hymns for the liturgical calendar earned him a generous royal patent in 1623 and aligned him in certain contemporary eyes with such controversial anti-Calvinists as Richard Montagu.

Wither’s attitude is often identified with the ‘puritan opposition’ developing in response to the Spanish match, most notably characterised by the controversial pamphleteer, Thomas Scott.² However, there are clear issues

¹ An article derived from this chapter is published in *History* in July.

² Ideologically, *Motto* has been compared with Scott’s infamous pamphlet, *Vox Populi*. See Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 247, 277-280; Michelle O’Callaghan, *The ‘Shepherds Nation’*:

involved with placing Wither neatly into this category, as such a depiction of the poet tends to neglect his religious verse, which is often perceived as a new devotional focus that moved away from his earlier controversial style. This has, in effect, created a divided approach in scholarship towards Wither's attitude and publications during this period as interest in his scriptural translations remains limited to the history of biblical and liturgical literature. However, Wither's response to the political climate of the early 1620s can be viewed as consistent throughout all his publications. In an effort to reconcile these seemingly contradictory portraits of Wither, and further explore the composition of the 'opposition culture' responding to the match politics, this chapter will show how his religious verse functioned politically in a manner consistent with his satires and pastorals.

I

In 1619 Wither began work on a metrical psalm translation. He published a long justification of his attempt that year, which was followed in 1620 with a meditation upon the first psalm. Rumours that the king himself had embarked upon psalm translation seems to have halted Wither's efforts for about three years. But following James's abandonment of the project, and apparently at the king's behest, Wither resumed the translation in 1624 and claimed to have finished about the time of James's death.³ There is an extant manuscript copy of his psalms that was most likely the version Wither attempted to have printed in Cambridge in 1625.⁴ *The Psalmes of David* were eventually published in 1632 in the Netherlands, which reveals some revision from the earlier manuscript, along

Jacobean Spenserians and Early Stuart Political Culture (Oxford, 2000), pp. 192; David Nobrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (Oxford, 2002 rev. ed.), p. 202.

³ Wither referred to his resumption of the psalms following the king's abandonment of the project in *Schollers Purgatory*, which was at an illicit press on 9 September 1624, suggesting Wither had resumed his translation no later than this date. In the dedication of the 1632 *The Psalmes of David* Wither related that he had been commanded by James to continue with the translation, and with James's encouragement had finished around March 1625. This can be corroborated by Mead's relation that Wither had shown about one hundred psalms to the king around Christmas 1624, who had told Wither that he had translated about fifty but did not intend to continue. George Wither, *The Schollers Purgatory* [London, 1624], p. 13; *Records of the Court of the Stationers Company 1602-1640*, ed. W. A. Jackson (London, 1957), pp. 169-167; George Wither, *The Psalmes of David* (Netherlands, 1632), sig. A3; James Doelman, 'George Wither, the Stationers' Company and the English Psalter', *Studies in Philology*, 90 (1993), 74-82, 79.

⁴ Doelman, 'George Wither', 81; Allan Pritchard, 'A Manuscript of George Wither's *Psalms*', *HLQ*, 27 (1963-4), 73-77, 75.

with the addition of prose meditations and a dedication to the Winter Queen, Elizabeth.⁵ The proximity of ideas and intent in Wither's *Psalmes* with the earlier publications *A Preparation to the Psalter* and *Exercises vpon the First Psalme* uncover that the spirit with which Wither undertook the translation in the early 1620s carried through to the published version of 1632. The delay and final place of publication, in part, stand as testament to the obstacles presented by the Stationers Company to the production of new Psalters.⁶

Wither was already a published poet when he commenced work on translating the psalms, but it is from this point on that his appearance in historical study diverges down two largely independent paths. Born in 1588 in Hampshire, Wither attended grammar school under the tutelage of John Greaves before moving on to Magdalen College, Oxford.⁷ It seems that around 1605 Wither was recalled back to his rural homestead, without obtaining a degree, during which time he is thought to have begun composing some of his later pastorals, including *Faire-Virtue*.⁸ In 1606 Wither went to the Inns of Chancery in London, partaking of the vibrant literary culture there, before enrolling in Lincoln's Inn in 1615.⁹

The eighteenth-century contempt for Wither's poetry was eventually replaced by a renewed interest in his early pastoral, most notably and enthusiastically by Charles Lamb.¹⁰ Wither's literary critics have since placed his early poetry firmly within the style of the Jacobean Spenserians – a loose affiliation of poets who were influenced by Edmund Spenser's form of pastoral poetry. Such a style was out of court favour during James's reign, which lent to the revived genre a critical undercurrent that pitted rustic, country values against court corruption.¹¹ Several studies judge Wither's work from this period to be

⁵ Pritchard also believes the printed version to show an improvement in phrase and prosody. Pritchard, 'George Wither's *Psalmes*', 73-75.

⁶ See Joseph Loewenstein, 'Wither and Professional Work', in A. F. Marotti and M. D. Bristol (eds.), *Print, Manuscript, & Performance: The Changing Relations of the Media in Early Modern England* (Columbus, 2000), pp. 103-123; Doelman, 'George Wither'.

⁷ John Aubrey, *Brief Lives, Chiefly of Contemporaries, Set Down by John Aubrey, between 1669 & 1696*, ed. A. Clark (Oxford, 2 vols., 1898), ii, p. 306; Anthony à Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, ed. P. Bliss, (Hildersheim, 4 vols., 3rd edn, 1969), iii, p. 761.

⁸ George Wither, *The Poetry of George Wither*, ed. Frank Sidgwick (London, 2 vols., 1902), i., p. xx; Charles S. Hensley, *The Later Career of George Wither* (The Hague, 1969), p. 17.

⁹ Wood, *Athenae Oxon.*, iii, p. 761; Sidgwick, *Poetry of George Wither*, i., pp. xxii-xxvii.

¹⁰ Hensley, *George Wither*, pp. 7-8; Charles Lamb, *The Works of Charles Lamb* (London, 1859), pp. 550-552.

¹¹ Michelle O' Callaghan, 'Pastoral', in M. Hattaway (ed.), *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 307-316, pp. 311-313. For both political and literary studies of the Spenserians' poetry see *The English Spenserians: The Poetry of Giles Fletcher*,

among the poet's finest, particularly his 1615 pastoral *The Shepherds Hunting*, before a dramatic decline in the quality of his output after 1625.¹² Wither's engagement with the political commentary implicit in the poetry of the Spenserians consequently reveals his loosely oppositional stance. From the outset Wither's publications demonstrate his Protestant patriotism that evoked the martial spirit of the bygone Elizabethan age in contrast to the effeminising peace of James's reign, both through the actual content of his work and the loose form and plain style of his poetry.¹³

However, literary scholarship predominantly passes over the biblical versification, which was not perceived to be the pinnacle of Wither's poetical achievements and is frequently viewed as the product of a genre-change.¹⁴ Charles Hensley asserts this most definitively, stating of Wither: 'Recognizing his social criticism in *Abuses* ineffectual and finding himself disparaged and unjustly treated, he gravitated toward a more devout religious point of view'.¹⁵ More recently, it has been recognised that the style of the psalms would have the wide appeal that Wither's poetry aimed for, but they are not seen as part of the literary reaction to the political upheavals of the 1620s.¹⁶ Whilst the fluid nature of political and religious allegiance has been asserted when identifying the seeming incongruence between Wither's secular verse and his biblical compositions, little has been done to unravel this in more detail.¹⁷ The religious verse is still viewed as a move away from the poet's earlier work, with Wither 'only returning to poetry of controversy with *Britains Remembrancer* in 1628'.¹⁸

Wither has a secure place in the history of biblical scholarship and psalmody, namely for his contribution to the theory of biblical lyric poetry in *A*

George Wither, Michael Drayton, Phineas Fletcher and Henry More, ed. William B. Hunter Jr. (Salt Lake City, 1977); *Early Stuart Pastoral*, ed. James Doelman (Toronto, 1999); Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*; O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*.

¹² See Hunter, *The English Spenserians*, pp. 111-115; Doelman, *Early Stuart Pastoral*, pp. 7-14. For a less sympathetic assessment see Joan Grundy, *The Spenserian Poets* (London, 1969), pp. 161-180.

¹³ Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, pp. 174-178, 187.

¹⁴ See Hunter, *The English Spenserians*, pp. 111-115 and Grundy, *Spenserian Poets*, pp. 163-180.

¹⁵ Hensley, *George Wither*, p. 33.

¹⁶ Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, pp. 215-217.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 217; Andrew McRae, *Literature, Satire and the Early Stuart State* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 10.

¹⁸ Doelman, *Early Stuart Pastoral*, pp. 10-13 and James Doelman, *King James I and the Religious Culture of England* (Woodbridge, 2000), p. 142; Jeffrey Shoulson, "'Propriety in this Hebrew Poesy': George Wither, Judaism, and the Formation of English National Identity", *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 98 (1999), 353-372, 356.

Preparation to the Psalter.¹⁹ Yet, likewise, this is rarely assimilated into a wider picture of Wither that incorporates his more overtly political poetry. His efforts to translate the psalms have been viewed as part of a broader early seventeenth-century ambition to supplant the much derided text of the Old Version – the semi-official Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter.²⁰ Whilst this ambition was undoubtedly crucial in motivating Wither’s biblical compositions, I suggest his desire to remodel this version stemmed more immediately from his political ideology rather than the literary concerns motivating the attempts of many others.²¹

The Reformation emphasis on new and accurate translation of biblical text instantly imbued translated psalms with a polemical aspect. The psalms themselves held special resonance for Protestants as identification with the trials and tribulations of David enabled them to visualise their current toil against the antichrist. The psalms became symbolic of their religious struggle.²² This combined with the increasingly widespread practice of congregational singing to create a characteristic association of Protestantism with vernacular psalmody.²³ The political aspect inherent in the translation itself was underlined and expanded by the partisan slant of the Protestant commentaries. This is evident in the psalms of Marot and Beza, which became the widely known 1562 Huguenot Psalter, and pronouncedly so in the annotated translation of the psalms in the Geneva Bible. This edition may have been a favourite of poets such as Sidney and Spenser, but, perhaps unsurprisingly, it was not so appealing to James who found the marginal notes ‘very partial, untrue, seditious, and savouring too much of dangerous and traitorous conceits.’²⁴ This discloses a long tradition in which

¹⁹ Barbara Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton, 1979), p. 35.

²⁰ Doelman, *King James I*, pp. 142-3; Hannibal Hamlin, *Psalms Culture and Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 52-64; David Norton, *A History of the Bible as Literature* (Cambridge, 2 vols., 1993), i., p. 275.

²¹ Richard Todd outlines the contemporary criticism of the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter and locates Wither’s efforts within what he describes as ‘a fairly concerted early seventeenth-century intellectual revolt against the ineptitude of the Old Version’. “‘So Well Attyr’d Abroad’: A Background to the Sidney-Pembroke Psalter and Its Implications for the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric’, *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 29 (1987), 74-93, 78-80.

²² Margaret P. Hannay, “‘Princes you as Men must Dy’: Genevan Advice to Monarchs in the *Psalmes of Mary Sidney*’, *English Literary Renaissance*, 19:1 (1989), 22-41, 28-31.

²³ See W. Stanford Reid, ‘The Battle Hymns of the Lord: Calvinist Psalmody of the Sixteenth Century’, *Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies*, 2 (1971), 36-54.

²⁴ Quoted in Linda Levy Peck, ‘Kingship, Counsel and Law in Early Stuart Britain’, in J. G. A. Pocock (ed.), *The Varieties of British Political Thought, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 80-

the translation of psalms was closely tied to Protestant political aspirations both internationally and closer to home.

In 1619 the confessional conflict, that had been threatening to erupt on the continent since the Reformation, was triggered by the Elector Palatine's acceptance of the Bohemian crown. As Bohemia held an imperial vote, Frederick's appointment to the throne would tip the scales in favour of the Protestant electors. To a significant proportion of Protestants across Europe the election in Bohemia inspired hope and optimism that the struggle against the Roman Antichrist was coming to a head and it concerned the whole body of the elect to participate in this effort.²⁵ It was in this apocalyptically infused international climate that I perceive Wither to have been inspired to partake in the partisan tradition of psalm translation and through which he found another avenue to vent his political disaffection.

Studies of Wither's early career and participation in the Spenserian literary community have uncovered the role that print played in pursuing political agendas. Committed to promoting humanist and Protestant values, it has been argued that the Spenserians utilised print to educate a wider audience in the duties of their civic responsibility.²⁶ This is perhaps most noticeable in Wither's directly didactic satires where his use of self-observation functions as a template for the godly citizen's interaction in a wider social context.²⁷ This can be traced throughout his early poetry and has been used to evaluate the youthful Wither's political concepts and ideological position. Like his other troublesome satire, *Abuses, Wither's Motto* functioned as a didactic mirror and embodied his vision of the ideal commonwealth by extending the lesson to a wider body than the traditional figures of the king and his courtiers.²⁸ Therefore we must understand the 'self' represented in the book as an idealised picture to provide a template to

115, p. 89. Anne Prescott remarks that James's distaste for the political commentary in the annotations prompted him to commission a new translation of the bible in his name. Anne Lake Prescott, 'Evil Tongues at the Court of Saul: the Renaissance David as a Slandered Courtier', *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 21 (1991), 163-186, 169, 173.

²⁵ Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 16-17.

²⁶ O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*, pp. 147-149; McRae, *Literature, Satire and the Early Stuart State*.

²⁷ O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*, p. 148.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157; McRae, *Literature, Satire and the Early Stuart State*, p. 102.

the godly reader.²⁹ If *Motto* is not read with this wider interpretation in mind then the impression left of Wither is that of an arrogant, narcissistic and proud character – as he may have appeared to some of his contemporaries who did indeed take exception to Wither’s self-praise. In the critical riposte to Wither in *An Answer to Withers Motto* (1625), the author concluded that such praises would make Wither happier coming from another, and so pleads: ‘Therefore desist from running forth so fast / With your owne praises, but let others cast / The mantle of reward vpon your head, / Till honour doe your vertue ouerspread’.³⁰

Continuing to trace Wither’s political use of print, Rob Browning’s insightful study of Wither’s *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne* (1635) has challenged the idea that Wither spent the 1630s in quiet contemplation and has shown instead how the *Emblemes* formed part of Wither’s political ideology. By promoting individual interpretation of the engravings through his own exemplifying approach, Wither challenged the traditional hold that the court had over emblematic language to involve a wider public in politics.³¹ Wither claimed to have begun composing the illustrations to the images some twenty years before, but problems with transporting the plates from Holland for the engravings delayed publication.³² This dates some of his work on the *Emblemes* to around the time Wither began to work on the psalms and it is clear that the same political ideology underpinned both projects. In *A Preparation to the Psalter*, Wither stated ‘*The hood makes not the Monke, neither is all knowledge tyed to a blacke gowne.*’³³ In this light Browning’s evaluation that the political element attached to the *Emblemes* was ‘in keeping with Wither’s career-long opposition to authoritarian restrictions upon discourse’³⁴ can be expanded to include his work on the psalms. Continuing to

²⁹ This reading of Wither’s own generous portrayal of himself in *Motto* was perceived by Lamb who, though finding him full of self-seeking, defined this ‘self’ as representing more, such as his friends, principles and so on. Lamb, *Works*, p. 550. See also O’Callaghan, *The ‘Shepherds Nation’*, p. 157.

³⁰ T.G., *An Answer to Withers Motto* (Oxford, 1625), sig. D2.

³¹ Rob Browning, “‘To Serve My Purpose’: Interpretive Agency in George Wither’s *A Collection of Emblemes*”, in Y. Bruce (ed.), *Images of Matter: Essays on British Literature of the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Newark, 2005), pp. 47-71. Cf. Rosemary Freeman, *English Emblem Books* (London, 1948), pp. 140-147.

³² George Wither, *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne* (London, 1635), sig. Av.

³³ George Wither, *A Preparation to the Psalter* (London, 1619), p. 21.

³⁴ Browning, ‘Interpretive Agency’, p. 65.

use the medium of print to accomplish his aim, Wither's exemplary self-applications and indicative readings in the psalm works formed part of his project to engender a godly commonwealth and enable wider interpretation beyond traditional boundaries.

Wither's intent to open up the restricted genre of psalm translation and exposition is most readily represented in *A Preparation*, which was his first publication upon the subject. The work can be situated within a Protestant trend that recognised the value of figurative language in scripture and sought to approach exposition from this perspective. But with this lengthy publication Wither aimed to counter the increasing complexity of Protestant texts on this topic, such as Flacius Illyricus's *Clavis Scripturae* (1617), by simplifying the theory and presenting it in a form whereby the less-learned folk could acquire the basic tools to understand scripture for themselves.³⁵ Wither addressed this problem directly, stating in *A Preparation* that 'those many that are in greatest want of instruction, had neede of expositors to expound their expositions.'³⁶ In Wither's opinion, popular comprehension of the psalms' spiritual meaning was very limited, despite their regular use in church services, and there is no doubt that he intended his own version to remedy this.³⁷ The form of *A Preparation* itself served to educate the readers as Wither uncovered his own methods in the translation process. That is not to say that Wither endorsed widespread popular attempts at *translation*; his attack on the 1620 psalm translation by the silk weaver, Henry Dod, underwrites this conviction.³⁸ But it is clear that he aimed to enable individual *understanding* through his provision of the required 'tools' for correct interpretation of the meaning. Wither made this clear in *A Preparation* as he promised:

that by the helpe of this simple labour of mine, men vnlearned (if they haue any reasonable measure of grace, with an indifferent naturall capacity) shall by industrious considering what is here deliuered, be

³⁵ See Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics*, pp. 78-82 on this trend.

³⁶ Wither, *A Preparation*, p. 6.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁸ Hamlin, *Psalm Culture*, p. 55.

almost able, without other helpe, to better themselues in the vse and vnderstanding of the *Psalmes*.³⁹

This sentiment is echoed throughout the course of the book and was exemplified in his *Exercises vpon the First Psalme* as Wither employed the techniques outlined in *A Preparation* to expound the meaning and uses of the first psalm. Yet the intent behind these works goes above and beyond the reclamation of exclusive discourse. For Wither, independent understanding of the psalms was crucial because of their immediate significance to the Reformed Church – a significance that he felt was often underplayed by an overemphasis on the historical setting.

Wither was determined not to undervalue the mystical significance of the psalms in favour of a solely literal reading. Although like many contemporaries Wither didactically employed the historical circumstances of David's laments, he more frequently opted to explain the meaning in terms of the prophetic reference to Christ. He blamed widespread ignorance of the true meaning partly upon the tediousness of the Old Version and partly upon the recent practice of psalm exposition 'which some have made litle pertinent to vs; by taking them [the psalms] to be meerey historical'.⁴⁰ Wither criticised this tendency in *A Preparation* where he highlighted the spiritually disruptive effects that a solely literal reading engendered as he charged such 'blind vnhappy *Separatists*, and *Sectaries*', who expounded only the literal sense, with having 'filled the world with vnnecessary Cauils, and troubled the consciences of their weake brethren'.⁴¹ Not only did the separatists' failure to comprehend the mystical understanding of the scriptures create schism between them and the Church, it also tempted weaker souls away from the righteous godly path.

Wither's emphasis on the spiritual understanding of the psalms identifies a key purpose behind these works that sought to supply a spiritual template for understanding the psalms' significance in the apocalyptic climate of the Thirty Years War. Wither's insistent reminders throughout *A Preparation* that the principal understanding of every psalm pertained to Christ or his Church aimed

³⁹ Wither, *A Preparation*, p. 6.

⁴⁰ British Library, Egerton MS 2404, fo. 6v; Wither, *A Preparation*, p. 68.

⁴¹ Wither, *A Preparation*, p. 100.

at increasing his readers' comprehension of the spiritual meaning signified in the psalms. His suggested applications of the psalms then illuminated the context in which they could be read. The immediate struggles of the Reformed Church were perceived as indicating the imminent fulfilment of the apocalyptic end prefigured in the psalms. This can be seen in Wither's preface to psalm 52 in the manuscript version of the psalms, where he explained that David had composed the psalm 'in the person of the Christian Church; who doth herein reprehend and deride the cruelty and vaine malice of Anti Christ, Prophetically declaringe, that his children shall see his destruction; and triumph over him'.⁴²

The focus of Wither's preface and meditation for psalm 35 contrasts with that of many of his contemporary expositors whose translations evoked a courtly world of defamation and slander.⁴³ For instance, the Geneva Bible locates the action directly in Saul's court, identifying David's enemies indicated in the psalm as the courtly flatterers who 'did persecute and sclander him.'⁴⁴ Keen to avoid representing the psalm as providing a scriptural precedent for revenge,⁴⁵ Wither ignored the historical context completely in his preface, introducing the psalm thus: 'It contains divers petitions, & propheticall Imprecations, concerning the Adversaries of *Christ*, & of his members; & perticularly mentioneth some of those misusages which he suffred by the Iewes.'⁴⁶ By using this preface Wither enabled a partisan reading of David's prayer to God for the destruction of his enemies: the prediction of the Church's eventual victory over their contemporary adversaries – those dual bastions of Catholic power, the papacy and the Habsburgs.

The immediate significance of this spiritual understanding is clearly shown in the dedication of the *Psalmes* to James's daughter, Elizabeth of Bohemia, whose sufferings and hardship during the war provided an especially relevant parallel to Christ's sufferings as typologically represented in the psalms.

⁴² BL, Eg. MS 2404, fo. 44v. For a discussion of this manuscript version in relation to Wither's published psalms see Pritchard, 'George Wither's *Psalms*', 73-77.

⁴³ Prescott, 'Evil Tongues at the Court of Saul', 179.

⁴⁴ *The Geneva Bible: a facsimile of the 1560 edition*, ed. L. E. Berry (Madison, 1969), p. 241, n. a.

⁴⁵ Wither had expressed his concern about those who 'irreligiously' used the example of David cursing his enemies to justify doing so themselves in *A Preparation*, where he revealed how, in his opinion, David's apparent cursing should be understood to apply to the enemies of the church of God. Therefore, in the psalms, David simply 'Prophetically pronounced the Curses, which God had decreed to bring vpon those wicked ones.' Wither, *A Preparation*, pp. 117-118.

⁴⁶ Wither, *Psalmes*, p. 65.

Wither's affection towards the princess and his Protestant expectation for her had been consistent from the outset of his career. Following only shortly after the death of Prince Henry, Elizabeth's marriage to the Elector Palatine in 1613 rejuvenated the spirits of the nation following the loss of the young, promising prince. The marriage united two Protestant powers and seemed, to many in England, to signify the start of an active foreign policy. Wither's 1613 *Epithalamia: Or Nuptiall Poems* for the Princess Elizabeth's marriage is bursting with militant Protestant spirit at the prospect of such a powerful union. He invoked Elizabethan memory with a hopeful comparison to the young Princess: 'Our last *Eliza*, grants her Noble spirit. / To be redoubled on thee; and your *names* / Being both one, shall giue you both one fames', and prophesied the great victories he – along with many hopeful Protestants internationally – saw forthcoming from this match in militant, apocalyptic language: 'And that from out your blessed loynes, shall come; / Another terror, to the *Whores of Rome*'.⁴⁷

Employing polemical examples in the 1632 dedication in the *Psalmes*, Wither applied the many afflictions of Christ-through-David to Elizabeth's adversity at the hands of the Catholics: 'He was exalted by *God*; &, yet, cast down. He was annointed [sic] *king*, & yet enjoyed not the *Kingdome*. He was driven from his owne possessions, & compelled to sojourne in a forraigne Land. *Kings & Rulers*, were confederated against him. He, was remooved from his *Kindred*...'⁴⁸ The passage unmistakably refers to Frederick and Elizabeth's misfortunes following Frederick's acceptance of the Bohemian crown. The Habsburgs had first occupied Bohemia before invading the Palatinate – the elector's own territory – and forcing the royal pair to live in exile in The Hague. There is even a suggestion of criticism towards James in the final line of this passage as he had not only refused to send official military relief, but also disallowed his daughter and son-in-law asylum in England. Yet at the same time Wither encouraged an optimistic reading of the psalms, striving to point out that 'all those *consolations, Hopes, Deliverances, promises of Mercye, Favours* enjoyed, Resolutions of *Praise, & Thanksgiving*... throughout the *Psalmes*; are in

⁴⁷ George Wither, *Epithalamia: Or Nuptiall Poems* (London, [1613]), sigs. B2v-B3; for a broad assessment of the literary reaction to the marriage in which context Wither's pamphlet is located, see George Gömöri, "'A Memorable Wedding': The Literary Reception of the Wedding of the Princess Elizabeth and Frederick of Pfalz", *Journal of European Studies*, 34 (2004), 215-224.

⁴⁸ Wither, *Psalmes*, sig. A4r-v.

a singular manner, pertinent also to you...'⁴⁹ Elizabeth could be sure her foes would be vanquished as enemies of Christ, and her prayers answered as David's were.

Wither's introduction and meditation for psalm 83 again exemplify this partisan reading of the psalms that served as a template for his fledgling independent readers, encouraging them towards a Protestant understanding of the psalms' prophecies. Psalm 83 has been described as a quintessential Protestant prayer to save the true faith from the devices of the ungodly.⁵⁰ Although Wither suggested its use against many heretical groups, including Turks and Pagans, his initial wording, 'It may be vused as a prayer against the *Leagues & Confederacies* of the *Churches* foes', must have kindled recognition of one particular enemy more than the others as the army of Catholic League had been in the field since 1619.⁵¹ Through his representative model of comprehension and exposition of the psalms, Wither promoted interest and confidence in the Protestant cause to a nation thirsting for military action in support of those Protestant heroes, Frederick and Elizabeth.

II

Wither's condemnation of a solely historical exposition did not lead him to derive purely spiritual significance from the psalms. He was rather adamant in fact that he had managed to strike the balance well, erring neither 'with those Expositors, that apply all to *Christ*, without respect vnto *Dauid* and his Kingdome; nor with those, who leaning to *Iudaisme*, expound all of *Dauid*, without any heede to the Kingdome of *Christ*.'⁵² In identifying the contemporary insights that could be derived from viewing the psalms in the context of their composition, Wither participated in a growing trend of anti-court critique. Anne Prescott has traced the developing Renaissance focus upon David as a slandered courtier at Saul's court. She demonstrates how this less well-considered aspect of David's biography was perceived and described more frequently in this period as

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, sig. A5.

⁵⁰ Hannay, 'Genevan Advice to Monarchs', 32, 36-37.

⁵¹ Wither, *Psalmes*, p. 153.

⁵² Wither, *A Preparation*, p. 24.

translators and commentators connected David's laments with the contemporary features of court life.⁵³

The psalms of Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, were not published until the nineteenth century, but they were well known through their continued manuscript circulation and have been shown to comprise the political undertones as described above.⁵⁴ The Protestant cause inherent within the translation was emphasised by their link to the Sidney-Dudley religio-political perspective. The connections of this family are reflected in the countess's choice of sources, which included the Huguenot Psalter, the Geneva bible and commentaries by Beza and Calvin.⁵⁵ Using her analysis of the psalms' political insinuations, Margaret Hannay claims that the dedication of the Psalter to Elizabeth in 1599 'served as a reminder of the duties of the godly monarch. Protestants would accept her as their David only so long as she emulated his example'.⁵⁶ Wither's identification with the psalmist and his suggested literal applications of the psalms illustrate that he too interpreted David's struggles in contemporary courtly terms.⁵⁷ Furthermore, the anti-court perspective pervading this interpretation, that employed humanist ideas on virtue, vice and true counsel, correlates with the sentiment underlying Wither's secular poetry.

As seen, Wither's anti-court attitude found particular expression through his literary involvement with the Spenserian community at the Inns of Court. The publication of his pastoral *Fidelia* in 1615 has been viewed as one product of this involvement. O'Callaghan has suggested that it can be located in the tradition of the conduct book. The denunciation of parental control over children's marriage partners drew upon analogies between public and private authority and justifies disobedience 'when reason and conscience are under threat from parental tyranny'.⁵⁸ The timing of *Fidelia*'s private publication in 1615, following Wither's imprisonment and during what Norbrook has termed the 'Spenserian revival',⁵⁹ emboldened the resonance of Wither's argument with political parallels and so locates the text easily within the oppositionist tradition of this

⁵³ Prescott, 'Evil Tongues at the Court of Saul', 164-166.

⁵⁴ Hannay, 'Genevan Advice to Monarchs', 23.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 26-30.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁵⁷ For an analysis of this style of exposition see Prescott, 'Evil Tongues at the Court of Saul'.

⁵⁸ O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*, pp. 153-155.

⁵⁹ Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, pp. 179-189.

period. This is confirmed in the text's contemporary references that suggest any manuscript in circulation had been recently revised or enlarged for its publication.⁶⁰ Yet I believe that *Fidelia* can also offer a brief insight into Wither's thought from the earliest stages of his literary endeavours. If we accept Wither's claim that some draft of *Fidelia* was 'long since pen'd', then a clearer understanding of a subtle theme is possible.⁶¹

Charting the Spenserian reaction to James's accession in 1603, Norbrook has claimed that the widespread optimism at the prospect of the new king turned to disillusionment as James made peace with Spain, relied on the unpopular Cecil and did not fulfil the promises of favour he made to such as Michael Drayton and Giles Fletcher, preferring instead the courtly style of Ben Jonson.⁶² The marginality and suffering as expressed by the female persona *Fidelia* has been equated with the position of the Spenserians in the 1610s who were exiled from court favour, and particularly Wither who had been a victim of oppressive authority.⁶³ I believe that this can be dated back to the disillusionment following James's accession, therefore revealing Wither's political sympathies almost from the outset of his career and questioning the view that he initially sought court favour in London, and only turned to satire after this endeavour had failed.⁶⁴

The form of the poem is a letter from *Fidelia* to her 'unconstant friend' who has betrayed her trust and it is through her expressions of hurt and disappointment that I believe Wither was conveying his disenchantment with the contrast between the promise and realities of James's rule. The poem is didactic in intent and Wither's use of typical humanist language to illustrate this hints at an indirect address to the king: 'I am in hope my words may proue a mirror, / Whereon thou looking, may'st behold thine error.'⁶⁵ By invoking the familiar humanist mirror analogy that functioned to educate and admonish Renaissance

⁶⁰ Wither refers at one point to the 'times' and hints at his own ill-treatment through the voice of *Fidelia*: 'Thou art acquainted with the times condition, / Know'st it is full of enuy, and suspition, / So that the war'est in thought, word, and action, / Shall be most iniur'd by foule-mouth'd detraction: / And therefore thou, me-thinks, shold'st wisely pause / Before thou credit rumors without cause.' George Wither, *Fidelia* (London, 1615), sig. B5v.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, sig. A5v. Sidgwick conjectures that the poem was probably in manuscript circulation during the early years of Wither's career in London. Sidgwick, *Poetry of George Wither*, i., p. xxiii.

⁶² Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, pp. 173-175.

⁶³ O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*, p. 154.

⁶⁴ See Hensley, *George Wither*, pp. 18-19; Hunter, *The English Spenserians*, p. 112.

⁶⁵ Wither, *Fidelia* (1615), sig. A8v.

princes, Wither intimated the possibility that his own book could be used for such a purpose, whilst the text utilised the concept for *Fidelia* to address her unfaithful lover. Further invocations of political terminology can also be seen to insinuate this parallel in disappointment, by drawing direct allusion to what the language in reality represented. In expressing *Fidelia*'s statement of regret, Wither used severe political language to illustrate his persona's strength of feeling: 'Hard was my heart: / But would't it had harder bin, / And then, perhaps, I had not let thee in, / Thou *Tyrant*, that art so imperious there, / And onely tak'st delight to *Dominere*.'⁶⁶ In passages such as this one the echo of regret seems to extend beyond the confines of the poem to represent a wider lament: the unfulfilled expectation at James's accession.

Thus his commitment to utilising his poetry in a didactic manner had formed a consistent mode of response by Wither to the predominant political anxieties relating to James's court and government. The re-edition of *Fidelia* in 1619, whose condemnation of parental choice in marriage partners had undoubtedly gained added significance by this date, and the publication of *Wither's Motto* in 1621, reveal that this motivation continued to underpin Wither's poetry at the time that he commenced work upon the psalm translation. In *A Preparation* Wither encouraged a popular reception of his religious verse by alerting his audience to its satirical content: 'Especially, if it be any pleasure vnto you, to see *Abuses whipt* againe, many of the *Psalmes* will giue so iust occasion, that I beleeeue my *Meditations* on them in *Verse*, will therein answere part of your desires.'⁶⁷ This comparison of the psalm meditations with his extremely popular and controversial satire underlines Wither's perception of the biblical verse as another avenue through which he could censure the debilitating corruptions of the age.

Wither's invocation of the psalms, and particularly the figure of David, in his poetry has not gone unnoticed. He has been identified as taking David's psalms for a poetic model, rather than Spenser's pastorals, and envisaged as reading them in 1614 'as an historical and personal drama, involving the

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, sig. B4.

⁶⁷ Wither's reference to *Abuses* was also likely to have been part of a ploy to ensure he achieved similar popular renown with his biblical translations; he was certainly aware that they were not the sort of thing his public had come to expect, as he lamented near the end of *A Preparation*: 'But, alas! I feare, these are neither the *Treatises* the world expects at my hands, nor those they care for.' Wither, *A Preparation*, sig. A2v, p. 137.

persecution of the godly under a court tyranny, that was currently being played out in his own imprisonment.⁶⁸ This personal invocation of the psalms can be traced into the 1620s throughout Wither's religious versification and beyond. In 1624 Wither directly referred to his personal use of the psalms, remarking: 'there is scarce one passage in the Psalmes of blessed Daud, concerning the combinations & practices of a malitious multitude, but I haue had occasion in a literall sense to apply the same to my Aduersaries.' Using language from the politically infused psalm 35 to support his assertion, he continued 'For, they haue rewarded me euill for good, and layd things to my charge which I knew not.'⁶⁹ For Wither this was doubly so, as by 1624 he had twice suffered imprisonment for what he claimed were the false accusations of malicious courtiers.

Wither's imprisonment for libelling practices, and his vociferous defence of his innocence, had popularised the poet's name and earned him a reputation for controversy.⁷⁰ In 1623 Chamberlain famously reported to Carleton that Ben Jonson was likely to 'heare of yt' for 'personating George Withers a poet or poetaster as he termes him, as hunting after fame by being a crono-mastix or whipper of the time, w[hi]ch is become so tender an argument that yt must not be touched either in iest or earnest.'⁷¹ During the Civil War, John Taylor accused Wither of wilfully writing such topical poetry in order to achieve the sort of popularity that Wither did in fact benefit from following his stint in the Marshalsea. Recalling a conversation the water-poet had supposedly had with Wither not long after the latter's release from prison, Taylor reported how Wither had recommended the following course of action:

*John, you must boldly doe, as I have don
Against great Persons let your Verses run,
Snarle at the State, and let your satyre's pen
Write against Government, and Noblemen.
You must run wilfully into offence,*

⁶⁸ Hunter, *The English Spenserians*, p. 113; O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*, p. 57.

⁶⁹ Wither, *Schollers Purgatory*, p. 87; see KJV Ps. 35:11-12.

⁷⁰ Wither defended himself in print in a book he penned in prison. George Wither, *A Satyre: Dedicated to his Most Excellent Maiestie* (London, 1614); Allan Pritchard, 'Abuses Stript and Whipt and Wither's Imprisonment', *The Review of English Studies*, New Ser., 14 (1963), 337-345, 344-345.

⁷¹ Chamberlain to Carleton, 25 Jan 1623, SPD 14/137, fo. 52

What though they call it sawcy Impudence,
And so Commit you for't, as they did me
Then shall you Thrive, and be as you would be;
Your Books would sell, your self get Coyn and Fame,
And then (like mine) Renown'd shall be your Name.⁷²

Wither, however, had consistently maintained that his satire had been misinterpreted and that he was the victim of the over-zealous times.⁷³ Henry Howard, earl of Northampton, has been identified as the likely candidate who took personal offence to *Abuses* in 1614. The anti-Catholic, anti-Spanish undertones in the satire immediately aligned Wither against this Catholic sympathiser and secret pensioner of Spain who had repeatedly brought charges of libel during the previous two years.⁷⁴ Extending this explanation further, David Norbrook has directly contextualised Wither's arrest within the tense political climate that surrounded the impending Parliament in 1614, claiming Northampton orchestrated his imprisonment to prevent the popular satirist from stirring up hostile opinion. This is further supported by the date of Wither's release that came only after the Parliament had ended.⁷⁵

Similarly in 1621 the government reaction to *Motto* can be viewed as part of an effort to gain the upper hand over the raging debate and growing opposition, that also saw – amongst others – the earls of Southampton and Oxford arrested.⁷⁶ The cause of the official furore over *Motto* has recently been re-evaluated. Clegg situates its publication within a trend that witnessed a spate of authors and publishers in trouble with authority between 1621 and 1624. Although she allows that *Motto* may have offended James, her ultimate explanation of the evidence rests upon the unlicensed state of the book.⁷⁷ O'Callaghan's analysis allows for both ideological and economic motives in publishing the unlicensed *Motto* in the tense atmosphere of 1621, but she

⁷² John Taylor, *Aquamusae* (Oxford, 1645), p. 8.

⁷³ See Michelle O'Callaghan, 'Taking Liberties: George Wither's *A Satyre, Libel and the Law*', in E. Sheen and L. Hutson (eds.), *Literature, Politics and Law in Renaissance England* (Basingstoke, 2005), pp. 146-169; George Wither, *Wither's Motto. Nec Habeo, Nec Careo, Nec Curo* (London, 1621), sigs. A2v, A5r-v.

⁷⁴ Pritchard, 'Abuses Stript and Whipt', 340-344.

⁷⁵ Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, p. 188.

⁷⁶ O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*, p. 186.

⁷⁷ Clegg, *PC*, pp. 184-185.

ultimately cites the book's contentious nature, which she contextualises more specifically to the summer of 1621, as the source of the ensuing trouble.⁷⁸ It is straightforward to discern that the immediate problem with *Motto* was its content as the May entry in the register is supported by Wither's own statement that Taverner refused to license it for him.⁷⁹ The grounds for this refusal are made apparent in a later examination in which the stationer, Marriott, claimed he 'went to Mr Tauerner intreateigne him to lycence the Booke, which hee refused to doe; but puttinge out of it what hee thought fitt, hee then lycenced it soe corrected'.⁸⁰ This indicates that the book was not just awaiting a licence, as the first register entry may suggest, but that it had been initially refused one and was only subsequently licensed after the personal intervention of Marriott.

From the examinations of those involved in publishing and printing Wither's *Motto* it becomes evident that the concern was to establish how the unauthorised book had come to be published and to account for its continued production and circulation.⁸¹ What the Privy Council seem to have suspected is a case of intended collusion to subvert authority in order to continue selling Wither's popular book. On 4 June 1621 the court of the Stationers Company fined Marriott, Grismand, Nicholas Okes and Augustine Mathewes for having a hand in publishing, printing and dispersing the book without entrance or licence. Marriott was fined doubly for the second impression that was printed in contempt of the company's order and for which they complained to the archbishop, who incarcerated Marriott.⁸² Following the events of 4 June, the book continued to be

⁷⁸ O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*, pp. 182-186. O'Callaghan follows Norbrook's evaluation in this contextualisation. Norbrook outlines the tense political climate following the dissolution of the first session of Parliament that summer as a contributory factor to Wither's arrest upon the grounds that the book contravened the proclamation against licentious speech: Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, p. 201.

⁷⁹ The examination of George Withers [sic], 27 Jun 1621, SPD 14/121, fo. 245.

⁸⁰ The examination of John Marriott, 10 Jul 1621, SPD 14/122, fo. 15.

⁸¹ Marriott was seemingly asked three things: why had he printed the book *knowing it had been questioned*, who had printed the 'other impressions that came out since', and who had printed the first copy. It was demanded of Grismand where he had sold them *after* it had been questioned. To Okes was likewise asked 'whether this Impression which hee made was donn before hee knew the Booke was questionned and that Marriott had ben punished for printing it'. See the examinations of Marriott, Grismand and Okes, 10 and 12 Jul 1621, SPD 14/122, fos. 15r-v, 21.

⁸² Jackson, *Court of the Stationers Company*, p. 135; Marriott's imprisonment following the court held on 4 June can be distinguished from his arrest on 27 June with Grismand and Wither. It is clear from Grismand and Okes's examinations on 10 July – the day the Privy Council ordered both Marriott and Grismand to be released – that their references to Marriott's imprisonment did not refer to his current incarceration, but to the 4 June when they were all fined. APC, vi., p. 12; SPD 14/122, fos. 15r-v, 21.

published and circulated in defiance of both the stationers and the ecclesiastical injunctions. I believe that it was in reaction to this defiance, because the uncensored *Motto* was offensive to the government, that on 26 June the Privy Council sent out a warrant to summon Wither before the Lords.⁸³

The key evidence to support this comes from Wither's examination taken 27 June at Whitehall before he was committed close prisoner to Marshalsea later that day 'until further order'.⁸⁴ Wither admitted that he had sold the book to Marriott and Grismand after it had been refused licence by Taverner and implicated the pair by stating that he had told 'the stationers that Mr Taverner had denyed him licence to print it before.'⁸⁵ This certainly explains the warrant issued also on 27 June to commit both Marriott and Grismand to Marshalsea as it appeared they had purposefully flouted licensing restrictions to get the controversial book into print.⁸⁶ Having established from Wither how the unauthorised book had come into public view, the remaining concern was to investigate the offensive contents. A leading question was asked regarding the December 1620 proclamation against licentious speech touching the state, indicating the belief that Wither had contravened this order, which the author denied. We are then given an insight into the sort of passage that Taverner may have censored in the unpublished, revised version as the examiners became more direct and asked Wither to clarify whom was meant by his 'enemies' whose downfall he had seen. Wither's recorded answers are not overly indicting – he admitted that his 'enemies' signified the earl of Northampton, but denied that 'there was any thing in his booke that toucheth the state or Gouvernement.'⁸⁷ It must not have sounded too convincing as Wither languished in prison for eight and a half months.

It was certainly clear to Wither's contemporaries that the satirist had bitten too deep and irked James personally. Joseph Mead related that Wither had been imprisoned for his *Motto* with the king threatening 'to pare his whelp's claws', whilst the critical *Answer to Withers Motto*, in contradicting the almost providential tone in the book, noted to Wither: 'If you had thought so to

⁸³ APC, v., p. 406.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 408.

⁸⁵ SPD, 14/121. fo. 245.

⁸⁶ APC, v., p. 409.

⁸⁷ SPD 14/121, fo. 245v.

displease the King, / You would haue sure forborne such rimes to sing.’⁸⁸ As is evident from the text itself, *Motto* sailed close to the wind through its contemporary allusions to political events and the political ideology developed in it, which at one point seemed to challenge the prerogative in itself and not just its abuse by ‘wicked counsellors’.⁸⁹ As such it has generated a reasonable amount of literature surrounding its contribution to the early 1620s ‘Protestant opposition’ voice, and for what it reveals about Wither’s ideology more particularly. Where there may have originally been some doubt as to the antagonistic potential of the work, more recently scholars concur upon its controversial nature, with Norbrook terming it the ‘most belligerent’ response by the Spenserians to the political crisis in the 1620s.⁹⁰

Wither’s reading of the psalms in relation to his own experiences of his corrupt age, therefore, underscores how the poet perceived the political relevance of his verse translations. In *A Preparation*, Wither employed parts of psalm 35 to highlight areas that had clearly been of use when misfortunes befell him. He advised that solace may be found ‘if the Wicked lay snares for him... if he be vniustly condemned... if he haue beene persecuted by slanderous tongues’,⁹¹ all of which resonated with the poet’s own experience. To Wither it was symptomatic of the growing problems of ‘the times’ whereby libels were made out of satires and truth-speaking poets were condemned.⁹² This personal identification was further underwritten by Wither’s translation of the psalm verse 35:11 in 1632. The common translation for verse 11 interpreted the psalmist as saying that false witnesses charged him with *things* that he did not *know*.⁹³ Wither’s own use of this translation in 1624, and again in the dedication of the

⁸⁸ Mead quoted in J. Milton-French, ‘George Wither in Prison’, *PMLA*, 45:4 (1930), 959-966, 961; T. G., *Answer to Withers Motto*, sig. C4.

⁸⁹ See below, p. 114.

⁹⁰ Lamb seemed to take Wither at his word that he intended to target vice in general, and no individuals in particular, in his satires, whilst Robert Willmott believed *Motto* to be more moral and didactic than satiric. Lamb, *Works*, p. 550; Robert A. Willmott, *Lives of Sacred Poets* (London, 1834), p. 94; Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, p. 201.

⁹¹ Wither, *A Preparation*, p. 128. See KJV, Ps. 35: 7, 11, 15.

⁹² O’Callaghan, ‘Taking Liberties’, p. 162.

⁹³ *The Geneva Bible*, p. 241; Thomas Sternhold, John Hopkins, et al., *The Whole Book of the Psalmes* (London, 1619), p. 16; KJV, Ps. 35:11-12; James VI and I/William Alexander, *The Psalmes of King David Translated by King Iames Cum Privilegio Regiae Maiestatis* (Oxford, 1631), p. 66; even the Sidney translation retains this sense: ‘Who did me wrong, against me wittnesse beare, / Layeng such things, as never in me were’. Philip Sidney and Mary Herbert, *The Psalmes of Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke*, ed. J. C. A. Rathmell (New York, 1963), p. 78.

1632 *Psalmes*, reveals that his alteration in the published translation was a conscious change, thus disclosing a direct allusion to Wither's own history. In the place of the usual sense, Wither modified verse 11 to: 'False witness rose, & charged me / With words I never said'.⁹⁴ The double exchange of *things* for *words* and *knew* for *said* only subtly alters the sense of the verse, but is significant because it becomes a reflection of Wither's experience in 1614, and again in 1621, when his satires had been interpreted to signify a meaning he did not intend; he had been charged with words he had not said (or so he claimed).⁹⁵ Through this self-referential expression Wither opened the remainder of the psalm to be read with political parallels in mind, which was reinforced by his use of loaded terminology further on in the psalm. Describing the behaviour of David's scorners, Wither translated a later verse in the psalm using vocabulary rich with political connotations: 'They seek not Peace, but *Projects* lay / For them that peaceful be'.⁹⁶

Wither's identification with the persecuted figure of David at Saul's court can be reinforced through his expressed perception of the biblical prophet. David's eventual position as king is underplayed by Wither in favour of depicting the psalmist in his shepherd-poet capacity. The differentiation between the idealised rustic life and the corrupting intrigue associated with the court was nowhere more politically expressed than through the genre of pastoral. The Spenserian poets who populated the Inns of Court had produced several collaborative pieces around 1615 in the pastoral style of their mentor. Yet, in contrast to the context of their Elizabethan predecessors, the Jacobean Spenserians' detachment from the court allowed the oppositional undercurrents of their pastoral to be invoked again in the 1620s.⁹⁷ Wither's continued participation in this genre alongside his religious versification is reflected in the re-edition of his well-known earlier works in the 1622 collection, *Iuuenilia*. The collection re-circulated such texts as his celebrated pastoral *The Shepherds Hunting* and *Fidelia*. Additionally, that same year, and whilst Wither was still in

⁹⁴ Wither, *Psalmes*, p. 66.

⁹⁵ For Wither's protestations against a libel charge see Wither, *A Satyre*.

⁹⁶ Wither, *Psalmes*, pp. 66-67. Italics mine.

⁹⁷ O' Callaghan, 'Pastoral', pp. 311-313; Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, p. 185; O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*, pp. 203-205.

prison, his early pastoral *Faire-Virtue* was entered into the Stationers' Register.⁹⁸ In updating *Faire-Virtue* for publication in 1622, Wither transformed the pastoral into a supporting statement of his professions in *Motto*. The domination of 'country' in the poem reinforced his self-exile from the court and the idealised picture of feminine virtue evoked images of Princess Elizabeth – sometimes quite explicitly – demonstrating Wither's unerring support for the Bohemian queen.⁹⁹

The soliloquy at the end of *A Preparation* underlines Wither's pastoral portrayal of David through his high estimation of the psalms as educational poetry:

But, who their Excellence in question calls?
When he shall know, they are the Pastoralls,
And heauenly Sonnets, which that Shepheard fram'd,
Who with his *Harpe*, the wicked Spirit tam'd
That rag'd in *Saul*, and sung his *Hymnes* diuine
Among the pleasant groues of *Palestine*.¹⁰⁰

By framing David in exclusively rustic terms, this passage situates the psalmist and his verses within the anti-court tradition associated with Jacobean pastoral. Additionally, his reference to the power of David's music over Saul helps to re-emphasise the period of David's life before he was crowned, and represents the aspiration that Wither had for his own poetry – the reforming power of the truth expressed in meter.

Wither's elevated view of poets found the ultimate representative in David. In his defence of translating the psalms into meter in *A Preparation*, Wither exalted the harmony of poetry with divine order and revealed the potent force in music through Davidic example. Furthermore, he made sure to exploit the literary credentials of the godly prophet and so lend weight to his own

⁹⁸ Arber, *TR*, iv, p. 64. It was entered 31 January 1622, interestingly for Marriott and Grismand who had obviously overcome any animosity created by *Motto*'s run in with authority in favour of the profits to be made from another publication from the controversial poet. For Wither's participation in the Spenserian community in the 1620s see Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, pp. 201-206 and O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*, pp. 189-190.

⁹⁹ Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, p. 202; O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*, pp. 212-213.

¹⁰⁰ Wither, *A Preparation*, p. 142.

endeavours through his identification of David in the many roles of the poet: 'Other while he takes occasion to set forth the malicious conditions of the enemies of the *Messias*, and his kingdome: then he is Satyricall. Another while he sings the sweet contentments of that shepheard with his flocke: there he maketh Pastorals.'¹⁰¹ In this view of David, the king-prophet can be more closely aligned with Wither than with James, as royal propaganda portrayed.¹⁰²

In employing the literal sense of the psalms, Wither could again mount an attack upon contemporary political culture. He identified the wide range of lessons the psalms had on offer, stating: 'Thence we may be instructed in Theologie in generall, in Prophecie, in Poesie, in Morality, in History, in Naturall Philosophie, in Astronomie, in matters Political, Oeconomicall, or whatsoever Science may be necessary for a good Christian'. He then underlined his understanding of the translation as a further instrument in his attempted reformation of morality. Enticing his audience with the promise of his controversial style, Wither stated: 'there you shall finde virtue commended, vice reprobued, goodnesse rewarded, and vnrighteousnesse punished.'¹⁰³ He put this intention into immediate effect when surveying historical uses of the psalms, where he related how they had been sung in scorn of the tyrant Julian, 'little regarding either his commands or threats where God was to be glorified'. Upholding the pious disobedience of the tale, Wither offered a politically oppositional usage of both the psalms and the history of David, as he explained how the episode had been intended as an imitation of when the psalmist had driven the evil spirit from Saul with his music.¹⁰⁴ This continues to uncover Wither's view of the psalms as applicable and contemporary, and widens our understanding of why he chose to embark upon psalm translation in this period.

It becomes clear in the psalm works that the objects of Wither's contempt were the corrupt court figures that he believed endangered the health of the commonweal. This was a recurrent theme in Wither's satirical poetry, particularly in the 1621 *Motto*, where even his plain-style and unfettered form revealed his ideological adherence to the plain and honest ways of the country

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹⁰² For the development and use of Davidic iconography in the Jacobean period see John N. King, 'James I and King David: Jacobean Iconography and its Legacy', in D. Fischlin and M. Fortier (eds.), *Royal Subjects: Essays on the Writings of James VI and I* (Detroit, 2002), pp. 421-453.

¹⁰³ Wither, *A Preparation*, p. 123.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

compared to the false and flattering manners of the court.¹⁰⁵ In the psalm translations this anti-court critique worked in the same way as his satires: to extend his didactic message, that upheld virtue and reproved vice, beyond traditional boundaries.

Exercises vpon the First Psalme delivers much of the satire that Wither had previously promised. The first psalm is not overtly political in the same way that can be said for such psalms as 12, 52 and 101.¹⁰⁶ It is a relatively short psalm exhorting the godly to stand firm in righteousness through the revelation of the undesirable fate of the wicked. Throughout his exposition, ‘the wicked’ are represented as oppressive courtiers seduced by their wealth and honour into opposing the truth and suppressing a virtuous populace. This is made transparent from the outset through Wither’s alternative suggestion that the psalm be used ‘when wee are discouraged with the prosperity of wicked worldlings (which seemes to bee the onely happy men)’, as it provided reassurance and comfort that all would receive their just desserts.¹⁰⁷ His contemporary understanding of the first psalm is nowhere more apparent than in his unravelling of verse four, which follows the King James version: ‘The vngodly are not so: but are like the Chaffe, which the winde driueth away.’¹⁰⁸ The comparison with powerful courtiers is unmistakable as Wither asserted that, although their earthly arrogance made them seem unmovable, they were chaff nonetheless. As such, not only could they expect to be tumbled restlessly by their vanity and intemperate affections, but also ‘their riches, honours, powers, and *their very place of being* (as *Dauid* saith) *shall decay, and be no more found.*’¹⁰⁹ The damning picture drawn here of the fate awaiting those who corrupted the state with their self-interested pursuits, who machinated and manipulated to maintain and advance their power, and whom Wither held in the utmost contempt, is as sharp-fanged as any of his satires.

Even royalty did not escape this satire’s tongue. Sandwiched in between a list of those mistakenly seeking blessedness from worldly things we find: ‘Kings, in their awful thrones of Soueraignty; / And vncontrould *prerogatiues* delight: / The Courtier sooths vp them in vanitie; / And thinkes it heauen to be their

¹⁰⁵ O’Callaghan, *The ‘Shepherds Nation’*, pp. 160-161.

