

***'London, thou great emporium of our Isle': Dryden
writing the city***

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This thesis began life as a weekly essay written in Michaelmas term 2013 for a special author paper on John Dryden. The original essay was little more than two thousand words in length, looking principally at Dryden's two direct addresses to London in *Annus Mirabilis* and *The Medall*. That it transformed into a doctoral thesis owes much to the enthusiasm generated by Peter McCullough.

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Abstract

John Dryden spent his professional life living and writing in London. As well as the implicit or explicit setting, subject or structuring principal for a substantial volume of his corpus, London is a condition of aesthetic production for Dryden's poems, plays and prose. This thesis contributes to our understanding of Dryden's centrality to the development of metropolitan literary culture in the Restoration period. Unlike existing criticism, it treats Dryden's urban modernity as a discrete subject rather than as being incidental to his other literary preoccupations. The thesis draws on the whole range of Dryden's writing – verse, prose, and plays – but also includes discussion of the representation of London in the work of other Restoration poets and dramatists when they provide illuminating comparative material.

An introductory chapter outlines the extent of our biographical knowledge of Dryden's attachment to London. Some space will be reserved for an abbreviated political history of Westminster and the City of London during the Civil Wars and Restoration of the monarchy, as well as outlining the urban and demographic development of the capital across the seventeenth century. Chapter two explores how metropolitan readers interacted with networks of manuscript and print circulation. Specific consideration is given to how sites of sociability affected the transmission of Dryden's work. The third chapter looks at the social and cultural development of the 'Town' as a built environment and discursive space, principally through the analysis of the prologues, epilogues, and dedications prefixing his drama.

The remaining chapters of the thesis look at particular texts – or clusters of texts – chronologically rather than thematically. Chapter four deals with the modes of civic government made possible by the purgative burning of the City of London in *Annus Mirabilis*. The subject of the fifth chapter is *Mac Flecknoe*: in particular, it looks at the political, social and literary allusiveness of the poem's topography, along with its structural debt to the Lord Mayor's Show and civic pageantry. Chapter six deals with Dryden's partisan polemic during the Restoration crisis of government. It asks how the offices and institutions of City government, street politics and populism influenced the writing of *His Majesties Declaration Defended*, *Absalom and Achitophel*, *The Medall*, and *The Duke of Guise*. Some observations are made on the mythological triumph of the Stuart monarchy over the City of London in *Albion and Albanius* in a brief coda. The final chapter looks at the ways in which translation offered an alternative path for the displaced representation of London, especially after Dryden fell from political favour and lost sources of patronage after the events of the 1688-9 Revolution. Chiefly, the texts under consideration are 'The Third Satire of Juvenal' and Virgil's *Aeneis*.

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Note on Texts and Abbreviations

Unless otherwise stated, quotations of Dryden's writings are from *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. H.T. Swedenberg et al., 20 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1956-2000), cited by short title as *Works*. I use the California Dryden as it is the only complete old-spelling edition of his works. Poems are cited by line parenthetically in the text; plays by act, scene, and line number; prose works by volume and page number. I also make reference to *The Poems of John Dryden*, ed. Paul Hammond and David Hopkins, 5 vols. (Harlow: Longman, 1995-2005) for the editorial matter, abbreviated to *Poems*.

Scriptural quotations are from the Authorised King James Bible, the translation of the Bible most familiar to Dryden. Wherever possible, I quote Latin and Greek authors in the seventeenth-century editions Dryden is most likely to have used.

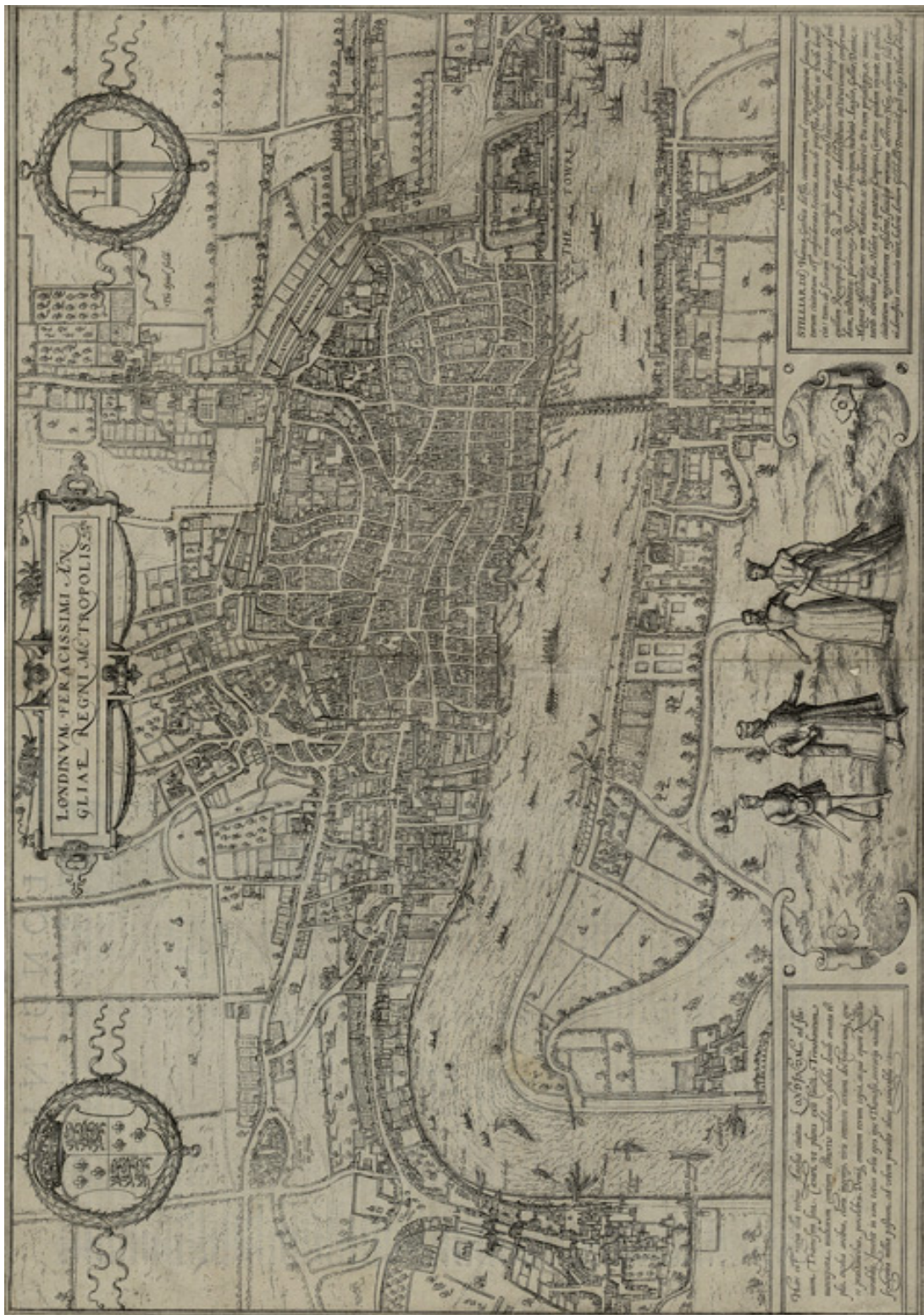
Abbreviations

De Krey, <i>London and the Restoration</i>	Gary De Krey, <i>London and the Restoration, 1659-1683</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)
<i>Works</i>	<i>The Works of John Dryden</i> , ed. H.T. Swedenberg et al., 20 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1956-2000)
<i>Poems</i>	<i>The Poems of John Dryden</i> , ed. Paul Hammond and David Hopkins, 5 vols. (Harlow: Longman, 1995-2005)
<i>Letters</i>	<i>The Letters of John Dryden</i> , ed. Charles E. Ward (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1942)
Harris, <i>London Crowds</i>	Tim Harris, <i>London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II: Propaganda and Politics from the Restoration until the Exclusion Crisis</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987)
Milton, <i>Prose Works</i>	<i>The Complete Prose Works of John Milton</i> , ed. Don M. Wolfe, 8 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953-82)
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
Pepys, <i>Diary</i>	<i>The Diary of Samuel Pepys</i> , ed. Robert Latham and William Matthews, 11 vols. (London: G. Bell, 1970-1983)
POAS	<i>Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714</i> , ed. George deF. Lord, 7 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963-75)
<i>Prologues and Epilogues</i>	<i>The Prologues and Epilogues of the Restoration, 1660-1700</i> , ed. Pierre Danchin, 7 vols. (Nancy: Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 1981-88)
Winn, <i>John Dryden and His World</i>	James Anderson Winn, <i>John Dryden and His World</i> (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987)