¹⁰⁶ For an analysis of the political content in these psalms see Prescott, ‘Evil Tongues at the Court of Saul’, 169, 172, 180.

¹⁰⁷ George Wither, *Exercises vpon the First Psalme* (London, 1620), p. 8.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97. For further examples see pp. 21, 51, 106-108, 128.

Fauourite.¹¹⁰ This passage stretches beyond the classical language of overbearing favourites and goes right to the very heart of the problem: the king's 'uncontroul'd' prerogative, that encouraged a court filled with flattering parasites as they vied with one another to gain the much coveted royal favour.¹¹¹ Wither's concern over the problem of sycophantic courtiers was powerfully conveyed through his secular verse, as seen in *Motto* the following year. Scathingly, Wither criticised those 'Who wedded to their owne deuises be; / And will not counsell heare, nor danger see, / That is foretold them by their truest friends: / But rather, list to them, who for their ends / Doe sooth their fancies...'¹¹² In the context of the Spanish match politics, Wither here tackled the issue of James's incomprehensible course of action, painting the king as the driving force behind the 'danger'. It reinforces the detachment from court that the Spenserians felt during the Jacobean period and is here manifested in the failure of the king to listen to their truth-speaking words in favour of self-interested yes-men, and continues to reveal Wither's consistent complaint that the truth was no longer adequate grounds for defence.¹¹³

One example from the 1632 publication continues to reveal Wither's political application, but also allows a deeper insight into his political thought. Prescott has described psalm 101 as the 'norm' against which the critical deviations in the Protestant translations and commentaries were contrasted.¹¹⁴ It was usually taken to represent David's future palace and meditations on his style of kingship.¹¹⁵ Differing from the emphasis such translations as the Geneva bible put upon the role of David in this psalm, Wither took it out of historical context and transposed the meaning to Christ. In this capacity the psalm therefore represents to Wither the makings of the perfect earthly government, which becomes evident from his introductory statement to psalm 101: 'It personates

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

¹¹¹ Through a condemnation of the oppressive behaviour of certain courtiers, Wither reflected how this loses the king his subjects' affection and implicates the unpredictable nature of the prerogative: 'By Vertue of his *Name*, they perpertrate / A world of Mischeifes: They abuse the State'. Wither, *Motto*, sig. D5r-v. See also O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepheards Nation'*, p. 196; McRae, *Literature, Satire and the Early Stuart State*, p. 103.

¹¹² Wither, *Motto*, sig. B6.

¹¹³ See Wither's public plea to the king in Wither, *A Satyre*; O'Callaghan, 'Taking Liberties', p. 162.

¹¹⁴ Prescott, 'Evil Tongues at the Court of Saul', 180.

¹¹⁵ For analyses of alternative Protestant translations of this psalm and the political commentary conveyed through it see Prescott, 'Evil Tongues at the Court of Saul', 180; Hannay, 'Genevan Advice to Monarchs', 37-41.

Christ proposing the divine, morall, political, & Oeconomical dutie of good Princes'.¹¹⁶

Rather than reading the psalm as a portrait of *kingship*, however, it is clear that Wither broadened the message to include magistrates and other authority figures. His recommendation on the best use of this psalm was 'at the Coronation of Kings, or when Magistrates, are admitted into their places'¹¹⁷, which directly established the political nature of the psalm but also collapsed the exclusivity of kingly authority. This was reflected in Wither's meditation upon the origins of authority: 'Oh Lord God! all Authoritie is from thee; and, thou placest good *Magistrates & Governours*, both in *church & commonwealth*, for a blessinge: or, permittest Tirants, Fooles, & corrupt persons, for the punishment of a wicked people.'¹¹⁸

By establishing this kingly manifesto as representative of all divinely sanctioned authority, Wither engaged with contemporary political argument that sought to justify resistance through the division of divinely ordained power into superior and inferior magistrates.¹¹⁹ The suggestion that Wither viewed authority as based upon a mixture of divinely appointed princes and magistrates, is echoed in the final prayer asking: 'that they whome thou settest over us...be alwaies, good examples (in life & conversation) both to their Equalls & Inferiors.'¹²⁰ Not only does this suggest a balance of authority, but it also removed from princes their assumed *delegation* of authority to officials such as judges.

III

When Wither halted his work on the psalms between 1621 and 1624 he turned his attention to putting other biblical songs into meter, which he claimed was at

¹¹⁶ Wither, *Psalmes*, p. 187. This contrasts to the Geneva translation that has as the psalm's introduction: 'Dauid describeth what gouernement he wil obserue in his house and kingdome.' *The Geneva Bible*, p. 257.

¹¹⁷ Wither, *Psalmes*, p. 187.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 187. This commentary can again be contrasted with that of the Geneva translation, the notes of which focused the attention on David and expounded the significance in contemporary courtly terms. See for example the note to verse 5 (that was rendered 'Him, that priuely sclandereth his neighbour, wil I destroie') says: 'In promising to punish these vices, which are moste pernicious in them that are about Kings, he declareth that he wil punish all'. *The Geneva Bible*, p. 257, n. d.

¹¹⁹ See ch. 1, pp. 28-29.

¹²⁰ Wither, *Psalmes*, p. 188.

the instigation of a member of the clergy.¹²¹ The instructive prefaces that Wither provided for each song in these publications likewise functioned as exemplary lessons in how to derive significance from the scriptures for the budding members of his envisioned godly commonwealth. This is signified directly in Wither's foreword to the clergy in the first song book, *The Songs of the Old Testament* (1621). Here Wither explained that he had prefaced each translation so that those who enjoyed the songs 'may not make mere sensual Musicke, but expresse melody both acceptable to God and profitable to themselues, by knowing the Vse, and meaning of what they sing.'¹²² It was crucial for Wither that, as with the psalms, these songs were not sung in ignorance of their true meaning. This motivation carried through to the 1623 *The Hymnes and Songs of the Church* where his prefaces continued to provide examples of how to derive significance from the songs. But, as with the *Psalmes*, these song books from the early 1620s went further than simply extending understanding to the populace. Wither's exemplary prefaces encouraged comprehension from a Protestant perspective and his constant reminders to employ suitable applications were intended to evoke parallels with the current international Protestant plight.

By again emphasising the spiritual meaning over the literal sense of the songs, Wither was able to prioritise the lasting significance therein and so insinuate a partisan reading. As he stated in *Songs of the Old Testament* 'each Song doth appertaine vnto vs, vpon some occasions, in this age of the Church, as properly as it did to them, for whom they were first composed.'¹²³ By then highlighting the especial purpose of singing these for their own specific time, 'the last Ages', Wither overtly alluded to the apocalyptic battle that had just begun and was even more poignant following the Protestant defeat by the Habsburgs at White Mountain in November 1620. Wither's intention to dictate a Protestant reading of his songs is reaffirmed in the preface to the First Song of Moses where he imbued the parallels with political resonance: '*Pharaoh*... was a Tipe, both of *Antichrist*, a temporall aduersarie of the Church; and of ouremie the Deuill'. Wither then immediately translated the spiritual significance of the Israelites' deliverance, stating 'For, this preservation of theirs, was a tipe of our

¹²¹ George Wither, *The Songs of the Old Testament* (London, 1621), sig. A3; Wither, *Schollers Purgatory*, p. 13.

¹²² Wither, *Songs of the Old Testament*, sig. A3; Doelman, *King James I*, p. 145.

¹²³ Wither, *Songs of the Old Testament*, sig. A3v.

deliuerance from the bondage of our Spirituall Aduersaries' and continued on to suggest that the song may be well used 'vpon some temporall deliuerances.'¹²⁴ The preface to part one of *Hymnes and Songs* echoes this political reading as Wither denied that the songs were impertinent to their own age. He invoked scriptural evidence to show that neither the writings nor the actions of those times were done for their own sake, but for the profit of later times.¹²⁵

Yet denominationally this last book seems removed from the style of militant Protestantism with which Wither's satires – and his psalm works – can be associated. The Stationers Company charged *Hymnes and Songs* with popery and with furthering superstition due to the spiritual songs composed for saints' days and seasonal rituals, and Wither was lumped with Richard Montagu as part of an anti-Calvinist front.¹²⁶ This has been echoed in subsequent scholarship. Most notably, David Norbrook detects a distinct Arminian cast to Wither's religious verse: the ceremonial form restricted his poetry in a manner not usually followed by the Spenserians; and the promotion of verse in services without scriptural sanction went against Calvinist opinion.¹²⁷ Furthermore, Clegg confirms the anti-Calvinist attitude exposed in *Hymnes and Songs* through Wither's clear appreciation for ceremonialism and his joint condemnation of papists and schismatics, finding his offence at the charges of popery disingenuous.¹²⁸ However, it is clear that these songs also represent consistency in both Wither's religio-political thought and the place of his own works within this ideology, and so render the categorisation as outlined above less clear cut and less indicative of directional change in Wither's outlook. Through the unifying and spiritually renewing capacity of these songs Wither sought to lend weight to the Protestant cause, at the mercy of religious schism both within England and internationally.

Part two of *Hymnes and Songs* comprised original spiritual songs for observable occasions in the Church. Through Wither's defence of the book, and the content itself, the uncharacteristic nature of the work can be assimilated into his resolute commitment to international confessional politics. In the preface to

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹²⁵ George Wither, *The Hymnes and Songs of the Church* (London, 1623), p. 1.

¹²⁶ Wither, *Schollers Purgatory*, p. 18 (mis-pag. as 22); Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, pp. 217-218.

¹²⁷ Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, p. 216.

¹²⁸ Clegg, *PC*, p. 48.

the second part of the book Wither justified commemorating the principal parts of the Redemption in anticipation of his Protestant detractors. He claimed this was not idolatry, superstition or idleness 'But a Christian and warrantable observation, profitably ordained, that things might bee done in order; that the vnderstanding might be the better edified: that the memorie might be the oftner refreshed; and that the deuotion might be the more stirred vp.'¹²⁹ The observation of commemorations in the Church was in Wither's opinion worthwhile for the spiritual health of its members. Likewise, his songs functioned in a similar way – to ease remembrance, renew spiritual sentiment and educate in understanding, both literally and (more importantly) spiritually. This purpose was reiterated in *The Schollers Purgatory* in 1624 where Wither claimed that he intended to increase unity within the Church and inspire in the general populace 'that obedience and reuerence, which they ought to expresse towards the pious ordinances of the Church.'¹³⁰ One key way that Wither believed his book could achieve this was through the variety of songs it offered and its selection of new tunes that had been provided by Orlando Gibbons, composer and organist of the Chapel Royal, that stood in contrast to the tiresome sole use of the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter.¹³¹

From these defences of his ceremonial songs it is clear that Wither desired to see a united and renewed Church. This can be viewed in part as a reaction to the growing divisions within the Church of England as stricter Calvinists protested against the infiltration of a more ceremonial form of worship, which they termed Arminian.¹³² Wither's expressed opinion on Church authority and religious schism uncovers his anxious perception of these disruptions. In an effort to avoid antagonising religious sensitivities, Wither maintained a commitment to the Church's authority, which he stated was 'to be followed without exception, in all things which the Scriptures haue left either doubtfull, or vtterly vnmentioned.'¹³³ Furthermore, he held the two extremities of papist and schismatic as dangerous to the Church, using the popular analogy

¹²⁹ Wither, *Hymnes and Songs* (1623), p. 123.

¹³⁰ Wither, *Schollers Purgatory*, p. 14.

¹³¹ Wither, *Hymnes and Songs* (1623), sig. O5v; J. R. Watson, *The English Hymn: A Critical and Historical Study* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 60-61.

¹³² See Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987).

¹³³ Wither, *A Preparation*, p. 53. For further examples see pp. 25, 88.

of Christ between two thieves to describe the grievous position of the Church of England.¹³⁴ Yet it was Wither's conception of the Church in international terms, in which he identified the plight of foreign Protestants as England's own, that provided the principal ideological context in which his calls for unity functioned. It was during the frustrating years of English peace and diplomacy with Spain, whilst the Habsburg army chastised German Protestants and attempted to suppress the Netherlands, that Wither composed these hymns. Thus, through a unified Church that recognised itself as part of the larger Reformed community, England would surely lend military support to her Protestant neighbours, whose victory was foreseen in the songs. This understanding identifies Wither with those advocating what Simon Adams has termed 'political Puritanism' in this period and rests much more easily with the ideological undercurrents of Wither's satirical and pastoral poetry.¹³⁵

Therefore, Wither's emphasis on stirring up affection and strengthening faith can be understood both in terms of persuasion to the cause and reassurance to the anxious. The preface to song 3 in the *Hymnes and Songs* encapsulates both of these encouragements as Wither invoked God's deliverance of the Israelites to give courage to those of weak faith, stating: 'in these times of feare and wauering, we may also by this memorable example of *Gods* prouidence, strengthen our faith...'. Whilst this faith was often weakened by their adversaries, Wither continued to buoy Protestant spirits as he went on to explain that the song's ending also applied to their own enemies, 'Who shall (doubtlesse) be at last shamefully ruined'.¹³⁶ This militant approach to exposition is reaffirmed in Wither's topically providential hymn in thanksgiving for public deliverances, as well as in his song for celebrating peace.¹³⁷ Immediately followed by a song for victory, his hymn for peace carries an implicit condemnation of complacency and moral degeneration. Perceiving that 'men most commonly abuse [peace] to the dishonour of God, and their ruine', Wither

¹³⁴ Wither, *Schollers Purgatory*, p. 14. See also Wither, *Exercises*, p. 130, where he condemned both the 'formall shewes, of zealous sanctitie' and the 'way of their owne merits' as paths to salvation.

¹³⁵ Simon L. Adams, 'The Protestant Cause: Religious Alliance with the European Calvinist Communities as a Political Issue in England, 1585-1630' (Unpublished DPhil Thesis, Oxford, 1973).

¹³⁶ Wither, *Hymnes and Songs* (1623), p. 11.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 187-189, 201-203.

upheld his song as providing more occasion ‘to vs...who about all other Nations haue tasted the sweetnesse of this benefit’ to meditate upon God’s evident mercy.¹³⁸ The song itself reflected Wither’s international Protestant perspective through a familiar illustration of war’s horrors that was followed by a plea to God ‘to pittie those, / In this distresse that be’, before expressing the hope that continued peace in England ‘make vs may / More thankfull, not Secure.’¹³⁹ Wither’s final caveat invoked the sentiment of the contemporary pamphlet polemic that strove to awaken England from her peaceful slumber and force her to recognise the threat posed by Spain.¹⁴⁰

IV

It is in light of this reading of Wither’s religious verse that the poet’s pursuit and receipt of the royal patent in 1623 is to be understood. James issued the patent to Wither on 17 February 1623, which granted the poet a 51-year copyright over his book, *Hymnes and Songs*, and additionally stipulated that it should be bound up with every metrical psalm-book henceforth. The abstract of the patent seems to indicate James’s appreciation of the spiritual value appertaining to the book, as it states: ‘having perused and taken particular notice of the said Booke, conceiueth the same, tending to the glory of God, and helpfull towards the encrease of Christian Knowledge and Deuotion in His Dominions’, suggesting that perhaps the king saw in *Hymnes and Songs* the unifying potential that Wither himself had intended.¹⁴¹ Yet, initially, Wither’s acceptance of the patent appears to be a hypocritical *volte-face* when viewed against his career-long condemnation of the patronage system that required (often false) flattery in return for favour.¹⁴²

Wither’s vehement profession of a free and independent mind throughout his poetry demonstrates his refusal to bend to corrupt power and authority through writing servile poetry. This functioned in part to deny victory to his

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 202-203.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 201-203. For this language see Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 26-29, 41-43; Thomas C. Fulton, ‘“The True and Naturall Constitution of that Mixed Government”: Massinger’s *The Bondman* and the influence of Dutch Republicanism’, *Studies in Philology*, 99 (2002), 152-178.

¹⁴¹ The full abstract of the patent is printed in W. W. Greg (ed.), *A Companion to Arber* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 212-213.

¹⁴² See particularly the preface to *Fidelia*, which presents an example of Wither attempting to generate an income from his work within the bounds of his honour and rank, and without resorting to flattery or other ‘base courses, sutes, and enterprises, by which some men (now of great account) haue encreased and raised their fortunes’. Wither, *Fidelia* (1615), sigs. A3-A7.

enemies through his physical imprisonment.¹⁴³ The attribution of two copied verses to Wither, in which this independent spirit is exhibited, in a contemporary verse miscellany suggests this defiant attitude had become synonymous with the controversial poet. One, described as ‘Wither’s song he made in prison’, echoes Wither’s argument in *A Satyre*:

Yet there’s another comfort in my woe
My cause is spread and all the world doth know
my faults’ noe more [...] then speaking truth & reason
noe debt, noe theft, noe murder, Rape nor treason
And then my mind in spight of prison free
for where she pleaseth any where can bee
she’s in an houre in Rome, France, Turkey, Spayne
on Earth, in Hell, in Heauen and here againe¹⁴⁴

He here scorned his inflicted punishment by emphasising his freedom of mind, which he then continued to assert would comfort him in the worst of times.

Wither also consistently denounced courtiers’ preference for flattery, rather than his own truth-speaking lines, stating in 1621:

A rush *I care not* who condemne me;
That sees not what, my Soules intentions be.
I care not though to all men knowne it were,
Both whom I loue or hate; For none I feare.
I care not though some Courtyers still preferre,
The Parasite, and smooth tongu’d Flatterer,
Before my bold, truth-speaking *Lines*; And here,

¹⁴³ Wither, *A Satyre*, sig. A4-A5, A7r-v

¹⁴⁴ Edinburgh University Library, Edinburgh, MS H.P. Coll. 401, fo. 61. Cf. Wither, *A Satyre*, sigs. A7v, B, D4V. Peter Beal casts doubt on Jackson’s attribution of these verses to Wither, noting Jackson’s unreliability in these matters. However, I believe the content lends remarkable weight to Jackson’s attribution as the verses closely reflect Wither’s language and sentiment as found in his printed works of this time. See Peter Beal (ed.), *Index of English Literary Manuscripts, 1625-1700* vol. 2, pt 2 (London, 1993), p. 641. The other verse in this miscellany begins with Wither’s classic line, also in *The Shepherds Hunting*: ‘My minds my k[ing]dome & I will permit / noe other will to haue the rule of it’. Hunter suggests Edward Dyer’s influence on this thesis in *The Shepherds Hunting*: Hunter, *The English Spenserians*, p. 113.

If these should anger them, *I doe not care*.¹⁴⁵

The defiant Wither here again inveighed against what he perceived as the prevailing climate, whereby corrupt courtiers made speaking the truth a libellous occupation. As late as 1622 he was proudly asserting his independence to please himself and eschewing the offerings of the court as he boasted: ‘my pleasures are mine owne, / And to no mans humours tyed. / You oft flatter, soothe, and faine, / I, such basenesse doe disdain: / And to none, be slaue I would, / Though my fetters might be gold.’¹⁴⁶ Castigating the court dependents whose fortunes relied on those of their patrons, Wither revelled self-righteously in his commitment to being bound to no man for his favours. His expression of this in his *Motto*, written just two years before the patent, rebuked even honest undertakings that required suspect means to attain due favour.¹⁴⁷

Therefore, historical speculation that the patent went some way to buying Wither’s silence and loyalty on the day Prince Charles left for Madrid presents a picture of Wither at odds with his own protestations.¹⁴⁸ Scholarly focus has traditionally centred upon the decade-long dispute between Wither and stationers over implementing the patent’s unpopular additional clause on binding.¹⁴⁹ In a recent analysis, Clegg has revised the dominant understanding of this dispute as concerning authorial rights and the infringement of the stationers’ monopoly, instead outlining the contentions in primarily religious terms. In its efforts to advance the ideology of a growing number of influential Arminian prelates, who saw in Wither’s book an opportunity to further their own anti-Calvinist

¹⁴⁵ Wither, *Motto*, sig. C8v.

¹⁴⁶ George Wither, *Faire-virtue, the Mistresse of Phil'arete* (London, 1622), sig. N.

¹⁴⁷ Revealing his strong distaste for the way that favours were awarded in the Jacobean court, and proclaiming his determination to keep his own unrestrained poetry far and above such unscrupulous practices, Wither wrote: ‘Had I some honest Suite; the gaine of which, / Would make me noble, eminent, and rich: / And that to compasse it, no meanes there were / Vnlesse I basely flatter’d some great Peere; / Would with that Suite, my ruine might I get: / If on those termes I would endeaour it.’ Wither, *Motto*, sig. B2r-v.

¹⁴⁸ Norbrook views the patent as part of a balancing act on James’s behalf, stating: ‘it did have the effect of largely neutralizing Wither politically in the final years of his reign.’ Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, pp. 215-217; O’Callaghan speculates that ‘the patent was possibly meant to ensure Wither’s loyalty and silence during a difficult period for the crown’ but the success of this came from the controversy it caused with the Stationers rather than Wither’s deference. O’Callaghan, *The ‘Shepherds Nation’*, pp. 212-213.

¹⁴⁹ For the quarrel with the stationers see Loewenstein, ‘Wither and Professional Work’; N. E. Carlson, ‘Wither and the Stationers’, *Studies in Bibliography*, 19 (1966), 211-5; Allan Pritchard, ‘George Wither’s Quarrel with the Stationers: An Anonymous Reply to *The Schollers Purgatory*’, *Studies in Bibliography*, 16 (1963), 28-43.

programme, she describes the patent as protecting ‘a liturgical Trojan horse that cached ceremonialism inside scripture’. In this reading, the stationers’ objection to the patent centres on this underlying Arminian agenda that may have threatened the sale of their psalters, when bound to Wither’s book, to their fervently Calvinist buyers and sat uncomfortably with the publishing record of the more staunchly Calvinist stationers themselves.¹⁵⁰ To Clegg, then, Wither’s part in circulating his work, and even procuring the patent, is reduced to simple financial motives and any ideological agenda is sidelined by the machinations of clerics such as Neile and Andrewes. It is clear that financial motives were certainly a predominant factor in pushing Wither to procure the copyright, but he did not stray far outside the bounds of his principles in doing so.¹⁵¹ On one level it prevented him ‘selling his lines’ to the highest bidder. On another it demonstrated a fair and honest use of the prerogative that bypassed the base and factious route to favour through the ranks of courtiers. In addition to receiving the copyright that he had requested, Wither willingly accepted the bonus binding clause. The stipulation on binding allowed an extensive public distribution of the work, whose attachment to the official Psalter would assist dramatically in achieving the aim Wither had intended.

Perhaps ultimately Wither sought his patent as the due reward for his labour undertaken for the health and wellbeing of the commonwealth and for the unity of their church; rewards that were usually usurped by the monopolist stationers.¹⁵² A commendatory verse by Wither in 1623, in praise of Charles Butler’s book on bees, underwrites this concept of his political motivation towards writing. The bee trope throughout history had often been invoked to reflect on human nature; these chaste and laborious creatures were perceived to represent the perfect political system from many differing perspectives.¹⁵³ In his treatise on bees, *The Feminine Monarchie*, Charles Butler used nature to

¹⁵⁰ Clegg, *PC*, pp. 48-49.

¹⁵¹ In a letter to Charles composed not long after his release from prison Wither requested the prince’s help in mediating with James to help alleviate his dire financial straits. See Allan Pritchard, ‘An Unpublished Poem by George Wither’, *Modern Philology*, 61 (1963), 120-121.

¹⁵² Wither, *Schollers Purgatory*, p. 5. See also Loewenstein, ‘Wither and Professional Work’.

¹⁵³ Danielle Allen outlines how the example of bees was invoked to commend rather differing forms of government throughout history, from Virgil’s praise of monarchy, and the communitarian view used by Christians, to the polemical use that projected an egalitarian view during the French Revolution. Allen, ‘Burning *The Fable of the Bees*: The Incendiary Authority of Nature’, in L. Daston and F. Vidal (eds.), *The Moral Authority of Nature* (Chicago and London, 2004), pp. 74-99, pp. 74-76.

underpin ideas of order and government by projecting human values onto his analysis. Butler's work thus functions in part as a manifesto of political perfection.

It initially would seem that Butler was reinforcing the vision of monarchical authority that James was busy propagating, as he celebrated the unparalleled virtues of a monarchy and the bees' practice of it, stating: 'For the Bees abhorre as well Polyarchie, as Anarchie, God hauing shewed in them vnto men, an expresse patterne of A PERFECT MONARCHIE, THE MOST NATVRAL AND ABSOLUTE FORME OF GOVERNMENT.'¹⁵⁴ Reaffirming in nature, the archetype of God's plan, that monarchy was the divine conception for the government of mankind, Butler conveyed his support for James. Similarly, when admiring the continual labour pattern of the bees, Butler revealed some of the ways in which the perfect government functioned by noting appreciatively what the community of the hive achieved and then stating: 'And all this vnder the gouernment of one Monarch, of whom aboute all things they haue a principall care and respect, louing, reuerencing, and obeying her...in all things'.¹⁵⁵ A sentiment that James would surely have commended amidst the atmosphere of dissent in London in 1623.¹⁵⁶

Such overtly monarchical statements seem at odds with the sort of book we may have expected Wither to commend. Yet there are certain aspects of the bees' political organisation that require a reconsideration of the initial reading of Butler's conception of perfect government. First of all Butler determined the bees' order to be that of a commonwealth 'since all that they doe is in common, without any priuate respect.'¹⁵⁷ His definition carried an implicit critique of England's commonwealth that was serviced by self-seeking officials, and was likely to be a pleasing sentiment to Wither, whose Protestant humanist values promoted a virtuous citizenship working together for a godly commonwealth.¹⁵⁸ This is re-emphasised later on when Butler judged bees' valour as superior to

¹⁵⁴ Charles Butler, *The Feminine Monarchie: Or the Historie of Bees* (London, 1623), sig. B2v.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, sig. Bv.

¹⁵⁶ This was the year that saw the circulation of the king's verses in answer to the increasing volume of libels attacking his policies. See ch. 1, pp. 39-40.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, sig. Bv.

¹⁵⁸ For an overview of the virtues increasingly associated with the ideal of the 'public man' in early Stuart England, including the promotion of public interest over private gain, and the growing identification of this attitude with the concept of 'country' as opposed to 'court', see Cust, 'Public Man'.

man's as the former will not quarrel as men will over private injuries, but will instantly 'enter the field' in defence of prince and commonwealth.¹⁵⁹

Secondly it transpires that the queen bee is 'elected'. Using political language in his description of the process by which the queen is chosen, Butler revealed how the bees act collectively in the interest of their commonwealth through the manner in which their government functions. As the queen produced several 'princes', to guarantee succession, it was necessary for the bees to eliminate multiple survivors to ensure they had only one monarch. Butler explained it thus: 'then, lest the multitude of Rulers should distract the vnstable Commons into factions, within two daies after the last swarme... you shall finde the superfluous Princes dead before the Hiue.'¹⁶⁰ Admitting the menace of the mob and the destructive potential of factions, Butler nevertheless revealed that sovereignty ultimately rested with the multitude who worked in the interests of the community by electing one prince to rule them.¹⁶¹

Finally, having described the best form of government as represented by the bees, Butler intimated that it did not constitute a reflection of England's monarchy, or anyone else's, stating: 'All which hee that seriously considereth, must with admiration acknowledge that singular wisdom, order, and gouernment in them, which in no other creature, man onely excepted, (*if yet to be excepted*) is to be found.'¹⁶² Butler's misgivings over man's attempt to imitate the order of nature indicate a commitment to elective monarchy but with lessons still to be learned in how to perfect it.

In praise of the treatise, Wither's commendatory verse agreed with the author that bees provide the natural image of divine will and offer a worthier lesson in philosophy 'Than all those tedious *Volumes*, which, as yet, / Are leaft vnto vs by mere *Humane-wit*.'¹⁶³ Amongst the many things Butler's book touched upon concerning the nature of bees, it was mainly for their political lessons that Wither found these creatures so instructive, as they worked virtuously (and laboriously, as any good Protestant should) for the benefit of the

¹⁵⁹ Butler, *Feminine Monarchie*, sig. C4.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, sig. B2v.

¹⁶¹ This employment of political language continued throughout Butler's elaboration upon the election process. He noted how the bees take two to three days to decide which prince to keep 'vntill one of them being deposed, they be vnited in the other.' *Ibid.*, sig. B2v.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, sig. B3v. Italics mine.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, sig. A2.

whole. With a sense of admonition to England at large in 1623, Wither noted 'How stoutly they their *Common-good* defend'.¹⁶⁴ The contribution and content of the commendatory verse to *The Feminine Monarchie* demonstrates that Wither valued the didactic aspect of nature, especially that of creatures such as bees and ants that highlighted for him the importance of labouring for the benefit of the common good.¹⁶⁵ This principle can be seen to underpin Wither's published works, as he aimed to educate and engender a more virtuous commonwealth through his 'labour' of composing didactic poetry.

V

Wither's hymns functioned as remembrancers to the Redemption in the same way that he intended his satires as remembrancers to virtue. He hoped that these Christ-focused songs would work to unify weak and dissenting opinion and encourage a renewed spiritual vigour in order to strengthen the Protestant Church in preparation for the ultimate battle against the temporal antichrist. On a more instructive level, the psalms and Old Testament songs aimed to equip his godly readers with the tools to comprehend the scripture. By emphasising the spiritual significance of the verses, Wither demonstrated how to derive hope and prophecy in the context of the continental war, whilst his personal employment of the psalms continued to build upon the anti-court criticism of his Spenserian poetry. Sadly for Wither, the publications received neither the response he had hoped for nor the widespread circulation that the patent had commanded. He could not get the psalms published until 1632 – and even then, only in the Netherlands. Meanwhile, Wither complained that the *Hymnes and Songs* received nothing but abuse in the taverns due to the machinations of the stationers, who remained determined in their efforts to castigate the book and prevent fulfilment of the patent's binding clause.¹⁶⁶ Yet this did not prevent

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, sigs. Av-A2.

¹⁶⁵ Wither's equal estimation of ants and bees is evident in his verse when he considered that they offered better instruction than philosophy books as they did not just give roles, like the latter, but taught men 'how to live'. *Ibid.*, sig. A2. Cf. Scott's employment of ants as an analogy from nature in his appreciative representation of the Dutch Republic. Thomas Scott, *The Belgicke Pismire* ([Holland], 1622). See also ch. 6, p. 254.

¹⁶⁶ Wither, *Schollers Purgatory*, p. 51.

Wither from continuing on to a prolific and lengthy career that was to see him imprisoned on several further occasions for his bold satirical writing.¹⁶⁷

Examining Wither's religious works in the international context of their composition identifies a consistency of purpose throughout his poetry and resolves the troubling incongruence that the independent approaches to Wither's secular and religious verse have created. With the inconsistency removed, Wither's writings provide an insight into the nature of early Stuart political thought. The religious verse can be seen as originating from the same ideology that underwrote the poet's continuous and vehement defence of the parliamentary cause during the Civil War.¹⁶⁸ Whilst doctrinally *Hymnes and Songs* cannot be aligned with the strict Calvinism that often characterised early 1620s opposition, its consistency with Wither's political outlook uncovers the diversity inherent within this group, and complicates the degree to which denominational adherence predicted allegiance in this period.

¹⁶⁷ L. H. Kendall, 'George Wither in Prison', *Notes and Queries*, 3 (1956), 147-149.

¹⁶⁸ For an assessment of Wither's political radicalism in the 1640s see David Norbrook, 'Levelling Poetry: George Wither and the English Revolution, 1642-1649', *English Literary Renaissance*, 21 (1991), 217-256.

Critical Theatre:

Civic Responsibility in the Early Plays of Philip Massinger

Philip Massinger's reputation for suffusing his plays with political commentary is well-established, if contested in its details. He collided with the Master of the Revels for alluding to contentious subject matter on three notable occasions over the course of his literary career, which saw his involvement in the composition of around fifty plays either through collaboration, revision or sole authorship.¹ Topicality has been consistently identified in his drama since Samuel Gardiner made Massinger the subject of a contextual reading in the nineteenth century, but consensus over his political thought remains more elusive.² Described varyingly as a democrat, an aristocratic monarchist and a proponent of a mixed constitution with a heavy parliamentary bias, the historiography on Massinger reveals the playwright to be nothing if not ambivalent in his representation of political authority.³ Furthermore, a certain ambiguity characterises the understanding of Massinger's religious outlook, as an early historiographical identification of him as Roman Catholic has been suppressed in more recent scholarship to align him with the vocal Protestant opposition to the Spanish match.⁴

Massinger commenced writing plays of sole authorship around 1621-22. By mid-1624 he had produced four plays, *The Duke of Milan*, *The Maid of Honour*, *The Bondman* and *The Renegado*, of which the last three in particular have been widely linked to the contemporary political context of the match.⁵

¹ T. A. Dunn, *Philip Massinger: The Man and the Playwright* (London, 1957), p. 25.

² Samuel R. Gardiner, 'The Political Element in Massinger', *Contemporary Review* (1876), 495-507. The detached manner in which Massinger is perceived to have broached contemporary issues has led some of his literary critics to challenge the political function that Gardiner identified in his plays. Annabel Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Reading and Writing in Early Modern England* (Wisconsin, 1984), pp. 87-89. Cf. also Allen Gross, 'Contemporary Politics in Massinger', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 6 (1966), 279-290.

³ See Samuel Taylor Coleridge in Martin Garrett (ed.), *Massinger: The Critical Heritage* (London, 1991), p. 124; Dunn, *Massinger*, pp. 163-176; Ira Clark, *The Moral Art of Philip Massinger* (London, 1993), pp. 84-85.

⁴ William Gifford seems first to have made this assumption. See Dunn, *Massinger*, pp. 49-50. Cf. Claire Jowitt, "'I am Another Woman": The Spanish and French Matches in Massinger's *The Renegado* (1624) and *The Unnatural Combat* (1624-5)', in A. Samson, (ed.), *The Spanish Match: Prince Charles's Journey to Madrid, 1623* (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 151-171. See below, pp. 131-133.

⁵ With the exception of *The Bondman*, there are some issues in accurately dating these plays. See Philip Massinger, *The Plays and Poems of Philip Massinger*, eds. P. Edwards and C. Gibson (Oxford, 5 vols, 1976), i., pp. 105-106, 199-200, ii., 1-2.

Topical allusions perceived in these plays have elicited attempts to map them to the politics of the changing court factions and alliances accompanying the course of the marriage negotiations. Massinger's political commentary has thus tended to be linked to the Protestant opposition at court that was spearheaded by his patron's brother, the earl of Pembroke, and the plays located within the season of 'political drama' following the collapse of the marriage negotiations with Spain in late 1623.⁶ However, it is evident that these close analogical readings overplay their card at times and so create limitations in their effort to force a round peg into a square hole.⁷ If, instead, we read these plays at one remove – that is, in the wider context of an increasing interest in, and experimentation with, political ideas that had been exacerbated by the match politics – we can see in Massinger's engagement with contemporary political concerns some of the ways that he was participating in the opposition culture that was evolving in response to James's government.⁸ In this light several of Massinger's contemporary allusions, although I would argue not strict analogies, gain added significance and so contribute to this new insight.

In exploring Massinger's representation of political authority in his plays composed during the height of the disaffection over the match negotiations, this chapter will continue to explore the nuanced character of English political thought in the period. Whilst this investigation of his plays identifies that Massinger was engaging with the same political concerns that dominated the poetry of George Wither, his articulation of these anxieties was not framed in the

⁶ See for example Gardiner, 'Political Element'; Margot Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre: Thomas Middleton and Opposition Drama under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge, 1980), pp. 213-221; Jerzy Limon, *Dangerous Matter: English Drama and Politics in 1623-4* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 62-87; Albert H. Tricomi, *Anticourt Drama in England, 1603-1642* (Charlottesville, 1989), pp. 153-164; Claire Jowitt, 'Massinger's *The Renegado* and the Spanish Marriage', *Cahiers Elisabethains*, (2004), 45-53; Jowitt, 'I am Another Woman'.

⁷ See in particular Jowitt's resolution of the problematical Jesuit character Francisco in *The Renegado*. Jowitt, 'I am Another Woman', pp. 163. The problems created by strict analogical readings have not gone unrecognised. Cf. Gross, 'Contemporary Politics', 279-290. Gross's challenge to the 'received opinion' of contemporary references in Massinger's plays rests to some extent on his belief that the playwright subscribed to a Jacobean political orthodoxy, asserting that 'the value of royal absolutism as a means of governing nations is never seriously questioned' (280) in Massinger's plays. This conceit, along with Gross's understanding of an oppressive and pervasive practice of censorship in the period, consequently limits any in-depth investigation of Massinger's political thought in his argument. See also Limon, *Dangerous Matter*, p. 66.

⁸ Patterson does employ an 'inexact analogy' in her reading of the political messages that Massinger presented in *The Maid of Honour* and *The Bondman*, concluding that the latter play, in part, offered 'a workable compromise' to the problem of achieving crown-parliament consensus without calling upon the ungovernable 'masses'. Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation*, pp. 88-94.

polemical, religious terms that characterised Wither's poetry, and that underwrote contemporaneous opposition drama, such as Thomas Middleton's infamous *Game at Chess*, or Thomas Drue's *The Duchess of Suffolk*.⁹

I

Revisions in methodological practice have revitalised the study of political comment in the early modern theatre from the emergence of the public playhouses in the reign of Elizabeth I until the closing of theatres during the Civil War. The diffusion of the new historicist approach, described as having muddied 'the formal walkways that criticism has up to now generally followed', has re-established the significance of history in literary criticism and emphasised the contemporary cultural value of works of literature.¹⁰ In the Jacobean period, the late plays of William Shakespeare have been subjected to historical readings that uncover their subversive messages, and in some cases, republican sympathies, whilst the tyrannical vision of Elizabeth's regime found in Ben Jonson's plays has been linked to the Catholic criticism and anxiety engendered by their exclusion from power during her reign.¹¹

Scholarship focusing upon the 1620s has identified a collection of plays commenting on and contributing to the tense political climate, which have been classified as a body of 'opposition drama'.¹² This body has been characterised as reflecting and encouraging popular anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic sentiment, and satirising the figure of the corrupt courtier in contrast to the more traditional

⁹ For an investigation the oppositional political commentary in these plays see Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, pp. 151-171, 205-209; Limon, *Dangerous Matter*, pp. 40-61, 98-129. Cf. Gary Taylor, 'Forms of Opposition: Shakespeare and Middleton', *ELR*, 24 (1994), 283-314.

¹⁰ H. Aram Veenser, 'Introduction', in H. A. Veenser (ed.), *The New Historicism* (New York and London, 1989), pp. ix-xvi, p. xv. Stephen Greenblatt's work has contributed significantly to this field. For an overview see Richard Wilson, 'Introduction' in R. Wilson and R. Dutton (eds.), *New Historicism and Renaissance Drama* (London, 1992), pp. 1-18.

¹¹ See Alan Sinfield, 'Macbeth: History, Ideology and Intellectuals', in Wilson and Dutton, *New Historicism*, pp. 167-180; Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism* (Cambridge, 2005). Hadfield's definition of republicanism and his argument for Shakespeare's advocacy of it is contentious and will undoubtedly provoke many responses. For Ben Jonson see Peter Lake, 'From Leicester his Commonwealth to Sejanus his Fall: Ben Jonson and the Politics of Roman (Catholic) Virtue', in E. Shagan (ed.), *Catholics and the Protestant Nation* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 128-161 and Robert C. Evans, 'Sejanus: Ethics and Politics in the Early Reign of James', in J. Sanders et al. (eds.) *Refashioning Ben Jonson: Gender, Politics and the Jonsonian Canon* (Basingstoke, 1998), pp. 71-92.

¹² Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*; Margot Heinemann, 'Drama and opinion in the 1620s: Middleton and Massinger,' in J. R. Mulrayne and M. Shewring (eds.), *Theatre and Government under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 237-265; Limon, *Dangerous Matter*; Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation*, pp. 81-99; Tricomi, *Anticourt Drama*, p. 156.

country nobility, thereby challenging the perception of drama as dominated by court attitudes and influences. Margot Heinemann's influential role in generating this concept illustrated the close relationship between city and parliamentary opinions discernable in the plays of Thomas Middleton in particular.¹³

Heinemann also posited the notion that the extraordinary political circumstances in England after 1623, when popular feeling was given credence by Charles and Buckingham's political about-turn, allowed for the staging of more politically explicit drama than had been possible beforehand, and so can be taken to reflect the concerns of the country during the tension of the preceding years.¹⁴ Jerzy Limon supports the view that the triumphant homecoming of Charles and Buckingham from Spain in late 1623 allowed critical theatre to flourish in the theatrical season following their return. He diverges from Heinemann, however, in his attempt to link the composition of the plays that engaged with contemporary political issues to a conscious propaganda campaign by Charles and the duke of Buckingham intended to gather support for an anti-Spanish war.¹⁵ Massinger's early independent plays have thus been frequently located within this season of political drama following the collapse of the marriage negotiations with Spain.¹⁶

Heinemann identified Massinger as representing 'the aristocratic wing of the [parliamentary puritan] movement', whose attitudes she perceived as underwriting the swathe of opposition drama in the period.¹⁷ Although loosely linking Massinger to the movement she defined as 'puritan', Heinemann admitted that there is little evidence to suggest Massinger 'had any puritan or Calvinist religious allegiance', and remarked that the question of his possible Catholicism 'remains open'.¹⁸ The suggestion that Massinger was a Roman Catholic is based solely on the internal evidence within his plays. Gardiner's assertion that Massinger held Roman Catholic sympathies, if not convinced by

¹³ Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*. See also Martin Butler, *Theatre and Crisis, 1632-1642* (Cambridge, 1984) for an examination of opposition theatre during the personal rule and crisis years of Charles's reign.

¹⁴ Heinemann, 'Drama and opinion in the 1620s', pp. 237-265.

¹⁵ Limon, *Dangerous Matter*. Cf. Heinemann, 'Drama and opinion in the 1620s', p. 238.

¹⁶ Tricomi goes as far to categorise *The Maid of Honour* as 'a piece of political persuasion', which 'inaugurated a series of militantly Protestant plays'. Tricomi, *Anticourt Drama*, p. 158; Heinemann, 'Drama and opinion in the 1620s'; Limon, *Dangerous Matter*, pp. 62-87; Jowitt, 'I am Another Woman', 154; Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation*, pp. 87-99.

¹⁷ Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, p. 213.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

the argument for firm belief, is largely derived from the outcome in *The Maid of Honour* where the heroine retires to a convent in what Gardiner represents as an escape from the vacuous centre of the Caroline court.¹⁹ The Catholic sentiments arising from the *The Maid of Honour*'s conclusion are further supported by Massinger's favourable portrayal of the Jesuit character, Francisco, and endorsement of Catholic doctrine in *The Renegado*, and in his collaborative appropriation of the medieval martyr legend with Thomas Dekker in *The Virgin Martir* (1620).²⁰

The most recent scholarship continues to echo the ambiguity surrounding Massinger's religious affiliations. Jane Degenhardt reads Massinger's problematic undertones of Catholicism in *The Virgin Martir* and *The Renegado* within the context of contemporary anxiety over the threat of Islamic conversion.²¹ In this view, Massinger's *Renegado* 'anchors Christian resistance [to Islam] in Catholic objects, ceremonies, and bodily practices, and repeatedly marks spiritual redemption in outward, visible, and material ways' that could not be met by Protestant spiritualism.²² She therefore ascribes to Massinger a quasi-ecumenicalism in which Christian dissension should be subsumed in the face of the greater Turkish threat. Conversely, Claire Jowitt judges that the same play portrayed Protestant anxieties about the Spanish match, identifying Massinger's characterisation – of the Jesuit in particular – as reflective of the shifting factional alliances at court.²³ Jowitt's identification of the discordant elements in Francisco's character, such as his Machiavellian scheming to help the lead protagonist escape with his converted bride, certainly raises questions about Massinger's representation of Jesuits.²⁴ But her resolution of the sympathetic portrayal of the Jesuit's religious identity overall as indebted to 'the complex political situation of 1624 when the Infanta gave way to French Princess through

¹⁹ Gardiner took *The Maid of Honour*'s 1632 publication date as synonymous with the composition date, thereby reading the play within a Caroline context. Gardiner, 'Political Element', 506-507.

²⁰ Dunn, *Massinger*, pp. 176-191; Jane H. Degenhardt, 'Catholic Martyrdom in Dekker and Massinger's *The Virgin Martir* and the Early Modern Threat of "Turning Turk"', *English Literary History*, 73 (2006), 83-118.

²¹ Degenhardt, 'Catholic Martyrdom' and Jane H. Degenhardt, 'Catholic Prophylactics and Islam's Sexual Threat: Preventing and Undoing Sexual Defilement in *The Renegado*', *The Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 9 (2009), 62-92.

²² Degenhardt, 'Catholic Prophylactics', 63.

²³ Jowitt, '*I am Another Woman*', pp. 158-163; Claire Jowitt, *Voyage Drama and Gender Politics, 1589-1642: Real and Imagined Worlds* (Manchester, 2003), pp. 176-184.

²⁴ Jowitt, *Voyage Drama*, p. 183.

the negotiations of Buckingham', whose interests became temporarily aligned with Pembroke and his brother, the earl of Montgomery, underestimates Massinger's independence of thought from that of his patronage network and neglects his intriguing representation of Catholic doctrines in the rest of this play and elsewhere.²⁵ It is not within the scope of this chapter to resolve Massinger's complex religious position; it is rather to establish his political motivation as distinct from the confessional polemic that is widely conceived to have been driving the oppositional literature against the match. Of the four plays considered in this chapter, *The Renegado* alone considers religious issues at the forefront of the action, and as seen, it is far from staging an unqualified endorsement of the 'political puritanism' that such as Thomas Scott are seen as advocating. Thus by detaching an investigation of Massinger's political thought in these plays from the constraining bounds of a confessional understanding of the match politics, we can discover the more profound ways that James's conduct of government impacted upon a political disaffection that was not solely swayed by the extent to which the king fulfilled a set of religious criteria.

In pursuing this aim, this chapter identifies a continuity of criticism in the four plays, which is reflective of Massinger's political conceits, thereby challenging the distinction perceived by both Heinemann and Limon in the extent of political commentary in the drama composed before Charles's return in 1623, such as *The Maid of Honour*, and that written afterwards, such as *The Bondman*.²⁶ In contextualising this view, Heinemann in particular relies on an interpretation of Jacobean censorship as repressive in character, thereby allowing her to explain the apparent consensus of the pre-1623 drama as a product of the self-censorship necessitated by this harsh system that temporarily abated following Charles and Buckingham's political *volte-face*.²⁷ However, this view of a firm, authoritarian grip upon literary expression has been subject to extensive revision in recent scholarship.²⁸

²⁵ Jowitt, 'I am Another Woman', pp. 162-164. Degenhardt, 'Catholic Prophylactics', 75-78.

²⁶ Heinemann, 'Drama and Opinion in the 1620s', pp. 239-241; Limon, *Dangerous Matter*.

²⁷ Heinemann, 'Drama and Opinion in the 1620s', pp. 237-245.

²⁸ A brief summary of twentieth century historiography on Jacobean stage censorship is provided in Richard Dutton, 'Censorship', in J. D. Cox and D. Scott Kastan (eds.), *A New History of Early English Drama* (New York, 1997) pp. 287-304. Cf. approaches by Patterson, Dutton and Cyndia Clegg in their differing challenges to the view of a repressive, government-sponsored mode of censorship: Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation*; Richard Dutton, *Mastering the Revels: The Regulation and Censorship of English Renaissance Drama* (Basingstoke, 1991); Cyndia S.

The significance accorded to the first of three occasions when Massinger's plays were subject to intervention from the censor has been revised to demonstrate a more positive relationship between the Master of the Revels and the playwrights than has often been maintained.²⁹ The extant manuscript of Massinger and John Fletcher's collaborative play *The Tragedy of Sir John van Olden Barnavelt* (1619) exhibits extensive revisions by the Master of the Revels, George Buc. In addition to the textual evidence, contemporary references allude to the play's rather unusual journey to performance on the stage, in recording that the bishop of London, John King, had initially refused to allow it.³⁰ It is unclear whether the Master of the Revels, George Buc, censored the manuscript prior to King's ban, or whether the current version played only after the revisions, but the manuscript has nevertheless been used to support the case for repressive censorship practices in the period.³¹ Revisionist readings of Buc's deletions have instead emphasised that, overall, much of the original play was allowed to be performed, so demonstrating that the changes primarily aimed at preventing the obvious provocation of offence rather than a sweeping overhaul of the entire work.³² The play instead offers an opportunity to see what was allowed on the stage, which in combination with *The Maid of Honour* and *The Duke of Milan* demonstrates a continuity and development with the plays written after Charles and Buckingham's return.

Massinger ran into the censor on two additional occasions, both in the 1630s, for dangerous and insolent matter in his plays. The current state of peace between England and Spain initially prompted Sir Henry Herbert to refuse a licence for *Believe As You List*, which followed the fortunes of Sebastian of Portugal after his deposition by the Spanish king, Philip II. Massinger removed the setting to classical times and substituted Sebastian for Antiochus of Syria, and the play was duly licensed in May 1631.³³ As Dutton explains, 'this was really no more than a fig leaf', thereby allowing the blatant parallel that the play

Clegg, "'By the Choise and Inuitation of al the Realme": Richard II and Elizabethan Press Censorship', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 48 (1997), 432-448. Cf. Janet Clare, *Art Made Tongue-tied by Authority': Elizabethan and Jacobean Dramatic Censorship* (Manchester, 1990).

²⁹ Dutton, *Mastering the Revels*, pp. 206-217.

³⁰ T. H. Howard-Hill, 'Buc and the Censorship of Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt in 1619', *The Review of English Studies*, 39 (1988), 39-63. This is discussed further in ch. 5, see pp. 188-189.

³¹ Clare, *Art Made Tongue-tied*, pp. 197-205.

³² Howard-Hill, 'Censorship'; Dutton, *Mastering the Revels*, pp. 206-217.

³³ Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, pp. 218-219.

provided with the exiled elector Palatine, Frederick V, to remain transparent.³⁴ That Massinger was only required to change a passage that the king personally found insolent in the 1638 lost play *The King and the Subject*, and was not subject to greater reprimand, has been used to further highlight the permissive attitude governing dramatic censorship practices.³⁵ Herbert transcribed the passage that Charles marked for deletion into his office book and its survival delivers a tantalising insight into the continuing critical thought of Massinger. The frequently cited extract, taken from a speech by a Spanish king, manifestly refers to the controversial levying of ship money, and, it may be suggested, upon Charles's own concept of his authority: 'Monys? Wee'le rayse supplies what ways we please, / ...The Caesars / In Rome were wise, acknowledginge no lawes / But what their swords did ratifye'.³⁶ A genuine concern for those guarding parliamentary rights through the reigns of the early Stuarts centred upon the importance of safeguarding the rule of law against a perceived royal intrusion. This last statement that we have by Massinger reveals his presentation of a king, already linked to Charles with the first phrase, decrying the laws of the land in favour of absolute royal authority. It is therefore difficult to sustain the image of a pervasive and repressive form of censorship that significantly restricted the expression of political content in drama throughout the early Stuart period. In Massinger's case, the contemporary allusions in his work are consistently critical, from the condemnation of poor military preparation in his two early independent plays *The Duke of Milan* and *The Maid of Honour*, through to the offending extract in 1638.

Heinemann's emphasis upon Massinger's gentry background directs her reading of his criticism as limited in its severity, and allows her to contextualise the political opinion observable in his plays within that of a contemporary 'aristocratic and gentry' view, which she characterises as 'a burning anger at tyranny against nobility and gentry, coupled with an acute sense that the

³⁴ Dutton, 'Censorship', p. 299; Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, p. 220; Richard Dutton, *Licensing, Censorship, and Authorship in Early Modern England: Buggeswords* (Basingstoke, 2000), p. 138.

³⁵ Dutton, *Licensing, Censorship, and Authorship*, pp. 14, 154.

³⁶ Henry Herbert, *The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert*, ed. J. Q. Adams (New York, 1963), p. 23; Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, p. 221; Clark, *Moral Art*, p. 154; Gross, 'Contemporary Politics', 290.

multitude must and should be kept down.’³⁷ The tradition of perceiving an aristocratic tone in Massinger’s work stems from his connection to the Herbert family. Massinger’s father, Arthur, was in employment in the Herbert household, leading Hartley Coleridge to speculate that the playwright’s upbringing and education was influenced by a childhood at Wilton House.³⁸ What little is known of the private life of Philip Massinger has therefore combined with internal evidence from his plays to produce a varied picture of the early Stuart playwright and his political ideology. In the nineteenth century, Samuel Taylor Coleridge categorised Massinger as a democrat, in contrast to ‘the most servile jure divino Royalist’ that he saw in Beaumont and Fletcher.³⁹ The criticism on Massinger’s political thought has since developed primarily in response to Gardiner’s 1876 reading of the plays’ political commentary. Gardiner’s influential interpretation identified Massinger’s political position as reflective of Pembroke, who represented the anti-Spanish faction at court, thereby allowing him to derive suggestive significance from several thinly veiled topical allusions in plays such as *The Bondman*, *The Great Duke of Florence* and *Believe As You List*. Through his strict alignment of contemporary court figures with characters in the plays, Gardiner ascribed Massinger’s political commentary predominantly to the fluid relationships and preferences of the Herberts.⁴⁰ He thus ultimately concluded that Massinger’s critique was aimed at the king’s low-born ministers and not critical of the monarchy itself – suggesting, in fact, that the 1632 play, *The Emperor of the East*, could possibly be complimentary to Charles I.⁴¹

Massinger’s earliest independent plays can be dated to 1621-22. Russ McDonald has therefore suggested that, ‘liberated from the direct influence of John Fletcher, Massinger was free to confront the moral issues that would engage his attention throughout his career’.⁴² Whilst this takes a rather restricted view of the collaborative enterprise, and Massinger’s own voice within the plays it produced, McDonald does underline the opportunity provided by Massinger’s

³⁷ Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, p. 217.