Note on Conventions

Here, ‘the City’ or the ‘City of London’ refers to the area governed by the Corporation of London (often known as the Square Mile), centred principally but not completely within the ancient defensive walls. The term ‘the City’ denotes both the geographical area within the Corporation’s jurisdiction and the municipal authority itself. I use the uncapitalised ‘city’, ‘metropolis’, ‘capital’ and ‘town’ in reference to greater London, including the City, Westminster, unincorporated Southwark, and adjacent parishes outside the ancient walls. The capitalised ‘Town’ has a distinct topographical and social meaning (as I explain in the second chapter).

In this thesis, dates follow the ‘Old Style’ Julian calendar (and hence ten days behind the Gregorian calendar in use in Catholic countries), but the year is assumed to start on 1 January.



1. Anonymous, *Londinum feracissimi Angliae Regni metropolis* (1572). Tudor engraving showing the extent of land use towards the end of the sixteenth century, including the open pasture between the City and Westminster village. London, British Library, Maps Crace Port. 1.12. © British Library.

Introduction

After receiving his early schooling in Titchmarsh, Northamptonshire, John Dryden arrived at Westminster School as a King's Scholar in around 1644.¹ To a young provincial boy unaccustomed to the metropolis, catching sight of London for the first time must have been an overwhelming experience. While the wider nation tore itself to pieces, Civil War London was cannot have been a sheltered environment for the young scholars. Westminster School educated generations of statesmen, judges, bishops and writers under the tutelage of Richard Busby.² King's Scholars, such as Dryden, boarded in the school and received stipends for two or three years prior to standing for election to either Trinity College, Cambridge, or Christ Church, Oxford. Dryden's literary career was undeniably influenced by the high Anglican and loyalist doctrine inculcated by the headmaster. As important, however, was the propinquity of the young Dryden to ongoing affairs of state in Westminster. It would have been difficult for the boys at Westminster to be sheltered from the transactions of the Long Parliament, Archbishop Laud's execution, Pride's Purge, and the incessant street politics enveloping the capital. When Charles I was beheaded in front of the Banqueting House on 30 January 1649, Dryden and the King's Scholars were locked away in prayer only a stone's throw away.

Aside from his higher education at Trinity College, Cambridge, and brief excursions to Northamptonshire or the country residences of friends and patrons, Dryden spent the rest

¹ The available evidence for Dryden's time at Westminster is outlined in Winn, *John Dryden and his World*, pp. 36-57.

² Such store was placed on Busby's exemplary pedagogy that he managed to survive several regime changes during his tenure as Headmaster between 1638 and 1695, despite his initial appointment by Laud for his Arminian and royalist beliefs.

of his life living and working in London.³ Any prolonged absences from the capital were noteworthy to his peers. On 20 August 1677, William Wycherley wrote to the Earl of Musgrave that, ‘I have no scandalous news to send you for M^r Russel is out of Town, nor any Poetical News, for Dryden is in Northampton-shire’.⁴ He worked alongside Milton and Marvell in the Office for Foreign Tongues, walking alongside the pair in Cromwell’s funeral procession on 23 November 1658. Probably acting as a part-time clerk and translator for John Thurloe, Cromwell’s secretary of state, Dryden looked to set himself up as an urban gentleman.⁵ He began developing the contacts – both literary and social – that would smooth his transition to a literary career (notably, Henry Herringman and Sir Robert Howard). We can locate several of Dryden’s known London residences. James M. Osborn has shown Dryden lodged near Lincoln’s Inn Fields from 1663, followed by the adjacent parish of St. Clement Danes.⁶ The evidence of rate books suggests Dryden was a householder in St. Martin’s-in-the-Fields from 1669 to 1687 on the north side of Long Acre. Dryden’s final residence was in Gerrard Street, Soho (a relocation possibly precipitated by his decline in his fortunes after 1688).⁷

³ His jaunts to Northamptonshire in later life were conditioned by the imperative of tending to affairs at his Blakesley farm. Chief among his rural retreats were the home of his father-in-law at Charlton, Wiltshire; Sir Charles Wolseley’s residence in Staffordshire; and Knole, the home of his patron the Earl of Dorset in Kent. See James M. Osborn, *John Dryden: Some Biographical Facts and Problems* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1965), pp. 214-25. There is also evidence that he made at least one visit to Ugbrooke in Devon, the country seat of Lord Treasurer Clifford. Such extended departures from the capital afforded the poet the time and space to write or recover from bouts of ill health.

⁴ *Time Literary Supplement*, 18 April 1935, p. 237.

⁵ Dryden’s status as a Commonwealth bureaucrat was firmly established in Paul Hammond, ‘Dryden’s Employment by Cromwell’s Government’, *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 8 (1981), 130-36.

⁶ Osborn, *John Dryden: Some Biographical Facts and Problems*, pp. 209-10.

⁷ He is listed as the fifth householder on the east end of the south side. According to Alexander Pope, Dryden undertook his translation work on ‘the ground-room next the street’; Joseph Spence, *Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men*, ed. James M. Osborn, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), i 25. All that is commemorated of Dryden’s residence in London is a cracked and obscured blue plaque above 43 Gerrard Street home, now located in the centre of Chinatown.

When Dryden perished on 1 May 1700 with a gangrenous leg, he was initially buried the following day in St. Anne's, Soho, with little fanfare. '[T]he whole town', Ned Ward announced in *The London Spy*, 'as well as in all other parts of the kingdom' were melancholy at the news of Dryden's passing.⁸ The family's modest designs for the funeral of the writer were overridden by the unwavering commitment of influential friends and acquaintances, including Lord Halifax and Dr. Thomas Spratt, Bishop of Rochester and Dean of Westminster, for a more magnificent ceremony.⁹ Samuel Johnson's life of the poet quotes the response of Lord Jeffries to the private funeral arrangements of the Dryden family:

What, shall Dryden, the greatest honour and ornament of the nation, be buried after this private manner! No, gentleman, let all that loved Mr. Dryden, and honour his memory, alight and join with men in gaining my lady's consent [Elizabeth Howard, Dryden's widow] to let me have the honour of his interment, which shall be after another manner than this; and I will bestow a thousand pounds on a monument in the Abbey for him.¹⁰

Subsequently, Dryden's corpse was exhumed at the request of his final patron, the Earl of Dorset, and carried to an undertaker's in Cheapside where he was embalmed after the royal manner and laid in state at the Royal College of Physicians. When the funeral procession finally assembled at the College of Physicians on 13 May, there was a diverse crowd of mourners. Counted among their number were poets, dramatists, actors, musicians, publishers, aristocrats and leading statesmen: the full gamut of influential London society. One commemorative poem recalled the fraternisation of different social circles in the fifty-strong

⁸ Edward Ward, *The London Spy*, no. 2, April 1700, in *The London Spy: Ned Ward's Classic Account of Underworld Life in Eighteenth-Century London*, ed. Paul Hyland (East Lansing, Michigan: Colleague's Press, 1993), p. 320.

⁹ Edmund Malone gives an account of Dryden's death and funeral in *The Critical and Miscellaneous Prose Works of John Dryden, Now First Collected*, 4 vols. (London: Printed by H. Baldwin for T. Cadell, 1800), i 347-82.

¹⁰ Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets; With Critical Observations on their Works*, ed. Roger Lonsdale, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), ii 108.