³⁸ Hartley Coleridge is quoted at length in Garrett, *Massinger*, pp. 165-171.

³⁹ Garrett, *Massinger*, p. 124.

⁴⁰ Gardiner, ‘The Political Element’, 496-498.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 503.

⁴² Russ McDonald, ‘High Seriousness and Popular Form: The Case of *The Maid of Honour*’, in D. Howard (ed.), *Philip Massinger: A Critical Reassessment* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 83-116, p. 84.

independent plays to investigate in more depth the playwright's thought and motives. It has been suggested that his plays only became increasingly political, with a more developed ideological basis, after Charles I's accession in 1625.⁴³ Such a view fails to take account of the continuity evident in Massinger's presentation of power in the plays composed before that date. Without denying the considerable influence of the political climate in 1623, a number of studies have drawn attention to an underlying ideology exhibited throughout his plays, from the collaborative *The Tragedy of Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt*, composed in 1619 with John Fletcher, to his Caroline tragedies of the 1630s.⁴⁴

Albert Tricomi has confidently stated that Massinger's use of Roman sources and Jonson's *Sejanus* firmly placed him in 'England's Tacitean tradition of republican drama.'⁴⁵ This assertion radicalises Massinger's criticism from the moderate satire of court figures in Gardiner, and faction-driven propaganda of Limon, to an ideological position that challenged the very nature of the government in England. Thomas Fulton's emphasis upon the republican undertones evident in *The Bondman* lends credence to this view. In challenging the revisionist view that faction played the dominant role in determining ideology, Fulton instead examines the influence of continental thought upon English oppositional thinking. His suggestion that with *The Bondman* Massinger drew upon the republican precedent of the United Provinces aligns the playwright with his perception of an increasingly republican voice discernable in the English opposition to the monarchy.⁴⁶ Whilst these studies both contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the intellectual environment in which Massinger was writing, their depiction of Massinger's 'republicanism' fails to answer Blair Worden's formidable challenge that

what we seek in vain is evidence that imaginative literature reflected or fostered a desire for republican rule. It was fully within the capacity of

⁴³ Douglas Howard, 'Massinger's Political Tragedies', in Howard, *A Critical Reassessment*, pp. 117-138; Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, p. 218; Dunn, *Massinger*, p. 174.

⁴⁴ Ivo Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology in Stuart Drama* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 140-167; Clark, *Moral Art*, pp. 80-154; Tricomi, *Anticourt Drama*, p. 192. *The Tragedy of Olden Barnavelt* is discussed at length below, ch. 5, pp. 187-210.

⁴⁵ Tricomi, *Anticourt Drama*, p. 163.

⁴⁶ Thomas C. Fulton, "'The True and Naturall Constitution of that Mixed Government': Massinger's *The Bondman* and the influence of Dutch Republicanism', *Studies in Philology* (2002) 152-178.

readers and audiences to enter imaginatively into worlds with political arrangements different from their own without inferring that such arrangements could or should be transplanted to their own time and place.

This certainly complicates the classification of political thought as ‘republican’ in pre-Interregnum England.⁴⁷

Ira Clark’s examination of Massinger’s political thought alongside what he identifies as the key emerging political problems of the period suggests that the search for political accommodation evident in his plays reveals that Massinger advocated a balanced constitution, with a probable preference for parliamentary sovereignty.⁴⁸ Whilst Clark comprehensively outlines several important aspects of Massinger’s thought, the broad timescale of his study inevitably results in some generalisations, with little account for the impact of the fluid and evolving intellectual climate upon the expression of thought in Massinger’s plays. Evidently there remains little consensus upon Massinger’s politics and the function of his drama. By close examination of Massinger’s presentation of authority and power in the four plays composed during and immediately following the Spanish match negotiations, this chapter will show that the playwright developed an ideology reflective of the anxieties surrounding the match, and that his drama functioned to educate those surrounding the king, as well as James himself.

II

Massinger’s topical references in these plays were certainly intended to trigger audience recognition. In the same way that Middleton provided the Black Knight in *A Game at Chess* with Gondomar’s suit, litter and signature ‘chair of ease’ to invite an instant identification of the character with the unpopular Spanish ambassador, so Massinger made clear reference to Buckingham, who had been appointed as lord high admiral in 1619, through a description of the Carthaginian admiral in *The Bondman* as

⁴⁷ Blair Worden, ‘Republicanism, Regicide and Republic: The English Experience’, G&S, *Republicanism*, i., pp. 307-328, p. 309. This is discussed further below, see pp. 158-160.

⁴⁸ Clark, *Moral Art*, pp. 84-85.

A rawe young fellow,
 One neuer traind in Armes, but rather fashiond
 To tilt with Ladyes lips, then cracke a Launce,
 Rauish a Feather from a Mistresse Fanne
 And weare it as a Fauour; a steele Helmet
 Made horrid with a glorious Plume, will cracke
 His womans necke. (I. i. 50-56)⁴⁹

But whereas in *Chess* this identification reflected the contemporary analogy that governed the whole action of the play, Massinger's topical allusions did not necessarily constitute an invitation to read his drama as a reflection of current events. There are points at which such allusions were chiefly provided for the audience's enjoyment in the play's evocation of current affairs. In a brief scene featuring an exchange between the court creature in *The Duke of Milan* and a prison guard, Massinger took occasion to lampoon the recent spate of incarcerations for transgressive political behaviour. Drawing upon George Wither's infamous reputation for libellous satires, Massinger pointed to the poet's recent spell in the Marshalsea: 'I haue had a fellow / That could indite forsooth, and make fine meeters / To tinkle in the eares of ignorant Madams, / That for defaming of great Men, was sent me' (III. ii. 17-20).⁵⁰ But beyond such humorously evocative effects, the significance of Massinger's topicality can further be seen in the extent to which his allusions are indicative of an engagement with some recurrent themes in contemporary critical discourse, which may in turn provide an insight into the major strands of the playwright's political thought.

⁴⁹ Massinger, *Plays and Poems*, i. All subsequent references to *The Bondman*, *The Duke of Milan* and *The Maid of Honour* to this edition and volume; references to *The Renegado* to this edition, vol. ii. Thomas Middleton, *A Game at Chess*, ed. T. H. Howard-Hill (Manchester, 1993), 35; Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, pp. 155, 217; Dunn, *Massinger*, pp. 173-174. Cf. Limon, *Dangerous Matter*, p. 68. Limon challenges the passage's inferred reference to Buckingham on the basis that it describes the Carthaginian admiral, and 'if we are to associate ancient Carthage with seventeenth-century Spain, then the description of the effeminate admiral would apply only to the contemporary Spanish admiral, and under no circumstances to the duke of Buckingham', thereby demonstrating the restrictive analytical framework inherent in firmly tying the plot of the play (or in this case, just Act I) to contemporary politics. Cf. Clark, *Moral Art*, p. 127. For the case that *The Maid of Honour* and *The Duke of Milan* mounted a direct criticism of Buckingham in their portrayal of favourites see Paul Salzman, *Literary Culture in Jacobean England* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 97-101.

⁵⁰ Edwards and Gibson consider that the lines 'fit Wither well enough', but the identification is not universally accepted. See Massinger, *Plays and Poems*, pp. 199-200.

The extent to which Massinger's consideration of military action in these early plays constituted a call for war against the Spanish enemy, as found in a wealth of contemporary literature, has again been a highly contested point, as one might expect given Massinger's propensity for ambivalence.⁵¹ Massinger's use of language in reference to foreign threats and wars in these plays certainly provides parallels with the flood of admonitory literature stressing the need for England to wake up to the threat of Spain.⁵² In *The Duke of Milan* the loyal counsellor Tiberio, in answering the ignorant remarks of his fellow counsellor, Stephano, allows a comparison between Milan and England that serves as a warning to any prepared to hear it. Where Stephano appreciatively remarks: 'though warre rages / In most parts of our westerne world, there is / Noemie neere vs', Tiberio replies: 'Dangers that we see / To threaten ruine, are with ease preuented: / But those strike deadly, that come vnexpected.' (I. i. 57-61) The language that characterised England as sleeping and dull to the threat of Spain is here echoed through Stephano's ignorant optimism, whilst the warning is given through the response of the wiser of the two counsellors, Tiberio. The final sentence could thus be seen as echoing the widely held scepticism of Spanish sincerity in negotiating the match that saw in the diplomacy a covert Spanish attempt to crush England from within. In one example, contemporaneous with the composition of *The Bondman*, one William Wood foreshadowed that 'without timely and strong opposition, [Spain] will take so deep roote, and spread his branches so far, as to overshadow all his neighbours: and deadly dangerous it will be for any one to sleepe in such a shade.'⁵³ Wood's Hispanophobia is unconcealed and underpins his belief that Spain's chief motivations for pursuing a dynastic union with England were to further popery and weaken the position of the United Provinces, who were once again at war with their former overlords.

Yet this criticism of England's military inaction is more complex in *The Maid of Honour*. The king's half-brother, Bertoldo, is the mouthpiece of pro-war rhetoric, commanding the king, Roberto, to 'Rowse us, Sir, from the sleepe / Of

⁵¹ See Gross, 'Contemporary Politics', 286-287; Limon, *Dangerous Matter*, p. 76; Clark, *Moral Art*, p. 100.

⁵² Fulton has underscored the connection between Massinger's language in *The Bondman* and Thomas Scott's controversial pamphlets. Fulton, 'Massinger's *The Bondman*'. See also Limon, *Dangerous Matter*, pp. 69-70. For a detailed discussion of Scott's pamphlets see ch. 6.

⁵³ William Wood, *Considerations vpon the Treaty of Marriage between England and Spain* ([The Netherlands], 1623), p. 13.

idleness, and redeeme our morgag'd honours' (I. i. 235-36). This assertion, following Bertoldo's powerful evocation of a potent Elizabethan naval glory, 'When the *Iberian* quak'd' (I. i. 227), again mirrors the contemporary literature in support of Frederick against the gathering might of the Catholic powers. The highly suggestive parallel between *The Maid of Honour's* framing plot, whereby the beleaguered duke of Urbin requests military assistance from Roberto as his own rash actions have brought his inheritance into question, and the plight of the elector Palatine has provided a firm foundation for reading Bertoldo's rhetoric as Massinger's. Yet the manifestly unjust premise of the war in *The Maid of Honour*, and the disintegrating virtues of Bertoldo, urge a less simplistic reading of his speech: Bertoldo's support is, after all, for the original aggressor of the conflict, and his integrity is eventually undermined when he breaks his betrothal oath to the maid of honour, Camiola.

This complicates the extent to which the play can be taken as pursuing a propagandist agenda in its presentation of the plot. Heinemann viewed this ambiguity in *The Maid of Honour* as demonstrative of censorship restrictions, contrasting it with the direct and obvious war-cry in *The Bondman* that reflected her proposed temporary relaxation of restrictions.⁵⁴ Clark determines that the play 'sets up an ambivalent response' – an attitude he consistently ascribes to Massinger's political explorations – in which the playwright presented the danger in premising nobility on military endeavour, no matter what the cause.⁵⁵ Clark's analysis here flags up Massinger's contribution to the wider criticism that, as we have seen with both Taylor and Wither, often accompanied support for military action. This criticism contrasted the decayed and effeminate culture of the Jacobean court with an idealised perception of the Elizabethan past.⁵⁶

Massinger's consistent criticism of the unmartial and effeminate courtier reflected his concern over the corrupt system of patronage at court that did not distribute rewards on the basis of merit. This situates Massinger within the tradition of humanist thought advocating the *vita activa* that perceived meritorious service to the commonwealth, including military service, as the most

⁵⁴ Heinemann, 'Drama and opinion in the 1620s', p. 241.

⁵⁵ Clark, *Moral Art*, pp. 100-102. See also Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 26-27.

⁵⁶ See above, ch. 2, p. 53 and ch. 3, pp. 93, 100.

deserving virtue for personal advancement.⁵⁷ Both the practice of Jacobean patronage distribution and James's separation of war and honour in his promotion of the virtues of peace provided a stark contrast to this humanist ideal.⁵⁸ In comic tone, the two courtiers who accompany Bertoldo to war in *The Maid of Honour*, on a misguided quest to prove honour in martial ability, immediately betray their true courtly colours when one of them reveals that he has bought cannon-proof armour. This is reinforced when the three are later captured as the enemy general, Gonzaga, jests 'The weight of their defensive armour bruiz'd / Their weak, effeminate limbes.' (II. v. 15-16). Yet Clark's reading of Bertoldo in *The Maid of Honour* again situates Massinger in an ambivalent light with respect to this contemporary vogue for martial valour and its automatic bond with honour.

Massinger's evident contempt for the popular image of the corrupt courtier is consistently transparent in his plays with particular criticism aimed at the meteoric promotion of undeserving men, not of noble birth. Continuing to engage with the central criticisms of the emerging anti-court culture of opposition, Massinger commented severely upon the royal favourite's undeserved jurisdiction and monopoly of patronage.⁵⁹ In *The Duke of Milan* Massinger's divergence from his sources in his characterisation of the favourite, Francisco, uncovers the playwright's general condemnation of the political circumstances that allowed the morally vacuous to rise to positions of power, thereby suggestively censuring Buckingham's growing influence.⁶⁰ Francisco, highlighting his minimal effort in cultivating his position, cynically describes how he was made master of virtues he did not possess and only made jests by his followers' interpretation: 'Nay all I did indeed, which in another / Was not

⁵⁷ Clark, *Moral Art*, pp. 95-98. Cf. Wither's advocacy of this tradition, ch. 3.

⁵⁸ Clark, *Moral Art*, pp. 95-96; Linda Levy Peck, 'Court Patronage and Government Policy: The Jacobean Dilemma', in G. F. Lytle and S. Orgel (eds.), *Patronage in the Renaissance* (New Jersey, 1981), pp. 27-46. For Jamesian ideology regarding peace, war and honour, see the royally sponsored anti-duelling tract *The Peace-Maker* (1618) discussed in ch. 1, pp. 32-33.

⁵⁹ Cf. Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, pp. 217-218, who suggests that 'these abuses are merely described, not dramatised', and that in consistently concluding his presentation of favourites without a 'gripping and dramatic confrontation', Massinger revealed there were limits beyond which he was 'not prepared to go'.

⁶⁰ *The Duke of Milan* was based upon the story of Herod and Mariamne, which Massinger chiefly drew from Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities*. Edwards and Gibson identify Francisco's character as a combination of three men in Josephus's account, but note that 'the lustful and scheming revenger who replaces Josephus's passive and innocent servants is almost entirely the dramatist's own invention.' Massinger, *Plays and Poems*, i., pp. 201-202.

remarkeable, in me shew'd rarely.' (IV. i. 31-32) *The Maid of Honour* expresses this attitude in both the unsympathetic portrayal of Fulgentio and through the words and actions of those who represent the interests of the state within the play. The counsellor Astutio tersely summarises the reality of Fulgentio's arrogance and position as favourite: 'A Gentleman, yet no Lord. He hath some drops / Of the Kings blood running in his veines, deriv'd / Some ten degrees off. His revenue lyes / In a narrow compasse, the Kings eare, and yeelds him / Every houre a fruitfull harvest.' (I. i. 23-27). Massinger's depiction here of the favourite's influence over royal patronage would certainly have evoked images of Buckingham, but beyond this immediate reference such criticism can also be seen as reflective of the dramatist's wider concern over who had access to the 'Kings eare'.

III

Free speech, as conceived in the context of counselling the king, was becoming an increasingly vital issue during the match negotiations as James issued proclamations against the licentious discussion over his unpopular policies, and reprimanded the Commons for touching those points of 'Our highest Prerogatiues, the very Character of Sovereignty.'⁶¹ Anxiety was growing over the failure of the 'public man' to provide counsel, as was his civic duty, in the corrupt world of a court filled with self-seeking sycophants.⁶² Massinger's commentary in two of the plays studied here on the citizen's duty to counsel the prince can be located within the unease generated by the subjects' difficulty in communicating with the king over his unpopular policies. The complexities thus inherent in proffering counsel are mirrored in *The Duke of Milan* and *The Maid of Honour* where those counselling the ruler first find it necessary to disentangle their status as subject from the advice being offered.

The foreign marquis, Pescara, justifies his words to Sforza in *The Duke of Milan* by relying on his status as Sforza's friend. It is clear to all within the play, and in the audience, that the duke is consumed with passion and jealousy

⁶¹ James VI and I, *His Majesties Declaration touching his Proceedings in the Late Assemblie and Convention of Parliament* (London, 1622), p. 6. David Colclough, *Freedom of Speech in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2005); *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, eds. J. F. Larkin and P. L. Hughes (Oxford, 2 vols, 1973), i., p. 496. See ch. 1, p. 27.

⁶² Cust, 'Public Man', pp. 126-134.

towards his wife Marcelia, yet it is only Pescara who voices an objection, as not doing so would render him like the others, ‘a parasite to the sorrow Sforza worships / In spite of reason’ (IV. iii. 9-10). The difficulty of counselling an irrational (thereby tyrannical) prince is demonstrated in Sforza’s reply: ‘This language in another were prophane, / In you it is vnmannerly’ (IV. iii. 35-6). Pescara’s privileged position as a friend is his saving grace, as Sforza remarks that, were it otherwise, his sword would have replied. Not only is the duke unwilling to listen to counsel from any quarter, but he is also prepared to counter any advice with violence. This theme is underlined in *The Renegado* in an exchange between the irrational viceroy, Asambeg, and ‘the renegado’, Grimaldi. Exclaiming that he has ‘lost my anger, and my Power!’ at both the pirates’ loss of a ship to the knights of Malta and Grimaldi’s defence of their inaction, Asambeg receives a suggestive retort from the defiant pirate: ‘Find it and vse it on thy flatterers: / And not vpon thy friends that dare speake truth.’ (II. v. 61-63)

Theatrical form is used in *The Maid of Honour* to demonstrate the complexities of addressing reforms to an authority figure. In order for Camiola to reprimand the transgressive behaviour of the favourite, Fulgentio, and apply her words to the king’s power, it is necessary for her to separate the king’s two bodies. She consequently addresses her advice to the mortal man, in whom she perceives the fault to lie, rather than encroach upon the sovereign office of kingship. Therefore, in answer to the king’s interrogation of her, Camiola, as indicated by her words, stands up to defend her position: ‘With your leave, I must not kneele Sir, / While I replie to this: but thus rise up / In my defence, and tell you as a man...’ (IV. v. 52-54).⁶³ The confidence displayed by Camiola moves the king to listen to her words, and act in an honourable fashion, to which Camiola shows her dutiful return to obedience by kneeling at his feet once again.

One of the professed purposes of poetry and literature during the Renaissance was as a tool for the instruction of princes, and as an attempt to instil virtue and dissuade from vice on a more general level.⁶⁴ Massinger’s

⁶³ Cf. Dunn, *Massinger*, pp. 166-167 and Clark, *Moral Art*, pp. 87-88.

⁶⁴ Blair Worden, ‘Historians and Poets’ in P. Kewes (ed.), *HLQ: The Uses of History in Early Modern England*, 68 (Berkeley, 2005), pp. 71-93. Thomas Scott outlined the didactic function of drama, whereby kings were content to be counselled, and even reprovved, from the stage in his

perception of the difficulties involved in counselling princes is tempered with the acceptance of that duty as inherent within his work. The slave revolt in *The Bondman* first serves as a lesson to the play's tyrannical aristocrats 'to instruct you / To looke with more preuention, and care / To what they may hereafter vndertake / Vpon the like occasions.' (V. iii. 222-25). More widely, however, Massinger provided a stark warning to those in authority against tyrannical abuse of power as the play revealed some threatening events when popular feeling was incited against those in authority. In reminding his audience that the revolt of the people was no more favourable than tyranny, and perhaps an instrument to be wary of, Massinger invoked the spectre of popularity, that so concerned James, as an encouragement towards better government.⁶⁵

Despite this assumed intent in the work of playwrights, Massinger's 1626 play, *The Roman Actor*, reveals the author himself questioning the function and role of the theatre in society. Contrasting with the view that 'the exposure and correction of tyranny was a goal shared by poetry and history', Rebecca Bushnell's study of tyranny on the stage questions the didactic power of theatre and lays heavier emphasis on its pleasure-giving role.⁶⁶ *The Roman Actor* reproduces the tale of the tyrant Domitian, and explores both the nature of tyranny and the related function of theatre throughout. Domitian's gruesome end at the hands of those he has tyrannised would initially suggest that there is a lesson to be learnt from watching the play. But the very nature of this theatrical function is questioned by the failure of the plays staged within the play to evoke this reaction. Bushnell claims, in fact, that ultimately all that the plays resulted in teaching was simply the awesome power of the tyrant, Domitian, particularly as he uses the stage to murder the actor, Paris. The contradiction is evident as Massinger criticises drama as a tool of tyranny through the use of that tool itself, and Bushnell is correct in drawing this out, stating 'the play is, after all, a devastating theatrical satire of a world in which satire is not functional.'⁶⁷

1624 pamphlet *Vox Regis*, which Heinemann posits as a possible motivation behind Middleton's composition of *Chess*. Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, p. 157.

⁶⁵ For James's concern about a growing, puritan-based and democratic sentiment see Richard Cust, 'Prince Charles and the Second Session of the 1621 Parliament', *EHR*, 122 (2007), 427-441, 433-434.

⁶⁶ Worden, 'Historians and Poets', p. 86; Rebecca W. Bushnell, *Tragedies of Tyrants: Political Thought and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca, 1990), p. 179.

⁶⁷ Bushnell, *Tragedies of Tyrants*, p. 186.

Massinger's representation of counsel-giving in his plays betrays his concern over the obstacles that stood between James and his subjects. Although *The Roman Actor* complicates Massinger's relationship with the didactic function of his dramatic poetry, his employment of this purpose is playfully intimated in *The Renegado* where the protagonist, Vitelli, presents the Turkish princess, Donusa, with 'a mirror / Steele so exactly, neither taking from / Nor flattering the object it returns / To the beholder, that *Narcissus* might / (And neuer grow enamourd of himselfe) / View his fayre feature in't', to which Donusa suggestively compliments his rhetorical style in her reply: 'Poeticall too!' (I. iii. 110-115). In elucidating the significance of the mirror scene in this play, Jowitt concludes that from the beginning '*The Renegado* sets itself up as a mirror for princes', offering both the audience and the monarch 'the possibility of seeing things accurately.'⁶⁸ As is clear from Massinger's concerns over the provision of counsel, there was certainly a level at which he directed his political criticism towards the king's ear. But in holding up an admonitory mirror for observation beyond the prince's gaze, Massinger's drama assumes a function both comparable with that of Wither's satirical poetry, in delivering his perceptive analysis of authority and power to a public becoming increasingly politically engaged, and notable for its principal address to the wider political elite.⁶⁹

IV

Massinger's experimentation with the nature and forms of power reveals on the surface a rather Jamesian notion of reciprocal duty. This has been examined by Robert Turner in terms of economic exchange in the sphere of patronage and due gratitude, which has been supported by Clark.⁷⁰ In discussing Massinger's concern over unfair social advancement Clark concludes that 'Massinger regularly proposed a resolution that could accommodate both stability and mobility in the socio-political hierarchy – reciprocal gratitude.'⁷¹ If everyone behaved according to this premise, corruption through unjust rewards would be

⁶⁸ Jowitt, 'I am Another Woman', pp. 156-157.

⁶⁹ See also a discussion on the political message delivered in the collaborative play *The Tragedy of Sir John van Olden Barnavelt* in ch. 5, pp. 209-210.

⁷⁰ Robert Y. Turner 'Giving and Taking in Massinger's Tragicomedies', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 35 (1995), 361-381, 361 and Clark, *Moral Art*.

⁷¹ Clark, *Moral Art*, p. 95.

avoided. Turner shows that the practice of patronage pervades Massinger's works, and consequently formed part of his concept of society, with God as the original patron.⁷² Clark has examined the moral framework that informed this view across the range of Massinger's independent and collaborative plays, concluding that the overriding ambivalence characterising the playwright's presentation of authority reflected his exploration of political accommodation in response to the problems he identified with the age.⁷³ I want to tighten the focus here to examine Massinger's conception of political authority within the four early plays composed during the match to uncover the nature and function of his engagement with an increasingly pervasive Stuart ideology at a time of considerable political tension.

Broken bonds of duty and gratitude are represented in *The Duke of Milan*, a tragedy that explores numerous power relationships and the exercise of authority in its presentation of the uxorious obsession of the duke and Machiavellian scheming of his favourite. It was published in 1623, and the likely date of composition is 1621-22.⁷⁴ During Duke Sforza's absence from Milan, his duplicitous favourite, Francisco, lectures his master's relatives on the necessity of remembering their inferior position as subjects, despite their kinship: 'You know him [Sforza] of a nature / Not to be play'd with: and should you forget / To'obey him as your Prince hee'le not remember / The dutie that he owes you.' (I. ii. 30-33). This presentation of reciprocal duty was grounded in familiar Jacobean terms, as James himself articulated in 1607: 'that as yee owe to me subiection and obedience: So my Soueraigntie obligeth mee to yeeld to you loue, gouernment and protection.'⁷⁵ Where the withdrawal of obedience in a subject was punishable by law, however, this Jacobean monarchical formula allowed only for divine punishment when kings failed to adhere to their obligations.⁷⁶ This princely transgression of duty is highlighted in *The Bondman*, in terms that sit uncomfortably with the central tenets of royal ideology.

The Bondman was written for the Phoenix at Drury Lane, and has been accurately dated to November 1623, following Charles's return from Spain

⁷² Turner, 'Giving and Taking', p. 366.

⁷³ Clark, *Moral Art*, pp. 80-154.

⁷⁴ Massinger, *Plays and Poems*, i., pp. 199-200.

⁷⁵ James VI and I, *The Workes of the most High and Mightie Prince, Iames by the Grace of God, King of Great Britaine, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith &c* (London, 1616), p. 511.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 531.

unmarried. It was acted at court on 27 December 1623, with 'the prince only being there'.⁷⁷ The main action of the play centres on the revolt of the Sicilian slaves, who in the absence of their masters, are incited by the disguised gentleman of Thebes, Pisander, to rebel against the oppression practised upon them by those few tyrannous aristocrats left behind. To justify their revolt the slaves say to the odious aristocrats: 'Your tyranny / Drew vs from our obedience' (IV. ii. 52-53) as they had not fulfilled their part of the natural contract existing between those in authority and those obeying it. In allowing the masters' failure to perform their proper duty to the slaves to dissolve the bonds of obedience that the slaves owed back, Massinger made obedience conditional upon the due fulfilment of duty by the ruler.

The political undertone in *The Bondman*, therefore, displays a belief in established limits upon authority, and investigates the resulting consequences when such boundaries are broken.⁷⁸ This is not restricted to commenting on monarchical or governmental power alone, as it is evident that Massinger investigated various forms of authority and its abuses and in doing so explored vital questions regarding human nature and personal liberty. *The Duke of Milan* is not as well known for its political comment as *The Maid of Honour* and *The Bondman*, but viewed within the context of Massinger's growing concern over the exercise of political authority developing during the match, the tragedy's portrayal of authority contributes to a wider understanding of Massinger's thought. In this tragedy, Massinger examined the abuse of power in the authority relationships that he presented from the highest level down. The corrupt relationship between the duke and Francisco is thus reflected in the favourite's relationship with the court creature, Graccho. Just as Sforza commands Francisco to be his instrument in the deplorable plan he has devised to assuage his overwhelming jealousy towards his duchess, Marcelia, so Francisco repeats this relationship to accomplish the ends of his own scheming, informing Graccho 'whether thou wilt or no, / Thou art to be my instrument' (IV. i. 81). Both the

⁷⁷ *The Bondman* was entered in the Stationers' Register on 3 December, and the in-text references to the collapse of a chapel – the so-called "fatal vespers" – on 26 October, and a house fire on 12 November give only a limited window at the end of November for the play's composition. Massinger, *Plays and Poems*, i., pp. 301-302, 307.

⁷⁸ Clark examines Massinger's negotiation of absolute authority in the later play, *The Great Duke of Florence*, stating 'despite declarations of absolute sovereignty, ultimate authority and legality [in the play] do not reside in *rex loquens*.' Clark, *Moral Art*, p. 92

duke and Francisco command obedience to their wicked schemes, displaying a tyrannical nature within their own jurisdictions. Sforza orders Francisco to ‘Expresse a ready purpose to performe / What I command, or by Marcelia’s soule, / This is thy latest minute’ (I. iii. 367-69), threatening death if his subject resists, whereas Francisco swears to Graccho ‘and euery day / I’le haue thee freshly tortur’d, if thou misse / In the lest charge that I impose vpon thee.’ (IV. i. 90-92). Both commands transgress lawful boundaries, betraying the distinctive mark of tyranny, particularly as the threat of violence accompanies each demand. Sforza asks Francisco to break natural law by committing a deed so heinous that he is tortured to ask it, whilst in turn, Francisco usurps the authority of Sforza through his relationship with Graccho. This abuse of power is reinforced by both Sforza and Francisco’s subjection of reason to passion throughout the play, thereby underwriting their tyrannical behaviour.⁷⁹

Massinger also addressed notions of patriarchy and sovereignty in these plays. The intellectual thought in defence of absolutism, including that expressed in James’s writings, determined that the prince had the natural authority granted to fathers and husbands.⁸⁰ In contrast, the theory widely held by Catholic philosophers and resistance theorists, resolved that authority resided with the community who was responsible for allocating an individual or group to govern, thereby viewing the family as almost autonomous within the state.⁸¹ In *The Bondman* Massinger employed the familiar political analogy between the family and the state, seeming to echo the patriarchal language used by James to ground his authority in natural law and so delineate his duty to his subjects. Following the justification of the slave revolt, Pisander laments the times when the masters

⁷⁹ James defined a tyrant both as one who governed outside the rule of law according to his own passions and desires, who thinks ‘his Kingdome and people are onely ordeined for satisfaction of his desires and vnreasonable appetites’, and also one who was not legitimate because he had usurped authority. James I, *Workes* (1616), p. 495. This twofold understanding is traced in Bushnell, *Tragedies of Tyrants*.

⁸⁰ See James’s *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies* in James VI and I, *Political Writings*, ed. J. P. Sommerville (Cambridge, 1994) for an example of the king’s patriarchal thought. Gordon Schochet examines James’s ideology, quoting from *The Trew Law*: ‘By the Law of Nature the King becomes a naturall Father to all his Lieges at his Coronation: And as the Father by his fatherly duty is bound to care for the nourishing, education, and virtuous government of his children; even so is the king bound to care for all his subjects.’ Gordon J. Schochet, *The Authoritarian Family and Political Attitudes in 17th Century England* (Oxford, 1988), p. 87.

⁸¹ Eileen Allman, *Jacobean Revenge Tragedy and the Politics of Virtue* (1999), pp. 38-39; Johann P. Sommerville, ‘Papalist Political Thought and the Controversy over the Jacobean Oath of Allegiance’, in E. Shagan (ed.), *Catholics and the Protestant Nation* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 162-184, pp. 167-168.

treated their slaves like second sons, a time when 'wise Law-makers / From each well govern'd priuate house deriu'd / The perfect model of a Common-wealth' (IV. ii. 63-64). But in ascribing the establishment of the state to the 'Law-makers', Pisander's laudatory description refers to a commonwealth where power derives from positive law. Furthermore, what Pisander is emphasising with this speech is the requirement for observation of reciprocal duty so that stability and order are maintained at a public level that is reflective of, but not grounded upon, domestic authority: 'Happy those times, / When Lords were styl'd fathers of Families, / And not imperious Masters' (IV. ii. 53-55).

Eileen Allman has highlighted how the Jacobean revenge tragedy examines the fallout when the tyrant contravenes the familial boundaries and threatens private property. The study seeks to demonstrate that the pictures of tyrants created onstage reflected a fear of the power potential inherent in James's understanding of absolute monarchy, rather than a criticism of his current exercise of power.⁸² It is suggested and developed here that these anxieties are also evident in both Massinger's tragedies and tragicomedies. Furthermore, his criticism assumes additional significance through the plays' composition within an increasingly tense political climate.

The Maid of Honour was not published until 1632, but its date of composition has been estimated as 1621-22.⁸³ The play focuses on Bertoldo, who, having been captured whilst fighting in the unjust war, is ransomed by the maid of honour, whom he then pledges to marry. Bertoldo subsequently breaks his oath to Camiola after falling in love with the duchess of Siena, and all the wealth and honours she has to offer him. In the play it is clear that Massinger is challenging the absolutist transgression of the public-private border. The king's seizure of Bertoldo's lands whilst the latter is imprisoned demonstrates this in the first instance. Not only does Roberto refuse to ransom his brother, but in the arrogant manner of a wilful tyrant, the counsellor, Astutio, claims that the king 'yeelds / No reason for his will' (III. i. 158-59) in seizing the lands. Similarly menacing in tone are the claims of the duchess of Siena, Aurelia, who asserts absolute jurisdiction, including the right to ransom the prisoner, Bertoldo. (IV. iv.

⁸² Allman, *Jacobean Revenge Tragedy*, pp. 40-43.

⁸³ Edwards and Gibson, *Plays and Poems*, pp. 105-106.

71-74) In this scene Massinger explores the potential of absolute authority as Aurelia overrules the law of arms upon a whim of fancy for the captive.

The autonomy of the private realm is addressed on several occasions by the 'maid of honour', Camiola, who categorically asserts her own authority, once stating 'I am Queene in mine owne house' (II. ii. 77-78). She thus puts forth a claim to sovereign-like power within her own small realm, in which she is not ruled over by a husband or father. Additionally, in rejecting the advances of the favourite Fulgentio, who had falsely invoked royal fiat in his attempt to win her, Camiola refuses to allow the authority of the monarch to threaten her private condition. Massinger's condemnation of Fulgentio's abuse of his power is illuminated when Camiola confronts the king. In a speech that delineates the limitations of his power, she asserted: 'Tyrants, not Kings, / By violence, from humble vassals force / The liberty of their soules. I could not love him, / And to compel affection, as I take it, / Is not found in your prerogative' (IV. v. 63-67). The extent and manifest abuses of the royal prerogative were certainly hot topics when Massinger composed this play. Whilst heavy criticism permeated the literature of opposition, James's determination to retain a firm grasp over his prerogative was translated directly to the public domain in his published declaration concerning the dissolution of parliament at the end of 1621.⁸⁴ In addition to contributing to this contemporary concern, *The Maid of Honour* here illustrates another dominant aspect of Massinger's political anxieties.

In charting the shared language of tyranny between the theatre and political literature, Bushnell has identified a discourse as much at variance with itself as in harmony. Massinger's concern for personal liberty situates him in a literary trend that increasingly focused upon addressing the legality of the tyrant's actions in relation to the rights of the subject. This diverged from an earlier emphasis on transgressive moral behaviour, and allowed a 'tyrant' to be defined as anyone who 'would deprive another of his liberty and property.'⁸⁵ In the extract above, Camiola's condemnation of unlawful monarchical intrusion upon the individual's freedom reflects Massinger's chief exploration in his plays of the personal liberty of the subject, allowing him to address questions on both

⁸⁴ James I, *His Majesties Declaration*, p. 6. Wither also demonstrated a similar concern over the prerogative. See ch. 3, p. 114.

⁸⁵ Bushnell, *Tragedies of Tyrants*, pp. 75-76, 158.

the nature of public authority and self-control. Therefore, in response to Fulgentio's effort to compel her through the force of royal command, Camiola stated: 'Though the King may / Dispose of my life and goods, my mind's my owne, / And shall be never yours.' (II. ii. 168-170)⁸⁶ This assertion is strongly evocative of Wither's defiant protestation from prison, 'My minds my k[ing]dome & I will permit / noe other will to haue the rule of it', that was representative of his consistent refusal to be intimidated by corrupt authority into writing flattering poetry.⁸⁷

The theme of betrayal has been identified as a consistent feature throughout Massinger's plays, especially self-betrayal, which the dramatist explored through his characters' disposal of their liberty.⁸⁸ In *The Renegado* almost all of the leading characters individually are faced with choices in which reason and personal liberty are opposed to passionate self-enslavement. The play's power-wielding monarchical figure, the viceroy Asambeg, typifies this characterisation in his lust for the kidnapped Paulina, whom he has imprisoned. But the force of his passion for her has turned the tables so that 'she that is inthrall commands her keeper, / And robs me of the fiercenesse I was borne with' (II. v. 106-107). By setting the play at the Turkish court in Tunis, Massinger was thus enabled to continue participating in the contemporary anti-court culture of opposition.⁸⁹ Yet, at the same time, it is clear that Massinger was exploring this predicament across the social spectrum presented in the play. Thus in a miserable state of contrition following his arrest, the renegade pirate Grimaldi proffers his liberty in exchange for a remission of his deeds: 'O with what willingnesse would I giue vp / My liberty to those I haue pillag'd, / And wish the numbers of my yeeres though wasted / In the most sordid slauery might equall / The rapines I haue made' (IV. i. 53-57) Furthermore, in endeavouring to free herself by the promise of fortune offered for betraying her mistress, Donusa's slave, Manto, finds she has only bought upon herself worse 'tyrannical' usage under Paulina, which she must meekly accept: 'And though

⁸⁶ Cf. Dunn, *Massinger*, p. 163.

⁸⁷ Edinburgh University Library, Edinburgh, MS H.P. Coll. 401, fo. 56. Ch. 3, pp. 121-122.

⁸⁸ McDonald, 'High Seriousness and Popular Form', p. 85; Dunn cites 'liberty' of one of the two central tenets in Massinger's political thought (the other he identifies as 'wise and just government'), and understands the playwright's view of political liberty to be 'founded on an ethical conception of the liberty of the individual soul.' Dunn, *Massinger*, p. 163.

⁸⁹ See also II. i. 70-73 and II. vi. 3-4.

ten times a day, she teares these locks, / Or makes this face her footstoole, tis but iustice.’ (V. ii. 66-67) Through these ancillary depictions, Massinger followed the same cycle that directed the play’s main action: temptation, failure and repentance.

It was this depiction of his characters’ negotiation of the conflict between their liberty and their desires that most particularly concerned Massinger in the play. The plot centres upon the indiscretion of the Christian gentleman of Venice, Vitelli, who narrowly escapes the conversion and damnation implicit in his sexual encounter with the princess, Donusa, through re-establishing his reason over his wilful desires. Having been showered with as many gifts and honours as it was within Donusa’s power to give, which, we learn, ‘is vnbounded as the *Sultans* power’ (II. iv. 88), Vitelli’s ‘constant resolution’ (II. iv. 109) shakes, and crumbles as he proclaims: ‘now I finde / That Vertue’s but a word, and no sure garde / If set vpon by beauty, and reward.’ (II. iv. 135-137) Just as the renegade, the slave Manto and eventually Asambeg as well, are consequently shown as understanding the full implications of their actions, Vitelli soon realises ‘At what an ouerualue I haue purchas’d / The wanton treasure of your Virgin bounties’ (III. v. 41-42), and Massinger underscores the depiction of *enslaving* passion as Vitelli unclothes himself ‘Of sins gay trappings (the proud liuery / Of wicked pleasure)’ (III. v. 50-51). Beyond the moral motivation that can consistently be identified in Massinger’s drama, the pervasive exploration of personal liberty and its voluntary surrender for private reward in *The Renegado* reflects the playwright’s political concern over the failure of civic responsibility, which can be seen as part of his response to the domestic crisis engendered by the match politics.⁹⁰

Massinger’s criticism of this failing of duty is evident in *The Bondman* where he suggestively alluded to those nobles who were unwilling to fund the war effort on the continent, perceiving them to instead prefer the yoke of Spanish tyranny to a freedom without their gold. Timoleon charges the wealthy Syracusan aristocrats with just this offence, and they are admonished by the virtuous Cleora who asks ‘dare you but imagine that your golde is / Too deare a

⁹⁰ Dunn describes the focus on this personal conflict as ‘in effect Massinger’s frequently refaceted conflict of reason and the passions’, but rather sees the conflict as inhering in a tussle between Christian virtue and lust. Dunn, *Massinger*, p. 177.

salary for such as hazard / Their blood, and liues in your defence?’ (I. iii. 297-299).⁹¹ But it was in the playwright’s contempt for the courtly sycophant that his criticism carried a heavier tone. More crucially than mere distaste for such behaviour, it becomes evident that Massinger perceived the conduct of such courtiers to create the tyrants freemen feared, in exchange for wealth and honours.⁹² He accused them, in essence, of wearing golden fetters. This can be aligned with contemporary anxiety, perhaps best epitomised by the pamphleteer Thomas Scott in his satirical tract *Vox Populi*. Scott held that many corrupt councillors ‘cry the lawes down and cry up the prerogative’⁹³ in order to pursue their selfish interests, which reveals the concern over the impact of courtiers’ behaviour upon the development of authoritarian government. In perceiving his presentation on the stage of the antithesis between liberty and self-seeking courtiers, we can identify a wider purpose inhering in Massinger’s didacticism, which sought to educate a corruptible citizenry in the fundamental necessity of virtuous public duty.

The corrupting lure of honours and patronage is touched upon in *The Duke of Milan* where Francisco’s own servant succinctly questions the Jacobean patronage system, asking himself rhetorically if he should ‘leauē to honour him, / That holds the wheele of Fortune? No, that sauors / Too much of th’antient freedome’ (IV. i. 38-40). This sentence identifies the conflict between honest counsel and advancement within the court that typified Massinger’s criticism of the Jacobean court. Graccho satirises court flatterers as chained to their art through their desire for wealth and social promotion, and it is this form of behaviour that Massinger perceives as contributory to the development of tyranny.

The most striking example of this is in *The Maid of Honour* where Bertoldo, who laments the loss of his liberty whilst incarcerated by the general, Gonzaga, is easily seduced into selling it again to the duchess of Siena, Aurelia. During imprisonment the relationship between Gonzaga and Bertoldo is immediately comparable to that of tyrant and subject as Gonzaga defines his

⁹¹ Fulton, ‘Massinger’s *The Bondman*’, 167.

⁹² Dunn identifies Massinger’s criticism of the Stuarts’ subjects ‘whose deference was a dangerous incense and sycophancy... who, for their own base ends, flattered the monarch...’. However, he does not contextualise this criticism or investigate its immediate political function. Dunn, *Massinger*, pp. 169-170.

⁹³ Thomas Scott, *Vox Populi* (1620).

position over his prisoner, stating that, should Bertoldo not be ransomed, ‘He lives, and dies my slave’ (III. i. 22). Bertoldo reinforces this image in a rhetorical question upon his own and his companions’ treatment whilst incarcerated: ‘hath the Tyrant found out / Worse usage for us?’ (III. i. 75-76). Furthermore, Bertoldo’s complaint of his suffering is spoken in the language of oppression. Where Gasparo and Anthonio compare their freedom in shallow terms, lamenting the loss of feasts and comfort, Bertoldo makes it clear to his friends that he values only his liberty, answering their material complaints with an exposition of his suffering: ‘But your narrow soules / (If you have any) cannot comprehend / How insupportable the torments are, / Which a free and noble soule made captive suffers / ... Fetters though made of gold / Exprese base thraldome’ (III. i. 96-102). This passage epitomises Massinger’s principles regarding the maintenance of personal liberty as of paramount importance. Yet it additionally serves to underline the folly of Bertoldo’s subsequent voluntary surrender of his free, and not so noble, soul to the duchess in Act IV.

Although he owes his valued liberty to Camiola’s ransom, he willingly breaks his oath to marry her following the duchess’s advances and promises of honours. He proclaims: ‘And yet who can hold out / Against such batteries, as her power and greatnesse / Raise up against my weake defences’ (IV. iv. 161-163). Bertoldo’s actions are thus dishonourable twofold, as he maintains and furthers Aurelia’s perception of her absolute authority by submitting to her personal desires, and in doing so allows his ambition for the prizes that she offers to exert authority over his honour and perception of liberty, as represented in the oath given to Camiola.

Massinger’s apprehension that subjects were to some extent responsible for creating tyrants was also conveyed in the earlier tragedy, *Barnavelt*. Barnavelt’s speech against tyranny establishes a point in the play where the audience can begin to believe that what the advocate says holds more truth than vain ambition, as his motive moves to conservation of the constitution against the ambitions of the prince of Orange.⁹⁴ He laments ‘we are lost for ever: and from freemen growne slaues / slaues to the pride of one *we haue raised vp / vnto*

⁹⁴ For an extended discussion on this see below, ch. 5, pp. 198-210.

this giant height' (ll. 723-725).⁹⁵ Barnavelt's protest comes too late for the United Provinces as the hopeless tone indicates, and is emphasised by the fact that the desperate situation was self-created, which characterises the warning that Massinger voiced throughout his early plays.

In *The Bondman* Massinger addressed the issue indirectly through the suggestive reaction of Timoleon. The Corinthian general, whose aid is requested by the Syracusans, refuses to succumb to the courtly ritual of exaggerated visual and titular pre-eminence, and outlines the essential virtues necessary to bear honours without a resulting corruption:

Honours and great imployments are great burthens,
And must require an Atlas to support them.
He that would gouerne others, first should be
The Master of himselfe, richly indude
With depth of vnderstanding, height of courage,
And those remarkable graces which I dare not
Ascribe vnto myself. (I. iii. 98-104)

By declining the honours of the Sicilians, Timoleon conveys his perception that such honours would be a great joy to one who desired absolute power over others, tacitly linking flattery and ceremony to the court of a tyrant. Furthermore, when the Syracusan aristocrats object to Timoleon's proposed policy, the Corinthian general launches into a tirade against their self-interested surrender of liberty:

Doe you prize your mucke
Aboue your liberties? and rather choose
To be made Bondmen, then to part with that
To which already you are slaues? or can it
Be probable in your flattering apprehensions,
You can capitulate with the Conqueror
And keepe that yours, which they come to possesse,

⁹⁵ Italics mine. Philip Massinger, *The Tragedy of Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt*, ed. T. H. Howard-Hill (The Malone Society, 1980).

And while you kneele in vaine, will rauish from you? (I. iii. 231-238)

In the same way that Timoleon's subsequent portrait of tyranny serves to instruct the corrupt aristocracy he addressed and motivate them to action, Massinger served his warning to those who would similarly augment James's power and free him of the need for parliament with the flow of Spanish gold.⁹⁶ In the professedly non-flattering words of Timoleon, England's corrupt courtiers may well have perceived the 'sharpe' criticism intended for themselves: 'You haue not, as good Patriots should doe, studied / The publike good, but your particular ends.' (I. iii. 171-172).

Timoleon's politically suggestive rhetoric in *The Bondman* has been used to demonstrate Massinger's 'democratic' political outlook.⁹⁷ The political connotations inherent in the plot itself, which stages a revolt against legitimate authority, provide premise enough to question Massinger's full subscription to monarchical forms of government.⁹⁸ But it is Timoleon's speeches in the first act that have recently provided the key base for Thomas Fulton to perceive 'republicanism' in the play.⁹⁹ The loose analogy seen in *The Bondman* between the countries there depicted and contemporary politics has aligned the play's Corinth with the Dutch Republic, thereby allowing a tradition of associating Timoleon with the prince of Orange.¹⁰⁰ Moving away from strict analogies, however, Fulton understands 'the fictitious arrival of Timoleon and his political ideology' as representative of 'the intellectual invasion of a very real sort during the policy crisis of the late 1610s and 1620s: that of Dutch political thought.'¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ Fulton identifies in this admonitory criticism the influence of Scott, who attacked notoriously attacked those courtiers persuading the king to rule without parliament by means of a Spanish alliance. Fulton, 'Massinger's *The Bondman*', 164-167, 176. See also Limon, *Dangerous Matter*, p. 81; Clark, *Moral Art*, pp. 128-129.

⁹⁷ Garrett, *Massinger*, p. 124.

⁹⁸ Patterson identifies a 'parliamentary and prophetic ring' in the rhetoric of the revolt leader, Pisander (II. iii. 32-47), and Heinemann concedes that these speeches, 'read out of the context of the play as a whole, have a startlingly revolutionary ring.', Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation*, p. 93; Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, p. 216. Cf. Dunn, who judges the slaves' defeat at the hands of the 'worthy' returning warriors demonstrates Massinger to be an 'anti-revolutionary', and Clark claims that, 'despite the revolutionary ideas in his speeches justifying the slave rebellion, its organiser and spokesman does not promulgate political revolt.' Dunn, *Massinger*, p. 165; Clark, *Moral Art*, p. 127.

⁹⁹ Fulton, 'Massinger's *The Bondman*'.

¹⁰⁰ Massinger, *Plays and Poems*, i., p. 303; Limon's tight chronological revision of the play's topical allusions asserted Timoleon's identification with the German general, Ernst von Mansfeld. Limon, *Dangerous Matter*, p. 67.

¹⁰¹ Fulton, 'Massinger's *The Bondman*', 153.

Much can be gained from reading Timoleon's speeches in the context of a rising English interest in the government of the United Provinces. That Massinger was tacitly suggesting that a potentially necessary reform in English government could be achieved by receiving instruction from the Netherlands is indicated in the play when the praetor of Syracuse explains that they have been so careless 'In the disposing of our owne affaires, / And ignorant in the Art of gouernment, / That now we need a stranger to instruct vs.' (I. iii. 2-4) The idea that aspects of the Dutch political system could be invoked as a model for English reform has also been identified in the works of Scott, so reaffirming Fulton's association between the play and the pamphlets of this expatriate minister.¹⁰² Fulton further underlines Massinger's engagement with such contemporary literature in identifying in *The Bondman* the correlation between monarchy and slavery that pervaded the polemical pamphlets in support of the Dutch against the threat of Spanish tyranny.¹⁰³

Yet Fulton's rendering of Massinger's republicanism in *The Bondman* is qualified by two key considerations. Firstly, whilst he distinguishes between Scott's (perceived) appreciation for mixed government and Massinger's preference for a 'stricter republicanism', the distinction is not borne out in Fulton's elucidation of the republican advocacy he sees in Timoleon's speeches.¹⁰⁴ Rather, the two are conflated as representative of an anti-absolute monarchist discourse of opposition, which ultimately posits a criticism of monarchy's excesses rather than the suggestion that the institution in itself is inimical to the public good.¹⁰⁵ Secondly, Timoleon's equation of monarchy with slavery works less effectively as a reflection of republicanism as he has come to Syracuse to defend an aristocracy, which we also learn is the form of government in Corinth (I. iii. 131). Furthermore, the 'sympathetic treatment of Timoleon's republicanism' that Fulton perceives in the play can be questioned in an additional direction through a brief re-evaluation of Timoleon himself. Whilst

¹⁰² Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. pp. 231-270; Fulton, 'Massinger's *The Bondman*', 164-173; for an investigation of the role played by the political precedent of the Dutch Republic in pamphlets in this period, see below, ch. 6.

¹⁰³ Fulton, 'Massinger's *The Bondman*', 171; for this association in the pamphlets see ch. 6.

¹⁰⁴ Fulton, 'Massinger's *The Bondman*', 156.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 166. For a further discussion of this idea, which poses a challenge to the assumption that Scott advocated a mixed form of government, see below, ch. 6, pp. 235-237.

Fulton recognises a debt in *The Bondman* to Massinger and Fletcher's earlier *Barnaveit* – that of 'representing tensions between monarchical and senatorial systems' – Timoleon's speech in defence of his tyrannicide (upon his brother) recalls a more ambivalent picture.¹⁰⁶

I suggest that in drawing the tale from Plutarch's life of Timoleon, Massinger's reconstruction of Timophanes's death at the hands of his brother, Timoleon, intended to evoke a parallel with the recent execution of Oldenbarnevelt instead of the Dutch Revolt, as suggested by Fulton.¹⁰⁷ This difference of allusion consequently alters our understanding of the passage from perceiving in it a defence of liberty in the face of absolute rule to the rather more opaque rendering of the rivalry between Oldenbarnevelt and Maurice that the playwright depicted in the earlier tragedy.¹⁰⁸ Timoleon's defence of his crime is phrased in the same justificatory tone that accompanies Orange's elimination of his rival in *Barnaveit*; however, intriguingly, the language employed echoes that voiced by the condemned Barnaveit in defence of the country's liberty. Thus where Barnaveit implied Orange, like Octavius, 'strove to tread vpon the neck of Rome, / and all hir auncient freedoms' (ll. 2435-6), Timoleon explained that his brother 'stroue to set his foote / Vpon the Cities freedome' (I. iii. 136-137); and where Barnaveit warned his auditors they would 'see this Government / changd [to a Monarchie]' (ll. 2444-5), Timoleon described the aim of his brother: 'To change the Aristocracie of *Corinth* / Into an absolute Monarchy' (I. iii. 131-132).¹⁰⁹ I suggest that Timoleon's usurpation, as the victor, of the condemned Barnaveit's rhetoric represents a continued investigation by Massinger into the retrospective act of legitimation that had concerned the playwrights in *Barnaveit*.¹¹⁰ Thus through the brief incarnation of Orange that Timoleon assumes in this speech, we can see Massinger adding a layer of ambivalence to the character's portrayal, which is further underlined by the praetor's suggestion that, should Timoleon not protect Syracuse against the enemy, 'Twill be beleeu'd, that for your priuate ends / You kild a brother.' (I. iii. 145-146) The intimation that his act could be construed as private spleen echoes much

¹⁰⁶ Fulton, 'Massinger's *The Bondman*', 161, 168.

¹⁰⁷ Clark, *Moral Art*, p. 125.

¹⁰⁸ Fulton, 'Massinger's *The Bondman*', 174; see below, ch. 5, pp. 198-210.

¹⁰⁹ Square brackets denote a deletion in the manuscript by the Master of the Revels, George Buc.

¹¹⁰ See ch. 5, pp. 202-203.

underground criticism of Maurice's pursuit of Oldenbarnevelt, and the reference to his kinship underlines the association with the recent Dutch *civil* turmoil, as opposed to the war for independence.¹¹¹

Therefore, I argue that rather than advocating republican government, with *The Bondman*, Massinger intended to reinforce and extend his representation of the corrupt effect upon political society that self-interested court sycophants engendered. The play's didacticism thus functioned, as with his first two independent plays, and the subsequent *Renegado*, to instruct the political elite in their civic responsibility, which insisted upon the preservation of personal liberty in order to safeguard the political liberty of the country more widely. Inherent within this purpose was an exploration of political authority, in which, as Fulton has rightly suggested, the contemporary precedent of the Dutch Republic played an increasingly influential role, and to a closer examination of which the next chapter will be concerned.

¹¹¹ For this criticism of Maurice see ch. 5, pp. 184-185.

The 'Execution of Justice' or Legalised Violence?

The English Reception of Oldenbarnevelt's Fall

The ideas, precedents and languages of the ancient constitution, classical liberty and continental theories of sovereignty and resistance have all varyingly been identified as key influences that were informing an evolving engagement with political ideas in early Stuart England.¹ Yet for the politically intense years of the Spanish match, the influence of Dutch republicanism seems unfairly neglected.² This has some basis in the unusual governmental development of the United Provinces that had worked for so long to justify its existence that it had forgotten to work on its form. At least this is how some historians conceive of the early Dutch Republic, with systematic expression of political theory not forthcoming until Spinoza and the brothers De la Court.³ It is also partly caused by a general unwillingness in much early Stuart historiography to admit that anyone in Jacobean England could have conceived of republican government – defined here narrowly as 'kingless' – as a plausible alternative for their country.⁴ Yet during these well-known years of unprecedented public opposition, a closer look needs to be taken at the ways in which the Dutch Republic was perceived,

¹ See introduction, pp. 16-19. In terms of contemporary precedent, the influence and perception of Venice has received significant attention. See David Wootton, 'Ulysses Bound? Venice and the Idea of Liberty from Howell to Hume', in D. Wootton (ed.), *Republicanism, Liberty and Commercial Society, 1649-1776* (Stanford, 1994), pp. 341-367; Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government, 1572-1651* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 104-119. For the role of Venetian republicanism in the Netherlands see Eco Haitsma Mulier, *The Myth of Venice and Dutch Republican Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (Assen, 1980).

² This is not reflected to quite the same extent for the period during and after the Civil War. See, for example, Jonathan Scott, 'Classical Republicanism in Seventeenth-century England and the Netherlands', in G&S, *Republicanism*, i., pp. 61-81; Herbert H. Rowen, 'The Dutch Republic and the Idea of Freedom', in Wootton, *Republicanism*, pp. 310-340.

³ For this view see E. H. Kossmann, 'The Development of Dutch Political Theory in the Seventeenth Century' in J. S. Bromley, and E. H. Kossmann, (eds.), *Britain and the Netherlands: Papers Delivered to the Oxford-Netherlands Historical Conference, 1959* (London, 1960), pp. 91-110; Eco Haitsma Mulier, 'The Language of Seventeenth-Century Republicanism in the United Provinces: Dutch or European?', in A. Pagden (ed.), *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 179-196. Cf. Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt, 1555-1590* (Cambridge, 1992) and Wyger R. E. Velema, "'That a Republic is Better than a Monarchy': Anti-Monarchism in Early Modern Dutch Political Thought", in G&S, *Republicanism*, i., pp. 9-25.

⁴ See for example Blair Worden, 'Republicanism, Regicide and Republic: The English Experience', in G&S, *Republicanism*, i., pp. 307-328.

portrayed and employed as a further avenue to pass political comment on England.⁵

On May 3 1619 the septuagenarian advocate of Holland, John van Oldenbarnevelt, climbed the scaffold erected in the Inner Court at The Hague and was beheaded by order of the States General. The execution cemented the victory of the Contra-Remonstrant faction over their Arminian rivals in a battle that had been raging since 1605. Yet on another level it proclaimed the triumph of the stadholder Maurice, prince of Orange, in the underlying power struggle that had dominated the relationship between the advocate and the stadholder since the turn of the century. The implementation of this final sentence upon the aged Oldenbarnevelt resounded throughout Europe with varying inflections of reception as different religious and political sensibilities were provoked. This was especially the case in England where news of the unfolding events occurring in the United Provinces was not only reported by the English ambassador, Dudley Carleton. Dutch proclamations and pamphlets concerning the divisive religious issues in the Netherlands, and following the arrest and trial of Oldenbarnevelt and his cronies, were translated and distributed in England.

The Contra-Remonstrant perspective of these pamphlets thus informed the English readership and, in doing so, immediately offered an easy alignment of prejudices that worked largely in harmony with the crown's reception of the news. The unproved charge of treason for consorting with Spain in an attempt to bring in the old order to the Netherlands cast Oldenbarnevelt in a traitorous-popish light, which was only confirmed by his support for the Arminian faction. In contrast to this portrait, Prince Maurice appeared as the true Protestant defender of the country's stability and religion. James's own personal animosity towards Oldenbarnevelt, affiliation for Maurice and general distrust of destabilising religious disputes allowed a royal endorsement of Maurice's actions in bringing down the proud and overambitious statesman, which can only have been more enthusiastic in view of the particularly monarchical manner in which Maurice increasingly operated. Therefore, England can be said to have received the good news of Oldenbarnevelt's defeat with one voice.

⁵ Thomas Fulton has made an inroad into this field. See Thomas C. Fulton, "The True and Naturall Constitution of that Mixed Government": Massinger's *The Bondman* and the influence of Dutch Republicanism', *Studies in Philology* (2002) 152-178; see ch. 4, pp. 157-159.

Through an investigation of the execution's reception in England this immediate presumption can be put to the test, and the extent to which the Dutch pamphlet polemic exerted a significant influence over this reaction can be examined, thereby questioning the representative nature of such pamphlet polemic in general. To contextualise appropriately the differing ways that the execution was presented in England, this chapter will first provide an outline of the discord in the Netherlands that culminated in the advocate's death. By then charting the varying ways that the news of Oldenbarnevelt's death was received, the chapter delivers an insight into how the Netherlands political system was perceived and projected, in turn, onto English domestic politics, thereby dissecting the impact of the example of the United Provinces upon English oppositional and political thought.

I

The emergence of the Netherlands from the war with Spain to a state of truce in 1609 threw light upon the rumbling domestic tensions that underlay the fragile union of the provinces. A complex web of political, religious and commercial antagonisms that had been kept at bay during the period of warfare could now gather the strength to engulf the country. These varying pressures became enmeshed into the formation of two factions that were predominantly defined by their religious differences, but that also played host to a combination of socio-economic tensions.⁶ Prince Maurice's decisive participation in 1617 meant that these factions were spearheaded by the two most powerful men in the country who themselves had a personal political rivalry. The eventual showdown, which resulted in Oldenbarnevelt's, Hugo Grotius's and their chief allies' arrests in

⁶ See Judith Pollmann's analysis of the Utrecht lawyer Arnoldus Buchelius's *Contra-Remonstrant allegiance*. Whilst from a doctrinal perspective Buchelius may have been most likely to support the Remonstrants, Pollmann highlights several alternative factors influencing his adherence to this faction, including envy at Holland's dominant position and influence. Judith Pollmann, *Religious Choice in the Dutch Republic: The Reformation of Arnoldus Buchelius (1565-1641)* (Manchester, 1999), pp. 126-136.

1618, had been anticipated for some time and should be understood in the context of the antagonisms that had begun tearing the country in two since 1605.⁷

The theological dispute between the two divinity professors at Leiden University, Franciscus Gomarus and Jacobus Arminius, brought into sharp relief the rising agitation of the strictly Calvinist elements with the broad spectrum of Reformed opinion and ambiguity in church-state relations that characterised the Dutch Church.⁸ Arminius most famously clashed with Gomarus over the internationally controversial issue of predestination. Gomarus followed Beza's supralapsarian predestination that implied God was the author of sin by his decree that elected some to salvation and some to damnation, even before the fall of man. Arminius's alternative to this rather bleak doctrine sought to salvage some modicum of free will for mankind in its understanding that God had preordained all believers to salvation so it was still, therefore, the individual's choice whether to accept or reject this offer.⁹ The infiltration of Arminius's doctrines into provincial churches ignited the underlying power struggle between the state and church, that was fuelled by jurisdictional ambiguities, as several Arminian-influenced preachers found themselves disciplined by local *classes*.¹⁰ The political shaping of these factions was already apparent in 1609 as the Gomarist sentiment behind the campaign against Arminian doctrines and preachers can be identified with 'the same stern Calvinists' who were vehemently resisting the Twelve Years Truce.¹¹

⁷ Israel notes that there was widespread expectation that Maurice would bring down Oldenbarnevelt's faction after the 'Sharp Resolution' of August 1617. He attributes the year's delay to the cautious approach taken by the stadholder, seen to be characteristic of his military conduct. Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477-1806* (Oxford, 1995), p. 443. This text provides a key account of the period. See also Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic and the Hispanic World, 1606-1661* (Oxford, 1982); K. H. D. Haley, *The Dutch in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1972); Jan den Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt* (Cambridge, 2 vols., 1973).

⁸ For an introductory discussion of the Dutch church in this period and a detailed examination of the dispute see Jan Rohls, 'Calvinism, Arminianism and Socinianism in the Netherlands until the Synod of Dort', in M. Muslow and J. Rohls (eds.), *Socinianism and Arminianism: Antitrinitarians, Calvinists and Cultural Exchange in Seventeenth-Century Europe* (Leiden, 2005), pp. 3-48; Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt*, ii., pp. 423-466.

⁹ Rohls, 'Calvinism, Arminianism and Socinianism', p. 12; Pollmann, *Religious Choice*, p. 106.

¹⁰ The *classis* was the regional assembly of congregations in the organisation of the Dutch Church. After these were provincial, and then national, synods. Both the *classes* and local government claimed authority over ministerial appointments. Rohls, 'Calvinism, Arminianism and Socinianism', pp. 6-7; Pollmann, *Religious Choice*, p. 106; Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt*, ii., pp. 456-457; Israel, *Dutch Republic*, p. 423.

¹¹ Israel, *Dutch Republic*, p. 423.

The justification for the disciplinary actions against the preachers had been based upon the notion that the Arminian doctrines conflicted with the Netherlands' Confession and Heidelberg Catechism. In 1610 the Arminian preacher Johannes Uytenbogaert composed a remonstrance to put to the states of Holland on behalf of the persecuted preachers. This became the renowned 'remonstrance', presented to the states by Oldenbarnevelt in July 1610, proposing a revision of these articles at a provincial synod. In their contra-remonstrance the Gomarists rejected secular authority over the church and insisted that only a national synod could resolve the issues; in any case, they insisted that revision of the catechism and confession was not a subject for debate.¹² Fearing the emergence of a dominant and independent church that might result from a national synod, the Remonstrants invoked the principle that it was for the individual provinces to regulate religious matters within their own boundaries.¹³

The nomination of Conrad Vorstius as Arminius's successor at Leiden in 1611 only served to intensify and internationalise the escalating conflict as the Contra-Remonstrants strenuously resisted the appointment. Vorstius's unorthodox, and even Socinian, reputation went before him and created a chorus of dissent at his appointment, with Gomarus resigning from his own chair in protest.¹⁴ So great was the furore, inflamed further by James I's protests against the appointment, that Oldenbarnevelt was eventually required to dismiss Vorstius, instead appointing the Arminian Simon Episcopius and Contra-Remonstrant Johannes Polyander to the two now-vacant chairs.¹⁵

The roles of Oldenbarnevelt and Prince Maurice in this conflict differed as, besides from a brief intervention in 1609, Maurice had not openly committed himself to either party.¹⁶ Oldenbarnevelt seems to have supported the Remonstrant cause less from a doctrinal point of view than because of a determination to repress the domineering influence of a Contra-Remonstrant church and retain the inclusive, liberal character of the Dutch Reformed

¹² Pollman, *Religious Choice*, p. 106; Israel, *Dutch Republic*, p. 425.

¹³ Pollman, *Religious Choice*, p. 108.

¹⁴ Israel, *Dutch Republic*, p. 428; Rohls, 'Calvinism, Arminianism and Socinianism', p. 21.

¹⁵ Rohls, 'Calvinism, Arminianism and Socinianism', p. 28.

¹⁶ Maurice intervened in Alkmaar in 1609 when he exerted his authority to choose a Gomarist town council, but the involvement of the civic militia soon nullified this step. See Israel, *Dutch Republic*, pp. 423-424.

religion.¹⁷ By 1617, however, the tension was mounting as Oldenbarnevelt and his faction had failed to restore unity and Contra-Remonstrant frustration at the growing Arminian dominance was rising to boiling point in many Holland towns. The religious antagonisms fed into several existing areas of tension that often meant allegiances were dictated by economic and regional factors as much as theological commitment. The more strictly Calvinist-inclined Southern immigrant population experienced economic hardship, as did the more inland provinces, who did not benefit from the improved trade brought in by the truce.¹⁸ Many provinces resented Holland's dominance in decision making and perceived that the domestic antagonisms and resistance to a national synod originated from there.¹⁹ In July of that year the 'mud-beggars' – Contra-Remonstrants who had trudged miles to village churches to hear orthodox services – seized the empty Cloister Church in The Hague. Maurice's attendance at a service there not long afterwards finally revealed his allegiances and so drew the battle lines between him and the advocate.

It is from this point on that the Dutch unrest became, to a large extent, a power struggle between Holland's advocate and stadholder. In August 1617 the states of Holland passed the 'Sharp Resolution' which enabled the towns to raise troops known as *waardgelders* who owed their allegiance to the town paying them, and stated that the regular troops owed their loyalty to the provincial states before the States General. Maurice perceived this action as an affront to both the true religion and his own person.²⁰ The following January, therefore, he began to exercise his given authority as stadholder, touring the southern provinces' Remonstrant towns and purging the Arminian influence on their councils. Through this method he ensured that the States General in mid-1618 voted to

¹⁷ The minister sent to Oldenbarnevelt the night before his execution reported that he found him orthodox in opinion and that he had supported the Arminians because he thought their doctrine should be tolerated. Carleton to Naunton, 6 May 1619, Dudley Carleton, *The Letters from and to Sir Dudley Carleton, Knt., during his Embassy in Holland from January 1615/16 to December 1620* (London, 3rd edn, 1780), pp. 364-365. Israel, *Dutch Republic*, p. 426; Pollmann, *Religious Choice*, p. 107. For an extensive discussion of Oldenbarnevelt's religious perspective see Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt*, ii., pp. 423-435.

¹⁸ Israel, *Dutch Republic*, pp. 434-437.

¹⁹ Carleton's critical remark that Oldenbarnevelt's and Grotius's antagonistic discourse against a national synod, which played upon Holland's Batavian ancestry and commercial power, were '*ad faciendum populum* against their next assembly', indicates the inflammatory nature of the Remonstrants' resistance. Carleton to Lake, 14 Apr. 1618, *Letters*, p. 265; Pollman, *Religious Choice*, pp. 126-136.

²⁰ Israel, *Dutch Republic*, p. 441.

hold a national synod and to disband the *waardgelders* raised in Holland and Utrecht. In response to these moves, the Remonstrants charged Maurice with aspiring to the sovereignty of the country and a pamphlet war began in earnest.²¹

Following the Sharp Resolution, the Remonstrant-influenced Utrecht city council had raised 600 *waardgelders* and had set about purging the local militia of its Contra-Remonstrant sympathisers.²² This city then became the battlefield of the eventual confrontation at the end of July 1618 when Maurice travelled there with additional troops to enforce the States General's decree to disband the *waardgelders*. Despite efforts by Oldenbarnevelt and his cronies to persuade the army units, which had always been under the authority of the States General, that their first obedience was owed to the province paying them, resistance crumbled upon Maurice's entrance to the city. The stadholder was then able to gain the authority from the States General to undertake measures commensurate with the security of the country, on which legally tenuous basis Oldenbarnevelt, Grotius and Hogerbeets were arrested on 18 August 1618, followed the next day by the arrest of the Utrecht secretary, Ledenberg.²³ Maurice had acted without the permission of the provincial states and the novelty of this course is reflected in the ambassadorial reactions. Whilst Carleton reported that generality deputies had visited him to express their hope in James's support for the proceedings, the French ambassadors, whose sympathies lay with the imprisoned advocate, immediately departed the country in shock.²⁴

With the chief opposition to a national synod removed, plans went ahead and the synod was convened at Dordrecht (Dort) in November 1618. The trial of the prisoners took longer to begin as Maurice set about first reforming the town councils so 'he may have plurality of voices in the assembly of Holland.'²⁵ The eventual trial began in March 1619; Oldenbarnevelt had to provide his own defence, without the aid of books and papers, and continued to deny the main

²¹ John Lothrop Motley, *The Life and Death of John of Barneveld* (London, 2 vols., 1874), ii., p. 340; Israel, *Dutch Republic*, p. 446. For instances of these pamphlets see Carleton, *Letters*, pp. 261, 264, 265 and below p. 185. For an account of the political function served by pamphlet polemic in the Dutch Republic see Craig E. Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture in the Early Dutch Republic* (Dordrecht, 1987), esp. pp. 155-175.

²² Israel, *Dutch Republic*, p. 442.

²³ Motley was in no doubt that the arrests were a violation of law, stating 'The States General were only as guests on [Holland's] soil, and had no domain or jurisdiction there whatever.' Motley, *John of Barneveld*, ii., p. 314.

²⁴ Carleton to James, 19 Aug. 1618, *Letters*, p. 279.

²⁵ Carleton to Naunton, 29 Aug. 1618, *Letters*, p. 289.

charges. Upon hearing his fate on 2 May 1619, Oldenbarnevelt reportedly protested: 'I governed... when I was in authority, according to the maxims of that time; and now I am condemned to die according to the maxims of this',²⁶ and was claimed to have spoken only these words on the scaffold: 'I die not as a traitor'.²⁷ The widespread report of Oldenbarnevelt's constancy, which reflected his incredulity at his treatment by the country he had worked so long for, contributed to the Dutch uneasiness surrounding the international reception of the news of the advocate's execution.²⁸ Their evident desire to receive royal approval from both James and Louis XIII underwrote the fragile veneer of legality attached to the proceedings.²⁹ But the simultaneous victory of Calvinism over Arminianism encompassed in the canons of Dort enabled the Contra-Remonstrants to present the resolution of the troubles as the triumph of truth over the malign influence of crypto-Catholic Arminianism, and the death of Oldenbarnevelt as the victory of the godly prince over the traitorous rebel.³⁰

II

The translated pamphlets that circulated in England ranged from copies of Dutch official documents to bitter invective. The information that they conveyed was predictably passed through a Contra-Remonstrant filter reflecting both the assumption of the legality through which the States General conducted the trial and the character assassination of Oldenbarnevelt that had filled the Dutch streets, whipping up popular antipathy towards the old advocate. The language of Dutch patriotism invoked to censure Oldenbarnevelt's supposed actions against the state was the same that had been employed to rail against the truce in 1609

²⁶ Carleton to Naunton, 6 May 1619, *Letters*, p. 363.

²⁷ Carleton to Chamberlain, 3 May 1619, SPF 84/90, fo. 5. Full transcription in appendix, p. 270.

²⁸ Carleton later explained that his delay in recovering Oldenbarnevelt's last letters was due to them having been 'kept close in regard he stood vpon his innocence vntill the very last'. Carleton to Naunton, 12 May 1619, SPF 84/90, fo. 68. Also in *Letters*, pp. 366-368.

²⁹ Carleton related on the day of the execution that three deputies from the states were sent to him, as well as to the French ambassador, in order to 'besiech his Ma[jes]ty to hold a goode opinion of this execution', until the time he could read a full account of the process and sentence. They assured Carleton that the proceedings were carried out according to justice and the defendants found guilty by the unanimous decision of the judges 'against whom no just exception could be taken'. The underlying motivation in this statement was surely to exonerate the prince from the charge of pursuing his own vendetta. Carleton to Naunton, 3 May 1619, SPF 84/90, fos. 16-17. See appendix, pp. 267-269 for a full transcription of this letter.

³⁰ For an analysis of the political and religious implications of Maurice's coup in 1618-19 see Israel, *Dutch Republic*, pp. 450-460.

and called for renewal of the war in 1621.³¹ The Calvinist, deeply anti-Spanish tone of the propaganda spoke with great import in England to the would-be heirs of 1588. In the charges that were published as Oldenbarnevelt's confession, the statesman appeared as the arrogant and ambitious author of the religious disputes tearing the young country to shreds and making her vulnerable to the assaults of foreign invaders.³² The states claimed that Oldenbarnevelt had not been formally accused of collusion with Spain so as to spare him the pain of torture at his advanced age, as well as in respect of his services to the country.³³ This did nothing to discourage the widely-held suspicion of his Spanish connections, however, which had for some time been exploited in the pamphlets attacking him. References to Oldenbarnevelt's Spanish designs in the rancorous commentary appended to *Barneuels Apology* and in the defamatory account of his life, *Barnevelt Displayed*, instantly invited his condemnation by the rabidly Hispanophobic members of the English commonwealth.³⁴

James received the full report of Oldenbarnevelt's death five days after the event, over which there was felt to be 'no greate cause to mourne'.³⁵ James did not express his opinion regarding Oldenbarnevelt's Spanish connections; but his own dynastic intentions towards Spain suggest such polemical rumours made little headway with him. Instead, James's support for the execution can be seen more in terms of his own relationship with both Oldenbarnevelt and Maurice and the severe perspective from which he viewed instigators of religious unrest. It was during the Vorstius affair that James received a bitter taste of Oldenbarnevelt's brand of diplomacy, when the king attempted to intervene in

³¹ The formation of Dutch patriotism during the revolt had been fused immutably with Calvinism, even though in reality the war was fought and maintained by a plurality of confessions. The providential ideas to which it appealed in 1609 and 1621 allowed an uncomplicated depiction of Oldenbarnevelt as an enemy of the country in the Contra-Remonstrant propaganda. See particularly *Barnevelt Displayed: Or the Golden Legend of New St Iohn* (London, 1619), which opens with the address: 'most impartial Reader, and my true-hearted Countreymen', p. 1. Cf. *A Relation of Some Speciall Points concerning the State of Holland. Or The Proudient Counsellours Companion* [London, 1621]. Both pamphlets appeal to the attributes of the constructed Calvinist patriotism. See also Israel, *Dutch Republic*, p. 423.

³² *The Arraignment of John van Olden Barneuelte Late Aduocate of Holland and West-Friesland* (London, 1619).

³³ States General to the Provinces, 9/19 May 1619, SPF 84/90, fo. 60. Full transcription in appendix, p. 274.

³⁴ John van Oldenbarnevelt and Petrus Holderus, *Barneuels Apology: Or Holland Mysterie. With Marginall Castigations* ([London], 1618), sig. B4v, F4; *Barnevelt Displayed*, pp. 34-5, 44.

³⁵ Calvert to Carleton, 8 May 1619, SPF 84/90, fo. 48. [Full] transcription in appendix, pp. 271-272.

the quarrel over the appointment to the divinity chair at Leiden.³⁶ It was not so much Remonstrant theology that the king objected to in Vorstius's appointment; for James, it was crucial to defend his own orthodox reputation that had been tarnished by an association with Vorstius's supposed Socinianism.³⁷ In James's view, Vorstius was innovatory and a heretic, which he understood, along with the toleration proposed by the Remonstrant party, as lying at the heart of the current troubles affecting the United Provinces.³⁸

The obstinacy of the Remonstrant party, spearheaded by Oldenbarnevelt, over the appointment and their refusal to bow to his express desires alienated the king and pushed him further towards affection for Maurice, who had finally declared against Vorstius in 1612 and was later presented with the Order of the Garter. The fallout from the affair is made clear in the diplomatic correspondence between James and his ambassador in the Netherlands, Ralph Winwood, in which the king conveyed his belief that Oldenbarnevelt was not to be trusted.³⁹ This can only have been magnified following Winwood's report on the heated conference he had held with Oldenbarnevelt. In response to Winwood's haughty assertion that James had the means to ensure his demands were observed in Leiden, Oldenbarnevelt asserted that 'he was borne in lybertye, and therefore could not digest suche kynde of language' before comparing James unfavourably with the king of Spain.⁴⁰ The animosity that the affair had created between James and Oldenbarnevelt is further evident from Carleton's remarks to the advocate's sons in 1618. To encourage Carleton to speak favourably on their father's behalf, they attempted to clear Oldenbarnevelt of any disservice to James, especially during the Vorstius affair. Carleton's response could not have raised much hope for the advocate's sons as he roundly reiterated James's displeasure at Oldenbarnevelt's disregard for his propositions before outlining his own duty as a public person to remain silent unless commanded otherwise.⁴¹ The perceived insult offered to James by Oldenbarnevelt was even held up by Sir Edward Vere

³⁶ For an overview of this affair and James's role in it see Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt*, ii., pp. 526-536.

³⁷ In 1610 the Jesuit Martin Becanus pointed out the Arminian implications of James's arguments in defence of his oath of allegiance and directly linked him to Vorstius who he described as 'atheistic'. Frederick Shriver, 'Orthodoxy and Diplomacy: James I and the Vorstius Affair', *EHR*, 85 (1970), 449-474, 453-454.

³⁸ Shriver, 'Orthodoxy and Diplomacy', 457; Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt*, ii., p. 528.

³⁹ Shriver, 'Orthodoxy and Diplomacy', 471.

⁴⁰ Quoted in *ibid.*, 473.

⁴¹ Carleton to Naunton, 16 Dec. 1618, *Letters*, p. 320.

in 1618 as a reason to be joyful at the advocate's unexpected arrest. Speaking in providential terms Vere remarked of Oldenbarnevelt: 'All this greatness is suddenly fallen, and with it the bitterest enemy, and the most dangerous to our state, besides a contemner of his majesty's person and actions.'⁴²

In 1619 James was certainly no Presbyterian and the Contra-Remonstrants' zealous opposition to the 'Arminian' doctrine of state superiority over the church was not the cause of his support for Maurice's actions. Instead, in addition to his personal regard for Maurice, the king patently approved of the course taken to remove a principal malefactor in the religious troubles plaguing the security of the Netherlands and in chief opposition to the proposed synod – an attitude which James found 'contrary to the public service.'⁴³ Consequently, a few weeks after the execution, James spoke in praise of Maurice and compared him to Henry IV of England 'for wysdome, prowess, [happie] fortune & like fame of Gouernment & purifying all troubles prosperouslie as well in peace as warre.'⁴⁴ In aligning the stadholder with Henry IV, James accorded to Maurice a princely authority, so disclosing his interpretation of Maurice's role in the Netherlands' government. By disregarding the democratic aspect of the Dutch Revolt, James's perception here of the ultimate success of monarchical rule in the respective countries of what were, essentially, two usurpers, was perhaps one way in which he could sweeten the taste of rebellion to himself.

Carleton's reports to England on Oldenbarnevelt, both official and in his personal correspondence, echoed the representation of events as painted by Maurice's faction and demonstrate that the ambassador's personal sentiments were aligned for the most part with the Contra-Remonstrant 'patriot' perspective. His voice was therefore added in harmony to the chorus of those flooding into England justifying the execution and vilifying its subject. To Carleton, Oldenbarnevelt was 'vindictive' and those supporting him needed their eyes opening 'to see and know their enemies', which he defined as 'the authors and nourishers of faction and disunion' in what was an evident reference to the advocate.⁴⁵ He reported with credulity the evidence for Oldenbarnevelt's collusion with Spain and outlined to James the threatening implications of his

⁴² Sir Edward Vere to Naunton, 20 Aug. 1618, *Letters*, p 283.

⁴³ Carleton to Naunton, 8 Sept. 1618, *Letters*, p. 290.

⁴⁴ Harbert to Carleton, 31 May 1619, SPD 14/109, fos. 121-122.

⁴⁵ Carleton to Lake, 5 Apr. 1618 and Carleton to Naunton, 3 Oct. 1618, *Letters*, pp. 261, 304.

plot for England. Oldenbarnevelt's 'practice of change of Religion' Carleton informed the king,

was accompanied w[i]th a desseign of transpecting the chiefe dependence of this State from your Ma[jes]ty to France; w[hi]ch is conceived he would have made as a bridge to passe further into Spaine. From hence proceeded his sweetning from time to time all differences w[i]th that Crowne, and on the contrary his nourishing alienation betwixt your Ma[jes]ties kingdoms & these Provinces.⁴⁶

In contrast to the scheming counsels of the Arminian party, who were in constant recourse to Vorstius, Maurice could be seen going 'the plain and open way, professing his purpose to live and die in the maintenance of the reformed religion.'⁴⁷ This perspective played on the alignment of Oldenbarnevelt and Arminianism with Spain and Catholicism, and Maurice with Calvinism and the Protestant Union, thus emphasising the importance of concord between England and the United Provinces. So perhaps with a more ideological outlook than the king, Carleton reported back the victory of the true church and the 'well-affected' party through Oldenbarnevelt's fall.⁴⁸

Carleton was a seasoned diplomat, however, and though Maurice had his full support, there are several hints to suggest that the ambassador well understood the less providential forces of faction that underlay the tensions. Having previously praised Maurice's straight style of working and the open nature of Dutch politics, Carleton could not help but wonder at Oldenbarnevelt's ignorance of his arrest considering his considerable position in the state. There is little doubt that Carleton viewed the proceedings as necessary for the ultimate welfare of the country, but his efforts to relate to England, and even to Maurice himself, the common talk that questioned their legal foundation conveys a sense of uneasiness about the business. Whilst the 'well-affected' party 'generally' approved of Oldenbarnevelt's arrest as a means to secure the state, Carleton

⁴⁶ Carleton to James, 8 May 1619, SPF 84/90, fo. 53. Also in *Letters*, p. 366.

⁴⁷ Carleton to Lake, 14 Apr. 1618, *Letters*, p 264.

⁴⁸ Jan den Tex briefly judges Carleton's view of the execution as the 'triumph of a good cause'; this understanding of the Netherlands' struggles can be confirmed throughout the ambassador's correspondence in such passages as quoted above. Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt*, ii., p 691.

remarked that the Arminians thought it insufferable 'in libera republica' and the assembled states 'as unlawfully chosen, and put into place by violence'.⁴⁹ He further remarked upon the French ambassadors' oration that cast a questionable light over proceedings, making them 'appear rather a persecution than a trial; and the cause itself rather matter of faction than justice.' But such earnest efforts, in Carleton's opinion, were effectively in vain as 'a purpose continueth... of making [Oldenbarnevelt] shorter by the head.'⁵⁰ A week later, following Oldenbarnevelt's death, Carleton again betrayed this slight apprehension at the inflexible resolve with which the execution was effected. The French ambassador, Carleton reported, had been denied an audience on the morning of the advocate's execution and his subsequent letters 'were not read in the assemblée of the States but *apres le coup*.'⁵¹

But the charge of colluding with Spain in an effort to bring the Netherlands back under their subjection, despite remaining unproved and vehemently denied by Oldenbarnevelt until his death, was enough to inflame some popular prejudices in England. To those committed to rescuing the international Protestant church from the jaws of the ambitious Spanish crown in league with the papacy, Oldenbarnevelt's apparent Arminianism was incriminating enough. The rumours of Spanish treachery simply added fuel to the fire. A ballad penned not long after the advocate's downfall encapsulates this absorption and easy manipulation of Oldenbarnevelt's fate into a vindication of Protestant victory and a dire warning to English 'crypto-Catholic Arminians'. Leaving aside the realities of faction and party rivalry that truly underwrote the execution, the ballad presented Oldenbarnevelt as a conspiratorial villain who 'vnnaturally complotted' to surrender parts of the country to the Spanish Low Countries, 'together with his horrible intent to murder *Graue Maurice*, and others.'⁵² The balladeer decried the Hell-inspired conspiracy that would have resigned the countries once more 'to Tyrants power' and would have

⁴⁹ Carleton to James, 19 Aug. 1618 and Carleton to Naunton, 29 Oct. 1618, *Letters*, pp. 281, 309.

⁵⁰ Carleton to Naunton 23 and 27 Apr. 1619, *Letters*, pp. 359-361.

⁵¹ SPF 84/90, fo. 16v. Italics mine. It is also apparent that Carleton grasped the personal role of Maurice in securing the execution as he subsequently related to Naunton that 'his Ex[cellen]cy was ye grain w[hi]ch turned the balance to [Oldenbarnevelt's] ruine w[i]th ye Judges when they were in chiefe deliberation about his cause'. Carleton to Naunton, 12 May 1619, SPF 84/90, fo. 67.

⁵² *A Pepysian Garland: Black-Letter Broadside Ballads of the Years 1595-1639*, ed. H. E. Rollins (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), p. 104.

downtrodden the truth of the gospel to put in its stead ‘trash and Traditions.’ Oldenbarnevelt’s ‘plot’ could thus be placed in an easily identifiable tradition of treason against God, sovereign and country: ‘Outmatcht this Deed cannot, / Except with *Powder-plot*, / Which ne’re will be forgot / till the last Iudgement.’ Invoking the providential understanding attached to the delivery from previous Catholic plots, however, the balladeer could cry with relief that once more God had ‘Cast downe his watchfull eye’ and crossed the old man’s purpose.⁵³ The lesson was thus conveyed to all Machiavellian statesmen who machinated and schemed without grace, and a warning given to all in England who harboured the ‘fell poyson’ of popery in their hearts.⁵⁴

There are difficulties in assessing the extent to which this ballad is in any way representative of a wider swathe of opinion about Oldenbarnevelt. It is no longer widely held that such cheap styles of publication offer a comprehensive insight into the attitudes and understanding of their readers.⁵⁵ The ballad’s employment of a certain language and imagery would immediately categorise the Netherlands’ dispute into the simple dichotomy that pervaded Protestant polemic. The assimilation of Arminianism with Catholicism, of Oldenbarnevelt with Spain, of his conspiracy with English treasons all identified the advocate as an enemy of the Protestant church and English nation. The ballad’s final prayer to God to keep the fruits of Elizabeth’s reign still flourishing completed this candid appeal to an emerging national sentiment.⁵⁶ But to what degree the ballad’s audience would have straightforwardly swallowed this partisan reworking of Dutch politics cannot be judged from the ballad alone. Whilst the ballad reveals evidence that the influx of the Contra-Remonstrant propaganda had some hand in shaping an English understanding of Oldenbarnevelt’s fall, a larger net must be cast to discover if such representations can be seen as typical of a wider public response.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 106-108.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 108; Ivo Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology in Stuart Drama* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 141-142.

⁵⁵ On these considerations and the value such publications offer see Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 38-39. Ivo Kamps describes the ballad as the popular, although not universal, view of the execution. Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology*, p. 141.

⁵⁶ Rollins, *Broadside Ballads*, p. 109.

Carleton's erstwhile secretary Nathaniel Brent and his long-time correspondent John Chamberlain both testify to the lively and widespread interest in the news of Oldenbarnevelt's trial and execution that had crossed the channel in three days. There is even evidence to suggest that in general many were well-disposed to the news, as Brent noted 'It hath bin confidently reported here that monsieur Barnevelt's head was cut of [sic] on Munday last; which hath caused much joy.'⁵⁷ The following year the playwright John Ford pointed to Oldenbarnevelt's execution as an example of the ruinous effects of flattery and envy in his neo-stoic *A Line of Life*.⁵⁸ Ford's depiction was not unsympathetic to the old advocate, who was portrayed as a great statesman; but ultimately he had allowed his personal ambition to overrule his public duty thus demonstrating that 'long life, and a peacefull death are not granted or held by the Charter of Honours'.⁵⁹ Yet even this more measured consideration of Oldenbarnevelt's fall owed a debt to the Dutch propaganda that apportioned responsibility for all the tumults to the advocate's vain ambition.

But the most direct and polemical use of the Dutch pamphlets can be seen in the Protestant-fuelled tirades against Spain and the papacy that were published during the climactic years of the Spanish match and foreign policy disasters of the later 1620s. The Arminian-Catholic-Spanish prejudices conveyed in the Contra-Remonstrant propaganda informed many references to Oldenbarnevelt, who then became a catchword for the might of Spain and the threat of Arminianism, with the emphasis on each being subtly adjusted as the times dictated. Two well known topical tracts urging a realignment of English foreign policy in the early 1620s, *Vox Populi* and *Vox Coeli*, both depicted Oldenbarnevelt as a Spanish agent. According to this picture, having been bought by Spanish gold, Oldenbarnevelt was intent to tear the state apart through the dissensions he had aroused in order to further realise Spain's ambitions.

⁵⁷ Brent to Carleton, 8 May 1619, SPD 14/109, fo. 25. Chamberlain related that he had heard the news on Thursday, 6 May following Oldenbarnevelt's execution on Monday, 3 May, Chamberlain to Carleton, 8 May 1619, SPD 14/109, fo. 23.

⁵⁸ For Ford's neo-stoicism see Michael Neill, 'Ford, John (*bap.* 1586, *d.* 1653?)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Oct 2007 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9861>, accessed 11 Sept 2008].

⁵⁹ John Ford, *A Line of Life Pointing at the Immortalitie of a Vertuous Name* ([London], 1620), pp. 79-81.

John Reynolds's *Vox Coeli* invoked Oldenbarnevelt as a recent example of Spanish treachery, decrying how near Spain had come to extinguishing the Netherlands' liberty 'by infecting and corrupting their Secretary *Barnevelt*, a man of so profound wit, and deepe iudgement and experience in matters of State, as he was not only the Oracle of the Netherlands, but the Ornament and Wonder of *Europe*, yea of his time.'⁶⁰ Reynolds's rather extravagant praise for Oldenbarnevelt echoes the description of the advocate's greatness given by John Ford and here functioned to convey the villainous nature of Spain all the more effectively.⁶¹ Tyrannously intent on breaking the liberty the Netherlands had gained, Spain, in the eyes of the tract's celestial conference, had succeeded in beguiling even such an experienced statesman as Oldenbarnevelt. An admonition therefore accompanied the reference to Holland's advocate that demonstrated how Spain's Indian gold could corrupt princes and statesmen internationally into fulfilling their ambitious and iniquitous aims.⁶² This, of course, would resonate loudly in an England headed by an insolvent monarch seeking to fill his coffers with a Spanish dowry.

In a similar vein, Thomas Scott's *Vox Populi* exploited the rumours that Oldenbarnevelt had been in receipt of a Spanish pension. This enabled Scott to identify Spain as the underlying culprit for the domestic turmoil affecting the Netherlands. In the polemically constructed relation, purporting to be from the Spanish ambassador Gondomar, the wily diplomat is shown to be mournful over Oldenbarnevelt's fall, whose 'succeeding plots' were aimed at disuniting Holland and England so Spain could more easily conquer them both.⁶³ The purpose of Gondomar's reference to Oldenbarnevelt in *Vox Populi* was to further blacken the image of Spain that such propagandists as Scott were trying to purvey as James drew threateningly close to an alliance with the Habsburgs. Oldenbarnevelt had been shown as an instrument of the Spanish crown that was aspiring to be the principal monarch of Europe. Accordingly, Oldenbarnevelt's downfall represented a righteous victory for the free, Protestant countries against the growing tyranny of Catholic Spain. Scott additionally presented Arminianism as another Spanish tool employed by Oldenbarnevelt to help collapse the

⁶⁰ John Reynolds, *Vox Coeli* ([London], 1624), p. 44.

⁶¹ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 44 with Ford, *A Line of Life*, pp. 79-81.

⁶² Reynolds, *Vox Coeli*, p. 45.

⁶³ [Thomas Scott], *Vox Populi* ([London], 1620), sig. B4v, Dv.

fractured unity of the Reformed religion. Through this illustration Scott therefore underlined the indivisible correlation between Oldenbarnevelt's Spanish treachery and his patronage of the Arminian faction, so encouraging his readers to see the necessity of remaining religiously unified and united with the Netherlands.⁶⁴

The growing fears, underpinning much political tension in the 1620s, that an Arminian faction were creeping towards a position of power and influence originated in part from this association of the prejudiced characterisation of 'Arminianism' with the inseparable otherness of Spain and Catholicism. Later pamphlets, however, reflect a subtle shift from the immediate political concerns of the early 1620s, that witnessed a cascade of references to the danger of Spain in an effort to cajole foreign policy towards a more active stance. By the later 1620s the more immediate concern of those still invoking this strand of self-defined 'patriot' opinion was with the perceived rise in Arminian influence domestically that threatened a return to Rome as insistently as did the Habsburgs' military might.⁶⁵ Therefore, Oldenbarnevelt was shown to be much more directly responsible for the civil disturbances in the Netherlands due to his insidious religious persuasion. In 1626 Matthew Sutcliffe vehemently challenged the interpretation of the Netherlands' discord in the controversial book, *Apello Caesarem* (1625). Sutcliffe attacked the book's claim that many had falsely attributed the troubles to the dissension caused by the Arminian faction. The author clearly knew not 'the danger wherein the Low Countries stood by the practises of *Barneuelte*, and other of that sect.'⁶⁶ The lesson for England this time thus intended to demonstrate the disastrous consequences of allowing Arminianism to creep into the country.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, sig. C2. For more on the arguments for maintaining Anglo-Dutch unity during the early 1620s see ch. 6, pp. 251-252.

⁶⁵ David Colclough discusses John Russell in the same context as Thomas Scott, noting that Russell placed the rise of an anti-Calvinist faction alongside the Spanish conspiracies of the Elizabethan period. David Colclough, *Freedom of Speech in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 118.

⁶⁶ [Matthew Sutcliffe], *A Brief Censure upon an Appeale to Caesar* [Oxford, 1626], p. 18. The attribution of this tract to Sutcliffe originates from John Rous's diary. See Clegg, *PC*, p. 248, n. 58. *Apello Caesarem* was the second controversial book by Richard Montagu in as many years, following one year on from *A New Gagg for an Old Goose* (1624). The books challenged Calvinist 'commonplace' views, such as that of the papal antichrist, and caused a furore in the Commons. For this episode see Samuel R. Gardiner, *History of England from the Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War, 1603-1642* (London, 10 vols, 1893-1895), v., pp. 352-374; Johann P. Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology in England 1603-1640* (London, 1986), pp. 218-219.

The effect of this message was made more successful through the references to Oldenbarnevelt whose posthumous reputation for treachery had been further enhanced by the discovery of a plot in 1623 hatched by his sons against Prince Maurice.⁶⁷ John Russell made sure to capitalise on this link when he invoked the example of the United Provinces to warn against the dangers of the Arminian doctrine in 1628. Expressing himself in rhyme to escape ‘The malice of the age’ that censured those daring to speak freely ‘In phrase more serious, or some graver kinde’ as ‘movers of sedition in the state’, Russell asked: ‘Did we not see, of late, what sad effect / This doctrine wrought, in that pernicious sect? / Had not the *States*, like, to their cost, t’haue felt / (By th’ treacherous designes of *Barnevelt*, / His sonnes, and others) what religious fruites / We might expect from such seditious bruites?’⁶⁸ So, building upon an established set of connotations that the name of Oldenbarnevelt could evoke amongst a prospective readership, such later pamphlets could combine the Dutch example with the contemporary English religious rift to create a powerful indictment of Arminianism.

On the reverse side of this coin, the reputation of Maurice as a Protestant hero in the mould of the Elizabethan martial courtiers was underlined and even built upon by the republication and translation of some favourable texts.⁶⁹ In 1620 William Shute’s translation of Jan Jansz Orlers’s eulogistic *The Triumphs of Nassau* was reprinted, which offered its prospective readers a catalogue of Maurice’s military achievements in aid of the Netherlanders’ fight for liberty against Spain. Shute’s dedicatory epistle to the brother earls of Pembroke and Montgomery emphatically revealed the militant Protestant agenda behind the translation and ensured the critically comparative context in which Orlers’s praise of Maurice could be read.⁷⁰ Such texts as this, and Johannes Bogerman’s

⁶⁷ This plot is discussed more fully below, pp. 179-181.

⁶⁸ J[ohn] R[ussell], *The Spy Discovering the Danger of Arminian Heresie and Spanish Treacherie* ([Amsterdam], 1628), sigs. A, C4. See also Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, p. 118.

⁶⁹ Ivo Kamps briefly discusses a popular English attitude towards Prince Maurice. Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology*, p. 141. Kamps’s work is discussed more fully below, see pp. 192-193.

⁷⁰ Jan Jansz Orlers and Henrick van Haestens, *The Triumphs of Nassau*, tr. W. Shute (London, 1620), (epistle unpag.). For examples of Orlers’s praise of Maurice and his Protestant victories that may have struck notes of contrast with James, see pp. 25, 50-81, 383. For an interesting analysis of the work as challenging James’s promotion of triumphs of peace in the context of Protestant militarism see Anthony Miller, ‘Domains of Victory: Staging and Contesting the Roman Triumph in Renaissance England’, in J. Gillies and V. Mason Vaughan (eds.), *Playing the*

1625 relation of Maurice's exemplary Christian death, reaffirmed the prince's position as a true defender of the Reformed faith and liberty of his country in the same terms that Calvinist propaganda had painted his role in suppressing the Remonstrants and bringing down Oldenbarnevelt. Reynolds followed this depiction of Maurice in his polemical pamphlets, asserting in *Vox Coeli* that the United Provinces' troubles would be overcome as with 'Barnevelt being dead, and Maurice that famous Prince of Orange living, Holland need not feare either the treachery, or force of Spaine.'⁷¹

Such interpretations of Maurice and Oldenbarnevelt were consolidated by the discovery of the plot against the prince. What had probably started out as a personal plot of revenge against the stadholder was soon transformed into another date on the Reformed calendar of providential deliverances. In early 1623 Oldenbarnevelt's younger son, William, Lord of Stoutenburg, had conspired with the Arminian minister, Slatius, and several others to assassinate the prince of Orange at his stables in Ryswick. Having enlisted the help of some mariners to transport some trunks to The Hague containing a quantity of arms and ammunition, the plotters were deceived by their hired accomplices, who had been kept in ignorance about the affair and apparently began to smell a rat. They swiftly departed and rode to the prince, also at Ryswick that day, whose rapid reaction ensured the discovery of the intrigue and the incarceration of several key conspirators. Stoutenburg absconded and found protection under the Archduchess Isabella in Brussels, but Groenveld – Oldenbarnevelt's elder son – was executed some months later, along with at least fourteen others.⁷²

James, perhaps predictably, was suitably disgusted with the revelation and was keen to ensure Oldenbarnevelt's younger son would gain no asylum in

Globe: Genre and Geography in English Renaissance Drama (Cranbury, 1998), pp. 260-287, pp. 274-275.

⁷¹ Reynolds, *Vox Coeli*, p. 45. For Scott's praise of Maurice see [Thomas Scott], *The Second Part of Vox Populi* ([London], 1624), sig. Av-A2, pp. 45-47.

⁷² The details of the plot derive mostly from the printed relations and contemporary reports. See appendix, pp. 275-277 for a full transcription of Carleton's report of 30 Jan 1623, SPF 84/111, fos. 41-42; *A Proclamation by the States of the Prouince of Utrecht, Against Certain Others of the Conspirators* (London, 1623); *A Relation of the Late Horrible Treason, Intended Against the Prince of Orange, and the Whole State of the Vnited Prouinces* (London, 1623). For a descriptive, and rather conjectural, account see Motley, *John of Barneveld*, ii., pp. 426-447. See also Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt*, ii., pp. 674, 684, 699.

England.⁷³ Printed relations of the conspiracy that invoked the spectres of Arminianism and Spanish tyranny using the familiar appeal to patriotism, along with Carleton's correspondence, went some way towards informing the English public of the event.⁷⁴ Yet the snippets of reception that have survived in diaries and private letters go somewhat further in demonstrating the penetration of a dichotomous concept of political events. Even though the unreliability of news and rumour was well acknowledged, reports coming from the United Provinces upon the treason – through such sources as merchants – must have seemed consistent enough to attain some credibility and forge a number of opinions. Chamberlain eagerly awaited the return of Carleton's nephew to receive confirmation of the nature of the conspiracy, though others seemed less concerned to await the details.⁷⁵ Ten days after the plot had been discovered, Simonds D'Ewes reported in his diary that he had heard of an intended plot against the king and queen of Bohemia.⁷⁶ The rumour that this royal pair, then resident at The Hague, were the key victims of the plot seems to have spread quite far. The diary of the Dorchester townsman, William Whiteway, similarly recorded in February 1623 that news had come of 'the discovery of a great treason in the low countreyes against the Prince of Orange K[ing] and Queen of Bohemia, and theirs that were alltogether at the Hage'.⁷⁷ The regular news reporter, Joseph Mead, related to Martin Stuteville on 7 February that Frederick, Elizabeth, all their children, Maurice, his brother and other principal men would have been murdered 'had not God in mercy prevented it.'⁷⁸ Walter Yonge seemed only to have caught the gist of the conspiracy by March, but adopted the

⁷³ James to the Prince of Orange, 21 Feb. 1623, SPF 84/111, fo. 128. See the transcription (French) in appendix, p. 278; BL Stowe 176, fo. 246.

⁷⁴ See *A Relation of the Late Horrible Treason; A Proclamation by the States of the Prouince of Utrecht*, esp. pp. 4, 13-14, 18, 20. The whole pamphlet is a compendium of translated relations on the conspiracy.

⁷⁵ Chamberlain to Carleton, 10 Feb. 1623, SPD 14/119, fo. 36.

⁷⁶ Simonds D'Ewes, *The Diary of Sir Simonds D'Ewes 1622-1624*, ed. E. Bourcier (Paris, 1974), p. 117. Bourcier adds in a footnote that following the discovery of the plot some people had deliberately spread the word that Frederick and Elizabeth were implicated in the affair. However, this agrees neither with D'Ewes's diary entry, in which he clearly identified the couple as potential victims rather than conspirators in the plot, nor with further evidence as discussed below.

⁷⁷ BL Eg. 784, fo. 59. See also William Whiteway, *William Whiteway of Dorchester: His Diary 1618 to 1635*, ed. D. Underdown (Dorchester, 1991), p. 50.

⁷⁸ BL Harl. 389, fo. 280.

perspective that the troubles were ongoing, noting that Orange and Palatine were 'like to be murdered by the Arminians in Holland.'⁷⁹

The official relations by the Dutch states certainly represented the plot as an attempted Arminian coup against the person of Prince Maurice.⁸⁰ Yet the wider terms in which news of the conspiracy spread firmly indicate the preconceived prejudices against Oldenbarnevelt and his notorious faction. Whilst most Dutch publications seemed rather reticent when it came to disclosing the extracted confessions of intent, rumours gathered apace to depict the intrigue as a design against The Hague's most prominent Protestant figureheads.⁸¹ Such was the public response to this event that quite a stir was caused on 17 February when two suspicious characters were seen crossing the Thames and were said to be Oldenbarnevelt's sons. Perhaps rather ironically, the shady pair were in fact Charles and Buckingham on their way to Spain.⁸² The uniformity with which these English observers noted the news of the conspiracy, adding fragments of detail that were missing from corantos and ambassadorial reports, suggests the independence of a large swathe of opinion from published and official sources.

Oldenbarnevelt's fall thus offered several avenues for polemicists to exploit in aid of their own cause. Royal support for the execution also allowed some measure of temporary alignment between James and those pamphleteers calling for war with Spain. The ballad endorses this most fully as comparisons are drawn between the providential reading attached to the curtailment of

⁷⁹ Walter Yonge, *The Diary of Walter Yonge*, ed. G. Roberts (London, 1848), p. 67. Yonge's report may well reflect the continued interest shown in the conspiracy by the news pamphlets, as Mead could report as late as 15 March that, as a regular customer, he had been sent a coranto which turned out to be 'nothing but an old repiti[c]ion of the Holland conspiracie'. BL Harl. 389, fo. 298. The continued pursuit of the conspirators throughout that spring, however, ensured a lengthy interest in the conspiracy: see BL Harl. 389, fos. 296, 303v, 212v.

⁸⁰ Carleton's relation five days following the raids at the inns reported that the plot had been hatched by some Arminian ministers in league with Oldenbarnevelt's sons, which, if successful, would have caused 'much bludshed in these townes... of which the enemy would haue reaped the fruits.' The letter is dated 1621, but there can be little doubt that Carleton referred to the 1623 conspiracy due to the close correspondence in date and the detail of the conspiracy itself. BL Stowe 176, fo. 219. See also *A Proclamation by the States of the Prouince of Utrecht; A Relation of the Late Horrible Treason*; SPF 84/111, fos. 41-42.

⁸¹ *A Relation of the Late Horrible Treason* gave a vague indication of the conspirators' aims including the murder 'of the Principall heades, and members of these Prouinces, besides the firing of the *Magazins* or store houses with powder', but likewise illustrates why the states released little information regarding the confessions, quoting a proverb 'That he shall seldome doe euill, who knoweth it not', pp. 8-9. Mead also reported the secrecy of the Netherlands' government over disclosing the details, citing 'reasons of State' as the cause. BL Harl. 389, fo. 286.