funeral train: it was ‘another *Babel*’ (‘all the Wits must meet / From *Covent-Garden* down to *Watling-Street*’; ‘Troop of Stationers.../And *Jacob T---n* Captain of the Guard’; ‘Play-house Sparks’).¹¹ Nor were the mourners confined to friends, literary acolytes or religio-political bedfellows. Indeed, the pomp and circumstance of the second funeral was funded by the members of the exclusive Whig dining society, the Kit-Kat Club. Although, as Ophelia Field argues, this was a tacit appropriation of Dryden posthumously to a Whig literary history, there is more going on here.¹² Seemingly incongruously, the organisers were arranging the burial of a Catholic apologist in an Anglican abbey. Scores of Londoners lined the streets around Whitehall and Westminster to witness the nation’s aristocracy bury an impecunious Tory writer. What shocked contemporary observers was the bizarre spectacle of the great in the political nation, such as Charles Montagu (formerly William III’s first Lord of the Treasury) who led the procession through the abbey, alongside stationers, actresses and tradesmen. By several accounts, the solemnity of the occasion slid into riotousness. George Farquhar lamented that ‘the burial was the same as his life: variety and not of a piece – the quality and mob, farce and heroics, the sublime and ridicule mixed in a piece – great Cleopatra in a hackney coach’.¹³ When Dryden was laid to rest in Chaucer’s grave in Westminster Abbey, he was surrounded by social and literary connections – writers, patrons, actors, publishers and booksellers – that attest to his embeddedness in London literary culture. Whereas later writers – such as Samuel Johnson or Charles Dickens – are more readily associated with the capital, the collocation of Dryden and London seems apposite given the bare facts of his life.

¹¹ [Thomas Browne], ‘A Description of Mr. D–n’s Funeral. A Poem’ (London: Printed for A. Baldwin, 1700), pp. 5, 7.

¹² Ophelia Field, *The Kit-Kat Club* (London: Harper Perennial, 2009), pp. 1-8.

¹³ George Farquhar, *The Complete Works of George Farquhar*, ed. Charles Stonehill, 2 vols. (New York: Gordian Press, 1967), i 391.

Seventeenth-Century London

It is scarcely possible to overstate the importance of London to national life during Dryden's lifetime. Few cities have ever had such an overwhelming and untouchable eminence. Between 1550 and 1700, inward migration had transformed the capital from a compact city concentrated within the ancient City walls into a sprawling metropolis.¹⁴ The population quadrupled during this time from 120,000 to 490,000, which made London the largest city in Europe. Relative to the population expansion of the rest of the nation, London grew by 88 per cent compared to 24 per cent.¹⁵ Although only between 10 and 20 per cent of England's population lived in cities during the seventeenth century, a visiting countryman would have been staggered by the alienness of metropolitan life.¹⁶ Crucial to London's importance was that the theatre of state played itself out along an axis between Westminster and the City of London. London was 'the Capital City, the Eye and Heart of the Nation, as being not only the Regal Seat, but the Principal place of Judicature, and residence of the chief Officers, and Courts of Justice, where also the Records are kept, as well as the principal place of Commerce and Concourse in the Nation, and to which the People may have the best

¹⁴ Although the data on early modern London's population history is contentious, there was certainly a sustained and vast expansion of the metropolis and its suburbs. Analysis of the competing figures can be found in Vanessa Harding, 'The Population of London, 1550-1700: a review of the published evidence', *The London Journal* 15 (1990), 111-28. Much of the debate concerns the definition of London and its geographical localities.

¹⁵ Roger Finlay and Beatrice Shearer, 'Population Growth and Suburban Expansion', in *London 1500-1700: The Making of the Metropolis*, ed. A. L. Beier and Roger Finlay (Harlow: Longman, 1986), 37-59, at p. 38. See also E. A. Wrigley, 'A simple model of London's importance in changing English society and economy 1650 and 1750', *Past and Present* 37 (1967), 44-70.

¹⁶ There was a growing distinction between rural and urban experience by the end of the century. While cities were associated with civility and sophistication, the country was rustic and uncouth. Although Adam dwelt in paradise, heaven was conceptualised as a city, the New Jerusalem (eg. Revelation xxi 2; William Gouge, *A Learned...Commentary on the Whole Epistle to the Hebrewes* (London: Printed for Joshua Kirton, 1655), p. 27; William Gearing, *A Prospect of Heaven* (London: Printed for Thomas Hassock and Benjamin Hurlock, 1673), p. 121; John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, ed. James Wharey and Roger Sharrock (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), pp. 158-63.