⁸² Dudley Carleton (nephew) to Carleton, 20 Feb. 1623, SPD 14/119, fo. 88.

Oldenbarnevelt's conspiracy and the discovery of the powder plot. A verse is even added to ensure God's care of the king.⁸³ But the implicit contrast insinuated in the subsequent verse in praise of the 'vertuous Queen' hints at the oppositional representation of the Dutch events that characterised the pamphlets of the 1620s. From Reynolds's concern about the sway of Spanish gold to Scott's depiction of the wily and manipulative ambassador, Gondomar, representations of the Oldenbarnevelt affair mostly demonstrate one further historical precedent that the Hispanophobic and anti-Catholic propagandists could draw on in their scarcely veiled criticism.

James would surely not have approved of the illustration of Oldenbarnevelt as a devious Spanish agent, but he certainly deemed him a divisive influence upon Dutch stability and perceived the outcome of events as a true execution of justice.⁸⁴ Dudley Carleton likewise fully accepted the legality of the proceedings, found to be in the best interests of the commonwealth.⁸⁵ A universal picture could thus emerge from England that Oldenbarnevelt was the wrong-doer, rabble-rouser, and innovator in religion against his state (and even his prince), and in consequence was rightfully punished by the states. Nevertheless, beneath the happy coupling of Oldenbarnevelt's fall with a Protestant victory, hints of an underground alternative understanding of events emerge that complicates the homogeneity perceived in this initial view of the English reception. And as there are two sides to every story, it cannot be surprising that a ripple of discontent can be gleaned from those unwilling to swallow down the dichotomous understanding that lent itself so easily to the profession of confessional politics.

III

Later seventeenth-century perceptions of Oldenbarnevelt's fate benefited from a temporal distance that allowed a more detached discussion of events whilst still employing the precedent to serve contemporary polemical purposes. The emphasis of the subsequent representations was placed more firmly upon the political rivalry between Maurice and Oldenbarnevelt and thus tended to present

⁸³ Rollins, *Broadside Ballads*, p. 109.

⁸⁴ See above, pp. 169-171.

⁸⁵ Carleton expressed this understanding towards Oldenbarnevelt's arrest in August 1618. Carleton to James, 19 Aug. 1618, *Letters*, p. 279.

the latter's downfall as the strategic victory of one faction over another. In challenging the interpretation of the Interregnum historian, Arthur Wilson, William Sanderson painted just such a depiction of the events culminating in the advocate's execution. Wilson's retrospectively critical history of James continued to portray Oldenbarnevelt as an ambitious and scheming villain, who with his associates sought to suppress the Reformed religion and establish Arminianism, 'being fomented by the Kings of *France* and *Spain*, as the immediate way to introduce *Popery*.'⁸⁶ Yet even in this analysis, Wilson still maintained that Oldenbarnevelt's personal jealousy of Maurice's position and power was the driving force behind his devious actions.⁸⁷

Drawing on this interpretation whilst continuing to twist the sense, Sanderson delivered the opinion that both factions were to blame for the tumult and that Maurice himself worked as covertly as Oldenbarnevelt had. Where Wilson described the Remonstrants' fears over Maurice's monarchical aspirations as jealousies wrought in them by the advocate, Sanderson revealed how Oldenbarnevelt's arrest demonstrated the realisation of such fears.⁸⁸ Having successfully surprised Utrecht and other Remonstrant strongholds, Maurice seized the advocate and his allies 'and committed them to prison, upon pretence of Treason; his power with the Army and interest with the States might do this and more.' Oldenbarnevelt's political power had thus been no match for the ambitious prince's military might and consequent assumption of legality as the advocate's crimes were made capital, 'sum'd up to the height, and sufficient to hang a thousand.'⁸⁹

Peter Heylyn equally found that hindsight offered a useful perspective from which to judge events. His youthful *Microcosmus* borrowed heavily from Thomas Gainsford's *The Glory of England* when describing the United Provinces. His depiction of the country in 1621 made no mention of the recent

⁸⁶ Arthur Wilson, *The History of Great Britain being the Life and Reign of King James the First* (London, 1653), p. 119. For a brief summary of the *History* see Graham Parry, 'Wilson, Arthur (bap. 1595, d. 1652)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29640>, accessed 12 Sept 2008].

⁸⁷ Wilson, *History*, pp. 125-128.

⁸⁸ Wilson charged Oldenbarnevelt with indoctrinating into his whole faction the continually repeated accusations in Remonstrant propaganda that '*Maurice* Prince of *Orange*... affected to make himself (by his *power*) sole *Lord* and *Monarch* over them'. Wilson, *History*, p. 125.

⁸⁹ William Sanderson, *A Compleat History of the Lives and Reigns of, Mary Queen of Scotland, and of Her Son and Successor, James the Sixth, King of Scotland, and (after Queen Elizabeth) King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, the First* (London, 1656), pp. 466-467.

tumults involving Oldenbarnevelt, but instead followed Gainsford in briefly relating aspects of the Dutch Revolt. Neither text formed a passionate justification of the revolt, rather approaching the troubles in a didactic vein, focusing on the folly of the Spanish king and the evident loss to his kingdom that the separation of the Netherlands had engendered. But both related events with clear sympathy for the Dutch cause and its valorous achievements. Heylyn followed common practice in describing the Netherlands as a ‘Schoole of defence for all Christendome’ and praised Maurice as ‘a valiant and expert leader.’⁹⁰ This was not so by the Restoration, however, when Heylyn depicted the prince as acting unlawfully in 1619 and puffed up by the promise of power, as well as James’s support. The factional differences were shown to be motivated by questions of authority, notably the Remonstrants’ fear of Maurice’s monarchical ambitions. In executing Oldenbarnevelt, Heylyn claimed, Maurice and the States General ‘violated all the Fundamental Laws of the *Belgick Liberty*’, and, perhaps reflecting the journey of his own opinions, continued: ‘in maintenance whereof, they first pretended to take Arms against the *Spaniard*, their most Rightful Prince.’⁹¹ The passage of time had certainly had a profound effect upon Heylyn’s perception of events that allowed him to exploit this piece of Dutch history for his own polemical purposes.⁹²

Yet on another level, this differing understanding to that of the 1620s Protestant pamphlets may have originated in part from pockets of contemporary alternative perspectives that were potentially more widespread than the evidence initially suggests. In this light, the implications for an understanding of a ‘public opinion’ relating to Oldenbarnevelt’s fall are subtly altered from assuming the pervading influence of a so-called ‘patriot’ viewpoint to identifying a number of more nuanced and varied factors determining and defining opinion. Despite the clear successes of Dutch Calvinist propaganda it is certainly evident that voices

⁹⁰ Peter Heylyn, *Microcosmus, or A Little Description of the Great World* (Oxford, 1621), pp. 139-141; Thomas Gainsford, *The Glory of England* (London, 1618), pp. 140-142.

⁹¹ Peter Heylyn, *Aerius Redivivus: or, The History of the Presbyterians* (Oxford, 1670), pp. 402-405. It was composed in the early years of the Restoration before Heylyn’s death in May 1662 and was published posthumously. Anthony Milton, ‘Heylyn, Peter (1599–1662)’, *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13171>, accessed 14 May 2009].

⁹² *Aerius Redivivus* was the second of a trilogy of Restoration histories that Milton perceives as a continuation of Heylyn’s effort to convey his urgent agenda for the Restoration church. See Anthony Milton, *Laudian and Royalist Polemic in Seventeenth-Century England: the Career and Writings of Peter Heylyn* (Manchester, 2007), pp. 197-214.

of both factions could still be heard in the United Provinces and that opinions were mixed towards the arrest and execution of the advocate.⁹³ One uncertain perspective travelled over in 1619 in official correspondence. The brief French verse expresses anxiety over the continued unrest in the Netherlands that Oldenbarnevelt's execution aimed to dispel. In earnest prayer to God to grant them the civil peace they desperately needed, the author judged that 'Barnevelt est mort à tort / Si le discord ne se change en accord.'⁹⁴ A much more extensive, and far less ambivalent, perspective was offered in an English manuscript translation of the Remonstrant pamphlet *Morgenvvecker, aen de Oude ende Ghetrouwe Batavieren, met een Remedie teghen haere Slaep-Siecktein* (1620), from the vitriolic pen of Henricus Slatius.⁹⁵ 'A Morning Waker to the ould and true Hollanders' in the first instance invites a comparison with Willem Baudart's *Morghen-wecker der Vrye Nederlantsche Provinten* (1610), and follows this earlier pamphlet's method in employing the historical example of tyranny to call for continued vigilance and action.⁹⁶ Unlike Baudart's tract, however, 'A Morning Waker' does not inveigh against the omnipresent Spanish threat, but instead draws an alarming portrait of Maurice's encroachment upon the Netherlands' liberty, revealing how the stadholder, 'following the footesteppe of that vnsatiabie bloodehound Nero, endeavourd to bring-in all manner of Tyranny.'⁹⁷ It reasserted the view that the proceedings by which Oldenbarnevelt was tried were without legal foundation or political precedent, and again charged the prince with aspiring to the sovereignty of the country.⁹⁸

⁹³ Carleton's frequent reports on the Dutch propaganda pamphlets and consequent flood of anti-Oldenbarnevelt libels testify to the Contra-Remonstrants' success at spreading their message and whipping up popular antipathy, but he also continued to relate the protestations and accusations of the Arminian faction. See, for example, Carleton to Naunton, 8 Sept., 12 Oct., 29 Oct. 1618, *Letters*, pp. 294, 307, 309. Some further remarks reveal that more than just the disgruntled Arminian party held reservations about Maurice's undertakings, as he noted those indifferent to either faction found the arrests unnecessary as the synod had already been decided upon. Carleton to James, 19 Aug. 1618, *Letters*, p. 281.

⁹⁴ 'Barnevelt is wrongly dead / If discord does not change into accord.' Advertisement on Oldenbarnevelt, May 1619, SPF 84/90, fo. 134.

⁹⁵ Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture*, p. 255.

⁹⁶ Cf. *The Morning Waker*, 1620, SPF 84/98, fos. 168-171v and Willem Baudart, *Morghen-wecker der Vrye Nederlantsche Provinten* (1610) [*Wake Up Call of the Free Dutch provinces*]. See also ch. 6, pp. 219, 245; Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London, 1991), p. 82.

⁹⁷ SPF 84/98, fo. 168.

⁹⁸ SPF 84/98, fos. 168v-169v. For this trend see Motley, *John of Barneveld*, ii., pp. 339-343; Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture*, p. 171.

The infiltration of such views as given in the Remonstrant pamphlet and from the French verse, along with the publication of the French ambassador's pleas on the prisoners' behalves, made available in England a more questioning portrait of the execution than the dominant interpretation allowed. It is therefore feasible to envisage that a perceptive proportion of English observers understood the execution in terms that would later influence the representation of the troubles as found in the histories of the post-Civil War historians.⁹⁹ Immediate support for this can be found in Chamberlain's letter to Carleton of the 31 May 1619. Chamberlain's interest in the details of the trial and execution seems to have been fully sated by the circulating news pamphlets comprising translations of the official publications by the states on Oldenbarnevelt's 'confession' and sentence. Yet he went on to relate 'that diuers of goode iudgement thinck he [Oldenbarnevelt] had hard measure, considering that no cleare matter of conspiracie with the enemies of the State appears, or can be proued, so that yt seemes to be meere matter of faction and opposition rather than infidelitie or treacherie'.¹⁰⁰ Having struck at the heart of a complex web of political potential attached to this understanding of Oldenbarnevelt's execution, Chamberlain continued to divulge what their resultant conclusion was, stating:

which though perhaps in England might be found treasonable or within that compasse, yet in a new vpstart commonwealth that hath so long contended and stands so much vpon libertie, they were not to proceed with such rigour against a man of his yeares and seruice, specially when the sparing of the rest makes manifest shew that they shot only at [Oldenbarnevelt]¹⁰¹

Chamberlain's disclosure of these underground murmurings uncovers areas of political concern that were not tied solely and inexorably to the cause of

⁹⁹ The translation of the ambassadors' pleas circulated in England together with the unambiguous reply of the states and an attached 'letter of advice' to the Duc d'Espemnon that sternly counselled the rebel Frenchman on the folly and manifest wrong of secular disobedience and causing civil unrest. *Newes out of Holland: concerning Barnevelt* (London, 1619).

¹⁰⁰ Chamberlain to Carleton, 31 May 1619, SPD 14/109, fos. 119-120. Chamberlain's ending words in this summary of certain sceptical views tend towards an imitation of Carleton's report concerning the French ambassadors' oration, suggesting one possible source for these dissenting opinions. Cf. Carleton, quoted above, p. 173.

¹⁰¹ SPD 14/109, fos. 119-120.

international Protestantism, anti-Catholicism and Hispanophobia. The death of Oldenbarnevelt alarmed many because of the hypocrisy used by Maurice and the states in overriding the liberty that stood as the Netherlands' foundation block. The implication of Chamberlain's last statement suggests that many perceived Oldenbarnevelt's execution as the fulfilment of a personal vendetta, thus raising questions over the growing authority of the prince of Orange.

Chamberlain's final observations further highlight the widespread circulation of news about the trial and execution and the contrasting ways in which the publications were read. The correspondent noted that whilst the advocate was never much admired in England, 'now he is gon, his protestations both by word and writing, together with his manner of dieng [sic] so constantly and religiouslie moue much commiseration and breed these discourses'.¹⁰² Chamberlain's people of 'goode iudgement' cannot easily be taken as representative of a wide section of the populace, who may likewise have perceived the execution as a factional victory of dubious legality. But supporting this possibility is the interpretation given in the tragedy, *Sir John van Olden Barnavelt*.

IV

The Tragedy of Sir John van Olden Barnavelt has been identified as a play belonging to the King's Men and is accounted as one of the several collaborative works by John Fletcher and Philip Massinger. The play is notable for its depiction of highly contemporary events in the Netherlands as it was performed just three months following Oldenbarnevelt's execution. Although it was not the only dramatic treatment of recent European history, the trouble encountered by notorious earlier efforts indicate the rather dangerous journey that Fletcher and Massinger had embarked upon with the subject matter of this play.¹⁰³ There is

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, fos. 119-120.

¹⁰³ Chapman's *Byron* plays, often cited as one of the few other examples of contemporary foreign subject matter, caused controversy for its offence to the French ambassador and its parallels with the Essex rebellion: Richard Dutton, "Methinks the truth should live from age to age: The Dating and Contexts of *Henry V*", in P. Kewes (ed.), *HLQ: The Uses of History in Early Modern England*, 68 (California, 2005), pp. 173-204, p. 183. Paulina Kewes has gone some way to redress the assumption that very few plays were concerned with contemporary history. In contrast, she demonstrates that many plays dealt with recent European themes that equally made 'pointed allusions to domestic affairs, foreign policy or sometimes both.' Paulina Kewes,

evidence, however, to suggest that it was not the first play the two dramatists had been involved in concerning contemporary, high profile events in the United Provinces.

In 1654 a play was entered into the Stationers' Register entitled *The Jeweller of Amsterdam or the Hague* by Fletcher, Massinger and Nathan Field. F. G. Fleay informs us that it must have been written whilst Field was still with the King's Men, which dates the play between 1617 and 1619, and most likely referred to the infamous murder of Jan van Wely.¹⁰⁴ In 1616 one of Maurice's grooms, John of Paris, and a soldier from the guard had shot, stabbed and strangled the visiting jeweller from Amsterdam. The crime was committed just feet away from the prince's chamber and the body disposed of in the 'Ashe-Dunghill' in the yard. Details of the crime and the subsequent trial and execution of the perpetrators circulated in England with a suitable level of distaste for the affair, yet also with the utmost respect for Maurice.¹⁰⁵ There is little doubt, however, as with the Overbury murder in England only a few years previously, that such corruption so close to the prince tarnished the reputation of the Dutch court and cast a questionable light over Maurice's personal life.¹⁰⁶ As the play is now lost, there can only be speculation over the playwrights' presentation of the scandal; but it does demonstrate an engagement with Dutch news and politics that found further expression in the subsequent tragedy based upon the demise of Oldenbarnevelt.

*Olden Barnavel*t was ready for the stage by 14 August 1619 when Thomas Locke reported to Carleton that 'The players heere were bringing of

'Contemporary Europe in Elizabethan and Early Stuart Drama', in A. Hadfield and P. Hammond (eds.), *Shakespeare and Renaissance Europe* (London, 2004), pp. 150-192, p. 192.

¹⁰⁴ Fleay's note appears in *A Collection of Old English Plays*, ed. A. H. Bullen (New York, 4 vols., reissued 1964), ii., p. 206.

¹⁰⁵ *True Recitall of the Confession of the Two Murderers John de Paris, and Iohn de la Vigne Touching the Horrible Murder Committed vpon the Person of Mr. Iohn De Wely, Merchant-jeweller of Amsterdam* (1616).

¹⁰⁶ Motley relates a tale derived from the annotator of the second edition of Brandt's *Historie van de Rechtspleging* with regard to the repercussions of this event, which is more interesting for its status as a widely held rumour than its veracity. The tale proceeds that the preacher Johannes Uytenbogaert discovered that the condemned prisoners had been able to dismiss the guard (in order to dispose of the body) because Maurice had allowed his groom such power to facilitate the private passage of women to his chambers. Motley ascribes Maurice's consequent dislike for the Arminian preacher and declaration for the Contra-Remonstrant cause to Uytenbogaert's discovery of this information. Motley, *John of Barneveld*, ii., pp. 52-53. The political impact of the Overbury murder in England is treated at length in Alastair Bellany, *The Politics of Court Scandal in Early Modern England: News Culture and the Overbury Affair, 1603-1666* (Cambridge, 2002).

Barnevelt on the stage, & had bestowed a great deale of mony to prepare all things for the purpose, but at th' instant were prohibited by my Lo[rd] of London.'¹⁰⁷ The intervention of John King, bishop of London, temporarily halted the play's performance until the 27 August when Locke mentioned that 'Our players haue fownd the meanes to goe through w[i]th the play of Barnevelt.'¹⁰⁸ The exact grounds of the bishop's objection are not known, but that it probably related to the play's controversial content is suggested by the only surviving manuscript of the play which reveals evidence of heavy censorship by the Master of Revels, George Buc. Furthermore *Olden Barnaveit* was not published after its production or in the mid seventeenth-century compendium of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays. It did not reach print until the nineteenth century, which fact, along with the manuscript's censorship, has made the play a subject of interest to historians and literary critics alike.¹⁰⁹

Buc's revisions to the manuscript are extensive and provide one of the few examples of the practices of early modern censorship for the period. For this reason alone, *Olden Barnaveit* has received significant scholarly attention.¹¹⁰ One of Buc's primary concerns seems to have been with the presentation of Prince Maurice. Statute forbade the presentation of living sovereign princes on the stage, but the stadholder could be claimed as an exception to this rule as he was not the sovereign prince of the United Provinces.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, Buc was still uneasy with this quasi-monarch's depiction, stating of the prince in one marginal remark: 'he is to [sic] much presented'.¹¹² Where the manuscript once stood as evidence for an oppressive Jacobean censorship, however, it is now

¹⁰⁷ Locke to Carleton, 14 Aug. 1619, SPD 14/110, fo. 25.

¹⁰⁸ Locke to Carleton, 27 Aug. 1619, SPD 14/110, fo. 57.

¹⁰⁹ The play was first published by A. H. Bullen in 1883 in *A Collection of Old English Plays*.

¹¹⁰ T. H. Howard-Hill remains the authority on Buc's censorship of the play. See in particular T. H. Howard-Hill, 'Buc and the Censorship of Sir John Van Olden Barnaveit in 1619', *The Review of English Studies*, 39 (1988), 39-63.

¹¹¹ This legislation only comes to our attention through James's reaction to the notorious production of *A Game at Chess* (1624). It is possible that the controversy created by Chapman's *Byron* plays prompted stricter measures to be enforced upon the theatre. See Kewes, 'Elizabethan and Early Stuart Drama', p. 160 and Richard Dutton, 'Censorship', in J. D. Cox and D. Scott Kastan (eds.), *A New History of Early English Drama* (New York, 1997), pp. 287-304, p. 298.

¹¹² [John Fletcher and Philip Massinger], *The Tragedy of Sir John Van Olden Barnaveit*, ed. T. H. Howard-Hill (The Malone Society, 1980), p. 13 referring to lines 385-403. Dutton has outlined that although Maurice was not a monarch, Buc appreciated his rather unique political position and consequently expressed concern over his presentation in the play. Richard Dutton, *Mastering the Revels: The Regulation and Censorship of English Renaissance Drama* (Basingstoke, 1991), pp. 207-209; Dutton, 'Censorship', p. 298.

more frequently viewed as indicative of a less severe climate as the extensive revisions suggest that Buc had put a good deal of effort into making the script playable.¹¹³

Part of Buc's difficulties in allowing an uncensored version of the play stemmed from the ambiguous portrayal of both Maurice and Oldenbarnevelt. The representation of these key figures is far removed from the reasonably uncomplicated picture painted by the Dutch propaganda. The character Barnavelt is initially shown as arrogant, ambitious and conspiratorial, which contrasts with a familiar image of the prince as the wise and provident protector of the country. But as the story unfolds, rationality becomes more associated with Barnavelt so that these distinct characterisations break down, and by the play's finale it is by no means obvious who the intended hero and villain of the piece are. So a rather inconsistent depiction of the two men emerges from the play as a whole, which has produced a varied interpretation of both the play's underlying message and Massinger and Fletcher's religio-political stance.

The ambiguous representation has been recognised since the play's initial publication, where Bullen, influenced greatly by Motley's *Life of Barneveld*, commented appreciatively that the playwrights had at least refused to accept outright the popular caricature of Oldenbarnevelt.¹¹⁴ It is Barnavelt's speeches of warning about the safety of the country's republican liberties, under threat from Orange's monarchical ambitions, that most significantly question his role as the villain. In a well-known passage that was marked for deletion by the censor, Barnavelt drew classical comparisons with Orange's encroaching authority, aligning the prince with the imperial domination of Octavius and himself with the persecuted, free-speaking Cato. The direction of the character's speech was to the Dutch lords who were convened for the sentence as he stated:

Octavius, when he did affect the Empire,
And strove to tread vpon the neck of Rome,
And all hir auncient freedoms, took that course

¹¹³ William W. Appleton, *Beaumont and Fletcher: A Critical Study* (London, 1956), p. 89 and Jerzy Limon, *Dangerous Matter: English Drama and Politics in 1623-4* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 6 provide examples of viewing the climate of *Olden Barnavelt*'s composition as one of 'severe censorship'. Cf. Howard-Hill, 'Censorship' and Dutton, *Mastering the Revels*, pp. 206-217. See above, ch. 4, pp. 133-135.

¹¹⁴ Bullen, *Old English Plays*, ii., p. 205.

That now is practis'd on you: for the *Cato's*
And all the free speritts slaine, or els proscrid
That durst have stird against him, he then sceasd
The absolute rule of all: you can apply this (ll. 2434-40)¹¹⁵

It has, of course, long been perceived that Barnavel't's contemporary application, warning that Octavius took the same course now 'practis'd on you', and advising them to 'apply' the conclusion, could be understood as much by the contemporary London audience as the characters onstage.¹¹⁶ In this view, the portrayal of Barnavel't's fate could evoke parallels with Raleigh's execution the previous year, as both could be construed as representing the autocratic exercise of political authority against those committed to a virtuous and free style of government. Massinger and Fletcher have, therefore, been classed amongst those anti-absolutist, upholders of the common law that many Whig historians have seen in the Stuart period.

Some studies have attempted to assimilate *Olden Barnavel't* within the tide of anti-Spanish sentiment washing over England, and so categorise it alongside such partisan pieces as the ballad examined above. Yet the uncertainty attached to the characters Orange and Barnavel't does not allow this categorisation to fit easily. Margot Heinemann compares *Olden Barnavel't* with Middleton's *Game at Chess* for its reliance on popular interest in 'anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic politics', where Barnavel't squarely remains the popish-Spanish conspirator.¹¹⁷ But in order to make the play reflect this understanding of Dutch politics, Heinemann must attribute the increasingly sympathetic characterisation of Barnavel't to literary inadequacies, largely on the part of Massinger. Furthermore, engaging with those critics who attach some significance to Barnavel't's eloquent speeches on liberty, Heinemann rebuffs the supposed inference to Raleigh and judges such speeches as more attractive to modern

¹¹⁵ Howard-Hill, *Olden Barnavel't* (1980). All further references are to this edition and follow the edition's spelling and use of contractions.

¹¹⁶ See in particular Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology*, pp. 157-158 and Kewes, 'Elizabethan and Early Stuart Drama', pp. 184-187.

¹¹⁷ Margot Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre: Thomas Middleton and Opposition Drama under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge, 1980), p. 203. See also Limon, *Dangerous Matter*, pp. 5-6.

editors than London audiences who, she claims, 'would probably have heard them as menacing.'¹¹⁸

The rather confused historiography of this play neatly reflects the ambiguities inherent in both Massinger and Fletcher's representation of events, and the reality of Oldenbarnevelt's execution itself. Albert Tricomi's reading of *Olden Barnaveit* epitomises these problems as, whilst he recognises the topical tone of Barnaveit's speeches, he judges Barnaveit to remain the villain, and Orange the virtuous prince, throughout the play. Moreover, the 'anti-court' elements of Barnaveit's protestations take on added complexity if viewed as part of a theatrical tradition of plays that 'all ringingly affirm an English national identity impelled to assert itself against Spanish imperialism.'¹¹⁹ Barnaveit's speeches certainly contain an anti-monarchical sentiment and promote the free form of the independent Netherlands government. Yet, for Massinger and Fletcher, there would surely have been manifest contradictions inherent in making Barnaveit the mouthpiece of anti-Spanish propaganda. By categorising this play, which he views as topically representing 'the war between Spain and the Netherlanders', within a militant Protestant opposition ideology, Tricomi casts the 'republican' value of Barnaveit's speeches into question whilst simultaneously relying upon them to fulfil the opposition element of the play.¹²⁰

The significance of this play for widening our understanding of the ways in which Dutch politics were perceived in England, and employed in investigations into political authority, can only be fully realised if some of these complications are resolved. Ivo Kamps has gone some way towards unravelling the characterisation of Prince Maurice and Oldenbarnevelt by contrasting the ways in which the play engaged with contemporary ideas on historiography. Kamps describes how the providential mode of historiography espoused throughout the play by Orange can ultimately be shown as fraudulent, thus subverting both an 'official' interpretation of the Dutch events and an increasing royal tendency to derive authority from a divine source rather than from the past. The play's prince of Orange is not the apolitical military hero of Calvinism that he was perceived as in England; he is instead revealed as employing the same

¹¹⁸ Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, pp. 136, 203-205.

¹¹⁹ Albert H. Tricomi, *Anticourt Drama in England, 1603-1642* (Charlottesville, 1989), pp. 151-156, 192.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 154, 192.

political machinations that Barnavelt is seen openly professing to use from the outset.¹²¹ Therefore, in Kamps's view, Massinger and Fletcher were employing the libertarian speeches of Barnavelt to challenge the 'deification and privatization' of power that they saw in early Stuart England. But the lens of historiography through which Kamps assesses the play restricts the playwrights' exploration of power and government to an English context alone. Here, they are motivated by developments in English historiographical thought and transpose the Dutch events in order to respond to the alarming rise of James's 'metahistorical' theories.¹²²

Kamps's reading suggests many new ways of looking at the play, but more account must be taken of the ways in which the realities of Dutch politics influenced the playwrights' representation of Oldenbarnevelt's execution. Only when we understand how Massinger and Fletcher interpreted the unique political arrangement of the United Provinces can we determine the statements about authority that the play makes. Furthermore, through an understanding of this broad political outlook, we can investigate the significance of the message for an English audience and assess the influence of Dutch republicanism upon the playwrights' thinking.

The contemporary subject matter of *Olden Barnavelt* allowed Massinger and Fletcher to call upon prevalent attitudes towards the Dutch. The theme of ingratitude was one that Massinger often returned to in his individual plays.¹²³ With *Olden Barnavelt* this theme was especially relevant due to the growing reputation in England of the Dutch as ungrateful.¹²⁴ A particular sticking-point was the perceived Dutch attitude towards the English and Scottish soldiers fighting for the Dutch cause. Richard Verstegan appealed to such concerns in his polemical *Toung-Combat*, where he protested that, even though the English had lost much blood on their behalf, the Dutch were 'so farre from honest ciuillitie, that they will not acknowledge anie friendship donne them, and therefore can they not entertayn anie thoghts of obligation, or gratitude, nay they dare playnly

¹²¹ Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology*, pp. 140-158.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 158.

¹²³ See ch. 4, pp. 146-148.

¹²⁴ This reputation is explored in more detail in ch. 6, see below, pp. 255-257.

tel vs; that wee are beholding vnto them.'¹²⁵ Massinger and Fletcher used the English soldiers in their play to engage with this topical issue. In refusing to join with Barnavelt's faction the English soldiers are revealed as principled, obedient and honourable fighters whose aim was 'to guard this Cuntrie, not to ruyn it, / to beat of forreigne Enemies, not to cherish / domestique Factions' (ll. 631-33). Yet this English captain's tirade also provided an opportunity to criticise Dutch behaviour. Perhaps a little disingenuously, Massinger and Fletcher characterised the soldiers as coming to this 'Schoole of war' (l. 652) for glory and honour alone. They remained poorly fed and clothed, without the promise of spoils, whilst the Dutch reaped the rewards:

noe Cuntrie ere made a defencive war
and gaind by it, but you, what privat Gentleman
that onely trailes a pike, that comes from England
or *Fraunce*, but brings gold with him? wch he leaves here,
and so enriches you; where such as serve
the *Polander, Bohemian, Dane* or *Turck*,
though they come almost naked to their Collours
besides their pay (wch they contempne) the spoiles
of Armyes ouerthrowne, of Citties sackd,
depopulations of wealthie Cuntries
if he survive the vncertaine chaunce of war,
returne him home, to end his age in plenty
of wealth, and honors. (ll. 637-49)

Dutch commercial success during the Twelve Years Truce was a point of envy for English onlookers who could only contrast their own stagnation against the rise of this new country that they had helped to secure. Whilst the Dutch were only getting richer with the influx of foreign soldiers, these soldiers themselves

¹²⁵ Richard Verstegan, *A Tounge-Combat, Lately Happening, Between two English Soldiers; in the Tilt-boat of Grauesend* (1623), pp. 29-30. The concern over the Dutch treatment of English soldiers is further demonstrated in Henry Hexham and Thomas Scott's response to Verstegan. In their *Tongue-Combat*, Hexham and Scott do acknowledge the complaint of neglect and ingratitude about the Dutch from many soldiers, despite then going on in an attempt to account for these complaints. See Henry Hexham/Thomas Scott, *A Tongue-Combat, Lately Happening Betweene Two English Souldiers in the Tilt-boat of Grauesend* (London, 1623), pp. 61-63.

could gain no financial reward for their service in fighting a defensive war. Through employing these topical sentiments, Massinger and Fletcher appealed to the prejudices of their audiences and revealed themselves as critical of the Dutch treatment of the English soldiers.

Yet by invoking the theme of Dutch ingratitude the playwrights were also able to develop their characterisation of the lead figures. Throughout the play both Orange and Barnavelt expect more recognition and reward from the country for the deeds that they had performed in order to safeguard it. Barnavelt emphasises this from the outset through his perception of the people's ingratitude towards him, which is then shown to play a large part in motivating his conspiracy against Orange. Ranting against the people's high estimation of Orange rather than himself, Barnavelt resolves upon action: 'this ingratefull Cuntry, [and this bold / vsurper of what's mine], shall first wth horror / know that he that could defeat the Spanish counsailes, / and countermyne their darck works, he that made / the State what 'tis, will change it once againe / ere fall with such dishonor.' (ll. 50-55)¹²⁶ Barnavelt's expectation for recompense is here based upon his sense of the significance of his own role in shaping the newly independent country. This mirrors to some extent the English presumption that the Netherlands remained indebted to them for their own participation in securing Dutch emancipation, indicating further ways in which the characterisation of Barnavelt and Orange can be understood.¹²⁷ Although Barnavelt appears as the scheming Machiavellian villain in the initial scenes, a certain amount of audience sympathy may have been generated through their identification with him as a victim of aggressive Dutch ingratitude.

Additionally, a less favourable impression of the prince of Orange is created as he is charged with claiming responsibility for the Netherlands' successes at the expense of Barnavelt, and by implication, the English soldiers. Barnavelt's protestation about the country's new devotion to Orange alone casts him in the role of the cuckold as he exclaims against seeking the prince's favour:

¹²⁶ *Olden Barnavelt*, p. 2. ll. 50-51. Square brackets denote the words deleted by Buc. In their place Crane interlined 'this base people / most base to my deserts'. It is clear from the passage that Barnavelt is referring to Maurice as the 'bold vsurper'. Howard-Hill thus takes Buc's deletion as indication that he did not approve of the prince being described in such a fashion, especially considering that he already was concerned about the frequency of Maurice's presentation in the play. Howard-Hill, 'Censorship', 57.

¹²⁷ See ch. 6, p. 255.

I am myself, as great in good, as he [Orange] is,
 as much a master of my Cuntries fortunes;
 and one to whom...
 this blinded *State*...
 is bound, and so far bound: I found hir naked...
 the marks of all her miseries vpon hir,
 an orphan *State*, that no eye smild vpon,
 and then how carefully I vndertooke hir,
 how tenderly, and lovingly I noursd hir:
 but now she is fatt, and faire againe, and I foold,
 a new love in hir armes, my doatings scornd at:
 I must sue to him... (ll. 1099-113)

Barnavelt's bitterness at his perceived neglect, as the country was no longer dependent on him, echoes English indignation at the United Provinces' forgetfulness of their earlier favours. This suggestion that Orange's achievements have trampled upon the contributions of others in liberating the Netherlands is made more relevant to England further on in the play when Barnavelt charges the prince with usurping the glory of the Vere brothers at the siege of Ostend (ll. 2360-1). Barnavelt's reference to 'those vnparelleld paire of warlike Brothers' (l. 2359) worked to endear the advocate's character to the English audience and enhance the negative characterisation of Orange.

The play also lampooned the apparent Dutch parity of the sexes. This was another feature of a created national stereotype of the Dutch in England, and one that was seen to mirror the social and political framework of the Netherlands more generally. Owen Felltham's tract on the character of the Low Countries sardonically highlighted this domestic arrangement, stating of the Dutch: 'In their ffamilies they are all Equalls, And you have noe way to know the Master from the Mistris, unless you finde them in bedd together'. Felltham's conception of their government as a democracy, with the allocation of power based on wealth rather than inheritance, uncovers his alignment of the chaotic private and

public authority that he observed in the United Provinces.¹²⁸ Whilst Massinger and Fletcher do employ this stereotypical representation of the household to comment on the state, they do not simply aim at criticising the destabilising effect of democracy.

An exchange between a group of Arminian Dutch women and an English gentlewoman comprises several layers. On the surface the Dutch women's bold statements of superiority over their husbands, combined with the novelty of their religion, parodies the Dutch reputation for equality. Their great claims are soon revealed as empty when the secretary Leidenberch undermines their position and commands them away, stating: 'good Ladies, no more Councells, / this is no time to puppet in' (ll. 845-6). Conversely, however, the nature of political authority described by the Dutch women can be equated with a government free from tyranny and ruled by the people themselves: 'No emperious Spanish eye, governes o^r Actions, / nor Italian iecalouzie locks vp o^r meetings: / we are o^rselues, our owne disposers, Masters' (ll. 771-3). The liberties they claimed reveal a free and open form of government that encouraged citizen participation. They rhetorically enquire of the English gentlewoman 'are we shut out of Counsailes, privacies...? / No, certaine, Lady; we pertake with all, / ... why this man / workes theis, or theis waies, with o^r against the State, / we know, and give allowaunces' (ll. 785-90). An inherent contrast is intimated in such sentiments that may have invited an English audience to think upon their own ignorance of the king's unfathomable policies. The obedience and respect for the *arcana imperii* subsequently exhibited by the English gentlewoman therefore becomes a reflection of the English citizen's exile from the decision-making process, as she remarks 'nor dare we thinck of what is don above vs, / not talk of *Graues*' (ll. 817-8). Massinger and Fletcher's use of the female gender to express anxiety about political impotence echoed much contemporary criticism, notably that of the Spenserian poets.¹²⁹

¹²⁸ [Owen Felltham], 'Three Moneths Observations of the Low Countreys, Especially Holland', published in Martine J. van Ittersum, "'Three Moneths Observation of the Low Countreys, Especially Holland": Owen Felltham (c. 1602-1668) and Anglo-Dutch Relations in the Seventeenth Century', *Lias - Sources and Documents Relating to the Early Modern History of Ideas*, 27 (2000), 95-196, 159-161. For a fuller discussion of this tract see ch. 6, pp. 254-255.

¹²⁹ See George Wither, *Fidelia* (London, 1615); Michelle O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation': Jacobean Spenserians and Early Stuart Political Culture* (Oxford, 2000), p. 154. See a brief discussion on this above, ch. 3, p. 103.

Whilst this brief scene allowed the dramatists to foray into the mechanics of Dutch governance, their appreciation for the candid conduct of policy does not belie an unqualified eulogy on Dutch republicanism. The message voiced through the Dutch women is problematic if read as a reflection of Massinger and Fletcher's politics because of the women's Arminianism and association with the dubious Arminian preacher, Holderus.¹³⁰ Yet this can be resolved if we understand how the playwrights depicted the Netherlands. As seen, Leidenberch's dismissal of the women negates their claims to equality and participation, and so demonstrates that such political inclusion is not actually in operation in the republic. So in praising the concept Massinger and Fletcher illustrate that, whilst the Dutch claimed to practice this open government in theory, the reality was rather different. Such an understanding reflects their broader representation of the Netherlands as failing to exercise the republican ideals that it claimed because the political machinery had broken down. The English gentlewoman's shrewd observation that 'two heads make monsters' (l. 816) succinctly conveys Massinger and Fletcher's identification of the chief political failing in the Netherlands. And in their presentation of Orange and Barnavel's destabilising power clash, they subtly pointed to an increasingly familiar classical analogy: the collision of Caesar and Pompey.

V

Significant scholarly attention has been paid to the new ways in which histories, drama, literature and practical politics of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries began to draw consistently on the political mores of the classical period and the resulting impact that this created.¹³¹ Diverging ways of reading the classical past

¹³⁰ They seem to have chosen this character from the pamphlet *Barneuels Apology* in which the 'marginall castigations' were provided by the Calvinist preacher Petrus Holderus. Wilhelmina Frijlinck notes that Professor Fruin perceived their designation of this name to an Arminian agitator to be a comic play on the preacher's staunch Calvinism. [John Fletcher and Philip Massinger], *The Tragedy of Sir John Van Olden Barnavel*, ed. W. P. Frijlinck (Amsterdam, 1922), p. cliv.

¹³¹ The most significant attention has been paid to the influence of classical ideas during the Civil War and Interregnum period. See Blair Worden, 'English Republicanism', in J. H. Burns (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450-1700* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 443-475, pp. 445-449; Quentin Skinner, 'Classical Liberty and the Coming of the English Civil War', in G&S, *Republicanism*, ii., pp. 9-28, p. 14. The literature on this influence for an earlier period is more limited, but has gone some way towards investigating the role of classical ideas. See Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1995) and Malcolm Smuts, 'Court-Centred Politics and the Uses of Roman

began to emerge in England, reflecting both the increasing interest in a range of Roman historians and the growing concern over contemporary political practice throughout the period that fostered an easy application of the Roman past to the present.¹³² The mounting influence of a Tacitean perception of Roman politics increasingly began to cast imperial Rome in a critical and authoritarian light. The first English edition of Tacitus' *The History* and *The Agricola*, published in 1591 by Henry Savile, Essex's secretary, reflects this new vogue for Tacitus and reveals the wider interest of the Essex circle in the works of this Roman historian.¹³³ Considerable scholarly emphasis on this classical influence has led to some charges that the role of other factors responsible for informing the intellectual framework of the period has been overlooked, such as the significance of continental example.¹³⁴ An investigation of *Olden Barnavel* can go some way towards bridging such gaps as we can see how Massinger and Fletcher drew on both classical and continental examples to explore political authority and governance and, in turn, develop some domestic observations.

The infamous career and demise of Julius Caesar was one particular Roman example that could be employed to argue divergent points.¹³⁵ On one hand, Caesar could be invoked to symbolise the stability and calm of monarchical rule after a period of turbulent civil unrest, with his murder depicted as the most depraved act of regicide. Whilst on the other, his assassination could

Historians, c. 1590-1630', in K. Sharpe and P. Lake, *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Basingstoke, 1994), pp. 21-43. Cf. Johann P. Sommerville, 'English and Roman Liberty in the Monarchical Republic of Early Stuart England', in J. F. McDiarmid (ed.), *The Monarchical Republic of Early Modern England: Essays in Response to Patrick Collinson* (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 201-216.

¹³² Smuts, 'Court-Centred Politics', pp. 21-43.

¹³³ See *Ibid.*, pp. 25-30; P. Burke, 'Tacitism', in T. A. Dorey (ed.), *Tacitus* (London, 1969), pp. 149-171, p. 155.

¹³⁴ Kewes has clearly established the role of contemporary example in informing the subject matter of a significant number of plays and masques in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that are understudied in favour of drama dealing with classical or English historical themes. Kewes, 'Elizabethan and Early Stuart Drama'. Additionally, Jonathan Scott's survey of the range of influences upon the development of English republicanism finds the role of religious ideology overly neglected and poorly integrated with other recognised factors. Jonathan Scott, *Commonwealth Principles: Republican writing of the English Revolution* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 1-8.

¹³⁵ Louisa Mackenzie draws attention to the some of the conflicting ways that Caesar was thought about in the sixteenth century through her investigation of Montaigne's representation of him. Whilst Caesar's military and political prowess remained undisputed, a humanist tradition had begun to emerge that emphasised the self-interest, ambition and tyranny of Caesar. Louisa Mackenzie, 'Imitation Gone Wrong: The "Pestilentially Ambitious" Figure of Julius Caesar in Michel de Montaigne's *Essais*', in M. Wyke (ed.), *Julius Caesar in Western Culture* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 131-147. See esp. pp. 131-134.

be used in the defence of resistance theory where Caesar is shown as a model of encroaching tyranny that was justly impeded by the noble defenders of liberty, Brutus and Cassius.¹³⁶ Representing Caesar's murder, therefore, could be a contentious pastime during James's reign. The king himself had no small measure of admiration for Caesar and took, as may be expected, a dim view of the conspirators.¹³⁷ Several depictions of Caesar's demise, such as William Alexander's *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*, approached the task with a level of caution that clearly illustrated that the sensitivity of the topic was well perceived – especially during crisis points, like the 1605 Gunpowder plot.¹³⁸ Ambiguity seems to characterise Shakespeare's presentation of the murder in *Julius Caesar*, which continued to be played throughout the Jacobean period. Shakespeare's exploration of tyranny and resistance in this play allowed neither Caesar nor his assassins to emerge as the unquestioned hero.¹³⁹ Other representations were somewhat less equivocal in their understanding of Caesar as receiving his just desserts, as seen in Ben Jonson's *Sejanus*.¹⁴⁰ However, depicting Caesar's death was not the only way to derive contemporary significance from this Roman story. Sir Arthur Gorges's 1614 English publication of Lucan's war epic, *Pharsalia*, underscores the rising importance of the anti-Caesarian poet as an influential source in representing Caesar's rise to power.¹⁴¹

Lucan's epic challenged the imperial rendering of the Caesars as ushering in an age of peace. In *Pharsalia* Caesar is depicted as attaining power by contravening Rome's laws. He is set in opposition to the liberty of the weakening

¹³⁶ Paulina Kewes, 'Julius Caesar in Jacobean England', *Seventeenth Century*, 17 (2002), 155-186, 156-160; Robert S. Miola, 'Julius Caesar and the Tyrannicide Debate', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 38 (1985), 271-289, 272.

¹³⁷ Kewes convincingly argues that James identified (and was identified with) the figure of Caesar, where he has been more traditionally associated with Augustus. Kewes, 'Julius Caesar', 161-163.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 156-159.

¹³⁹ Miola delivers a convincing appraisal of the play in which the deliberate ambiguities defining Caesar, Brutus and Cassius function as a criticism of political theory (in this case tyrannicide) when juxtaposed with historical reality. Miola, 'The Tyrannicide Debate', esp. 288-289. But, of course, interpretations of this play vary widely. Cf. Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 167-183 and Kewes, 'Julius Caesar', 170-172.

¹⁴⁰ This is seen especially in the long speech by the persecuted historian, Cremutius Cordus, who holds up Caesar's assassins for praise. Kewes, 'Julius Caesar', 172, 180.

¹⁴¹ Norbrook determines the publication to be a political statement by the anti-Spanish Gorges, who had received no advancement at court since the death of Prince Henry. David Norbrook, 'Lucan, Thomas May, and the Creation of a Literary Republican Culture', in Sharpe and Lake, *Culture and Politics*, pp. 45-66, p. 53.

republic and shown to be motivated by self-interested ambition.¹⁴² James's early translation of parts of Lucan suggest ways in which the most ardent monarchist could reconcile themselves to the poet, as the king employed parts of the text to vent forth against rebellion.¹⁴³ But the Lucanic influence that penetrated through much of late Elizabethan and Jacobean literary culture was more indebted to the 'freedom-loving, aristocratic, and tyrant-hating poet.'¹⁴⁴ These were the values informing the work of those that borrowed from Lucan in the anxious political context of James's reign, such as Jonson and Thomas Kyd.¹⁴⁵ Samuel Daniel's epic on the Wars of the Roses, *The Civil War*, has long been recognised for its debt to Lucan in both style and theme, whilst George Chapman's closet drama *Caesar and Pompey* has been described by one critic as the most 'Lucanic conception of Caesar on the English stage'.¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, Massinger and Fletcher's own engagement with the widening interest in Lucan is directly revealed in their collaborative play *The False One*.

The False One has been dated to around 1620, following just one year after *Olden Barnavelte*.¹⁴⁷ The action centres on the period just following the battle at Pharsalus when Caesar arrived in Egypt. Lucan and Plutarch have both

¹⁴² Lucan's republicanism has not gone unqualified. The poet's unfavourable depiction of Caesar has to be reconciled with Lucan's earlier praise of the current emperor, Nero, and viewed within the context of Lucan's court career. For a brief discussion of this see Norbrook, 'Lucan', p. 47 and Frederick M. Ahl, *Lucan: An Introduction* (Ithaca and London, 1976), pp. 54-61. For a recent re-evaluation of Lucan's portrayal of Caesar as more ambivalent than reputation has allowed see Christine Walde, 'Caesar, Lucan's *Bellum Civile*, and their Reception', in Wyke, *Julius Caesar*, pp. 45-61. Walde's balanced view attempts to extricate Lucan's Caesar from the prejudices informing interpretation since antiquity. There is clearly some ground upon which a more ambivalent reading of Lucan is possible. Yet, as Walde herself must admit, since the fourteenth century Lucan has been mobilised in support of an anti-Caesarian (and eventually, republican) argument. Whatever the extent to which we can determine whether Lucan himself espoused such views, it is evident that those employing *Pharsalia* in Jacobean England saw in the text the subversive depiction for which Lucan is (rightly or wrongly) famed.

¹⁴³ See Kewes, 'Julius Caesar', 175-176. Kewes also perceives *Pharsalia* to be utterly republican in outlook.

¹⁴⁴ Norbrook's paraphrase of Hugo Grotius on Lucan in 1614. Norbrook, 'Lucan', p. 54.

¹⁴⁵ W. Blissett, 'Lucan's Caesar and the Elizabethan Villain', *Studies in Philology*, 53 (1956), 553-575, 567-569; Lukas Erne, *Beyond The Spanish Tragedy: A Study of the Works of Thomas Kyd* (Manchester, 2001), p. 208.

¹⁴⁶ For Chapman see Blissett, 'Lucan's Caesar', 570. For an investigation of Lucan's role in developing a republican literary culture see Norbrook, 'Lucan'; and for a brief look at Lucan on the stage see Kewes, 'Julius Caesar', 172-179. Kewes largely discusses Massinger and Fletcher's *The False One*.

¹⁴⁷ John Fletcher and Philip Massinger, 'The False One', ed. R. Kean Turner in F. Beaumont and J. Fletcher, *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, ed. F. Bowers (Cambridge, 10 vols., 1966-1996), viii., pp. 115-202, p. 115. Further references to this edition.

been perceived as informing this understudied play.¹⁴⁸ Yet, in addition to the borrowed passages, it is Lucan's negative depiction of Caesar as the villainous rebel that dominates any interpretation.¹⁴⁹ This representation is intimated almost immediately as the Roman soldier relating the news of the battle to Ptolemy's court describes the charge of Caesar's troops: 'His army came on as if they had been / So many Caesars, and like him ambitious, / To tread upon the liberty of Rome.' (I.i.208-10) Massinger and Fletcher build upon this characterisation of Caesar throughout the play, following Lucan in portraying his rise to power as unlawful and his authority derived from a victorious rebellion.¹⁵⁰ Paulina Kewes's contextualisation of the play within the climate generated during the Palatinate crisis of 1619-20 highlights how Massinger and Fletcher's employment of classical texts allowed them to consider the present, as she outlines the topical applications that their Lucanic depiction of Caesar encouraged: 'His battles won and his ascendancy over the Roman senate guaranteed, Massinger and Fletcher's Caesar is set to implement his foreign policy unopposed... Modelled on Lucan's heroic villain, Massinger and Fletcher's Caesar is very much at home in Jacobean England.'¹⁵¹ It is within this context of Massinger and Fletcher's interest in Lucan and his emphasis on the rivalry between Caesar and Pompey that *Olden Barnavel*t can be read.

In *The False One* Massinger and Fletcher focused upon the crowned rebel. Pompey's fate is sealed by the end of the first scene and the play moves on to investigate the problems arising from rebellion and illegitimate authority. In *Olden Barnavel*t the plot builds up to its climax in Barnavel't's execution, concentrating on the power struggle between him and Orange, and examining the ways in which they variously justify their actions. To some degree, therefore, we can see *Olden Barnavel*t as a prequel to the themes that Massinger and Fletcher carried on to investigate in *The False One*. In tracing this process, *Olden Barnavel*t drew inspiration from a Lucanic representation of Caesar and Pompey. The analogy is neither consistently rigid, nor necessarily direct. Instead, the playwrights utilised some familiar aspects of Rome's civil war in order to

¹⁴⁸ Kewes, 'Julius Caesar', 173; Eugene M. Waith, *Patterns and Perspectives in English Renaissance Drama* (Newark, 1988), p. 55.

¹⁴⁹ Kewes, 'Julius Caesar', 176-179.

¹⁵⁰ See V.ii.1-9 and V.ii.39-52. See Kewes, 'Julius Caesar', 177 on the latter passage.

¹⁵¹ Kewes, 'Julius Caesar', 179.

represent the disturbances in the Netherlands in a new and provocative light. This is most simply apparent in the ambivalent characterisation of the lead protagonists that reflects an equation with the two Roman figures.¹⁵² Neither Barnavelt nor Orange are shown as capable of providing the more favourable alternative government, thus both of their actions contravene the liberties of the state and so remain unjustifiable. Massinger and Fletcher strip away the rhetoric of ‘good and bad’, or ‘right and wrong’, to reveal underneath that it is individual ambition motivating the war.

In *Olden Barnavelt* the failing republic is at the mercy of this personal struggle. It is failing in that the meritocracy by which it functioned has created an ambition in both men that it does not have the volition to check. Both Orange and Barnavelt feel entitled to exercise chief authority in the Netherlands; an entitlement which neither can justly claim. But the location of power in the country has become confused and the government is instead besieged by the sway of great men. We learn early on that Barnavelt has exercised sole authority for thirty years: ‘onely the name of King / yo^u haue not had, and yet yo^r absolute power / hath ben as ample’. (ll. 100-2) Sovereignty rests with the states, which is freely admitted, but the political machinations of both Orange and Barnavelt demonstrate that sycophancy has corrupted the effective control of power.¹⁵³ Barnavelt himself identifies this key failing in the republic, addressing the lords of the states with contempt: ‘when I am a Sycophant, / and a base gleaner from an othe^rs fauo^r / as all yo^u are, that halt vpon his [Orange’s] crutches / shame take that smoothnes, and that sleeke subiection.’ (ll. 1095-8)¹⁵⁴ As with Caesar, in the

¹⁵² See Norbrook, ‘Lucan’, pp. 48-49 for an evaluation of the characterisation of Caesar and Pompey. He highlights the purposefully problematic portrayal of these two figures, describing Caesar as both the hero and the villain and Pompey ‘almost an antihero, liable to charges that he himself might become a tyrant if he won the war.’ p. 48.

¹⁵³ It is unclear whether the lords, to whom both Barnavelt and Orange profess themselves subject, represent the provincial states of Holland or the States General, and consequently whether the frequent use of ‘state’ refers to the province of Holland or the United Provinces as a whole. Massinger and Fletcher do not seem to engage with the contestation of sovereignty between the provincial states and the generality in any area other than military obedience, on account of this constituting a fair portion of Barnavelt’s charges (see ll. 258-9 and 2199-200). In other regards, I understand that they represented sovereign power as being theoretically located in the States General, as is made manifest by the statement of Lord Bredero: ‘vsing that vnited powre w^{ch} warrants, / all we thinck fitt’ (ll. 1272-3). I perceive that Massinger and Fletcher attach both meanings to ‘state’, but as Holland’s position as the largest, richest and most dominant province often meant it was interchangeable with the Netherlands as a whole, the differentiation may be less crucial.

¹⁵⁴ The words unmistakably derive from Barnavelt’s envy of the prince; and his subsequent protestation that he himself is as deserving as Orange suggests his concern is more related to the

play it is Orange's military successes that have enabled him to rise to a position from which he can fight for power. Barnavelt's initial scheming therefore points to a new necessity for military strength, in order to 'strengthen o^r side / against the now vnequall opposition / of this [prowd] Prince [of *Orange*]...' (ll. 279-281).¹⁵⁵

Yet whilst the ambitious determination of both puts the country at risk, as with Caesar and Pompey it soon becomes manifest that the contest is unbalanced.¹⁵⁶ Orange's battlefield achievements have won him *de facto* authority and his military superiority gives him a sufficient threat of force so that by the close of Act II he has accomplished the victory over Barnavelt's faction that in reality took a year to achieve.¹⁵⁷ Therefore, as the play moves on, it is the power potential and political manoeuvrings of the rising star, Orange, that assume a more menacing appearance. Orange's manipulation of the lords of the states in order to pursue his vendetta against Barnavelt under the cloak of official authority provides one illustration.¹⁵⁸ Orange tactically submerges his true intention to eliminate his opposition, instead feigning care for the greater good of the country in provocatively suggesting they abstain from meting out the 'just' punishment to Barnavelt's faction. The response elicited from the lords encapsulates the contradiction between the theory and practice of power in the Netherlands as their words stand in blatant contrast to reality:

such mild proceedings in a Government
new settled, whose maine strength had it's dependaunce
vpon the powre of some perticular men
might be given way to, but in ours, it Were

recipient of the flattery, rather than the practice itself. This is re-emphasised upon his arrest when Barnavelt vows to 'shake the *servile soules* of those poore Wretches / that stick his slight deservings about mine' (ll. 2076-7) *Italics mine*. Barnavelt's own faction does not escape this slur early on in the play, which is made by one of their own. (l. 82) But, as discussed above, Massinger and Fletcher do not intend to paint Barnavelt as the virtuous alternative to Orange, so the accusations function to demonstrate the diffusion of corruption throughout the republic.

¹⁵⁵ Square brackets denote Buc's deletions. *Olden Barnavelt*, p. 9.

¹⁵⁶ There is even an early preview of the contest's end when Orange, in retaliating to Barnavelt's accusations, suggests to him that the cure of his own faults 'would make ye shrinck & shake too, / shake of your head.' (ll. 516-7).

¹⁵⁷ I.e. from the enactment of the Sharp Resolution in August 1617, that allowed the towns to raise *waardgelders*, to Maurice's subjugation of Utrecht the following July. For the chronology see above, pp. 163-168.

¹⁵⁸ Kamps identifies Orange as adopting a cunning passive role to deliver the impression that his actions are brought about by others: Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology*, p. 152.

vnsafe and scandalous; then the *Prouinces*
haue lost their liberties, Iustice hir Sword,
and we prepard a way for our own ruyn (ll. 1254-60)

Here, Vandort's speech subtly reveals the hypocrisy by which the state is working. His initial description outlines exactly the sort of political practice currently in operation in the Netherlands, dependent 'vpon the powre of some perticular men'. Yet Orange's manipulation has worked effectively: in protesting against appearing to be so weak, the lords resolve upon punishing the 'treason'. Not only has Orange achieved his goal, but he has managed to criminalise his opponent whilst legitimating his own actions.

Massinger and Fletcher's depiction of Orange in this way reveals their engagement with the anxieties surrounding the usurpation of authority and its consequent justification that they continued to examine in *The False One*. In *Olden Barnavelte* they exploited the contrast between the legally dubious foundation of Maurice's coup in 1618 and its official representation as the exercise of a true and just authority. Orange's victory over Barnavelte and his cunning manipulation of his own image allows him to disavow the advocate's faction as traitors, whilst promoting his violent destruction of Barnavelte as the execution of justice.¹⁵⁹ At his trial Barnavelte denounces the evidence against him as faked, warning: 'this elaborate forme / Of Iustice to delude the world, a cover / For future practises.' (2422-4). Barnavelte's eventual popularity with the people

¹⁵⁹ This understanding of Massinger and Fletcher's presentation of state legitimised violence is indebted to Alan Sinfield's reading of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in which Shakespeare is shown to have questioned, rather than endorsed, Jamesian ideology. *Olden Barnavelte* similarly engages with the inconsistencies attached to distinctions between tyranny and legitimate kingship in its exposition of both Orange's illegal assumption of authority and his violent suppression of Barnavelte. See Alan Sinfield, 'Macbeth: History, Ideology and Intellectuals', in R. Wilson and R. Dutton (eds.), *New Historicism and Renaissance Drama* (London and New York, 1992), pp. 167-180. Kamps has also perceived the challenge to state rituals in *Olden Barnavelte* and follows Shapiro in perceiving the potential for subversion in the staging of state violence in an ambiguous setting. Kamps highlights the excessive blow, which strikes off Barnavelte's fingers too, as indicative of this subversion, stating 'it lampoons the state by depicting it as inept in performing the very task designed to reactivate its power.' Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology*, pp. 164-165. The detail relating to Barnavelte's severed fingers was not created by the playwrights, however, but derived from a contemporary pamphlet report, *The True Description of the Execution of Iustice, Done in the Grauenhage, by the Councill of the Generall States Holden for the Same Purpose, vpon Sir Iohn van Olden Barnauelt* (London, 1619), p. 2. Therefore, the relation of this in the play illustrates their manipulation of what may have been a familiar part to Oldenbarnevelte's story into a demonstration of the impatience behind Orange's elimination of his rival. (ll. 2997-9).

serves to underline this portrayal of Orange, as his actions move ever further away from their democratic grounding and towards authoritarian rule.¹⁶⁰

In consequence, just as Pompey's supporters are revealed in the end to be fighting for the liberty of the republic against Caesar's tyrannical ambitions, so the redundant Barnavelt can become the voice of his country's liberty against the ambitions of Orange.¹⁶¹ Rather than reflecting a venomous spleen motivated by envy, Barnavelt's later cautionary speeches against the ambitions of the stadholder assume a mantle beyond that of the scheming Machiavel seen in the earlier acts. For instance, in only the second scene of the play Barnavelt employs potent political language in defence of the country against Orange. He rhetorically asks the lords if the Netherlands had fought so hard maintaining their liberties against the Spanish only now to 'offer vp o^f slavish necks / to one, that onely is, what we haue made him? / for, be but you yourselves, this Prince of *Orange* / is but as *Barnaue*lt, a Servant to / yo^r Lordships, and the State' (ll. 302-6). Yet this commitment to liberty rings hollow as a quick aside reminds the audience that Barnavelt is set upon exacting personal vengeance against Orange (ll. 329-31).¹⁶² Following his arrest, however, with Orange's own schemes becoming more apparent, Barnavelt speaks with a consistency that gives credibility to his words and allows him to be, for a short time, the mouthpiece for the dying ideals of the republic. The advocate's indictment of Orange as the true author of his demise upon his arrest therefore verbalises the underhand practices of Orange that are becoming increasingly transparent, so that Barnavelt's allegations no longer seem unjustified: 'this is the *Prince*, the cruell *Prince* your Master, / the thirstie *Prince* of this poore life.' (ll. 2070-1)

Barnavelt's gradual emergence as the country's defender in this way signals the loose identification of Orange with Caesar. Massinger and Fletcher's depiction of Orange's military prowess allows an early association with the

¹⁶⁰ See ll. 2663-7 and ll. 2795-801. The latter reference to an exchange between two captains just before Barnavelt's execution serves to remind the audience that Barnavelt's death is not requested by the people, in whose name it is done.

¹⁶¹ Lucan suggests that liberty lay at the heart of the defence against Caesar. Inspiration would no longer come from Pompey, 'but by that pair of rivals always with us - / Liberty and Caesar... / the Senate showed by dying that it was fighting for itself.' (vii. 695-697) Lucan, *Civil War*, tr. S. H. Braund (Oxford, 1992). See also Norbrook, 'Lucan', p. 49.

¹⁶² See also Barnavelt's speech to the lords that makes use of religious imagery to describe how the states make themselves subject to Orange, but which is immediately followed by a reminder of Barnavelt's plot and an example of his vain ambition. (ll. 1121-81).

historic reputation of Caesar.¹⁶³ Even though Barnavelt's proselytising speech near the beginning of Act II evidently stems from his destructive envy, the picture he draws of Orange permits identification with the increasingly influential image of Lucan's Caesar. Orange is described as a 'popular S<na>ke, that hath / stolne like a cuning theif the Armyes harts / to serve his owne ambitious ends' (ll. 727-9) so that Barnavelt can then call for action: 'Freemen, and Masters of what yet is yours / rise vp against this Tirant, and defend / wth rigo^r, what too gentle lenitie / hath almost lost' (ll. 735-8). In similarly calling for his fellow countrymen to recognise the voluntary slavery that they were entering into in allowing Maurice's ambitious designs to be played out, the 1620 pamphlet 'A Morning Waker' invoked the woeful precedent of the Romans who suffered their 'free Republique' to become a 'Tyrannicall monarchy'.¹⁶⁴ Thus, in the passage above, Barnavelt's charge of tyranny reflects one significant way in which Massinger and Fletcher were drawing upon the arguments advanced by Remonstrant propaganda in their use of a Roman narrative to represent the Dutch struggle. By exploiting the widely-circulated rumour that Maurice aimed at the sovereignty of the country, the playwrights could allude to Caesar's similar notorious ambition and so reinforce their depiction of the Netherlands as a republic endangered.¹⁶⁵

Massinger and Fletcher's direct invocation of Roman precedents in the play underlines this appointment of Orange as the Dutch Republic's Caesar. The executioner who wins the game of dice and performs the execution uses the

¹⁶³ Caesar's reputation in this period as a remarkable military tactician remained undoubted, despite the criticism that was increasingly being levelled at the ethics behind his motivation. Mackenzie, 'Imitation Gone Wrong', p. 132.

¹⁶⁴ SPF 84/98, fo. 168.

¹⁶⁵ Kamps has also linked Orange's characterisation in *Olden Barnavelt* with Caesar, emphasising the portrayal of the 'unwilling' ruler seen in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, 'who repeatedly refuses the crown that he longs for with all his heart, and which he eventually intends to accept.' Kamps uses this parallel to outline how Massinger and Fletcher present Orange as a political manipulator who pursues Barnavelt's execution to maintain his own political position. Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology*, p. 153. I agree with this understanding, but think that the playwrights intended a more direct allusion to the historical Caesar in order to comment upon the threat of great, military men in weakened republics. There is some historical debate about what sort of monarchy, if at all, Caesar aimed to establish. See Howard H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome from 133 B.C. to A.D. 68* (New York, 1976), p. 437. It seems clear, however, that seventeenth-century readings of Lucan's Caesar perceived him as ambitious of more than just monarchy in Rome, but also of world domination. See Blissett, 'Lucan's Caesar', 560; and Norbrook on the comparison of Cromwell with Caesar for his suspected monarchical ambitions in *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 299.

‘Sword that cutt of *Pompeis* head’ (l. 2738) thereby establishing Barnaveit in the position of the conquered Pompey, and Orange, by implication, as his victorious rival.¹⁶⁶ Leidenberch’s appeal to Cato ‘and yo^u brave *Romaine* speritts, famous more / for yo^r true resolutions on Yo^r selues, / then Conquest of the world’ (ll. 1664-6) at the hour of his suicide pits Barnaveit’s party ideologically alongside the staunch defender of Roman republican values, and their adversaries alongside that ambitious conqueror, Caesar.¹⁶⁷ Returning to the famous passage excised by Buc, it is Octavius that Orange is compared with, so signalling the utter death of the republic and rise of the empire that had not been effected by Caesar’s assassination. The subsequent reference to the elimination of Cato and like-minded free spirits (ll. 2437-9), however, again suggests the influence of a Lucanic rendering of the civil war in the way that Massinger and Fletcher shaped their representation of Oldenbarnevelt’s fall.

Barnaveit’s last speech offers a resigned admission that the country’s future now rests in Orange’s hands unopposed: ‘Comend my last breath to his Excellence, / tell him the Sun that he shot at, is now setting, / setting this night, that he may rise to morrow, / for ever setting: now let him raigne alone’ (ll. 2981-4). Orange’s victory is therefore complete and he has achieved all that he covertly worked towards. The closing exchange between two lords reflects the ambivalence of the characterisation whilst maintaining the hint of trepidation about the future that is left to the audience. Vandort, a consistent supporter and flatterer of Orange throughout the play, espouses what would become the official justification of Oldenbarnevelt’s execution: ‘vaigneglorie thou art gon: / and thus must all, build on Ambition.’ (ll. 3000-1) However, an unnamed lord offers the final words of the play that betray insightful remorse and question both Orange’s conduct and Vandort’s unperceived hypocrisy in charging Barnaveit alone with ambition: ‘Farwell, great hart: full low thy strength now lyes, / he that would *purge ambition* this way dies.’¹⁶⁸ (ll. 3002-3) In alluding to Barnaveit’s attempt

¹⁶⁶ Kamps judges that Massinger and Fletcher’s reference to Pompey intended to emphasise the Machiavellian conduct of Maurice’s proceedings against Oldenbarnevelt that contrasted sharply with his expressed providentialism, so placing ‘the assassin’s sword – not the sword of justice – in the hands of the Prince of Orange.’ Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology*, pp. 152-153.

¹⁶⁷ Cato is often identified as Lucan’s third hero in *Pharsalia* as he assumes a position opposite to Caesar after Pompey’s defeat at Pharsalus. For an introduction to the characterisation of Cato in *Pharsalia* see Ahl, *Lucan*, pp. 231-279.

¹⁶⁸ Italics mine.

to prevent the conquest of Orange's ambitions, the play closes with a chilling appraisal of political reality under a successful usurper.

By employing the Roman analogy in their understanding of the Dutch Republic's power struggle, Massinger and Fletcher could emphasise the antitheses observable in the classical precedent. Lucan's *Pharsalia* posited an antithesis between Rome as self-governing and as an empire, and between liberty (identified with the former) and the tyranny of Caesar. Transposed to the Netherlands, Massinger and Fletcher could therefore suggest an antithesis between the direction of Maurice's ambition and the liberty that the United Provinces had fought so hard for. In doing so, they conveyed their conviction of the need for sure safeguards upon power to prevent the emergence and dominance of ambitious individuals, especially those with military strength. The political message emerging was that the United Provinces must look to the reign of the Caesars to understand the implications of their inaction against Maurice's encroachments.

Put upon the English stage, *Olden Barnaveit* challenged James's monarchical understanding of Maurice's victory as the triumph of princely rule over the instability of the republic's civil war; of the monarch over the rebel. In cultivating his public image, James drew on two renowned historical examples in Solomon and Augustus, but he also identified his own rule with their predecessors and parents, David and Caesar.¹⁶⁹ In contrast to this exaltation of hereditary monarchy, *Olden Barnaveit* presented a dark and oppressive account of the origins of such authority and the potential of its excesses, that would have been likely to evoke memories of Raleigh's execution. As we have seen, several studies have noted this pervading anxiety about the exercise of autocratic authority that held decided resonance with James's style of government. Yet this only functions effectively when Barnaveit's rhetoric can be trusted. Necessarily, therefore, Massinger and Fletcher's representation transcended the dichotomous interpretation of the rivalry as fought between wrong and right, Arminianism (read Catholicism) and the Reformed. The absence of a clearly identifiable hero

¹⁶⁹ James's identification with Solomon is probably the most well-known aspect of his public image. Recently, however, John King has demonstrated how James also employed Davidic iconography in his public image. John N. King, 'James I and King David: Jacobean Iconography and its Legacy', in D. Fischlin and M. Fortier (eds.), *Royal Subjects: Essays on the Writings of James VI and I* (Detroit, 2002), pp. 421-453.

in *Olden Barneveld* functioned to reject such easy alignments in favour of a Tacitean exploration of motives that requested the audience to seek beyond the propaganda.¹⁷⁰

¹⁷⁰ Massinger and Fletcher certainly made extensive use of the contemporary pamphlet polemic in *Olden Barneveld*. Barneveld's long and repetitive speeches extolling his own achievements for the state are heavily dependent upon both *Barneuels Apology* and *Barnevelt displayed*. Yet, as seen, the play as a whole eschews the partisan rendering of these pamphlets. Frijlinck closely traces Massinger and Fletcher's use of these pamphlets: Frijlinck, *Olden Barneveld*, pp. xxvi-lviii. Whilst she appreciates that, considering the partiality of their sources, they did well in depicting Oldenbarneveld with some level of moderation, she ultimately finds his eloquent speeches as unconvincing and concludes 'we cannot be filled with intense pity at the overthrow of a sly, crafty conspirator.' p. cxlix. Interestingly, they also borrow almost verbatim from the French ambassadors' oration on behalf of Oldenbarneveld that was published in *News out of Holland: concerning Barnevelt* (1619). For an introduction to some of the ways in which Tacitus was read in Renaissance Europe see Burke, 'Tacitism', esp. pp. 154-162.

Making 'Republiques of Kingdoms'?

Dutch Politics and English Pamphlet Polemic, 1621-1623

On 7 May 1623 the Scottish Privy Council hurriedly wrote to James I informing him of the insolence displayed by the Dutch in Leith harbour during the previous week. Playing host to the ships of the declared enemies, Spain and the Netherlands, the Scottish authorities had found it no mean task to keep disturbances minimal and maintain his majesty's peace in the harbours of Leith and Aberdeen.¹ Their efforts came to nought in Leith that May, however, when some opportunistic Dutch mariners had seized their chance to score against their foes with an attack on a Dunkirker ship.² The Privy Council's report related that, 'not without probable suspicion of trechery in some of the Company', the Dunkirker had experienced difficulties leaving the harbour and had run aground. Two passing Dutch ships, seeing their advantage, then began firing upon the stranded Spanish vessel. Immediate action was taken by the council on behalf of his majesty, considering the current state of peace that existed between him and both parties involved, to prevent further hostility and allow the Dunkirker to leave the harbour safely. Yet these efforts were once more in vain as the Hollanders soon after boarded and then burned the unfortunate Spanish ship.³

Not only had the Dutch contravened the council's express instructions to forbear their assault upon the Dunkirker, but they had offered direct insult to James by setting the ship alight after the Scottish authorities had raised the king's colours, so claiming the wreck for James. Such incendiary actions certainly smack of an insolence likely to incite underlying Anglo-Dutch commercial antagonism. This was at least how the incident was presented to the ambassador

¹ In the summer of 1622 two Dunkirkers had taken refuge in the harbours of Leith and Aberdeen, where they remained under the watch of Dutch ships and unable to leave unmolested. Samuel R. Gardiner, *Prince Charles and the Spanish Marriage* (London, 2 vols., 1869), ii., pp. 372-373.

² Dunkirkers were privateers from the Spanish occupied ports – especially Dunkirk – along the coast of the Netherlands, sometimes under the pay and always the authority of the Spanish king. They competed with such North Sea countries as England, France and the United Provinces for a stake in North Sea fishing. For an account of the influence of the Dunkirk privateers upon the North Sea fishery see A. P. van Vliet, 'The Influence of Dunkirk Privateering on the North Sea (Herring) Fishery during the Year 1580-1650', in J. Roding and L. H. van Voss (eds.), *The North Sea and Culture (1550-1800)* (Hilversum, 1996), pp. 150-165.

³ Scottish Privy Council to James, 7 May 1623, SPD 14/144, fos. 27-29; Gardiner, *Prince Charles and the Spanish Marriage*, ii., 374-376.

in the United Provinces,⁴ as Conway described how the incident was ‘a farr greater insolencie’ than the earlier misconduct of two Dutch captains (who had stolen a prize from another harbour) that had already caused ‘his Ma[jes]tie to looke back to the incivilities, neglects, and outrages com[m]itted against his Ma[jes]t[ie]s Royall Interrest, and Prerogatiue in the Narrowe Seas and his owne harbours’.⁵ Although Conway was anxious to reassure Carleton of the king’s continued care for and desire to stay on terms with the Netherlands, he warned that such incidents ‘giue opportunitie to everie malicious, envious or sedicious humor to open his mouth in exclamac[i]on against the States, and on the syde of his Ma[jes]t[y]s honor.’⁶

Yet Conway’s description of this sort of reaction does not reflect the conduct of James’s Scottish subjects in Leith, who were a cause of serious concern to the council. Not only were the magistrates of Edinburgh unwilling to raise men in defence of the beleaguered Dunkirker, but the onlookers upon Leith pier were found to be inciting the Hollanders in their assault. In contradiction to the efforts of the council to subdue the quarrel, the local population made no attempt to hide the clear direction of their affections. In relating the damage inflicted by the Hollanders’ cannons, including the death of one Scottish bystander, the earl of Melrose exclaimed that if more had been hurt it would not be a cause for regret, ‘for when the dunkerker left there ship many of our people standing vpon it [beackened] to the Hollanders with there hats to come and possesse her as they did.’⁷ Furthermore, an order had to be proclaimed two days following for the restitution of the crew’s goods as a

number of rude, uncivile, and mischeant people, who without pitie or compassioun of the distressis and miserie wherein the said poore strangeris had fallin by the wrak of their ship, ... violentlie and shamefullie spoylit and robbit the poore strangeris not onlie of their armour bot of their clothing and such uther goodis as they had within the

⁴ For the abridged relation that was appended to Conway’s letter to Carleton see SPF 84/112, fo. 157.

⁵ Conway to Carleton, 15 May 1623, SPF 84/112, fo. 124.

⁶ SPF 84/112, fos. 124v-125.

⁷ Melrose to Annandale, 10 May 1623, SPD 14/144, fo. 61.

ship, to the great discredite and disgrace of the cuntrey if delyverie and restitutioun be not made of the saidis goodis⁸

Even ties of loyalty and hierarchy could not move the Leith population as the Privy Council found themselves relying upon their own servants – ‘and some were affected Gentlemen’ – to bring the battered Spanish ship back into the harbour.⁹ The Scottish Privy Council records reveal that such an occurrence was not entirely unusual. Just a fortnight before, a complaint had been lodged by a Spanish official about a hostile demonstration also at Leith harbour. Rather than assisting the crew to tow their grounded ship back into the harbour, which task would usually be undertaken by all present and able, the Leith locals instead stood jeering on the shore, throwing stones and ‘calling thame “fleyd cowarts” and “coutercheris” and “damnit dogis”, bidding thame go bak, “the divill tak yow all, and be with yow all”’.¹⁰ In Aberdeen a more serious case had been brought to light by the Spanish captain there, who reported that his crew’s bread supplier had confessed ‘hes bene verie earnestlie delt with and intreated be some personis of the toun of Abirdeyne to poisone the said supplicant and his companies bread’¹¹. Although the baker had refused to conspire with the plotters, he stopped short of disclosing their identities.

It is therefore evident that international tension found particular expression in these Scottish harbours in the early months of 1623. Under instruction from the king, the Privy Council sought to observe neutrality; the sentiment of certain sections of the population appears somewhat otherwise.¹² Commercial antagonism with the Dutch, who were seen as ungrateful, unscrupulous and inferior, was especially acute in Scotland due to the contestation over Dutch fishing rights in the North Sea. In 1617 a Scottish official, John Browne, had been kidnapped by Dutch mariners in an incident that further inflamed the tense relations.¹³ Yet the reaction of the populace of Leith

⁸ *RPCS*, iii., 9 May 1623, p. 218; Gardiner, *Prince Charles and the Spanish Marriage*, ii., 375-376.

⁹ SPD 14/144, fo. 28.

¹⁰ *RPCS*, iii., 23 Apr 1623, p. 212.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 11 Feb 1623, pp. 169-170.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. lvi.

¹³ For further details on this incident see J. C. Grayson, ‘From Protectorate to Partnership: Anglo-Dutch Relations, 1598-1625’ (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University College London, 1978), pp. 248-249 and below, pp. 255-256.

and Edinburgh to the potentially provocative assault upon the Dunkirker indicates the existence of a more penetrating attitude of hostility towards the Spanish.¹⁴

The predominance of anti-Spanish feeling demonstrated in these incidents allows some insight into the factors influencing the development and active expression of a collective opinion that can be termed 'nascently public'. In spite of all the insinuations of ingratitude that the firing of the ship at Leith could have aroused, the actions of the onlookers in support and encouragement of the Hollanders reveal a lively engagement with national and international politics. Choosing rather to support their Protestant neighbours and abuse the Spanish crews and ships, the Scottish folk in Leith and Aberdeen showed irrevocably where their allegiance lay, even at the expense of disobedience to the king's ministers. The evidence here is, however, limited in what it can reveal about the ideological complexities dictating these allegiances and what significance they may have carried in shaping or changing perceptions of domestic authority and obedience. Whilst the Dutch demonstrably had the support of these active few against the Spanish in the confines of the harbour, it is unclear how far this was influenced by a religio-political commitment to driving the tyrannous Catholic Spaniard from the shores of Protestant Britain. To what extent did the 'liberty-loving' Dutch republicans influence the ideological undercurrents determining commitment to this cause? To better investigate these issues our attention must turn to events in the United Provinces and their consequent representation in a group of pamphlets published for an English readership.

In April 1621, the same month that the Spanish ambassador, Gondomar, was attacked by London prentices, the Twelve Years Truce between the Dutch

¹⁴ Gardiner summarised Scottish sentiment, as demonstrated in Leith, thus: 'Nowhere was the Spanish flag more thoroughly detested than in Scotland. By the ties of religious and of commercial sympathy the inhabitants of Leith and Edinburgh were brought into close communication with the Dutch.' Gardiner, *Prince Charles and the Spanish Marriage*, ii., p. 375. Scottish attitudes towards the match and the European war have not received the same wealth of attention that has attended English views. This neglect is all the more significant in light of the large number of Scots that served in the war, and is now beginning to be remedied. One recent study has generalised Scottish sympathies as lying 'with their co-religionists in the Dutch Republic and Germany and hostile towards the Catholic Habsburg powers', which, while supported by the evidence here, inevitably does not take account of the variety of opinion and the diverse factors informing it. Dauvit Horsbroch, 'Wish You Were Here? Scottish Reactions to "Postcards" Home from the "Germane Warres"', in S. Murdoch (ed.), *Scotland and the Thirty Years' War, 1618-1648* (Brill, 2001), pp. 245-267, p. 246. Cf. David Worthington, 'Alternative Diplomacy? Scottish Exiles at the Courts of the Habsburgs and their Allies, 1618-1648', in *Ibid.*, pp. 51-75.

and the Spanish expired, thus recommencing the battle for sovereignty in the Netherlands.¹⁵ Anti-Spanish-papist feeling reached a zenith in England at the very moment that the Dutch Republic again prepared to defend itself against the Habsburg conglomeration. The inexorable coupling of monarchy and slavery, republic and liberty that underpinned the Dutch defence of their cause was being reformulated at the same time that James seemed resolved to ignore the common good of England and pursue his own wilful course. Set within the wider context of the confessionally-conceived conflict that had followed Frederick's election in Bohemia, the Dutch cause against Spain thus provided English polemicists with another opportunity to call for action against their common foe.

On the eve of the truce's expiry, and during the early years of the war's resumption, it is possible to identify a number of pamphlets in dialogue with each other that voiced support for either the Spanish or the Dutch. The pro-Spanish tracts came from the pen of the Catholic intelligencer, Richard Verstegan, whilst those in defence of the Dutch cause can be identified with a loose Protestant affiliation, resident in the Netherlands and grouped around the notorious Norwich minister, Thomas Scott. There has been considerable work on the prolific contribution of Scott to the opposition literature of the match, much of which came from the less-regulated presses of the United Provinces.¹⁶ Yet only brief attention has been given to his role in the dialogue conducted between the English expatriates and Verstegan.¹⁷ The polemical posturing evident in this

¹⁵ For the history of the revolt see Pieter Geyl, *The Revolt of the Netherlands* (London, 1958); Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt* (Middlesex, 1985 rev. ed.); Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477-1806* (Oxford, 1995). For a recent account that seeks to re-establish the dominant role played by the province of Holland see James D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic: War, Finance and Politics in Holland, 1572-1588* (Oxford, 2008).

¹⁶ For example see Cogswell, *BR*; Simon L. Adams, 'The Protestant Cause: Religious Alliance with the European Calvinist Communities as a Political Issue in England, 1585-1630' (Unpublished DPhil Thesis, Oxford, 1973), pp. 448-462; Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 231-270; Peter Lake, 'Constitutional Consensus and Puritan Opposition in the 1620s: Thomas Scott and the Spanish Match,' *HJ*, 25 (1982), 805-825; Louis B. Wright, 'Propaganda against James I's "Appeasement" of Spain', *HLQ*, 6 (1943), 149-92; Roberta Anderson, "'Well disposed to the affairs of Spain?'" James VI and I and the Propagandists', *Recusant History*, 25 (2000-2001), 613-635.

¹⁷ Martine van Ittersum has recognised that Scott's *Belgicke Pismire* responded to Verstegan's 1621 *Observations* in her assessment of their influence upon Owen Felltham's *Three Moneths Observation* (discussed below, pp. 254-255). However, her analysis of this is limited to a brief relation of the main argument informing their opposed advocacy for English action in relation to the United Provinces. Martine J. van Ittersum, "'Three Moneths Observation of the Low Countreys, Especially Holland": Owen Felltham (c. 1602-1668) and Anglo-Dutch Relations in

pamphlet exchange immediately highlights how the tension arising over questions of allegiance and loyalty was compounded by the renewal of the war over Dutch independence. Whilst it may be problematic to perceive these publications as concerted attempts to court an identifiably 'mainstream' public opinion, their direct appeals to a sympathetic readership suggests that their arguments were exploiting a familiar stock of prejudices and stereotypes.¹⁸

In addition, this pamphlet exchange provides another opportunity to investigate how the republican arrangement of the Dutch government was perceived and portrayed, thereby allowing a continued exploration into the influential role of this particular continental precedent in encouraging republican thought in Jacobean England. If we understand that the exclusive equation of 'republican' values with a specified form of popular government is only enabled when the language that identifies 'republic' as an antonym of 'monarchy' becomes available, then an examination of the language employed in these pamphlets will uncover the extent to which certain English writers were disseminating anti-monarchical sentiment in relation to the English state.¹⁹

I

It is perhaps inevitable that any account of the ideological impact of the Spanish match will address the well-known and oft-cited pamphlets of Thomas Scott. Having fled to the United Provinces in late 1620 to escape the fallout from his sensational debut, *Vox Populi*, Scott remained in the Netherlands serving as minister to the English garrison at Utrecht and producing anti-Spanish propaganda until his assassination in 1626. Scott's pamphlets have been widely employed to examine the representative nature of his expressed attitude and the

the Seventeenth Century', *Lias- Sources and Documents Relating to the Early Modern History of Ideas*, 27 (2000), 95-196, 127-134. See also Paul Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World: Richard Verstegan and the International Culture of Catholic Reformation* (Leuven, 2004), pp. 140-141, discussed below, p. 223; Michael C. Questier (ed.), *Stuart Dynastic Policy and Religious Politics, 1621-1625*, Camden Society, Fifth Series, 35 (Cambridge, forthcoming 2009), p. 22.

¹⁸ Anthony Milton's insightful exploration of the East India Company's response to the Amboyna massacre of 1624 provides a caution against a trend that assumes such pamphlet polemic represents conscious attempts to mobilise public opinion against the government. Anthony Milton, 'Marketing a Massacre: Amboyna, the East India Company and the Public Sphere in Early Stuart England', in L&P, *PS*, pp. 168-190.

¹⁹ For this emphasis on the language of republicanism see David Wootton, 'The True Origins of Republicanism: The Disciples of Baron and the Counter-Example of Venturi', in M. Albertone (ed.), *Il Repubblicanesimo Moderno. L'idea di Repubblica Nella Riflessione Storica di Franco Venturi* (Naples, 2006), pp. 271-304.

contemporary ideas and languages that informed it.²⁰ Most notably for this study, Markku Peltonen has engaged with Peter Lake's interpretation of Scott's religious convictions as providing the predominant influence over his thought and actions. However, Peltonen rightly casts the net wider than Lake's puritan-based analysis allowed and has located Scott within a lengthy and vibrant tradition of English classical republican thought. Neither study has neglected the role that the United Provinces played in Scott's propaganda, and Peltonen in particular has highlighted what he perceives as Scott's appreciation for their mixed form of government.²¹ Yet this pamphlet polemic needs to be viewed more widely still and detached a little from the over-familiar figure of Scott to consider its contribution to the discourse employing the example of the United Provinces. Most significantly, a specific selection of this literature needs to be examined as part of the pamphlet exchange that was conducted between 1621 and 1623.

Speculation has long been rife regarding the possible sponsorship of Scott's pamphlets. This has both guided interpretation of their content and overlaid the motivation for their publication. Whilst biographical errors led to an unsupportable link between Scott and the earl of Pembroke, Simon Adams's correcting analysis relocated the backstage involvement to The Hague and judged Scott to be part of the Bohemian propaganda machine operating from there.²² Identification of authorship has remained a constant problem for a large proportion of the pro-Dutch pamphlets employed here and it is by no means clear that Scott did indeed compose much of the work that has been attributed to him. As Adams has shown, many of the pamphlets printed together for Scott's 1624 *Workes* were not authored by him, including such tracts as John Reynolds's *Vox Coeli*.²³ The familiar themes and arguments that run through the bulk of this literature account for the general attribution to Scott and can be also seen as part of the same propaganda. It will be these arguments and themes that will provide the basis of analysis here, with less attention given to deciphering the individual

²⁰ See above, n. 16.

²¹ Peltonen, *Classical Humanism*, pp. 268-269; cf. Lake, 'Constitutional Consensus'.

²² Adams, 'The Protestant Cause', pp. 450, 454. See also Lake, 'Constitutional Consensus', 813-814.

²³ Adams, 'The Protestant Cause', p. 460. The error of attributing these pamphlets to Scott long went unnoticed and is still being made. For an example see Anderson, 'James VI and I and the Propagandists', 620, 622.

thought and motivation of Scott alone. The evidence that suggests there were additional figures involved in producing these texts supports this direction and indicates that the ideas are representative of a wider body of opinion than one nearly-radical minister.

The ideological consensus underpinning these pamphlets has been investigated and contextualised within a broad swathe of loosely Protestant opinion both in England and internationally.²⁴ The war in Germany and the renewal of the Dutch-Spanish conflict was often understood in terms of a religious struggle against the temporal designs of the Spanish monarchy and the spiritual usurpation of Rome. Many thus sought to advocate English intervention by the means of a diversionary war with Spain, often in the West Indies.²⁵ This would drain the Spanish government of the American gold, which was perceived as the foundation upon which the power of Spain rested. As we have seen, the articulation of this attitude employed a vocabulary of warning to England, which was seen as slumbering in security. In addition to exhibiting this common interpretation of contemporary events, it is clear that the tracts produced in the Netherlands for an English audience were recycling more specific narratives in support of their cause, thereby reinforcing the suggestion that it was a collaborative enterprise with a Bohemian-Orange connection. In defence of the Dutch struggle against the Spanish and in support of renewing the war many of these pamphlets turned to the justificatory literature of the Dutch Revolt and invoked the language and arguments that it propounded.²⁶ Two tracts in particular indicate not only the use of the same sources, but also the role the pamphlets themselves played in re-circulating the older defences.

In 1624 *A Relation of Sundry Particular Wicked Plots and Cruel, Inhumaine, Perfidious; yea, Vnnaturall Practises of the Spanish* was published independently, and also adjoined to an English translation of Jacob Verheiden's defence of the revolt, *De Jure Belli Belgici*.²⁷ Republished the same year under the title *A Second Part of Spanish Practices*, again with Verheiden's tract, this pamphlet was included in Scott's 1624 *Workes* and has frequently been attributed

²⁴ See Adams, 'The Protestant Cause', pp. 448-462; Peltonen, *Classical Humanism*, pp. 231-270.

²⁵ Gardiner, *Prince Charles and the Spanish Marriage*, ii., pp. 122-123.

²⁶ This is further discussed below, pp. 245-255. See also Martin van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt, 1555-1590* (Cambridge, 1992).

²⁷ Keith L. Sprunger, *Trumpets from the Tower: English Puritan Printing in the Netherlands, 1600-1640* (Leiden, 1994), p. 110.

to him. The involvement of the erstwhile English separatist, Stephen Offwood, in the production of anti-Catholic-Habsburg tracts in the 1620s suggests he was the S. O. behind the composition of *A Relation*, which claims to be a compilation and translation of several Dutch authors, including the Contra-Remonstrant theologian, Willem Baudart.²⁸ The reference to Baudart immediately identifies the militant, anti-Spanish position of the tract that, like Baudart's *Morghen-Wecker*, exonerated the Dutch from the charges of rebellion in taking up arms against their prince. It argued instead that they did 'but iustly and religiously defend themselves against a perfidious Tyrant who sought their ruine, by all possible meanes he could, and the subuersion of the whole State.'²⁹ Offwood's relation of the tyranny the Netherlands endured under the duke of Alva, the notorious governor-general of the Netherlands during the revolt, most transparently illustrates the shared use of pro-Dutch propaganda by the English pamphleteers through a comparison with the account given in the 1623 tract *A Tongue-Combat, Lately Happening Betweene Two English Souldiers in the Tilt-boat of Grauesend*.

Tongue-Combat is also frequently attributed to Scott.³⁰ The inclusion of this pamphlet in a further 1624 collection of Scott's works, that otherwise appears to comprise works of the minister's sole authorship, lends credence to this attribution.³¹ Yet the dedication by the soldier, Henry Hexham, strongly suggests that he authored the tract and his earlier translation work for the cause of international Protestantism suitably aligns him with the sentiment of the pro-Dutch pamphlet.³² Ultimately, *Tongue-Combat* probably represents a

²⁸ Michael E. Moody, 'Offwood, Stephen (b. 1564, d. in or after 1635)', *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37819>, accessed 1 July 2008]; Sprunger, *English Puritan Printing*, pp. 109-111; Israel, *Dutch Republic*, p. 570.

²⁹ S[tephen] O[ffwood], *A Relation of Sundry Particular Wicked Plots and Cruel, Inhumaine, Perfidious; yea, Vnnaturall Practises of the Spanish* (1624), p. 2. Willem Baudart, *Morghen-wecker der Vrye Nederlantsche Provinten* (1610) [*Wake Up Call of the Free Dutch Provinces*]. Baudart's 'exceedingly popular and plainly populist' tract called for the Dutch to remain vigilant against the Spanish enemy through a description of the tyranny practised by Spain during the revolt. Benjamin Schmidt, *Innocence Abroad: The Dutch Imagination and the New World, 1570-1670* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 230-232.

³⁰ Adams, 'The Protestant Cause', p. 456.

³¹ Thomas Scott, *Vox Populi. Vox Dei. Vox Regis. Digitus Dei. The Belgick Pismire. The Tongue-Combat. Symmachia or The True-Loues Knot. The High-Wayes of God and the King. The Projector* [Holland, 1624]. This work contains the nine pamphlets listed in the title, all of which appeared independently as well.

³² Hexham's dedication is in the first person and makes several references to having personally composed the following tract, for example he states that the insults in Verstegan's tract 'prouoked me to say what I could, and what I knew, in defence of all.' [Henry Hexham and Thomas Scott],

collaborative effort by Hexham and Scott, who could have become acquainted when the minister joined a detachment of Horace Vere's regiment after he left England, with whom Hexham served.³³ Whilst Hexham's military affiliation seems to have been invoked for its authority in the soldierly dialogue that *Tongue-Combat* comprised, the influence of Scott's political ideology is also discernable.³⁴ Furthermore, this collaboration can be underwritten by the publication of another propaganda piece the following year. *An Experimentall Discoverie of Spanish Practises* has again been independently attributed to Hexham and Scott.³⁵ The tract's republication in 1624 with its earlier sub-title *A True Souldiers Counsel* then providing the main heading is suggestive of Hexham's involvement, whilst its inclusion in Scott's 1624 *Workes* additionally links the piece to him.³⁶

Tongue-Combat again aimed to validate the Netherlands' war with Spain in direct response to the deprecatory Catholic tract of the same name.³⁷ It reported in detail the 'bestly and sauage domination' of the duke of Alva as an assertion of legitimacy in disclaiming his authority.³⁸ The close correspondence of this description with Offwood's *A Relation* suggests that both authors were working with an established justification narrative and strongly indicates they were utilising the same sources. Not only are the same charges brought against the duke, but the same examples are employed by both tracts to augment the indicting picture of Alva. Thus we hear of the false testifier, Martin Hutton, named in both pamphlets, and the woeful case of the father executed for lodging

A Tongue-Combat, Lately Happening Betweene Two English Souldiers in the Tilt-boat of Grauesend (London, 1623), sigs. A2r-v. For the translations see A. F. Pollard, 'Hexham, Henry (fl. 1601-1650)', rev. M. R. Glozier, *ODNB*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn 2006, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13160>, accessed 8 Apr. 2008]. Glozier presumes *Tongue-Combat* to be the work of Hexham, in which he finds confirmation of Hexham's religious motivation.

³³ Adams suggests that Scott was probably friends with both Hexham and *Tongue-Combat's* dedicatee, George Holles. Adams, 'The Protestant Cause', pp. 451, 456.

³⁴ The link made between frugality and liberty on the one hand and vanity and slavery on the other is one example of the influence of Scott's thought. Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, p. 64. Cf. with Thomas Scott, *The Belgicke Pismire* ([Holland], 1622), pp. 39-43, 81-82. See also Peltonen, *Classical Humanism*, pp. 236-239.

³⁵ For attributions to Scott see Adams, 'The Protestant Cause', p. 456. William Maltby questions Scott's authorship as he determined the 'quality of writing and scholarship... far below anything else he attempted'. William S. Maltby, *The Black Legend in England: The Development of Anti-Spanish Sentiment, 1558-1660* (Durham, N. C., 1971), pp. 107-108.

³⁶ Thomas Scott, *The Workes of the Most Famous and Reverend Divine Mr. Thomas Scot Batcheler in Diuinitie. Sometimes Preacher in Norwich* (Utrecht, 1624).

³⁷ The relationship between these pamphlets is explored in more detail below, p. 240.

³⁸ Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, p. 28.

his heretic son in Maastricht.³⁹ Both works also include verbatim reproductions of the widely circulated, but spurious, articles of the Inquisition. The articles were supposedly uncovered in a councillor's chamber in Antwerp and detailed the tyrannous plans of the Inquisition to suppress the native Netherlanders.⁴⁰

Additionally, there is some evidence that implies Offwood was familiar with the earlier pamphlet and used it when composing *A Relation*, as his expression at times mirrors that of *Tongue-Combat* when relating particular cruelties. One description in *Tongue-Combat* states of Alva's practice: 'the parties that were married in the reformed Assemblies, were held as Heretickes vnlesse they married againe, (which many did) intending therby to bestow the rich women vpon his souldiers for a prise.' A comparison with Offwood reveals: 'those that were married in the Reformed Church, he forced to be married again: and if they were rich, hee tooke them from their husbands, and gaue them to his Souldiers to make prize of them.'⁴¹ The more damning tone in Offwood's extract reflects the style of *A Relation* throughout that vehemently endeavoured to contribute to the Black Legend of Spanish cruelty.⁴² Yet the duplicate reproduction of the tale's cause, consequence and conclusion support the premise that *Tongue-Combat* provided a source of evidence for *A Relation*. Furthermore, the republication of Offwood's tract as *A Second Part of Spanish Practices* continues to underwrite the notion of a collaborative effort, as it was bound together with *An Experimentall Discoverie of Spanish Practises*, thereby revealing the intention for Offwood's independent publication to act as a sequel to the earlier 1623 tract. Therefore, the language and content similarities combine with the publication history of *A Relation* to suggest that the arguments used in polemical texts, such as *Tongue-Combat*, were being constantly re-deployed.

³⁹ Further examples of Alva's general cruelties include the exhuming and hanging of those already buried for not receiving the sacrament so that he could obtain their goods. Cf. Offwood, *A Relation*, pp. 8-9; Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, pp. 33-38.

⁴⁰ Offwood's tract includes all twelve articles where *Tongue-Combat* omits the final one. Offwood, *A Relation*, pp. 3-4; Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, pp. 26-27. For a discussion of this document's circulation and influence see K. W. Swart, 'The Black Legend during the Eighty Years War' in J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossmann (eds.), *Britain and the Netherlands, vol. 5: Some Political Mythologies; Papers Delivered to the Fifth Anglo-Dutch Historical Conference* (The Hague, 1975). pp. 36-57, pp. 41-2.

⁴¹ Offwood, *A Relation*, p. 8; Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, p. 37.

⁴² This legend and its invocation by Dutch and English pamphleteers is explored below, pp. 249-251.

The ideas and prejudices that these pamphlets sought to exploit suggest that they were following the lead of Dutch pamphleteering, from which they derived many of their arguments, in attempting to persuade a broadly-based readership of the justness of their position.⁴³ Continually aware of the charges of ‘popularity’ that could easily be levelled at such publications, these pro-Dutch pamphleteers tended to address their tracts to ‘true-hearted’ or ‘wel-affected’ readers, and often excused their intrusion into print with an appeal to the urgency of the situation that was generated by the failure of the traditional modes of counsel.⁴⁴ Not everyone was so easily persuaded that such public interferences were warranted, however. John Rous roundly condemned the ‘factious passion’ and meddlesome intent of *The Interpreter* (1622), although not necessarily its sentiments, before remarking: ‘we must be patient, & beware least going beyond a lawfull calling we make it worse, with wrecke of conscience vnto Condemnatis’.⁴⁵

Lake has revealed the extent to which Scott’s tracts worked from an assumed consensus within the Jacobean Church that he could then build upon to encourage this opinion towards his own more radical understanding of an active foreign policy.⁴⁶ This reading of Scott has been expanded to incorporate the contemporary critique that Christian humanist thought levelled at courtly vice and corruption.⁴⁷ But it is also clear that all of these pamphlets, and not just Scott alone, were employing a range of topical prejudices in order to admonish and sway opinion to the justice of their cause as a riposte to the opposing side. It is evident that the Protestant authored pamphlets addressed their arguments to a body of the public informed by a symbiotic vogue for classical political philosophy and an apocalyptic understanding of their own age. Meanwhile, the Catholic polemicist, Richard Verstegan, was able to follow this appeal to

⁴³ For this intention in Dutch pamphleteering see Craig E. Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture in the Early Dutch Republic* (Dordrecht, 1987), pp. 160-165.

⁴⁴ See, for example, Scott, *Belgicke Pismire*, sig. A2; Offwood, *A Relation*, sig. A2. On the developing idea of popularity as a menacing force in politics and its deployment in early Stuart England see Cust, ‘Public Man’; Lake and Pincus have outlined the characteristic justification for appealing to a wider ‘public’ in the period before the Civil War when such practice was still largely regarded as illicit. Peter Lake and Steve Pincus, ‘Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England’, pp. 1-30, pp. 1-8, and Peter Lake, ‘The Politics of ‘Popularity’ and the Public Sphere: the ‘Monarchical Republic’ of Elizabeth I defends Itself’, pp. 59-94, in L&P, *PS*.

⁴⁵ BL, Additional MS 28640, Diary of Rev. John Rous, fo. 123.

⁴⁶ Lake, ‘Constitutional Consensus’, 808, 823-825.

⁴⁷ Peltonen, *Classical Republicanism*, pp. 231-270.

humanist sensibility through his exploitation of the irrationality and radicalism associated with the characterisation of the puritan stereotype. Their joint use of Dutch history and their invocation of international reputations to achieve their aims offer us a way of understanding how the political thought and practice of the Netherlands were used polemically to garner English opinion in this discourse exchange, and so reveal how ideas of republicanism were presented to the English public in a politically unstable period.

II

In the only full English-language biographical account of Richard Verstegan's astoundingly lengthy career, Paul Arblaster makes only fleeting reference to the pamphlet exchange. Identifying Scott as a maligned figure in one of Verstegan's English tracts, Arblaster concludes that between 1620 and 1624 Thomas Scott 'agitated for war with Spain, as Verstegan agitated for peace.'⁴⁸ Arblaster is here referring to Verstegan's denunciation of Scott, and his pamphlet *Vox Populi*, in the 1621 tract *Londons Looking-glasse*, which initially highlights the conscious dialogue that was conducted between Verstegan and the Protestant pamphleteers until 1624. Born in London around 1550 to parents of Dutch origin, Richard Verstegan fled England as the Elizabethan persecution of Catholics began to intensify. He eventually settled in Antwerp where he enjoyed a varied career mostly within the world of print.⁴⁹ From 1620 he has been identified as the author of several editions of Abraham Verhoeven's newspaper, *Nieuwe Tijdinghen*. His contributions to this publication reveal his interest in both the Spanish marriage and the continental troubles that were manifesting themselves in the period, and underpin the hostility towards both Calvinists and the Dutch Republic that he expressed in his English publications.⁵⁰

Throughout all of Verstegan's pamphlets considered here, we can see him using the humanist concept of reason to portray those who advocated renewed war with Spain as ignorant and ruled by passion. This is perhaps most clearly seen in the 1623 dialogue *A Toung-Combat* where Verstegan immediately set up the tradition of popular anti-Spanish sentiment as against reason:

⁴⁸ Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World*, pp. 140-141.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. ix, 20-21.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 116-117; see also pp. 138-145 for Arblaster's relation of Verstegan's work for the *Nieuwe Tijdinghen*.

It seemeth strange vnto mee that men of sence and vnderstanding, should not rather regard the iustnes of the cause & quarrel which they are to def[en]d... then to let themselues bee blyndfolded & led forward by sinister suggestion, to follow the vn vnderstanding vulgar multitude for companie or custome sake⁵¹

The negative image of the ‘vulgar multitude’ drawn here suggests that Verstegan was writing to persuade a literate and marginally educated opinion, who would identify themselves as men of sense and understanding and dislike being linked to the passions of the ignorant. This alignment of reason with Verstegan’s Catholic-Spanish view, and passion with the popular pro-Dutch opinion, is reiterated clearly in his 1622 *Newes from the Low-Countreyes*. Again in the form of a dialogue, Verstegan’s mouthpiece expresses content ‘when I fynd my selfe to haue to doe with such as will affoord place vnto truth and reason, before passion and partiality’. This follows an admission of shame at Calvinist lies by the opposing spokesman and represents the fulfilment of the aim that Verstegan intended for the tract, as the Hollander is consequently persuaded by the reason inherent in the Brabander’s argument.⁵²

As the reference to *Vox Populi* in *Londons Looking-glasse* shows, Verstegan was clearly abreast of the Protestant tracts pouring into England from the United Provinces, galvanising the country to wake up and fight for the Reformed religion against the tyranny of Spain. In answer to these tracts and the development of international politics, Verstegan mounted a campaign to prove the legitimacy of Spanish rule in the Netherlands, uncover the war as rebellious, the Dutch as ungrateful and cruel, and link it all with the seditious Calvinist religion. That Verstegan’s tracts were reaching England, were sufficiently circulated, and stirred up a response (if not quite the one he intended) is revealed by Edward Coke’s reference to the 1621 tract *Observations Concerning the Present Affaires of Holland and the Vnited Prouinces* when ‘reviewing Spanish

⁵¹ [Richar]d [Verstega]n, *A Young-Combat, Lately Happening, Between two English Soldiers; in the Tilt-boat of Grauesend* (1623), p. 8.

⁵² Richard Verstegan, *Newes from the Low-Countreyes. Or The Anatomy of Caluinisticall Calumnies* ([St-Omer], 1622), p. 75. This intention is laid bare in Verstegan’s dedicatory letter to his friend, ‘a man curious, and desirous to penetrate into the truth of things, and not contented to be carried away with vulgar noyses wherewith Idiots are soone satisfied’, p. 4.

crimes' in the parliament of that year, and is reaffirmed by John Gee's inclusion of the pamphlet and the subsequent *Newes from the Low-Countryes* in his 1624 catalogue of popish books.⁵³ By associating the pro-Dutch policy with the stereotype of the radical puritan, Verstegan could present his argument as the true path of the loyal subject in the tussle over allegiance that the match politics had created. He pursued this aim through his interpretation of the Dutch Revolt and by his exploitation of the Anglo-Dutch trade antagonisms that were causing problems for uniting the two countries against Spain.

Verstegan's Catholicism frequently formed the backbone of his arguments in these pamphlets; indeed, a substantial amount of time was given to articulating the truth of the Catholic religion against the new doctrines of the Reformed. He deployed many familiar Catholic criticisms of Protestantism in attacking its novelty, internal schism, reliance on scripture and individual interpretation. But perhaps most suitably for his aim of speaking to a conformist English public, alienated by the twin props of radicalism, Jesuits and puritans, Verstegan drew upon the latter's reputation for conflict with the church and state and linked it to the Calvinist Contra-Remonstrants of the United Provinces. In doing so he could remove the fundamentally uniting concept of the Reformed religion and paint the advocates of the Protestant cause as supporters of rebellion, democracy and a Presbyterian form of church government, which would sit uneasily with a less austere, more Episcopalian body of opinion.

Verstegan's close watch on English domestic events is revealed in a piece written for the southern Netherlands' newspaper, *Nieuwe Tijdinghen*, in February 1621 where he explicitly drew a connection between those whom he termed the English puritans and the monarchomach tendencies of Calvinism. In an article that referenced the diverging gap between royal policy and Calvinist ambitions, he invoked the contemporary example of the United Provinces directly, accusing 'the Calvinists of wanting to overthrow all princely government "and make new Republics, on the basis of Holland and of the other United Provinces of the Netherlands.'"⁵⁴ Whilst this Dutch report most likely functioned as propaganda

⁵³ Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World*, p. 138; John Gee, *The Foot out of the Snare* (London, 1624), sigs. Q4v, R2.