recourse, and where they may have the best accommodation.’¹⁷ London’s population and wealth, as well as its political and religious institutions, meant it was instrumental in the maintenance and change of national rule. ‘I looked on it [London] as the master wheel’, the royalist Lord Mordaunt wrote prior to the meeting of the Convention Parliament, ‘by whose motion the successive rotations of all the lesser must follow’.¹⁸ In particular, the City of London simultaneously projected itself as a city loyal to the crown and a bastion of English liberty. This second pillar of its identity – the defence of Reformed Protestantism and civic liberty – meant that the dense urban communities of the City exposed the ideological divisions and fault lines within national political life.¹⁹ ‘Citizenship provided an identity’, Ian Archer writes, ‘which accelerated politicization, both because of the opportunities it provided for institutional expression and because of the languages of ‘freedom’ it entailed’.²⁰ Crowd demonstrations, rallies, riots and rebellions gathered Londoners together in numbers unimaginable in any other circumstance. The threat to people and property was less threatening to the municipal and national authorities than the symbolic breakdown in hierarchy and social order. As Bucholz and Ward have shown, popular politics was defined in opposition to the Great Chain of Being; mass demonstrations and mob rule threatened the legitimising mythologies of the body politic.²¹

¹⁷ *Vox Populi: Or the Peoples Claim to their Parliaments Sitting* (London: Printed for Francis Smith, 1681), p. 5.

¹⁸ Letter from Lord Mordaunt to Charles II, 26 January 1660, quoted in *The Letter-Book of John Viscount Mordaunt, 1658-1660*, ed. Mary Coate (London: The Royal Historical Society, 1945), p. xviii.

¹⁹ London was the cockpit for theological and ecclesiological change in England during the Reformation. London citizens were crucial to the doctrinal debates turning the world upside down during the sixteenth century; reformed Protestants saw themselves as a band of the elect amidst Babylon. See Susan Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

²⁰ Ian Archer, ‘Popular Politics in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries’, in *Londinopolis: Essays in the Cultural and Social History of Early Modern London*, ed. Paul Griffiths and Mark S.R. Jenner (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 26-47, at pp.27-8.

²¹ Robert Bucholz and Joseph Ward, *London: A Social and Cultural History, 1550-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 269.

Although apprentice riots and public disorder were common in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries asserting the ancient right of petition for the redress of grievances or the enforcement of community standards, they were rarely designed to enact regime or constitutional change. More serious rebellions could precipitate a revolution in government. If London's allegiance changed, so changed the nation. Popular demonstrations in the provinces could not enforce a change in the succession or crown policy without the support of Londoners. As a result, kingmakers needed the obedience and allegiance of London's citizens. The failure of Tudor rebellions, notably Wyatt's rebellion (1554) and Essex's rebellion (1601), can be ascribed to civic authorities maintaining their hold on London. Indeed, Mary I gave an impassioned speech at the Guildhall as Wyatt's supporters marched towards the capital from Kent.²² The audience cheered and tossed up their caps in expressions of joy at her pleas for obedience. Mary assembled the Trained Bands and royal guards to halt the advance of Wyatt's conspirators south of London Bridge. Without the loyalty and military support of London's citizens, the queen would likely have been at the mercy of the rebels.

In contrast to the sixteenth century, the Stuart loss of control over the capital precipitated the fall of the monarchy. Since London crowds were not monoliths, unchanging in their agendas and loyalties, their commitments proved decisive in the future direction of the country. London became the fulcrum for the constitutional struggles to engulf the nation in the 1640s and 1650s. According to Macaulay's Whig interpretation of history, written some two centuries later, 'it is no exaggeration to say that, but for the hostility of the City, Charles the First would never have been vanquished and that, without the help of the City,

²² See Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCullough, *Tudor Rebellions* (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 90-101.

Charles the Second could scarcely have been restored'.²³ Likewise, royalist historians were in no doubt as to London's role as chief architect of the Great Rebellion. Thomas Hobbes remarked that, 'But for the City the Parliament could neuer haue made the War, nor the Rump euer haue murdered the King'.²⁴ The collaboration between the parliamentary leadership and their City allies in rallying London's radical citizenry would continue to exert an influence over royalist-Tory fears of social anarchy in the Restoration. London sectarians pushed the nation into uncharted constitutional waters, which could not easily be dislodged from national memory. The extent to which the world had been turned upside down was recalled in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*: 'There cannot be a better instance of the unruly mutinous spirit of the city of London, which was the sink of all the ill humour of the kingdom, than the triumphant entry which some persons [Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton] at that time made into London who had been before seen upon pillories and stigmatized as libellous and infamous offenders'.²⁵ Without London, 'the fomenter, supporters, and indeed the life of the war', there could have been no Puritan Revolution and no ultimate victory for the parliamentary forces.²⁶