⁵⁴ Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World*, p. 141.

for the pro-Spanish inhabitants of the Low Countries, Verstegan's English tracts built upon this link extensively.

In seeking to prove the poor foundations for English military assistance to the Netherlands, Verstegan used the differing church polities of the two nations to establish a correlation between English puritans and Dutch Calvinists on the one hand, and English Protestants and Dutch Arminians on the other. Many Jacobean divines had been happy to accept the autonomy of national polity within an agreed uniformity of doctrine with the international Reformed Church. Yet the crises of the 1620s had more sharply delineated those who advocated partaking in the defence of the Reformed Church from those who were becoming increasingly distanced from its cause.⁵⁵

In questioning why English Protestants would choose to defend the Dutch Calvinists, Verstegan aligned the Protestant cause with the unruly and seditious activities that were being suppressed in England. Citing the recent restraints of preaching and arrests in England that aimed to demonstrate the puritans were not defended at home, he irrationalised English defence of the Dutch, who 'are more seditious and vnrulie tounge followes [sic] then our English *Gomarists*, I meane our *Puritanes*'.⁵⁶ Appealing to those conformists who, following the king himself, favoured an Erastian model of church government, Verstegan highlighted the Presbyterian aspects of the Dutch Church as a more developed form of puritanism that stood in opposition to English Protestantism. Worse than the puritans' 'making of Pettie Popes, and Pettie Antichristes of our Bishops', the Calvinists in Holland went further by making any church head an idol.⁵⁷ Verstegan frequently invoked the church structure in the Netherlands to uncover the treacherous nature of Calvinism that contrasted fundamentally with the English Church in denying the prince temporal authority: 'He that denyeth this in *England* is by the law to dy as a traytour: he that affirmeth it in *Holland* is by their doctrine to be held for an Idolater.'⁵⁸ Furthermore, he reversed the dominant fear of a widespread Catholic conversion by outlining the threat of further reformation in England on Dutch terms. Not only would the puritans welcome

⁵⁵ Adams, 'The Protestant Cause', pp. 20-24.

⁵⁶ Verstegan, *Toung-Combat*, pp. 39-40.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁵⁸ Richard Verstegan, *Observations concerning the Present Affaires of Holland and the Vnited Prouinces* ([St-Omer], 1621), pp. 127-128.

such an event, but would be likely to start persecuting the Protestants 'as the others now do the *Arminians* in *Holland*.'⁵⁹

Verstegan's depiction of Calvinism throughout his defences of the Spanish side in the war worked to encourage further distinction between his intended moderate readers and his pro-Dutch adversaries. He drew upon the political language of obedience to castigate the Dutch as base rebels and such as himself as faithful subjects, tactically neglecting the exposition of elective monarchy that was advocated in the collaborative 1595 tract *A Conference about the Next Succession to the Crowne of England*.⁶⁰ To Verstegan the Dutch Revolt was symptomatic of the Calvinists' rebellious nature.⁶¹ He repeatedly cited examples of their disloyal, regicidal tendencies and devoted an entire pamphlet to proving their hypocrisy in aligning Jesuits with such a view.

With his tract *Newes from the Low-Countreyes* Verstegan was responding to a proclamation issued by the States General of the United Provinces no later than February 1622. The proclamation commanded the departure of Jesuits from the Netherlands, along with further penalties for Catholics, in a move that was intended to inhibit the workings of the Dutch mission.⁶² Verstegan took particular issue with the accusation that the Jesuits sought to convert the multitude, move them to assassinate princes and 'instruct them in all manner of Treachery and Treason, thereby to induce and bring the Tirannie and absolute gouernment of the King of Spaine... againe into these Countries.'⁶³ Not only did Verstegan find the king-killing epithet to fit more aptly to the Calvinists, who he identified as responsible for five out of the eight most recently assassinated potentates, he also dryly condemned their recent duplicitous about turn:

⁵⁹ Verstegan, *Observations* (1621), pp. 129-130; see also a more developed discussion of this threat in the extended version, Richard Verstegan, *Observations concerning the Present Affaires of Holland and the Vnited Prouinces...The Second Edition. Augmented with Diuers New Chapters...* ([St-Omer], 1622), pp. 102-105 (mis-pag. as 82-85).

⁶⁰ For a brief outline of Verstegan's contribution to this tract see Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World*, pp. 61-63. For a lengthier discussion of the tract's political theory see Peter Lake, 'The King (the Queen) and the Jesuit: James Stuart's *True Law of Free Monarchies* in Context/s', *TRHS*, 14 (2004), 243-260.

⁶¹ For the Catholic tradition of imputing seditious political theory to Protestants see above, ch. 1, pp. 46-47.

⁶² Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World*, p. 142.

⁶³ *A Proclamation Made and Proclaimed in Holland, &c. By the Lords the Generall States of the Vnited Netherland Prouinces, Prohibiting all Iesuites, Priest, Monkes, Friers, and other Spirituall persons of the Romish Religion, to Come into the Vnited Netherland Prouinces, or to Stay Therein* ([London], 1622), p. 2.

These Caluinian Calumniatours will seeme by calling Iesuites & Priests the murtherers of Princes and Potentates, as if they (poore innocent soules) were becom great Care-takers for Princes & Potentates safeties. This surely is a very suddainly-grown-vp affection: they were not wont to be so, for me thinks it is not so long ago that Princes can haue forgotten, that at such tyme as their subiects rebelled against them, the good Holland-Gewses were alwayes readier to assist their rebelles agaynst them, then them against their rebelles.⁶⁴

This ending reference to the Dutch assistance for Protestants internationally, notably the Huguenots in France and most recently the Bohemian Protestants, divorced the religious cause from the secular obedience demanded by all states. Verstegan could therefore conclude 'that the very ground-worke of Caluinian religion is layed & settled vpon rebellion, as to all the world it is manifest.'⁶⁵

This understanding dominated Verstegan's portrayal of the Dutch Revolt in answer to the many Dutch defences. Thus the reason why William, Prince of Orange, had resolved upon Calvinism as his chosen religion, Verstegan argued, was 'in regard of their stirring spirits.'⁶⁶ In reply to the charge of tyranny that the northern provinces levelled at Spain, Verstegan continuously asserted Philip II's accepted legitimacy as rightful sovereign and presented him in the role of dutiful monarch through upholding his oath to maintain religion.⁶⁷ The Hollanders meanwhile were described as innovators, 'rebellious Sectaryes, and Sacrilegious Church-robbers' in terms that repeatedly emphasised the link between their disobedient actions and the sedition inherent in Calvinism.⁶⁸

Such attempts to persuade his readers of the seditious nature of Calvinist-puritan belief allow us an opportunity to evaluate his perceptions of political authority. The polemical motivation behind the tracts can be seen as dictating Verstegan's expression of political thought, thus guiding him away from the central tenets with which he is usually associated. Earlier tracts that Verstegan was associated with reveal his adherence to contract theory in the origins of

⁶⁴ Verstegan, *Newes from the Low Countreyes*, pp. 31-34. 'Gewse', implying beggar, was the derogatory name given to the Dutch rebels that exploited their low status.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

⁶⁶ Verstegan, *Observations* (1621), p. 79.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-33.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 33; Verstegan, *Toung-Combat*, p. 20.

monarchical authority. Sovereignty was placed in the hands of the monarch upon the grounds that the contractual terms be upheld; resistance could be exercised by those in authority if such terms were broken. This was the clearly articulated basis of the well-known tract *A Conference* and was consistent in his writings at least until 1605.⁶⁹ Even his advocacy of absolute monarchy whilst writing in the Spanish Low Countries has been viewed as restrained and ‘too close to his earlier parliamentarianism to be approved by a French or English absolutist.’ In this vein we can justify his defence of Philip II against the Netherlanders as resting on the premise that the king had not broken the contract.⁷⁰ It is indeed clear from the later tracts examined here that the main undercurrents of Verstegan’s political thought remained unchanged. However, his discussion of princely authority reveals a conscious effort by Verstegan to manipulate the representation of his thought, which reflects his intention to capitalise on the reversal of allegiance that the politics of the match had created in England.⁷¹

To enlist support from his intended English audience it was necessary for Verstegan to neutralise the radical political associations attached to Catholicism. By drawing on the realignment of political obedience, Verstegan could present himself superficially as an advocate of monarchy along Jamesian lines whilst painting the pro-Dutch faction as upholders of popular, republican government. In this way Verstegan’s discussion of whether a country is better governed by popularly selected persons or by an ‘absolute prince’ in practice allowed him to defend only an undefined form of monarchy against rule by the many-headed monster.⁷² On the surface Verstegan’s commitment to divinely sanctioned monarchical authority seems implicit in this comparison as he considered ‘what God himselfe in his disposition of naturall thinges doth, concerning gouernment, make to appeare’ after noting the evident celestial preference for rule by one. Aligning himself with publicly projected Jacobean consensus, Verstegan concluded: ‘These naturall demonstrations do teach vs, that Principality or Kingly gouernment is best.’⁷³ Verstegan’s concession that an absolute king rules with laws and a wise council for assistance was an allowance that any of James’s

⁶⁹ Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World*, pp. 236-237.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 237-238.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 236-239.

⁷² Verstegan, *Observations* (1622), pp. 141-148.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 141, 143.

most ardent supporters would have been willing to admit and it thus seems to function as a pacifier to concerned humanist discourse on the natural condition of man.⁷⁴

Yet by not discussing any direct divine origin of this princely power and failing to divulge anything further upon its nature or the location of sovereignty, the simple polemical dichotomy between traditional concepts of power and the innovative, destabilising and threatening alternative of popular rule is revealed. Through this exaggerated emphasis on the political differences of the two states, Verstegan again sought to alienate supporters of the Dutch cause from their co-religionists. Using civic humanist philosophy to expound the pitfalls of the Dutch political system, Verstegan responded to the opposing literature and its claim to represent the path of virtue. He played on the English perception of the Netherlands as uncivilised, mercantile and generally of lower birth in criticising the corrupting force of envy and self-interest that would plague any government composed of those uneducated in manners and civility and dependent on their trade for income.⁷⁵ Furthermore, there could be no advancement to honour through virtuous actions in such a state 'for they want the knowledge and the authority to do it, if they had the will.'⁷⁶

Verstegan's repeated suggestion that the Dutch government was illegitimate allowed him to fully endorse political obedience, again in a manner that continued to draw upon the sensibilities of his conservative readers. On this subject Verstegan was most successfully able to exploit the polemical advantage offered by the Protestant opposition to royal policy in their support of the Dutch and Bohemian revolts. In *Newes from the Low Countreyes* Verstegan countered the basis of legitimacy upon which the States General claimed authority, employing familiar scriptural evidence for temporal obedience:

God hath comaunded that subiects must be obedient vnto their Kings and Princes. Shew me where God hath graunted a priuilege vnto the States of

⁷⁴ In Arblaster's analysis such concessions firmly remove Verstegan from subscribing to an absolute form of monarchy: Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World*, p. 237.

⁷⁵ For an insight into the development of this Dutch stereotype in English thought see Michael Duffy, *The Englishman and the Foreigner* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 28-30 and Marvin A. Breslow, *A Mirror of England: English Puritan Views of Foreign Nations, 1618-40* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), pp. 74-99.

⁷⁶ Verstegan, *Observations* (1622), pp. 145-147.

Holland, to relinquish and reiect all obedience vnto their lawfull and soueraigne Lord the King of Spayne; and to band agaynst him in publike rebellion, and to assume vnto themselues the Princely authority belonging vnto him.⁷⁷

This passage would initially seem to align Verstegan with advocates of absolute authority in England, which was likely to be the correlation that he aimed to achieve. Yet Verstegan's perception of the location of sovereignty in the Netherlands moderates this first reading. As outlined above, Verstegan held Philip to be the lawful prince in the Netherlands who had not negated his own authority by behaving tyrannically. He demonstrated this understanding elsewhere in his efforts to establish that the Dutch had fully acknowledged Philip as their king, 'as they had acknowledged his ancestors before him from whome hee successyuely inherited those countries'.⁷⁸ Such a view correlates with the conclusions on elective and hereditary monarchy in *A Conference*, that succession was reliant on a combination of both.⁷⁹ Yet, recognising the king of Spain as the 'soueraigne Lord' in the above passage did not mean that Verstegan perceived Philip to hold sovereignty of himself. Castigating the rebels for poor patriotism, Verstegan condemned their efforts to 'transport & giue away the absolute Soueraignty of their country to other Princes', whilst inadvertently acknowledging the same to be held by them.⁸⁰ Thus, in criticising the Dutch, Verstegan uncovered his identification of sovereignty as being held originally by the people, although it could not be bandied about at will and certainly not by the vulgar multitude. Even if resistance could be permitted at some level, it was most definitely not within the prerogative of the common people.⁸¹

In support of this view of the revolt as unlawful, Verstegan drew upon the universal image of the base rebel. Countering the providential arguments of the

⁷⁷ Verstegan, *Newes from the Low-Countryes*, p. 11.

⁷⁸ Verstegan, *Toung-Combat*, p. 11.

⁷⁹ Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World*, pp. 238-239.

⁸⁰ Verstegan, *Observations* (1622), p. 116.

⁸¹ See Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World*, p. 236. Arblaster's assumption that Verstegan allowed resistance by magistrates and authority figures is not satisfactorily substantiated by the reference he gives to *Londons Looking-glasse*. This view cannot simply be assumed from Verstegan's exposition of contract theory as the vague and various arguments for precisely who was permitted to resist authority are by no means homogeneous. Verstegan's English tracts of the 1620s, for the political reasons outlined above, made no positive reference to resistance.

Dutch in support of their case, Verstegan related ‘how ill they haue sped, who haue beene the chiefest Actors in so ill a busines as is rebellion... against their most iust and lawfull Soueraigne’, concluding that ‘the most high and supreme Ruler of all, hath, by permitting these their disgracefull endes, shewed his dislike of their actions’.⁸² Their disrespect for kings everywhere was made manifest through their treatment of dead princes and seditious epithets against James himself ‘which without any respect of Majesty, are euery where common in these rebellious *Hollanders* mouthes’.⁸³ In this way Verstegan was able to paint the ‘pretended republike of *Holland*’ as founded on an unsanctified abandonment of true obedience using the language of monarchical authority that was familiar to English readers, and so represent himself as loyal.⁸⁴

Finally, this portrayal of the Dutch rebels as inherently anti-monarchical transformed their assertions of resistance to Philip’s tyranny into a campaign for worldwide democracy. The success of the Dutch Revolt was certainly a cause for concern to monarchs throughout Europe as it set a rather dangerous precedent for imitation. In 1607 James found that the threat posed by the rebels’ success precluded his expression of well-wishes towards them, whilst in 1617 one motivation for pursuing an Anglo-Spanish union was to halt ‘a creeping disposition to make popular states and alliances to the disadvantage of monarchy’.⁸⁵ The correlation of the Dutch popular government with their vocal Protestantism offered Catholic polemicists an easy opportunity to exploit the seditious implications of the Reformed religion. With reference to the English puritans, the Jesuit John Floyd remarked in 1620:

These couert enemies of Kings want not their Confederates in France whose mindes and desires *Turquet* a famous French Protestant expresseth in his booke written in commendatio[n] of Democracy aboue Monarchy; nor in Holland to which this French Democratist *Turquet* dedicated his

⁸² Verstegan, *Observations* (1621), pp. 92-93.

⁸³ Verstegan, *Newes from the Low-Countryes*, pp. 35-37; Verstegan, *Observations* (1621), p. 94.

⁸⁴ Verstegan, *Observations* (1622), p. 147.

⁸⁵ Hugh Dunthorne, ‘Resisting Monarchy: the Netherlands as Britain’s School of Revolution in the Late Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries’, in R. Oresko, G. C. Gibbs and H. M. Scott (eds.), *Royal and Republican Sovereignty in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 125-148, p. 126; quotation in Simon Adams, ‘Foreign Policy and the Parliaments of 1621 and 1624’, in K. Sharpe (ed.), *Faction and Parliament: Essays on Early Stuart History* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 139-172, p. 141.

aforesayd booke, as to men allready made blessed by this kind of gouernment, and fittest instruments to bring the same into the rest of reformed Countries.⁸⁶

Allowing him to then suggest: ‘Of these enemies of Monarchy so combined togeather, we haue more need to take heed then of the Pope, who is further off, his cause not popular...’⁸⁷ Following in this vein, and just as he had reversed so many Protestant accusations, with this manipulation Verstegan turned around the well-worn image of the Spanish aspirations to universal monarchy and united Calvinists internationally in a conspiracy to universal republicanism. Specifically employing the term ‘republic’ to denote a kingless, popular government, Verstegan directly linked English radical Protestant support for the Dutch Calvinists with a preference for their political system: ‘seeing *Gewses of Holland, Huguenots of France, and Puritanes of England*, are three names of one signification, example, and combination togeather might easily haue brought them to the making of Republiques of Kingdomes.’⁸⁸

In 1621 Verstegan’s suspicions regarding the Netherlanders’ revolutionary intent to instigate worldwide democracy extended just so far as attaining ‘to their wished great Republike, of the whole seaunteene Netherland Prouinces.’ On the eve of the truce’s end this served as a warning that they aimed at more than just recognition for the northern provinces as a free state, but desired to assimilate the obedient Spanish Low Countries into their rebellious fold.⁸⁹ By 1622, in reaction to Dutch propaganda and, I argue, the publications of the English Protestant community in the United Provinces, Verstegan had

⁸⁶ John Floyd, *God and the King*, ed. D. M. Rogers, English Recusant Literature, vol. 9 (Menston, 1969), p. 23. See ch. 1, pp. 46-47. Floyd here referred to the Huguenot Louis Turquet de Mayerne’s *La Monarchie Aristodemocratique*, which was dedicated to the States General and had made quite a splash at the French court following its publication in 1611. Turquet, father of the royal physician Theodore de Mayerne, had not quite advocated democracy in his tract, rather suggesting a reform of the French absolutist monarchy along the lines of an Aristotelian mixed government with a central role for the landed and commercial elite. The book was, however, subsequently paralleled with the *Vindiciae*, thereby allowing such as Floyd to exploit its subversive reputation. Hugh R. Trevor-Roper, *Europe’s Physician: the Various Life of Sir Theodore de Mayerne* (New Haven, 2006), pp. 155-156; Henry Heller, *Labour, Science and Technology in France, 1500-1620* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 165.

⁸⁷ Floyd, *God and the King*, p. 24.

⁸⁸ Verstegan, *Observations* (1622), p. 69.

⁸⁹ Verstegan, *Observations* (1621), p. 98.

significantly expanded his opinion on this matter.⁹⁰ The enlarged *Observations* charged the Dutch with instigating rebellion in other countries: both helping their co-religionists in Rochelle, 'there to further the beginning of a stately imitated Holland-republike', and threatening to liberate the common people from the servitude of the Danish king, 'Whereby we may see, they can take a delight to make more rebels besides themselves.'⁹¹ Consequently, Verstegan could argue that the English and French assistance to the rebels had only served to endanger those countries themselves in this respect; only '*Spayne*, against their willes hath preuented it'.⁹² In his efforts to counter the masses of Protestant propaganda flowing into England in aid of the Dutch and, more widely, Protestant cause, Verstegan exploited the political threat that many, including the king, believed the vocal 'puritan' opposition posed.⁹³ In doing so, he appealed to the conservative language of monarchical authority in stark opposition to his alarming account of the rebellious and 'Tymocraticall' Netherlands.⁹⁴

III

In the same way as Verstegan, the Protestant pamphleteers traded on contemporary religious and political anxiety to advance their cause, but they had a much more widely accepted stock of prejudices to exploit. As we have seen, Verstegan himself recognised this dominant popular sentiment, which he denounced as vulgar and ignorant in his effort to address his tracts to a more discerning reader.⁹⁵ The pro-Dutch tracts could appeal to the well-established militant Protestantism that had been combined in England, since the accession and continued peaceful policies of James I, with the idealisation of martial glory embodied in a retrospective reconstruction of Elizabeth's reign. Invoking the quasi-cult of the Elizabethan military heroes, such as Essex and Raleigh, polemicists provided a high standard of comparison for critique of the Jacobean

⁹⁰ Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World*, p. 139.

⁹¹ Verstegan, *Observations* (1622), pp. 77-81 (mis-pag. as 57-61).

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁹³ For James's perception of this threat see Richard Cust, 'Prince Charles and the Second Session of the 1621 Parliament', *EHR*, 122 (2007), 427-441, 433-434.

⁹⁴ Verstegan, *Observations* (1622), p. 148.

⁹⁵ Verstegan takes particular issue with the constant invocation of the 1588 Armada, 'the memorie whereof by the incessant clamours of Puritanical enemyes of peace, hath possessed more place in the heades of the inconsiderate vulgar multitude, then the manie great wrongs that enforced it.' Verstegan, *Toung-Combat*, pp. 26-27.

court and government. This mode of critique also drew upon the mores of classical philosophy, advocating the virtuous *vita activa* in a society committed to working for the public good.⁹⁶

But beyond such well-examined areas, these pamphlets present a discussion of political authority, often in response to Verstegan's tracts, that continues to reveal how, in negotiating the match politics, explorations into political authority were being articulated. Peltonen has most fully considered the relationship between Dutch politics and Scott's pamphlets. In his analysis, Scott propounded the republican emphasis upon virtue and a self-preserving constitution to maintain liberty and pursue the common good. Accordingly, the embodiment of this ideal could be found in the mixed constitution of the United Provinces, whereby the elected governor and counsellors were joined by the people's active participation in government in their capacity as advisers. Peltonen briefly elucidates Scott's application of this to his vision for a reformed English constitution. The Dutch government provided the ultimate example to a commonwealth that was founded on similar institutions and simply needed a renewal.⁹⁷

Thus, in Peltonen's understanding, Scott's commendation of republicanism extended to the promotion of a mixed form of government, elected by the people, and committed to acting in the public interest. As far as England was concerned, recent events had revealed that such a system was no longer functioning in this fashion; and one suspects that Scott was glancing back fondly to an imagined Elizabethan ideal that had been corrupted by the Stuart accession. Such a conception of the English constitution was by no means innovative or radical, but was certainly at odds with James's own view of his kingly authority.⁹⁸ Yet 'republicanism' is a slippery term. Peltonen uses it interchangeably with 'commonwealth' in line with much seventeenth-century usage.⁹⁹ In this vein Scott's views can easily be aligned with other contemporary

⁹⁶ Peltonen, *Classical Humanism*. Cf. George Wither's attitude, ch. 3.

⁹⁷ Peltonen, *Classical Humanism*, pp. 264-269.

⁹⁸ For the tradition of conceiving of the English constitution in this way see Zera S. Fink, *The Classical Republicans: An Essay in the Recovery of a Pattern of Thought in Seventeenth-Century England* (Evanston, 1962). For James's political ideology see James VI & I, *Political Writings* ed. J. P. Sommerville (Cambridge, 1994).

⁹⁹ For a discussion of the interpretive problems associated with 'republicanism' in historical study see David Wootton, 'Review: *Republicanism: A Shared European History*, eds. M. van Gelderen

humanist critics of the court, such as George Wither and Philip Massinger, in their calls for virtue, the pursuit of common good, and desire to participate in government through counsel.¹⁰⁰ Yet it becomes evident that these pamphlets, engrossed in a polemical exchange involving the United Provinces, were beginning to engage with the new language of republicanism that associated the pursuit and presentation of liberty exclusively with a democratic form of government, thereby making possible a 'sustained assault on the legitimacy of monarchy.'¹⁰¹

As we have seen, in the early 1620s Verstegan was using 'republic' as a pejorative term in direct opposition to 'monarchy' or 'kingdom'.¹⁰² This immediately defined the possessors of such a state as monarchomachs and potential regicides, as Verstegan delighted in pointing out.¹⁰³ For Scott and the other pamphleteers to have been advocating this style of government in the 1620s would have been much more radical indeed. The reason why they do not appear to have been doing so currently, in contrast to Verstegan's unmistakable definition, can be partly attributed to the complex range of meanings attached to republicanism. This has allowed historians to see in the promotion of the United Provinces an underlying commitment to the political ideology of virtue and liberty, rather than a constitutional preference for a kingless state. But perhaps more significantly, the undefined constitution of the Dutch Republic allowed for a myriad of political interpretations, from popular republic to quasi-monarchy, that could be varyingly employed to suit polemical requirements. Although sovereignty rested with the states of the seven individual provinces in the northern Netherlands (and not the States General, whose decisions were

and Q. Skinner', *EHR*, 120 (2005), 135-139; Wootton, 'True Origins of Republicanism', pp. 271-304. See also Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government, 1572-1651* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 222.

¹⁰⁰ This idea forms the basis of Peltonen's argument; he uncovers Scott's participation within the classical humanist tradition in which such vocabulary, as above stated, was employed. Several of Scott's contemporaries are shown to have been writing in the same vein, including Wither and John Reynolds. Peltonen, *Classical Humanism*, pp. 247, 251.

¹⁰¹ Wootton, 'True Origins of Republicanism', pp. 292, 300.

¹⁰² Verstegan at times also used 'republic' in opposition to 'commonwealth', although his understanding of this latter term was more expansive and would seem to correlate with his use of the word 'state'. See Verstegan *Observations* (1622), p. 144; cf. with description of Holland as a 'pretended comonwealth', p. 148.

¹⁰³ For this contemporary understanding see David Wootton, 'Introduction: The Republican Tradition: From Commonwealth to Common Sense', in D. Wootton (ed.), *Republicanism, Liberty, and Commercial Society, 1649-1776* (Stanford, 1994), pp. 1-41, 2, 18.

approved by the provincial states),¹⁰⁴ the continuation of the office of stadholderate after the revolt, held successively by the House of Orange (although elected), made the depiction of the United Provinces as a kingless-republic much more difficult.¹⁰⁵

In light of these complexities, and to build on Peltonen's evaluation, the Protestant pamphlets produced in support of the Netherlands will be read alongside Verstegan's tracts. By examining how the history of the revolt and the political structure of the United Provinces was presented in the pamphlets, a more defined understanding of the nature of the republicanism being advocated can be achieved. Additionally, whilst Peltonen's unproblematic attribution of anonymous tracts to Scott allows him to develop a comprehensive analysis of this controversial minister's political thought, it consequently limits his insightful conclusions to the ideology of one individual. But by perceiving the contribution to the pamphlets examined here as a more collaborative effort, the subsequent analysis can be understood in terms of a wider sphere of influence.

As with Verstegan, it was likewise necessary for the Protestant pamphleteers to fight their corner in the battle over who gave true allegiance. This was conducted using the humanist vocabulary of counsel and liberty in conjunction with an appeal to Reformed religion. To exonerate the Dutch from their rebellious action against Spain, and to encourage English support for their cause, these pamphlets aligned the classical conceptions of tyranny and slavery with the ambitions of the Spanish monarchy, whilst conversely linking the ideal of the free and virtuous commonwealth with the Dutch Republic.¹⁰⁶ Although England was frequently depicted as a commonwealth in this vein, the evolving influence of a Machiavellian republicanism encouraged wider applications of the

¹⁰⁴ Herbert H. Rowen, 'The Dutch Republic and the Idea of Freedom', in *ibid.*, pp. 310-340, p. 312.

¹⁰⁵ Rowen, 'Dutch Republic', pp. 310-314; Herbert H. Rowen, *Political Ideas & Institutions in the Dutch Republic: Papers Presented at a Clark Library Seminar, 27 March 1982* (Los Angeles, 1985); Eco Haitzma Mulier, 'The Language of Seventeenth-Century Republicanism in the United Provinces: Dutch or European?', in A. Pagden (ed.), *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 179-196, pp. 180-181.

¹⁰⁶ Peltonen's exposition of Scott's republican thought identifies this alignment of liberty as safeguarded in a virtuous commonwealth, such as the Dutch Republic, and slavery resulting from the corruption often bred in the vice-ridden, self-interested flattery of the royal court. Yet this analysis is most concerned to locate Scott's thought within the framework of humanist philosophy. It thus focuses substantially upon the moral circumstances leading to liberty or slavery and only secondarily upon governmental institutions. This precludes an extended discussion of Scott's criticism of monarchy in general and of James's absolutist tendencies in particular. See Peltonen, *Classical Humanism*, pp. 231-270.

anti-Spanish invective that allowed these pamphlets to posit an antithesis between monarchies and the common good.¹⁰⁷ The tacit criticisms engendered by English royal policy further enabled this identification. Therefore, many Protestant assertions of loyalty were often underpinned by a didactic element that sought to convey the value of liberty and counsel. In his 1622 sermon-style pamphlet, *The Belgicke Pismire*, Scott confirmed his allegiance in such terms. Defining those as loyal who loved the king's children, Scott proclaimed: 'It is for *Heathens, Turkes, Papists*, to becomes Assassimates, Parricides, and bloody Traitors; and it is for Tyrants amongst these, to suspect their friends, brethren, and children, and therefore to cut them off at the motion of their Flatterers'.¹⁰⁸ Scott's latter definition was in part an assault on the king's behaviour that had allowed those advocating an active foreign policy against Spain to be identified as disloyal.

Such an identification certainly agitated supporters of the Dutch-Palatine cause, as is made clear in another 1622 pamphlet, *The Interpreter*. This pamphlet has been attributed to Scott on account of its ideologically akin content; however, the piece was not included in Scott's 1624 *Workes*, as many of the Protestant propaganda pieces were.¹⁰⁹ *The Interpreter* can therefore be assimilated into the publications of a broad body of English opinion in sympathy with the views of such as Scott, which has been uncovered in Thomas Cogswell's work.¹¹⁰ Once more, affection for the king's children, Frederick and Elizabeth, is presented as the mark of loyalty and linked directly to the figure of the puritan; no longer simply describing one opposed to church ceremony, this label now represented the honest subject and sole speaker of truth. Reaffirming the loyalty of this category, but again with a telling aside, the author concluded of the puritan: 'Hee'le not a Traytor be unto the King / nor to the Lawes (for that's an other thing / men dreame not off: who think they no way can / be Traytors unto many for one man)'. Positioning the common good against the policies of the king, the qualification of this passage returned back the accusations of disloyalty voiced

¹⁰⁷ For Machiavelli's republicanism see Wootton, 'True Origins of Republicanism', pp. 293-295.

¹⁰⁸ Scott, *Belgicke Pismire*, sig. A4.

¹⁰⁹ Adams, 'The Protestant Cause', p. 455. Adams judges the criticism of English society in *The Interpreter* to be too controversial for Scott. Whilst the verse does deliver a cruder representation of domestic politics at the time of the match, I do not consider the condemnation of the pro-Spanish courtiers to reach beyond anything that Scott wrote.

¹¹⁰ Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 6-53, esp. p. 24.

by the Spanish faction by widening the understanding of loyalty beyond mere obedience to James. This was underwritten by the subsequent portrayal of the 'Protestant' as a sycophantic, crypto-papist who holds 'him as a Rebell that dare say / No man against the laws, wee must obey.'¹¹¹

The political alignment of Spain with tyranny and the Netherlands with liberty penetrated the literature produced to encourage English support initially for the renewal of hostilities in 1621 and then for the consequent war that followed. This informed the discussion on the origins of the Low Countries, which drew on the Dutch appeal to their Batavian heritage. This appeal suffused the literature of the revolt that invoked the political freedom associated with the legendary Batavian ancestors of Holland to demonstrate the ancient authority of their provincial states.¹¹² It is clear that the discussion of these origins in the English pamphlets sought to prove that the Dutch had always been free and that their mixed government was chosen by the people.¹¹³ Yet if we also read their assertions in direct response to Verstegan's tracts a little more detail can be uncovered.

In *Belgicke Pismire* Scott took particular exception to Verstegan's negative depiction, in his 1621 *Observations*, of the association between the Netherlands' origin and the national character of the Dutch. Verstegan argued that if Holland had been intended for men 'the foure elements would not haue conspired together to be there all naught, & by being naught vnto men, to shew their dislike of vsurpers that depriue fishes of their due dwelling places.' Thus in Verstegan's view, the difficulty presented in retrieving land from the sea showed that their efforts were an encroachment upon natural authority.¹¹⁴ In countering this, Scott instead emphasised how the Netherlanders' fight against the sea revealed the Batavian 'generositie and nobility' of nature 'in struggling for their auncient and native freedom... (a vertue that hath beene hereditary...)'¹¹⁵ He then continued on to answer Verstegan directly and to challenge his account of nature's judgement:

¹¹¹ *The Interpreter* (1622), pp. 6-14.

¹¹² For the use of this myth in the literature of the revolt see Gelderen, *Political Thought*, pp. 206-207.

¹¹³ Peltonen, *Classical Humanism*, p. 268.

¹¹⁴ Verstegan, *Observations* (1621), p. 14.

¹¹⁵ Scott, *Belgicke Pismire*, p. 53.

So that whereas one saith wittily but not well, How all the elements
conspire there together to be naught, to shew their dislike of the naughty
people, I may truly say, All the naughty Elements are forced there to do
good, to shew the virtue and diligence of the good people, who conspire
together in honest labor and artificiall industrie.¹¹⁶

Scott's illustration of the political philosophy driving the Batavians, and consequently their descendents, in connection with their natural virtue once again reinforced the polemical link between liberty and the United Provinces that Verstegan had denigrated through his pamphlets.

Hexham and Scott's *Tongue-Combat* sought to counter Verstegan's continued representation of the revolt as an unlawful rebellion against their rightful lord. It was composed in reply to Verstegan's *Toung-Combat* and in order to respond directly, the dialogue form reprinted verbatim many of Verstegan's arguments as the pro-Spanish 'Red-Scarf'. Hexham and Scott did not disagree with Verstegan that Philip II had been the accepted ruler of the Netherlands, which, they seem to suggest, he held by right of his inheritance *and* the agreement of the Low Countries.¹¹⁷ Yet in defence of the revolt they addressed the original constitution of the country to demonstrate how Philip had breached their fundamental principles and so engendered a just removal of obedience. Although the Netherlands were described as having a mixed government, the exact nature of it was to be determined by the people: 'they chose their Gouvernours themselues, were he one or more, King, Generall, or Earle, and euer had respect that their Liberties and welfares should not rest in the bosome or disposition of one man onely'¹¹⁸. In this understanding of the ancient Dutch political system there was no guaranteed place for a monarch at all. Although they understood sovereignty as residing with the elected nobles and commons in the States General, 'together with their Prince, (whatsoever title he bore)', the following customs and laws made it clear that this was only the case while the prince 'inuioably obserued' them.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹¹⁷ See Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, pp. 9, 12-14, 16, 22, 30-31.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

Furthermore, the pamphlet's portrayal of the contemporary Dutch government underlines this interpretation as political pre-eminence was consistently given to the states rather than the prince of Orange.¹²⁰ The rather malleable way that the Dutch political system could be presented offers, to some extent, a reflection of the principles informing the observer. As we have seen, John Fletcher and Philip Massinger's emphasis upon the political rivalry between Maurice and Oldenbarnevelt in *The Tragedy of Sir John Van Olden Barnaveit* subtly suggested that the republican liberty of the United Provinces was under threat from the monarchical ambitions of the stadholder in the context of his 1618 coup.¹²¹ Whilst alternatively, the nebulous position of Maurice within the government could be conveyed with an understanding that reflected an equation of his role with that of a sovereign prince. As we saw in the previous chapter, this was certainly the understanding revealed by the king, and a similar view was provided in a contemporary anonymous manuscript description of the 'Politia of the United Provinces' that suggested: '[Maurice] liveth in a Condition equal to most Princes in Christendome, having an high and eminent Place in a great *State*, and commanding a gallant Army, without Care or Charge.'¹²² As with Verstegan's derogatory depiction, however, Prince Maurice barely achieved a mention in these Protestant pamphlets.

A comparison can be drawn between the treatment of Maurice in the pamphlets engaging with Verstegan's tracts and a piece of pro-war propaganda published before the truce's end. *A Relation of Some Speciall Points Concerning the State of Holland. Or the Prouident Counsellors Companion* has again been attributed to Scott for its anti-Spanish invective, but there is little to substantiate this association. It is a translation of the anonymous Dutch pamphlet, *Den Compaignon vanden Verre-sienden Waerschouwer*, and as such is best understood in the context of the Dutch 'patriot' effort to convince the Netherlands of the need to resume the war and call for English assistance.¹²³ As

¹²⁰ This is likely to have referred to the States General. See Rowen, 'Dutch Republic', p. 312.

¹²¹ See ch. 5, pp. 198-210.

¹²² See ch. 5, p. 171; *A Fourth Collection of Scarce and Valuable Tracts*, eds. J. Somers et al (London, 4 vols., 1752), ii., p. 392.

¹²³ Adams sees the tract in this light. Adams, 'Protestant Cause', p. 453. Israel locates this pamphlet in the stream of pro-war publications produced following the revelation in print of the unacceptable terms for peace intended by the ambassador Peckius, chancellor of Brabant. For this, and a discussion of the republic's varied opinion on the resumption of the war, see Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic and the Hispanic World, 1606-1661* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 74-83.

The Prouident Counsellors Companion reveals, it was of evident polemical importance in the Netherlands to invoke the (in reality, uncertain) support of the martial Prince Maurice for renewal of war. The prince's esteemed reputation as a military courtier, easily equated with the memory of the Elizabethan heroes, suggests that this invocation may have held similar value for the English proponents of the Dutch cause, seeking to provoke their nation to action.¹²⁴ Yet where the political and military reputation of the prince is unequivocally presented in *The Prouident Counsellors Companion*, the minimal presentation of Maurice in the English-authored tracts examined here suggests a conscious effort to represent the United Provinces government in line with an understanding that was based more on the theory of power than on the example of its current execution.¹²⁵

Where the *Tongue-Combat* made it clear that sovereignty had once rested with the States General and the elected prince together, then identified as the Spanish king, it was subsequently shown that such authority now resided with the States General alone. The pro-Dutch advocate, Tawny-scarf, argued that since the truce had been made the Netherlands had been recognised as a free state. Other kings, princes and states had treated with it in this way, 'acknowledging them to bee inuested with soueraigne power in the *vnited Body*.' It was no longer a combination of elected members and a prince that wielded ultimate authority, but the former body alone. This was made patently clear as Tawny-scarf continued on to equate the position of the States General with that of other rulers as he attempted to undermine the consistent attacks Verstegan made on their illegitimate, poor and 'thieving' status:¹²⁶ 'whatsoever is vnfit to bee spoken of other Princes, is vnfit to bee spoken of them in their places; and the iust attributes you giue other high Commanders, ought to be giuen them in their *vnited Body*'.¹²⁷ The emphasis upon the lack of 'traine, pompe, or titular

¹²⁴ For the English perception of Maurice in this way see Ivo Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology in Stuart Drama* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 141 and above, ch. 5, pp. 178-179.

¹²⁵ *A Relation of Some Speciall Points Concerning the State of Holland. Or the Prouident Counsellors Companion* [London, 1621], sig. A2, p. 4. In *Tongue-Combat*, despite the lengthy advocacy of the Dutch cause, Prince Maurice is only referred to once on the final page. Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, p. 104.

¹²⁶ Verstegan, *Toung-Combat*, pp. 12-16, 48. See also Verstegan, *Newes from the Low Countreyes*, pp. 7-10; Verstegan, *Obseruations* (1622), pp. 135-139.

¹²⁷ Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, pp. 50-51.

vanities' that characterised the Dutch government compounded the indicting omission of Prince Maurice's political role in this account.

In early 1623 Mead noted that *Belgicke Pismire* was in circulation and that it reportedly represented 'the cheife points of goverment in those countryes'.¹²⁸ The particular picture of authority given in *Belgicke Pismire* had gone even further in trivialising the position of the stadholder. Perceiving the war against Spain to be the glue that held the diverse provinces together, Scott idealistically desired to see a more permanent 'prevention invented against Change and dis-Vnion, though with as much caution and limitation, as the *Venetians* vse in the election of their Dukes.'¹²⁹ In expressing this wish, Scott flatly denied recognition of Maurice's capacity as, or potential to become, the Netherlands' figure-head. Maurice's position as stadholder, his captaincy of the states army and election as admiral-general meant that he did, in fact, lead the republic.¹³⁰ Scott's acknowledgment of the prince's role, however, extended only so far as his military leadership, under whose 'stayed and advised' command Scott wished the Netherlands well, until a better course could be found.¹³¹

In terms of application to England, the significance of these conceptions about the origins and current state of the Dutch government becomes clear when it is perceived how the Dutch and English systems were viewed as comparable. Peltonen has recognised that Scott sought to remedy what he perceived as a degeneration of the English commonwealth through the reformation of morality and instituting a mixed form of government. To achieve the latter, Scott saw the value for England in imitating the Netherlands as she already had a parliament that could be compared with the States General.¹³² Yet there was a further didactic function in these accounts that served as a warning to England. Their accounts of the tyrannous ambitions of the Spanish monarchy against the liberty of the Dutch can be understood as an admonitory reflection of the contemporary battle that could be perceived in England between the absolute tendencies of James and the ancient form of the commonwealth.

¹²⁸ BL Harley MS 389, i., fo. 281.

¹²⁹ Scott, *Belgicke Pismire*, p. 51.

¹³⁰ Rowen, 'Dutch Republic', p. 313.

¹³¹ Scott, *Belgicke Pismire*, p. 51. Cf. John Reynolds's more reverent treatment of Maurice. John Reynolds, *Vox Coeli* ([London], 1624), p. 47.

¹³² Peltonen, *Classical Humanism*, pp. 264, 269.

Such a function was made manifest in *Tongue-Combat* where the encroachments of Philip were related ‘as a mirrour to warne all Magistrates to beware of tyrannie, and to be content with their owne manly moderation, lest *Lucifer*-like, seeking to become gods, they prooue diuelish Tyrants, and so lose their first angelicall seates of Soueraigntie.’ Extending further than traditional humanist advice for princes, this counsel warned against a very Jacobean understanding of divine monarchy. Spurred on by the sheer disregard for the common good and Protestant cause perceived in James’s policies, these pamphlets pointedly drew attention to the government of the United Provinces. In an appreciative observation of the States General, a damning comparison was made with England’s own representative institution, as the Dutch body under Philip was described as standing ‘in the midst as a Moderator betwixt Prince and people, as our Parliaments in England vse to doe.’¹³³

The pamphlets also used the arguments deployed in defence of the Dutch Revolt and advocating the renewal of war to castigate the excesses of monarchy, which could again be transposed to the direction of James’s government. Hugh Dunthorne attributes as significant a role to the infiltration and circulation of anti-monarchical Dutch literature as to the influence of its republican example in developing English criticism of royal policy.¹³⁴ The influence of such literature is clearly discernable in the English pamphlets examined here, which invoked original revolt material as well as contemporaneous Dutch publications, in defence of the Dutch cause. They could therefore draw upon the coherent arguments developed in these Dutch pamphlets that asserted the liberty, privileges and institutions of the Netherlands in the face of Spanish tyranny.¹³⁵ Martin van Gelderen’s survey of the political thought of the Dutch Revolt significantly challenges a tradition of seeing Dutch political thinking as chiefly concerned with debating the pros and cons of monarchy until Spinoza and the brothers de la Court engaged with republicanism, which even then was defined by its particularly Dutch character.¹³⁶ Gelderen, however, reveals that in addition to building upon ‘an indigenous tradition of constitutionalism’, the ideology of

¹³³ Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, pp. 12-13.

¹³⁴ Dunthorne, ‘Resisting Monarchy’, pp. 133-137.

¹³⁵ For this literature see Gelderen, *Political Thought*; Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture*, pp. 170-175.

¹³⁶ Gelderen, *Political Thought*, pp. 276-277.

the Dutch political order developed in the revolt literature, ‘as based on liberty, constitutional charters..., representative institutions..., and popular sovereignty..., was principally republican.’¹³⁷ Yet, despite this, republicanism in the Netherlands during the early seventeenth century remains an overly neglected field of study.¹³⁸ It is certainly apparent that during the height of the civil conflict in the Netherlands between 1617 and 1619, and following the fallout from Maurice’s ‘coup’, Remonstrant polemic was beginning to engage with the new language of republicanism in its assault upon the stadholder’s supposed aspirations to sovereignty. The notoriety of the exiled Remonstrant minister, Henricus Slatius, may have limited the influence that his secular defence of republican liberty in ‘A Morning Waker to the ould and true Hollanders’ could exercise over such committed Reformed preachers like Scott.¹³⁹ Yet, as we have seen, Massinger and Fletcher’s depiction of the Netherlands suggests that the influence of these political ideas could easily transcend confessional boundaries.

However, in providing evidence to counter Verstegan’s unsubstantiated claims, *Tongue-Combat* turned to such revolt authors as Philip Marnix van St Aldegonde, described by Dunthorne as ‘William the Silent’s leading propagandist and a determined advocate of Protestant unity in the face of Spain’,¹⁴⁰ and William’s own renowned *Apology* to demonstrate the evident legitimacy of their argument.¹⁴¹ These sources allowed the English writers to

¹³⁷ Gelderen, *Political Thought*, pp. 276-287, esp. p. 280. It is worth noting that Gelderen’s use of ‘republicanism’ is not unproblematic as he ascribes its articulation during the revolt in part to the influence of the classics during the Dutch Renaissance (p. 284), and it is highly contestable to say that Cicero, and even Sallust, were using the language of republicanism in the way Gelderen here intends. Cf. Wootton, ‘True Origins of Republicanism’, pp. 280-286, 300-301

¹³⁸ Gelderen’s *Political Thought* extends only until the end of the sixteenth century, whilst the recent efforts to revise our understanding of Dutch republicanism within the context of a continental tradition continue to reflect the older historiography’s mid-seventeenth century starting point. Jonathan Scott, ‘Classical Republicanism in Seventeenth-century England and the Netherlands’, in G&S, *Republicanism*, i., pp. 61-81; Wyger R. E. Velema, ‘“That a Republic is Better than a Monarchy”: Anti-Monarchism in Early Modern Dutch Political Thought’, in *ibid.*, i., pp. 9-25. Tracy’s brief exploration of Dutch republican thought from 1590 to 1650 starts out on the premise that, participating within a broad European tradition, ‘Dutch writers too labelled their policy as a *respublica mixta*, assimilating it to the kind of balanced constitution that was thought to have the best chance for survival’, thereby precluding an investigation into the articulation of republican thought as defined in this chapter. Tracy, *Founding of the Dutch Republic*, p. 298. See also Tuck’s assessment of Grotius’s aristocratic republicanism. Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 154-169.

¹³⁹ *The Morning Waker*, 1620, SPF 84/98, fos. 168-171v. See ch. 5, pp. 185, 207.

¹⁴⁰ Dunthorne, ‘Resisting Monarchy’, p. 125.

¹⁴¹ Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, pp. 48, 80. William the Silent’s *Apology* was written under his direction by his court chaplain, Loyseleur de Villiers, in consultation with the Huguenots, Hubert Languet and Philippe Duplessis-Mornay. For this tract and the contribution of

uncover the justness of the Dutch cause and highlight the dangers of absolute monarchy through the example of Spain. In defending the justice of the cause, *Tongue-Combat* even borrowed authority from the neo-stoical, but far from democratic, Justus Lipsius.¹⁴² Well-perceiving the threat to monarchy presented by the revolt's success, Hexham and Scott followed Lipsius in conceiving that 'Monarches, and a timorous woman especially, would haue beene wary, euen for consequence sake, if not for conscience, how they fauored or supported the subiects of another Prince, at least if they iudged them *Rebels*', allowing them to conclude of Elizabeth I's support for the Dutch 'that shée tooke them for no *Rebels*, but for distressed people tyrannized ouer by a cruell, mercilesse, and bloody enemy'.¹⁴³ Philip II, meanwhile, not content with the bounds of his inheritance, was charged with attempting to reduce the Netherlands 'to absolute obedience' by stirring up a rebellion. This offered Hexham and Scott the opportunity to again traduce the ambitions of those who would be absolute:

The fore-mentioned practise of prouoking people to profitable offences, hath beene auncient, and is vsual with Tyrants, who finde no pleasure in commanding except they may be absolute... if they see the least opposition or variation, presently they take new Councils to mixe all in combustion and confusion, like another Chaos, thereby to raise vp the worke new according to their owne fancies... by the hand of power or policie.

The alignment of this description with the domestic climate in England before the return of Charles from Spain in 1623 seems quite radical. Here James would be cast in the role of the political manipulator, intent on increasing his authority at the expense of his subjects' welfare. And it of course refers to Spain. Yet Red-scarf's provocative question 'Doth not any King rather seeke to rule his people in peace, then prouoke them to rebellion...?' universalised the answer given by

Aldegonde to the revolt literature see Gelderen, *PoliticalThought*, pp. 151-153, 123-126, 139-140.

¹⁴² For Lipsius's contribution, on the side of princely rule, to the Dutch exploration of the best form for their independent state see Gelderen, *Political Thought*, pp. 180-187.

¹⁴³ Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, p. 49.

Tawny-scarf.¹⁴⁴ The warning was again implicit about the dangers of monarchical authority, which in the context of James's increasing intolerance of opposition during the match years was an unambiguous assertion.

Likewise, Scott's assault on tyrannical ambitions in *Belgicke Pismire* comments on monarchy generally after employing a Spanish example. This allowed him to situate the critique in the context of anti-Spanish sentiment whilst attacking all such ambitions more widely. More indicting than his condemnation of those who 'vsurpe such a tyrannicall and heathenish authority ouer their flockes, as with the *Great Turke* to make their owne wils, limits, and lawes to the wils of other men', Scott's depiction of their advocates runs close to the bone. Such tyrants have

gotten Court Clergie-men to become their *Champions*; who, being full of winde themselues, haue blowne these bladders with flatterie and forgerie... whilst they [the tyrants] imagine all other men to be made for their pleasures; and *their wils to be a more just law to their subjects, then Gods Law is or can be to them.*¹⁴⁵

The representation of the clerical influence over courts and kings attacked the formulation of divinely ordained, absolute monarchy of the sort expounded by some Jacobean clerics.¹⁴⁶ The complicating factor here, however, is the direct praise of James's kingly-conduct that immediately follows on. The instruction to look to James as an example stemmed from praise of his peaceful policy that showed consideration for the blood of his subjects in the waging of war. Unlike the arch-aggressor, the king of Spain, James's example taught 'rather to ouersee all injuries, but such as would startle *Dauid* himselfe'. Such generous references to the king certainly seemed to earn the tract a reputation for treating James with 'due & exceeding commendation'.¹⁴⁷ Yet the marginal reference to the biblical

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 22-23.

¹⁴⁵ Scott, *Belgicke Pismire*, pp. 57-58.

¹⁴⁶ See, for example, [Richard Mocket], *God and the King* (London, 1616). Burgess claims that this clerical language was confined to generalisations and only appropriate in certain contexts. Yet Scott's assault upon it here seems to transcend Burgess's imposition of category boundaries as Scott links the general vocabulary to a more politically specific impact. Glenn Burgess, *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution* (Hampshire, 1992), pp. 132-137.

¹⁴⁷ BL Harl. 389, fo. 281.

text 2 Samuel 10 seems to uncover the tacit criticism in this praise as the cited passage concerns David's victory over the Ammonites in a war of two fronts. The parallel between David's beleaguered, yet victorious, army and the two-pronged attack of the Spanish and Austrian Habsburg forces on the Reformed Church is implicit.

However, this analysis does not intend to downplay the significance attached to the Spanish threat in itself. The real danger that Spain was perceived to pose in Europe and the fledgling colonies was another avenue through which James's marriage policy could be attacked. Employing a widely invoked example,¹⁴⁸ *Tongue-Combat* admonished James through the precedent of the former Anglo-Spanish marriage between Mary and Philip II:

The losse of Calis, was a fruite of the Spanish match: this killed Queene Marie to behold, when she considered how contrary to the aduice of her best Counselors, shee would proceede with this marriage, though they had warned her of these euils aforehand, and told her that the Spaniards had no respect but to themselues, which shee would not beleue, till it was too late to remedie.¹⁴⁹

Calling for James to listen to his 'best Counselors' and not trust the Spanish in this doomed enterprise, this passage invoked the parallel risk of permanently losing more territory, so making an indirect allusion to the Palatinate. Elsewhere, considerably more is shown to be at stake on account of the insatiable Spanish lust for power; not satisfied with 'the addition of Countries by accesse of marriage or any other title', they aimed only for conquest.¹⁵⁰ By employing the established image of Spanish ambitions these tracts could unite their audience in fervent hatred for this Catholic power.

IV

Where Verstegan could malign the Dutch cause through an appeal to the political language of obedience and resistance, the Protestant writers could turn to the rich

¹⁴⁸ See Cogswell, *BR*, p. 50.

¹⁴⁹ Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, p. 57, n. b.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

tradition of the Black Legend. Originating in Italy, the European-wide infiltration of the Spanish stereotype was greatly spurred on by the propaganda of the Dutch Revolt.¹⁵¹ The resulting picture of the Spanish as an innately cruel race was maintained during the truce by several Dutch histories that functioned as ‘triggers of collective allegiance.’¹⁵² By conveying the difficulty through which the nation had had to fight to gain its freedom, the authors sought to provoke a population, that had been lulled asleep by the truce, into united action. It was thus necessary to relate to the public, in dramatic terms, the cruelty supposedly used by the Spanish during the revolt to warn them of what could again be expected.¹⁵³ Furthermore, the Dutch mass reproduction of Bartolemé de Las Casas’s account of the ruthless Spanish conduct in the New World was easily appropriated to the requirements of their propaganda as they charged Spain with wanting to turn the Netherlands into another Hispaniola.¹⁵⁴ The English use of these Dutch sources is directly shown by Offwood’s *A Relation of Sundry Particular Wicked Plots*. Offwood cites Willem Baudart and Emmanuel van Meteren’s histories that both related graphic descriptions of Spain’s cruelty and aimed to keep a Dutch public alert to the danger.¹⁵⁵

The polemical function of invoking the legend is revealed by the 1622 *Newes from Pernassus*, a partial translation of Traiano Boccalini’s *Ragguagli di Parnaso* (1612-13). Boccalini’s antipathy towards the Spanish monarchy permeated throughout the tract, which is likely to have made it an attractive propaganda piece to those English dissenters in the Netherlands.¹⁵⁶ But the production of this translation may also be significant when considered in light of Boccalini’s unreserved republicanism. In the northern European republics, amongst which he counted the Netherlands, Boccalini saw a new form of government that would safeguard republican liberty in a way that monarchies

¹⁵¹ Swart, ‘Black Legend’; Maltby, *Black Legend in England*, pp. 44-60.

¹⁵² Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London, 1991), p. 82.

¹⁵³ Schama, *Embarrassment of Riches*, pp. 82-92.

¹⁵⁴ Swart, ‘Black Legend’, pp. 52-54; Geoffrey Parker, ‘The Dutch Revolt and the Polarization of International Politics’, *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 89 (1976), 429-443, 440.

¹⁵⁵ Schama, *Embarrassment of Riches*, pp. 82-85. Offwood, *A Relation*. Offwood refers in the extended title to ‘Emanuel de Miter’ which I have taken to be van Meteren, whose *Historica Belgica* (1598) was circulating in translation. Dunthorne, ‘Resisting Monarchy’, p. 136.

¹⁵⁶ David Wootton, *Paolo Sarpi: Between Renaissance and Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 74; Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 103.

never could.¹⁵⁷ The fatal implications for monarchy that such a view imparted, therefore, suggest to some extent the grounds upon which Verstegan could mount his politic attack on ‘universal democracy’, as the works of those employing the new language of republicanism in a positive way were starting to be invoked more widely.¹⁵⁸

The translation and publication of Boccalini is again associated with Scott through its inclusion in the 1624 *Workes*.¹⁵⁹ I suggest that the publication functioned in part as a response to Verstegan’s *Newes from the Low-Countreyes* as the relation of the Spanish treatment of other countries, such as Naples, and the political evaluation of her ambitions reveal Spain as an aggressive and tyrannical power internationally.¹⁶⁰ In his effort to exonerate the much-denigrated reputation of the Spanish, Verstegan had claimed in *Newes from the Low-Countreyes* that exemplary Spanish conduct towards her other territories proved that the Hollanders’ accusations of tyranny were false. Furthermore, they could be unveiled as hypocritical in light of their own subjects’ difficulties. Citing the examples of Naples, Milan, Sicily and more besides, Verstegan asked: ‘And where among all these different nations is there any one found, that is so Tyrannized ouer at this day, as are the subjects of Holland, with so great and so intollerable exactions and taxations?’¹⁶¹ It seems likely that such pro-Spanish propaganda as this prompted the publication of Boccalini’s tract that satirically uncovered his protest against the Spanish assault on continental – and particularly Italian – liberty. Thus included in *Newes from Pernassus*’s selection of Boccalini’s ‘advertisements’ is the encounter between Almansor, erstwhile king of the Moors, and the kingdom of Naples, who ‘relate one to another the miseries they sustaine by the oppression of the Spaniards’.¹⁶² Whilst in the final

¹⁵⁷ Wootton, *Sarpi*, pp. 72-76; Paul A. Rahe, *Republics Ancient and Modern: Classical Republicanism and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, 1992), p. 341; Rowen, ‘Dutch Republic’, pp. 339-340.

¹⁵⁸ Wootton categorically defines Boccalini as subscribing to this language. Wootton, ‘True Origins of Republicanism’, p. 295. On Boccalini’s use of this language see Wootton, *Sarpi*, pp. 74-75; Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 102.

¹⁵⁹ William F. Marquardt, ‘The First English Translators of Trajano Boccalini’s *Ragguagli di Parnaso*: A Study of Literary Relationships’, *HLQ*, 15 (1951), 1-19. Adams finds the publication of this tract further evidence of a possible Bohemian sponsorship of Scott’s propaganda activities as this was the sort of polemic circulating in manuscript form in The Hague. Adams, ‘The Protestant Cause’, p. 455.

¹⁶⁰ [Thomas Scott], *Newes from Pernassus* ([Holland], 1622).

¹⁶¹ Verstegan, *Newes from the Low-Countreyes*, pp. 94-95.

¹⁶² Scott, *Newes from Pernassus*, p. 40.

chapter, which was a new composition and not a translation from Boccalini,¹⁶³ the threat of Spain was illustrated with some highly contemporary references in a manifest attempt to galvanise the ruling houses of Europe into action: ‘You see how honourably hee deales with that Prince, whose peaceable patents made him easie entrance; and how fauourably with the Palatinate, whom hee rides in bloud, and spur-galls on both sides, whilst you stand laughing on, and see not that your day is comming.’¹⁶⁴ Elsewhere in 1622 Scott requested Naples, Milan and Antwerp to confirm that ‘where the *Spaniard* comes, he sets himselfe downe like an absolute and tyrannicall Lord, silencing all Lawes but his owne’,¹⁶⁵ underwriting the motivation behind the published translation and its association with Scott.

The polemical exchange stretched yet further than the bounds of Europe. As seen, the Dutch popularisation of Las Casas’s report on Spanish America augmented the picture of Spanish cruelty. However, Spanish dominance in the New World was also seen as destructive to Europe as their enrichment through their colonies enabled the furtherance of their universal ambitions.¹⁶⁶ Rather than military assistance on the continent, those advocating a Spanish war desired English intervention in the Indies, often with Dutch collaboration. Yet it was on this subject that Verstegan could again exploit topical sentiment as the Anglo-Dutch trade disputes that had long been simmering became involved in the diplomatic tangle. English and Dutch antagonism in this area arose from three key contestations: Dutch fishing in the North Sea, whaling in Spitzbergen – over which James asserted sovereignty, and English trading rights to Dutch settlements in the East Indies.¹⁶⁷ Mercantile relations were heavily strained in these regions leading to a general resentment at the heavy-handed practices of the Dutch and the economic advantages that they seemed to win, with the utmost ingratitude, at English expense. Popular conceptions of the Dutch as socially inferior and concerned only with making a profit compounded these irritations to

¹⁶³ Marquardt, ‘First English Translators of Trajano Boccalini’, 4; Wright, ‘Propaganda against James I’s “Appeasement” of Spain’, 163.

¹⁶⁴ Scott, *Newes from Pernassus*, sig. M3v.

¹⁶⁵ Scott, *Belgicke Pismire*, p. 56.

¹⁶⁶ See for example Hexham and Scott, *Experimentall Discoverie*, pp. 36-44, 51; Reynolds, *Vox Coeli*, p. 48.

¹⁶⁷ K. H. D. Haley, *The British and the Dutch: Political and Cultural Relations through the Ages* (London, 1988), pp. 53-60.

produce an identifiably Dutch stereotype.¹⁶⁸ From the early 1610s a projected union between the two nations' East India companies provided the basis for a series of conferences, but negotiations continued to founder upon contested details of the enterprise. Political relations between the two countries continued to be affected by these issues in the 1620s when the Dutch were seeking a Protestant Union as James was able to use the trade dispute to delay his commitment.¹⁶⁹

In this respect, the apparently easy dichotomy between the cruel Spaniard and the virtuous Hollander is revealed as more complex. Marvin Breslow perceived that the 'puritan' resolution of these irritations was to submerge them as less vital than the more apocalyptically significant dichotomy between Spain and the body of the Reformed.¹⁷⁰ This is most clearly apparent in Scott's pamphlets, particularly *Symmachia: or, A True-loues Knot* (1624) that was composed in response to the Amboyna massacre. But reconciling Anglo-Dutch divisions was certainly still a vital issue for Scott before the inflammatory news of the massacre further threatened amicable relations. In *Belgicke Pismire*, he imputed the antagonism to an enemy plot which, if successful, could only benefit Spain. The Dutch strength at sea was thus upheld as a buttress against the might of Spain and the spread of her enslaving tentacles.¹⁷¹ John Grayson, however, challenges the representative nature of Scott's pamphlets, rather viewing them as reflecting 'a need to arouse public feeling, predominantly apathetic or envious towards the United Provinces.'¹⁷² Whilst Breslow's puritan terminology contributes to an overly simplistic confessional understanding of political sympathies, Grayson's analysis tends to underplay the pervasive mentality of anti-popery and Hispanophobia identified in this period by Cogswell and

¹⁶⁸ For a discussion of this stereotype see Duffy, *Englishman and the Foreigner*, pp. 28-30. Although Duffy only identifies these derisory attributes with English attitudes towards the Dutch after 1625, citing the Spanish match as causing most anti-Spanish Englishmen to look positively towards the United Provinces, it is also evident that these concepts were already well-known. Breslow, *Mirror of England*, pp. 90-91.

¹⁶⁹ Grayson, 'Protectorate to Partnership', pp. 282-284.

¹⁷⁰ Breslow, *Mirror of England*, pp. 84-99.

¹⁷¹ Scott, *Belgicke Pismire*, pp. 52-57, 63-67.

¹⁷² Grayson, 'Protectorate to Partnership', p. 288. See also Haley, *British and the Dutch*, pp. 60-64, who suggests that these tensions during James's reign conflicted with the 'natural' view of the Netherlands as Protestant allies, leading to a 'war' in the minds of many in England.

Lake.¹⁷³ There is certainly evidence to demonstrate that attempts were being made to diffuse the tension repeatedly generated over commercial disputes. Some verses to this end, evidently circulating in manuscript during the winter of 1621/22, were transcribed by both John Rous and William Whiteway. Almost identical in wording to Whiteway's, Rous's transcription ran:

The Belgicke frogge out of the bogge
with British mouse doth striue
The Iberian kite meane while by slight
surpriseth both aliue

Whilste for their shares of Indian wares
English & Dutche doth brawle
The Spanyard watcheth advantage catcheth
to seise on them & all

Then be agreed & take good heede
make not a needles fray
Leaste to a third that ravenous birde
you both be made a pray.¹⁷⁴

Rous attributed the verse to the 'states' who, he quite simply remarked, had left them as a 'caveat' in London. Whiteway demonstrated even less sympathy with the sentiment of the verses in reporting that they had been found upon 'a report of Shipping to be provided to supresse the Insolency of the Hollanders'.¹⁷⁵ Evidently not everyone found it as pertinent to subjugate the reality of commercial dispute to the ideological crusade that Scott advocated against Spain. A further insight into the contemporary perception of the Netherlands may be

¹⁷³ See Cogswell, *BR*, pp. 50-53; Lake, 'Constitutional Consensus', 810-814; Peter Lake, 'Antipopery: the Structure of a Prejudice', in R. Cust and A. Hughes (eds.), *Conflict in Early Stuart England* (London, 1989), pp. 72-106.

¹⁷⁴ BL, Add. 28640, fo. 103v. Cf. William Whiteway, *William Whiteway of Dorchester: His Diary 1618 to 1635*, ed. D. Underdown (Dorchester, 1991), pp. 40-41.

¹⁷⁵ Whiteway, *Diary*, p. 40; BL, Add. 28640, fo. 103v.

gained from an extant manuscript copy of Owen Felltham's *Three Moneths Obseruation*.¹⁷⁶

Originally composed in early 1622, the manuscript draws upon both Verstegan's 1621 *Observations* and Scott's *Belgicke Pismire*, which consequently lends it an 'ambiguous meaning'.¹⁷⁷ In considering the Netherlands' good parts in the brief second half of the tract, Felltham seems to employ Solomon's natural analogies in an echo of Scott's *Belgicke Pismire*, which was premised upon Proverbs 6:6 'Go to the Pismire, O Sluggard, Behold her wayes, and be wise.'¹⁷⁸ Felltham extended the comparison beyond Scott, however, to uncover how the Dutch resemble '4. things very small, but full of Wisedome': the ant, rabbit, spider and grasshopper. The warlike nature of this latter creature allowed praise to be lavished upon the military school that the United Provinces was held as providing: 'It is the *Christian... worlds Academie* for Armes; unto which all Nations resort to bee instructed'. Scott's influence can also be seen in Felltham's account of their welfare community.¹⁷⁹ Yet there are some underlying criticisms that combine with the disparaging picture given in the first part to deliver an unfavourable portrait overall. The short references to the revolt reveal a sympathetic interpretation of the Dutch cause as Spain is portrayed in the role of oppressive tyrant. Yet the representation serves more as 'a *Glasse*, wherein Kings ... may see' the injurious results of their actions, rather than as a vindication of Dutch liberty. Furthermore, a hint of commercial resentment is detectable in the natural analogies. Like Scott and Hexham, Felltham praised their industrious natures, comparable to spiders; yet in praise of their merchants he asks: 'What Nation is it into which they have not insinuated themselves...?'¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ The original text underwent many additions and revisions before it was published in 1648 so there are many extant and differing manuscript copies. The one concerned here comprises the earliest text overlaid with some additions, dating it between 1622 and 1624. Ittersum, 'Owen Felltham', 109-123. The article contains a full transcription of the tract.

¹⁷⁷ Ittersum, 'Owen Felltham', 130. Ittersum has identified that Felltham only used Verstegan, Scott and Fynes Moryson's *Itinerary* (1617) as source material for the original version. Later versions employed several further works. 134.

¹⁷⁸ Scott, *Belgicke Pismire*, p. 1.

¹⁷⁹ For these influences, especially in the more extensive *Brief Character*, see Ittersum, 'Owen Felltham', 129-131, and 163-164 for the transcription. Cf. Scott, *Belgicke Pismire*, esp. pp. 76-79.

¹⁸⁰ Ittersum, 'Owen Felltham', 164-165.

The depiction of their reputation for wealth and trade echoed the more explicit criticisms of the Dutch character shown in the first part. Here the Dutch are revealed as ungrateful, irreligious, avaricious, uncivil and devoid of private authority.¹⁸¹ Following Verstegan in his understanding of their political system, Felltham linked their popular government with an inherent anti-monarchical sentiment: ‘Their Government is a *Democracy*, And... {there} had need... {bee} many Rulers... {over} such a Rabble of Rude-ones. Tell them of a King, {though but in iest and} they... {will} Cutt your Throate in earnest; The... {very} Name implies Servitude.’ Likewise, Felltham’s account of the qualification for government echoes Verstegan’s timocratical description as he related how they are chosen ‘more for their Wealth then... their... Witt’. Such a fiscal motivation was subsequently shown to be of paramount importance to the Dutch, that ‘rather than hinder profit... they’le tolerate anything.’¹⁸² Felltham’s tract, therefore, continues to suggest that English attitudes towards the Dutch were characterised by a certain ambiguity that only seems to have been augmented by the 1621-1623 pamphlet exchange.¹⁸³

In answer to the invocation of the Black Legend in the Dutch and English pamphlets, Verstegan could thus turn the tables once more and exploit this widespread low estimation of the Dutch, and even evidence from English reports, to show the Dutch as much worse than the Spanish. Progressing to more detail in subsequent tracts, Verstegan’s 1621 *Observations* played upon the English sensitivity to Dutch mercantile behaviour in light of their long-established assistance to the Netherlands. It particularly antagonised English sensibility that the junior state they had fought to establish would repay them with such commercial hostility.¹⁸⁴ Verstegan directly referred to the episode that had escalated into a diplomatic incident in 1617, involving the Dutch abduction of a

¹⁸¹ See Ittersum, ‘Owen Felltham’, 157-161.

¹⁸² {} denote insertions in the manuscript; the breaks in the text reflect the manuscript’s deletion of words that are transcribed by Ittersum. Ittersum, ‘Owen Felltham’, 159-160. Cf. Verstegan’s representation of the Dutch government, above p. 230.

¹⁸³ Cf. also *Tom Tell-Troath* that delivered a bold critique of James’s policy and asserted that assisting the Hollanders in Flanders was the best way of getting Spain out of the Palatinate, yet remained affronted that the ‘very Pedlars, whome wee our selves set upp for our owne Use, are now become our Masters in the Easte-Indyes; and thinke themselves our Fellows in any Ground of *Christendome*.’ Somers, *Scarce and Valuable Tracts*, i., 117.

¹⁸⁴ Ittersum suggests that the implied expectation was for economic concessions from the Dutch. Ittersum, ‘Owen Felltham’, 115. For the development of the Anglo-Dutch political relationship with respect to commercial rivalry see Grayson, ‘Protectorate to Partnership’.

Scottish official in reaction to James's grant that allowed the collection of tributes from Dutch fishermen in Scotland. Presenting the case, as James himself had done, as one of ancient right that had been trampled upon by the saucy Hollanders, Verstegan tapped into the contemporary commercial conflicts that encouraged a perception of the Dutch as ungrateful and insulting.¹⁸⁵ Not only exploiting this sore wound, Verstegan smashed the equation of liberty with the Dutch by depicting their harsh treatment of the English in East India in oppressive terms:

they haue vsed them, in the sight of the Indians, in such contemptible and disdainfull manner, as if at home in their owne Countryes, the English in respect of them were but an abiect and a slauish Nation; and that the Hollanders were either their Superiours, & might vse them at the pleasure, or the English so base and vnpowerfull, as they durst not be reuenged, but quietly put vp any iniury at their handes.

In transporting the action to East India, Verstegan could remove the charge of slavery from Spanish shoulders, reveal the Dutch as hypocritical and incite English feelings of superiority. This was made explicit when Verstegan continued on, referencing a proverb to ask: 'Haue we not brauely set beggers on horsbacke?'¹⁸⁶

In the extended version of *Observations* in 1622 Verstegan added much more detail to his account of the Dutch in East India, using letters from English colonists and merchants, in part to invalidate Scott's attempt to play down the disputes in *Belgicke Pismire*. He reiterated the ingratitude shown by the Dutch through their commercial treatment of England and cited instances of Dutch cruelty from 1619 and 1620, employing the correspondence of the minister, Patrick Copland. Copland's relation from East India, published in February 1622, lamented the discord created by the ingratitude of the Dutch, enquiring: 'Is this the recompence of our loue and bloud shewed vnto you, and shed for you, to

¹⁸⁵ Verstegan, *Observations* (1621), pp. 59-61; for a relation of this incident see Grayson, 'Protectorate to Partnership', pp. 248-249. Grayson described the affair as providing the king with 'another illustration of the obstinacy of the province of Holland in particular, at the same time that Carleton was meeting its resistance to the idea of a national synod.' p. 249.

¹⁸⁶ Verstegan, *Observations* (1621), pp. 63-64.

keepe you from the supposed thraldome of *Spaine?*'¹⁸⁷ Making further use of the topical disagreements, Verstegan also included part of the merchant-adventurers 1622 supplication to James regarding Dutch mercantile conduct and imploring the king for restitution against these actions.¹⁸⁸

Such contemporary evidence, in Verstegan's view, was surely enough to persuade his readers of the injustice associated with supporting the Dutch cause. Linking this to his polemical presentation of their political tendencies, Verstegan aimed once more to influence the interpretation of allegiance. God had allowed such actions so the English would know the Dutch were:

a perfidious and rebellious people to their Prince, & knowing them so to be, that such of our nation as will notwithstanding continue to take their parts, may be knowne to be men that wrong their owne reputation, are carelesse of their Nations honor, and to other Nations make themselues a laughing stocke.¹⁸⁹

To defend the Dutch in this light was thus surely no mark of loyalty. In this way the poor reputation of the Dutch entered the political arena and enabled proponents of the match, and pro-Spanish Catholics such as Verstegan, to encourage opinion away from supporting the Dutch cause.

In addition to minimising the importance of such disputes and ascribing their authorship to Spain, the Protestant pamphleteers answered Verstegan by implicating the individual Dutch merchants' Hispanophile attitude. They argued that such behaviour as Verstegan had described in his tracts was not public policy, but the actions of some 'wicked persons, who wearie of their owne welfare, would as gladly haue the King of *Spayne* their Master againe as you, or any other *Spanish* pensioner could wish.' The Black Legend was then once again employed to unite opinion against the evident tyranny of authorised Spanish policy and function as a 'watch-word and mirroure to ours abroad in *Virginia* and the *Bermuda*'s, as also to vs at home, to teach vs to beware, and behold what

¹⁸⁷ Patrick Copland, *A Second Courante of Newes from the East India in Two Letters* ([London], 1622), p. 2. Cf. Verstegan, *Observations* (1622), pp. 64-66 (mis-pag. as 44-46). Verstegan repeats this passage verbatim, p. 65 (mis-pag. as 45).

¹⁸⁸ Verstegan, *Observations* (1622), pp. 66-68 (mis-pag. as 46-48).

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 69 (mis-pag. as 49).

courtesie we are to expect from them where they are masters and... hang vp *all for their profit*', not just heretics, Hollanders and Indians.¹⁹⁰ So in contrast to the familiar image of the Dutch making 'gain to be their God and King',¹⁹¹ the Protestants offered a bleak picture of a Habsburg-dominated Europe.

¹⁹⁰ Hexham and Scott, *Tongue-Combat*, pp. 69, 74. Cf. Hexham and Scott's answer to Verstegan, pp. 68-78, with Verstegan, *Toung-Combat*, pp. 31-33.

¹⁹¹ For this view of the Dutch see Duffy, *Englishman and the Foreigner*, p. 28. Verstegan described their 'auaricious and insatiable desire of gayne' to be so great that when they could not spoil the trade of other nations they would 'not sticke to spoile one another.' Verstegan, *Obseruations* (1621), p. 65. See also Ittersum, 'Owen Felltham', 158-159.

Conclusion

In early 1622 James was reported to have entertained the Dutch embassy with more disrespect than ever before. Rumour had it that when the Dutch ambassadors 'desird [James] to be their protector & promised to be as faithfull & seruiceable to him as any subjects he had; he should call them Rebels & bid them returne to their true & lawfull Soueraigne the King of Spaine.'¹ The king's patience had been sorely tested by those stirring spirits among his own subjects in the parliament newly dissolved; the floundering commercial negotiations with the Dutch apparently revealed that by early February it had completely run out.² This snippet of London gossip that Joseph Mead passed on, with a large dose of scepticism, to Martin Stuteville during the height of the Spanish match years opens up several ways in which we can consider some of the central points I have advanced in this study.

In the first instance, the king's supposed admonition to the Dutch brought questions over monarchical authority and the legitimacy of resistance into the foreground of the antagonism generated by the recurrent trade disputes. Mead's incredulity regarding the rumour reminds us, of course, that James in all probability did not utter such words to the Dutch commissioners in early 1622. Yet, beyond the 'truth' of the anecdote, we can see that James's subjects assigned to their king a view that aligned for the most part with the manifest slant of his political thinking. James was becoming increasingly concerned by the perceived democratic tendencies that he attributed to a puritan element both within the Commons and society more widely. He therefore necessarily held extensive reservations over endorsing a foreign policy that aided subjects' resistance to established authority, especially that underpinned by religious motivation (however nominal that motivation may have been). Frederick V consequently earned some measure of royal disapproval when his machinations succeeded in securing him a crown proffered by those Protestant, defenestrating malcontents in Bohemia. Meanwhile, although the distasteful manner by which the Netherlands had gained independence may have been mediated by James's

¹ BL Harley MS 389, i., fo. 140.

² Samuel R. Gardiner, *History of England from the Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War, 1603-1642* (London, 10 vols, 1893-1895), iv., pp. 273-274.

inherited view of the Dutch as a junior nation over which he had a special care, such a view was increasingly difficult to maintain in the face of Dutch mercantile success at England's (perceived) expense.

The tense nature of the Anglo-Dutch commercial relationship could therefore be easily exploited for political ends by those with an axe to grind against the northern Netherland provinces. Building upon the beggarly reputation associated with the Dutch rebels, anti-Dutch propaganda was able to goad English hierarchical sensibilities and link the avaricious merchant character with the Netherlands' popular government. Furthermore, as we have seen in the pamphlet polemic of Richard Verstegan, this portrayal of the Dutch corresponded well with the confessional type-casting that the politics of international religious conflict enabled. Accordingly, the Dutch Calvinists, English puritans and French Huguenots could be defined as inherently anti-monarchical in an evident attempt to capitalise upon the reversal of allegiance engendered by James's dynastic and foreign policy.

These stereotyped slurs against puritans most certainly highlight the inextricable tentacles of post-Reformation denominational conflict that infiltrated into the political realm. It was upon this pervasive, post-Reformation worldview that James's subjects were able to draw when justifying their resistance to his conduct of government. Thus in 1622 the preacher John Knight could turn to the theory of resistance, which had been developed as an emancipatory response by persecuted Protestants on the continent, to articulate his dissent over the religious implications of the Spanish marriage. To some extent, then, the match can be said to have prompted recourse to resistance theory as the king appeared increasingly to act against the interests of the Reformed faith. This, of course, only served to validate the polemical association of radical Protestantism with sedition and popular rebellion that was so evidently revealed by the Calvinist revolt in the Netherlands.

The rather flexible way that authority in the Netherlands could be interpreted consequently allowed those who favoured an alliance with Spain to associate the negative connotations of popular rule, or government by the many-headed monster, with the polity of the nascent Dutch Republic. This stood in contrast to the quasi-monarchical depiction of Prince Maurice as the heroic, Calvinist, soldier-prince, at the helm of the United Provinces. This Protestant

view of Dutch authority was influenced to a large extent by the pamphlet propaganda of the Dutch, patriot Contra-Remonstrants, who were rumoured to be encouraging the prince to assume the sovereignty of the country.³ It was through such a militant Protestant framework, encompassed in this latter understanding of the Dutch political system, that Oldenbarnevelt's death was represented and understood by a significant body of opinion in England. This subsequently allowed the charge of rebellion and treachery to be reversed once more to Catholic, Spanish shoulders.

But, as we have seen, the depiction of authority in the Netherlands did not neatly follow these confessionally aligned representations. Outside the immediate demands of propaganda and policy, the varying ways that the English considered and represented political power in the Dutch Republic offer an opportunity to investigate the evolving ideas upon authority and government that constituted the vibrant political culture in Jacobean England. The rumour that Mead related in 1622 is perhaps indicative of James's principled reluctance to admit that any circumstances could warrant the subjects' removal of their prince. Yet in practical terms the king had increasingly begun to consider Maurice as the Netherlands' nearest princely equivalent. The prince's role in the Netherlands' government was nebulous and mutating, especially following the execution of Oldenbarnevelt, who had until that point wielded significant political authority in the union's most dominant province, Holland. This consequently allowed for some level of manipulation when depicting the government of the United Provinces that could serve to reflect and underline the particular political principle being advocated. The monarchical terms in which James and his ambassador, Carleton, publicly perceived the prince contrasted with the marginalised depiction of him in favour of an emphasis upon the citizenry and their representative body, the States General, in the pamphlet polemic concerning the renewal of the Dutch-Spanish war in 1621. This contrast provides one illustrative example of the differing ways in which political opinion shaped the presentation of Maurice's role in England.

³ John Lothrop Motley, *The Life and Death of John of Barneveld* (London, 2 vols, 1874), ii., pp. 339-343.

Whilst such depictions were clearly intended to assume an immediate political function, it is evident that they were constructed from pre-existing opinions on the nature, limits and best practice of political authority. These representations, therefore, offer a further opportunity to evaluate the nuances of English political thinking in alternative ways to that provided by the more ephemeral, confessionally exploitative depiction of Maurice as the courtier-soldier, which permeated through the literature produced by the militantly-Protestant propaganda machine. In the same way, the immediate religio-political climate had encouraged the ‘patriot’ characterisation of Oldenbarnevelt as a pro-Spanish, Arminian-Catholic traitor. It also allowed Verstegan, to quite some degree of contrast, to malign the old advocate through a description of him as a rabid defender of the form of republicanism that was so repugnant to princes.⁴ For Massinger and Fletcher, however, this association of Oldenbarnevelt with the republican liberty of the Netherlands was employed positively as a contrast to the creeping aspiration to sovereignty perceived in the actions of the prince. Examining the English reception and consequent portrayal of the advocate’s downfall thus reveals the utility in turning to English considerations of continental, and especially Dutch, precedent to explore how political authority was being investigated during periods of domestic tension.

Thus, to return briefly to the initial quotation once more, it further indicates the value for studies in English political thought in looking at the influence of Dutch republicanism in the period before the canonical political theorists of the mid-seventeenth century. James’s purported instruction to the Dutch to ‘returne to their true & lawfull Soueraigne the King of Spaine’ highlights the English familiarity with the contested terms of the Dutch Revolt – and their perception of their sovereign’s attitude towards such terms. As the end of the Twelve Years Truce approached, the presses in the United Provinces again began to produce a voluminous body of literature in support of the Netherlands’ emancipation from Spanish tyranny. These publications, therefore, brought the politically explorative ideas of the earlier revolt period once more into the public domain. Recent research upon this justificatory literature has attempted to identify how it was engaging with republican ideas, thereby revising our view of

⁴ Richard Verstegan, *Observations concerning the Present Affaires of Holland and the Vnited Prouinces* ([St-Omer], 1621), pp. 90-91.

the Dutch Republic as unconcerned with this mode of thought until Spinoza. The renewal of the war thus rejuvenated the dissemination of these political ideas, so allowing the English dissenters resident in the Netherlands to draw upon them in their opposition to James's pro-Spanish policy. The pamphlet exchange between these malcontents and Verstegan demonstrates how the revolt literature was employed to convey a message to an English audience, and thus allows an investigation of the ways in which Dutch political theory was influencing English political thought.

This is a relatively unexplored area for the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, but judging from the insights gained by examining the pamphlet exchange, it promises to be a fruitful line of future enquiry. In the first instance, the Remonstrant smear campaign against the prince of Orange, which was conducted during the height of the civil disturbance in the Netherlands and for the years following Oldenbarnevelt's execution, drew extensively on a republican language of liberty in order to depict Maurice's actions as utterly contrary to the government and common good of the United Provinces. These protestations against the dangers inherent in monarchical rule were being articulated during the same period that an English culture of opposition was increasingly turning towards classical and continental political alternatives to James's perceived absolute-style of government. The increasing demand for news that allowed the publication of translated pamphlets, tracts and ephemeral printed material from the Netherlands to flourish in England during this period reflected a growing interest in international political affairs. Whilst this was largely dominated by a wealth of Contra-Remonstrant, pro-war publications that flooded into England, the survival of some of the stridently republican, Remonstrant propaganda suggests that these ideas were being disseminated as well. Massinger and Fletcher's depiction of Maurice, furthermore, indicates that this Remonstrant literature was also being engaged with. In the English polemical pamphlet exchange of the early 1620s we have seen one example of the influential role that Dutch political literature played. The Remonstrants' Arminian association, however, complicates to some extent the more easily transferrable employment of political ideas seen in the use of the revolt literature. But the view of a heterogeneous political culture in early Stuart England, which

this study has contributed to, suggests that a focus upon the circulation and engagement with such literature would prove a worthwhile future undertaking.

Finally, Mead's attribution of this sentiment to James by his subjects in early 1622, and its apparent currency amongst the 'common' people, reaffirms the suggestion that the period witnessed a marked increase in popular engagement with political ideas. Furthermore, it underpins the suggestion that the political ideas being developed and articulated in opposition to James's government were drawn from a range of influences and precedents in the contemporary and classical past. The various responses to the Spanish match, which were made from right across the social spectrum, provide a portal into some of the central political ideas of the period. As Thomas Cogswell has outlined, the unpopularity of James's policies certainly encouraged and shaped the expression of dissident opinion, and facilitated an appeal to the dichotomous confessional framework in the protests and entreaties that were being made. Yet, looking at some of these responses in more depth, it is evident that they can be contextualised within an identifiable political culture developing in Jacobean England. Although far from a homogeneous body of opinion, this culture can loosely be defined as 'oppositional' through its shared concern over the divergence of James's government from the political values held as central for preserving the common good. These values, in England, were widely understood as synonymous with the Reformed faith, explaining to some degree the ferocity of protest precipitated by the match.

It is a misrepresentation, however, to then classify the match opposition in religious terms that marginalise the significance of the diverse range of alternative factors and influences that dictated political allegiance. The literary output of John Taylor, George Wither and Massinger during the early 1620s all functioned to some extent as the individual responses of these authors to the tense political climate in which they were writing. Whilst works by all three have often been cited as examples of the match opposition, that none of them fit comfortably into the categories they are placed into gives grounds to question the utility of employing a rigidly confessional approach to understand the opposition literature. Like the cleric Thomas Adams, Taylor was evidently anxious about the favourable terms for Catholics that would result from Charles's prospective marriage to the infant. Such anxiety was matched, however, with an equal

concern over the widespread disobedience and public attempts to interfere with the conduct of government that the marriage policy engendered. The continued commitment of both these men to a Jamesian prescription of monarchical authority, despite their staunch dedication to the Reformed cause, indicates the range of factors that were dictating allegiance during the match. This suggests that political thinking was in some measure independent of the demands of militant Protestantism.

The similar central themes that dominate the criticism in Wither's and Massinger's works are reflective of the political concerns of a wider public, as well as the literary community. They shared an anxiety, along with a significant proportion of the politically savvy population, over the corruption identified with the Jacobean court. This identification was perceived as ultimately indicative of the inherently corrupt nature of princely courts more widely. One especially pernicious character associated with such courts was that of the flatterer and favourite, whose self-interested, sycophantic counsel endangered the common good by allowing the prince's descent into tyranny when personal liberty was exchanged for golden fetters. These political concerns were derived from considerations of authority that were indebted to the humanist enquiry after the best form of a commonwealth. Thus implicit in the criticism of the Jacobean court was a commitment to political society that was dependent upon the participation of virtuous citizens who were dedicated to acting in the public interest. Therefore, in responding to the questionable exercise of authority and its accompanying poor counsel during the early 1620s, Wither's satirical and biblical poetry and Massinger's drama could invoke and develop the ideas that defined the politically inquisitive opposition culture. The function each intended their commentary to play, however, stemmed from differing underlying motivations. Although far from casting him in the role of the dissenting puritan, Wither's poetry reflects the intricately interwoven relationship between the mores of humanist thought and the cause of international Protestantism in his deployment of a political agenda that had the maintenance of the Reformed religion at its heart. The more religiously ambivalent investigation of political authority that Massinger pursued in his plays, however, underlines the variegated character of the opposition culture and reemphasises the broader political foundation that informed a variety of responses to the match.

As Mead's report reveals, popular rumours on political themes were rife in 1622. The expression of opinion that was generated by the match and the continental conflict provides an opportunity to interrogate this broadly-based political culture, and so examine the nature and development of English political thought at the heart of the historiographically contested late Jacobean period. This study is premised upon the crucial insights provided by survey overviews of the protest against the match, and the defence of royal authority that it provoked. In building upon this, it has adopted a number of different approaches in order to examine in more depth the character of English political thought and the impact that James's unpopular policies had upon its development and expression. Through the detailed investigation of individual authors whose literary contributions between 1618 and 1624 present problematic counter-examples of an oppositional stereotype, the predominant framework for understanding the match literature has been tempered with a more nuanced view. This has been underlined through a subsequent focus upon the influential role played by additional languages and ideas that were becoming available in the period. Furthermore, in examining how English political thinkers conceived of the shifting exercise of power in the Netherlands, additional insights into their perception of English authority are provided.

In conclusion, this study has demonstrated the diversity of political opinion current in the late Jacobean period. In its varied formulation and articulation, this opinion drew on a range of influences, from the king's conception of divine and absolute authority to the new commendation of democratic republicanism as promoted by Traiano Boccalini. Reflective of a growing interest in exploring alternative forms of government that could most capably promote the common good, this explorative thought assumed more subversive potential when it was specifically articulated in response to periods of political crisis. In support of recent scholarship, then, this thesis identifies the potential for, and often existence of, ideological conflict well in advance of the 1640s. This conflict frequently employed, exploited, and was sometimes guided by, the dichotomous confessional mentality that permeated throughout post-Reformation society, but it was far from bound by it.

Appendix

SP 84/90, fos. 16-17v

Carleton to Naunton, 3 May 1619

(16r.) Right honorable

Yo[u]r Ho[nou]r may please to advertise his Ma[jes]ty that this morning betwixt nine & ten of ye clock ~~Monsr~~ Barnevelt was beheaded vpon a scaffold exprecly sett vp at the entrance of the great hall w[i]thin the Court, there being two ~~squadrons of soldgers~~ {companies of soldiers in bataills} w[i]thin the said Court, two others in the two {next} out Courts, & all the avenües kept w[i]th strong courts of gardes; w[hi]ch notw[i]thstanding gave libertie to as much people to enter as the place could well beare. He had knowledge given him betwixt nine & ten last night that he was to dye this morning, & had three ministers w[i]th him all night some part whereof he spent in prayer, some in writing to his wife (w[hi]ch was permitted him, & he tooke some {but very little} rest; soone after [e]ight this morning, he was brought into the Chamber where the States General vsually assemble, & they being there in full body w[i]th his twenty fower Judges, & three fiscals, his sentence was read {by a clarke} of losse of life, & confiscation of goods, the deduction of w[hi]ch held a full howers reading: w[hi]ch he attentively & patiently heard, sitting on a bench vncovered, & in the end thereof desired the States in few words that they would be satisfied w[i]th his life, & that his Children might enjoy his goods. from thence he was jmmediatly conducted to the scaffold; where at his first com[m]ing he ~~vsed~~ ~~thi~~ stirred his hat to ye people, ~~saying~~ {vsing} this word onely Ick sterf niet ~~as~~ {als} een Lands Ver{r}ader. I dye not as a traytor. An hower being taken vp in the reading of the sentence the whole businesse lasted but an hower and a half; ~~and~~ no remarquable thing {hapning} therin; this onely was obserued that the scaffold being opposite to the Prince of Oranges lodgings ~~and lying Est and west~~ he neuer would looke directly that way, but turned himself {still} ~~towarde the south and~~ {on the one side when he prayed and o[n] the other} when he kneeled downe to receaue his blow: ~~he turned his back was w[hi]ch was so soone dispatch that~~

{w[hi]ch was giuen him sodainly his hands being vnbow[nd] and} his head fell
{[lited]} vnder his left arme in ye fall of his body.

(16v) The carcas was left a while on the scaffold for the people to behold and afterwards coffind, and carried away. The scaffold remains still, w[hi]ch breedes suspition that some other of the prisoners may goe the same way w[hi]ch will be Musberghan, yf any for the other two I am informed will escape w[i]th life though otherwise they will be ~~condemned~~ declared incaple of euer bearing office and ~~be~~ condemned to perpetual imprisonment.

The French Amb[assado]r continued his instance to the very last for the sauing of Monsr Barnevelt for w[hi]ch purpose he demaunded audience this morning early and that being denied him he wrote these letters ~~wherof~~ wherof I send y[ou]r H[onou]r the copies w[hi]ch were not read in the assemblie of the States but apres le coup.

At this present there are sent {three} Deputies fro[m] the States vnto him w[hi]ch deliuer the same ~~as others haue~~ account of theyr proceedings as the same number one of Guelderland an other of ~~Zealand~~ {Holland} the third of ~~Holl~~ {Zealand} being sent likewise vnto me haue done euen now to the end I should

(17r) aduertise his Ma[jes]ty and that is, that hauing com[m]itted the examina[ti]on of the cause of these prisoners to 24 sworne Judges men against whom no just exception could be taken they had all without contradiction {of any one} resolved of Barneuels execution for crimes of w[hi]ch they would giue his Ma[jes]ty within few dayes {~~more~~} ample relation by a copie of the proces and sentence; meane while they besiech his Ma[jes]ty to hold a goode opinion of this execution that it is according to Justice and equitie and necessarily requisite for the peace and repos of this State. In answeare I told the[m] that the confidence his Ma[jes]ty hath of the Justice of theyr proceedings did make him forbear interposing himself during the whole time of this proces though his natural disposition to clemencie might otherwise haue drawne fro[m] him the ~~same~~ {like} intercessions as haue bin vsed by other princes

(17v) and the same confidence when his {Ma[jes]ty} shall heare of this execution will breede a goode perswasion of Justice {and equitie} thereof vntill

his Ma[jes]ty may see the ~~proecesses~~ proces; w[i]th w[hi]ch I sayde I would readily acquaint his Ma[jes]ty when I may haue it of the[m].

The Proces will be printed in Duch and French with all expedition.

Herew[i]th goe letters fro[m] our Diuines who were employed to the Sinode wherby they aduertise his Ma[jes]ty through the hands of my L[or]d of Canterburie of the conclusion of that businesse. They are gon to Leyden this day to entertaine themselves there and at Ambsterda[m] vntil a ship be prepared for theyr returne, they being dismist very honorably and w[i]th as much contentment in all respects as they haue giuen w[hi]ch hath bin very great.

These occasions ~~at the Hagh~~ {w[i]th the vacation of the Faire} haue putt by the Est Indian merchants fro[m] making any report {of theyr treatie in England} to the States hetherto; so as they are gon to Ambsterda[m] to speak first to the companie and returne hether again w[i]thin a day or two.

Thus I humbly take leaue. fro[m] ye Hagh this 3rd of May.

Carleton to Chamberlain, 3 May 1619

Goode Mr Chamberlain. A word for this time and away. The Canons at Dort were published on monday last w[i]th vniforme consent of the whole Sinode. This Monday, about the same hower betwixt nine and ten in the morning Barnevelt was beheaded in the Inner court of the Princes Hofe vppon a scaffold sett vp expresly before the entrie of the great Hall. He died constantly and religiously; hauing but one night to prepare himself; and an hower and a half to heare his sentence and to suffer. At the conclusion of the reading of his sentence w[hi]ch was [~~confiscat~~] losse of life and confisca[ti]on of goods[;] he prayed the States to content themselves w[i]th his life, and to leaue his goods to his wife and children; and at his cum[m]ing vppon the scaffold vsed this word onely I die not as a traytor. you shall haue his proces by the next w[hi]ch is all ready in the presse both in Duch and French. I thanck you for y[ou]r last wh[e]rin you write of Charles Morgans quarrel to me for ayding his Coronet: It is a thing I can not refuse any of my nation (being required) as far as theyr cause will beare; much less a man of his place. Thus I rest. y[ou]r[s] most assured D Carleton

Calvert to Carleton, 8 May 1619

(48r) My Lord. Some few dayes since his Ma[jes]tie receiued a Letter from the States generall in favor of the Bohemians; touching w[hi]ch businesse my Lo[rd] of Doncaster is furnished w[i]th Instrucc[i]ons sufficyent from his Ma[jes]tie, as he passeth by that way; But in the meane time his Ma[jes]tie hath commaunded mee to signify vnto you his pleasure, that to the proposc[i]on w[hi]ch the States haue made for some succor and support from his Ma[jes]tie to the Bohemians, hee would haue you lett them knowe, as you see fitt occasion, that hee cannot yet assist them, either w[i]th forces or money in the tearmes hee now stands: for it is well knowne that at the earnest request of the King of Spaine, and seconded since w[i]th a desire from the Bohemians themselues and from the Count Palatine, his Ma[jes]tie hath taken vpon him to bee a mediator of peace betweene King Ferdinand and them; and that depending, if his Ma[jes]tie should supply them w[i]th forces or money, hee should make himself a party, and not indifferent for such an office, wherein his honor is deeply engaged.

His Ma[jes]tie hath this morning perused the Letter you sent vnto Mr Secr[etary] Naunton touching the death of Barneuelts, for w[hi]ch wee haue no greate cause to mourne.

His Ma[jes]tie hath also seen {the} Cannons of the late Synode, in the Preface to w[hi]ch Cannons hee finds an omission, w[hi]ch hee would gladly haue amended, and com[m]aunded mee to signify so much vnto you, that you might procure it to be done; The point is this; where they mec[i]on the Princes who haue contributed their countenance

(48v) and assistance to that greate [acon...], they vse these words Serenissimi, Prapotentum etc Regis, Principum [...] wherein his Ma[jes]tie conceiueth the menc[i]on they mak of him is too obscure, and therefore to the word Regis hee would haue added Jacobi magna Britannia etc. This is all I haue for the present to write vnto you I sent you long since an answere to the l[ett]re I receiued from you at Newmarket, w[hi]ch I hope came vnto yor hands.

And so I rest.

Yor Lo[rdshi]pps very loving friend to do you service
Geo. Caluert

Theobalds. 8. May. 1619

Carleton to Chamberlain, 8 May 1619

Goode Mr Chamberlain in answeare of y[ou]r l[ett]re of the 24 of this pr[esen]t w[hi]ch I receaued yesterday I concurre w[i]th you in opinion that words must be seconded w[i]th actions elce they will be accounted but winde, but both of these are not in one mans power[;] and we that are in these employments are filij obedientiae to say as we are com[m]aunded: others may doe after as they please and I am rather sorrie that I had so much to say then that there is so little done. For what is past here I send you the minute of a l[ett]re w[hi]ch I pray you keepe to y[ou]rself till you returne it. Though it be scribled you will pick out somewhat in that of w[hi]ch I know you will desire to be particularly informed. Grotius and Hogerbets had theyr sentences of perpetual imprisonment and confisca[ti]on of goods pronounced in the same place as Barneuelts had his on Saturday last.

...

y[ou]rs most assured. D. Carleton

States General to the Provinces, on Barnevelt's sentence, 9/19 May 1619

Wee send you herew[i]th certaine exemplaries of ye sentence arrested or concluded, by ye the learned Iudges, appointed (a while since) by vs vnto the iudging of the prisoners, w[hi]ch we some space since caused to be apprehended: w[hi]ch sente[n]ce we the 13th of this moneth haue caused to be pronounced and executed vppon the person of Iohn van Olden Barnevelt, late Advocate of ye Province of Holland and Westfryseland.

Moreover haue ye sayed Iudges made ouerture vnto vs, y[a]t besides those mentioned in his sentence, there are sundry other points layed to his charge, w[hi]ch in conformity to the information, and the indicions arising therfrom, giues greate casue, y[a]t he had his aspect vppon ye enemy, & directed his actions thereafter, y[a]t he would not only not giue offence, vnto ye other side, but would on the contrary favour them.

But forasmuch as ye proofs and confessions touching thos[e] points, were not such as thervppon could be by lawe diffinatuely disposed of w[i]thout more nearer inquest, and sharper examination by torture, and y[a]t the same is not fou[n]d convenient by ye aforesayed Iudges, as well in regard of his old age, as other considerations w[hi]ch doth concerne the service of ye Country. And more especially for y[a]t the deciding of these, and other busenesses, might not longer be deferred w[i]thout evident dommage vnto ye common cause: and ye points specified in ye sentence being sufficient to statute in his person an exemplary punishment; we haue found it good and needfull to advertise you therof by these: Beseeching ye Allmighty (noble, worthy, wellerned, faithfull, and provident Lords) to keepe you in his holy protection; Hagh this the 19th of May 1619. was subscribed I van Dorth. v^l . and vnderneath stood: By ye ordonance of ye aforesayed Lords, states, and signed. C Aerssen.

Carleton to Calvert, 30 Jan 1623

(41r) Right honorable

Here is a notable treason against the person of the Prince of Orange happily discovered after this manner. On Munday last the Prince being at Risewick (his accustomed place of recutation to see his breede of horses) two meane persons matcosses as they call them here, sea faring men, desired to speake w[i]th him: w[hi]ch he refusing as not willing there to be troubled, they stayed notw[i]thstanding till he tooke his coche to returne, [and] then pressing forward w[i]th importunity they delivered him a writing w[hi]ch contayned that they two w[i]th two, other their companions they left at theyr lodging here at the Hagh, were hyred w[i]th good sumes of money payd them downe in gold to doe a peece of service for the good of the Countrey [and] yf this service were knowne to his Ex[cellent]cy they desired to receive his com[m]aundements; yf it were not knowne they doubted the intention, [and] therefore thought fitt to acquaint him w[i]th it, [and] thervpon one of them pulled out of his pockett a hand full of gold w[hi]ch he shewed his Ex[cellent]cy to confirme theyr information. His Ex[cellent]cy returning immediately to this place caused garde to be sett vpon these two men w[i]th theyr two fellowes who were found at theyr Inne, [and] they conducting their garde w[i]th the Fiscall to an other Inne where the partye was, who delivered them theyr moneyes (a certayne Ioyner of Rotterdam) he was there apprehended w[i]th three more in his company all seafaring men, [and] a chest was there found by discovery of the other fower wherin some pistols [and] long daggers, [and] in the bed strawe where these men lay were hidden certayne poignards: w[hi]ch being shewed them, [and] they asked to what purpose they had those armes they agreed all in one tale, that they had a dessigne to have broken vp a prison at Harlem wherin lye two Arminian Preachers, [C]opius [and] Born, [and] to have sett them at liberty: to w[hi]ch they pretended all to be persuaded by one Berkle late Secretary of Blaswick, from w[hi]ch place he was deported in the late generall reformation, [and] hath ever since lived at Rotterdam. This Berkle was mett going out of that Inne as the Fiscall entred, who spake w[i]th him, he being of his acquaintance, but lett him goe vnarrested, [and]

he is since escaped: for w[hi]ch the Fiscall is much blamed. Since these mens apprehention they having bene more strictly examined [and] the chiefe of them shewed the torture yesterday they confessed

(41v) this delivery of the Arminian Preachers to be onely a pretence agreed vpon amongst them in case theyr plott should be discovered w[hi] ch was to have assayled the Prince of orange [and] murdered him in his coche in his vsuall walke betwixt this [and] Risewick: for w[hi]ch besides this money already distributed w[hi]ch was to the value of 300. florins a man, larger sumes were promised w[i]th [assu]rance of maintenance for theyr wives [and] children that should [mis]carry in the attempt; w[hi]ch should have bene exploited by these eight here taken (of w[hi]ch fower onely knew the whole matter) the Secretary Berkle, who is fled, [and] eight more were to come from Leyden. The chiefe contriver of this treason, [and] he that vndertooke to give the blow to his Ex[cellen]cy, whilst the other should have stayed his coche [and] assayled those about him, was one Slatius [an] Arminian banished Preacher, who hath lived closely since his banishment at Rotterdam, [and] hath drawne into it Barnevelts two sonnes, Grondeuille [and] Craningpolder (both w[hi]ch fled away from hence late this last night) [and] Vandermyle, Barnevelts sonne in lawe who lives confyned at Beverwicke betwixt Alkmar [and] Harlem, is accused to be acquainted therw[i]th by Slatius, who was lately w[i]th him at Beuerwick in his way from Amsterdam. Officers are sent hervpon to arrest him, [and] proclamation is th[is] day made for the apprehending of Slatius w[i]th Ge[c]teranus* (Arminian Ministers likewise) accused to be of the conspiracy [and] Berkle** w[i]th 4000. florins vpon every one of theyr heads 60[0] being promised to the discoverer of any one of the eight Leyden men, [and] impunity to such as willingly appeare. Theyr purpose was having done theyr exploitt to have escaped by benefitt of the frost over the yce through the marish gro[ing] towards Tergow; w[hi]ch had bene no hard matter eyther for [th..] execution (his Ex[cellen]cy going alwayes vnaccompanied save onely w[i]th such as he hath in his coche [and] one page on horseback) [or] the escape, by meanes of theyr swift slyding vpon the yce [vn]der much cover, w[hi]ch is the nature of that drowned land. The sumes of money delivered to these men as pretium sanguinis in all to the valew of 5000. florins [and] the season of the yeare so proper for invasion by

meanes of the frost maks it suspected the ennemy had a hand in this treason: but as yet

(42r) yet appeares no further evidence then suspition onely. Howsoever they would have reaped the fruict thereof by the death of this worthy Prince whome God doth vndoubtedly protect; he havubg w[i]thin these few dayes escaped two great dangers, this of treason [and] an other of sicknes; wherw[i]th not w[i]thstanding he is much broken.

W[i]th the account yo[u]r Ho[nou]r will give his Ma[jes]ty hereof you may please to putt his Ma[jes]ty in minde of congratulating {w[i]th his Ex[cellen]cy} this happye escape w[i]th a few lynes; w[hi]ch I belieue wilbe done by other Princes, [and] I know none to whose service he is more devoted then his Ma[jes]ties Thus I humbly take leave. Hagh this 30th January 1623

y[ou]r H[onou]rs
most humbly to be com[m]aunded

Dudley Carleton

marginal notes:

* & Velsius

** so com[m]only called but p[ro]clamed by the name of Adryan Adrianson van Dyck

James to the Prince of Orange, 21 Feb 1623

Mon Cousin. Ayans en cognoissance par nostre Ambass[ado]r le [Cnlr] Carleton de la grace que Dieu vous a faite de descourir et preuenir vne pernicieuse conspiration qui estoit brassée et preste d'executer contre vostre personne et le repos de cest Estat là; Nous n'avons peu que nous conjouir et louer Dieu de tout nostre coeur avec vous de cestre heureuse deliuerance, pour l'interest et vif sentiment que nous avons, non seulement de chose qui vous touche en particulier de si pres, mais aussy de tout ce qui concerne le bien et conseruation generale de Messrs les Estats, ausquels nous scauons combien celle de vostre personne est chere et importante; et nous promettons que vous ferez tellement vostre proffit de cest aduertissement que par vostre vigilance vous dissiperez a l'aduenir, non seulement la trame et les complots, mais aussy les occasions et moyens de telles machinations. En quoy nous ne doubtons pas que Dieu secondera vostre diligence, lequel nous prions Mon Cousin vous avoir tousyours en sa sainte protection.

V[ost]re tresaffectionne Cousin

Jaques R.

Newmarkett le 21. d Feburier 1622

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