Such denunciations of the capital were less at the expense of the official representatives of the City government, who were predominantly sympathetic to the royalist cause prior to 1642, than of the rebellious lower orders. It was a commonly held royalist belief that the rebellion was the work of a committed minority misleading and manipulating the urban mob.²⁷ The crown maintained that only a small faction within the capital was

²³ Thomas Babington Macaulay, *The Life and Works of Lord Macaulay*, 10 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1896-1906), i 278.

²⁴ Thomas Hobbes, *Behemoth or The Long Parliament*, ed. Paul Seaward (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2010), p. 386.

²⁵ Edward Hyde, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, 6 vols., ed. W.D. Macray (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888), i 264.

²⁶ Hyde, *The History of the Rebellion*, iii 51.

²⁷ Ian Roy, "'This Proud Unthankful City": A Cavalier View of London in the Civil War', in *London and the Civil War*, ed. Stephen Porter (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), 150-71, at pp. 154-5.

culpable for the betrayal of the king's mercy and favour. In royal proclamations, the City is represented as being by nature loyal and subservient to the crown's will, but a schismatic and fanatical faction has whipped up popular discontent amongst protestors and petitioners:

a prevalent faction of that Citty (which over-rules the whole) hath so farre joynd with and in that horrid Rebellion, that it hath denounced warre against the whole Kingdom, by violent opposing all the possible wayes to Peace; and so that Citty formerly Famous for their Loyalty, and Love to their Soveraignes, is now become the head of that Traiterous faction, and the receptacle of all such as are disaffected to Our Government, and the Lawes of the Kingdom.²⁸

London's crowd politics – violent rioting, mass demonstrations, and large-scale petitioning movements – were exploited from an elite level. Parish and parliamentary elites fomented anti-popery, through the insinuation of popish 'plots' and scares (associated with Laudian liturgical innovations), in order to push for religious reformation. Many seventeenth-century historians, especially those like John Nalson writing during the Exclusion Crisis, drew a distinction between the respectable, wealthier citizens who were loyal to the crown and the allies of the Commons found amongst London's 'mechanic citizens' and 'rabble'.²⁹

However, any suggestion that the capital was implacably hostile to an interventionist and authoritarian crown in the early Stuart period has been discredited by Valerie Pearl. She notes the extensive network of financial ties and civic allegiances that bound the municipal government and the crown together. 'Charles I enjoyed throughout his reign a small but powerful nucleus of support in the City government, that in particular of the most influential section of the aldermanic Bench and probably of the Court of Common Council, although unwilling to commit themselves to support Charles in 1640, preferred to back the crown by

²⁸ James Larkin (ed.), *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973-83), ii 933.

²⁹ John Nalson, *An Impartial Collection of the Great Affairs of State. From the beginning of the Scotch Rebellion in the year 1639 to the murder of King Charles I* (London: Printed for S. Mearne, T. Dring, B. Tooke, 1683), passim.

the autumn of 1641 and that substantial changes in the City government were needed to give power to supporters of Parliament'.³⁰ Here we must distinguish between the attitudes and actions of the municipal government and those of London's citizens. Whilst the City Corporation depended on the crown for the confirmation and extension of its chartered privileges, the king relied on the City for forced loans and impositions in the absence of parliamentary taxation, especially during his personal rule. This interdependent and collaborative relationship was crucial to the mercantile elite who took advantage of the system of patents of monopoly, economic licences, customs farming, and other concessionary ties.³¹ As a result, the City Corporation was compliant to royal authority in matters of both finance and religion.

But wealthier citizens proclaimed an allegiance to their king in a variety of celebratory and commemorative media that extended beyond pecuniary motives.³² Livery companies acquired portraits of monarchs to adorn their halls and offered grand entertainments for the royal family (notably the Merchant Taylors Company's hosting of James I and the Prince of Wales in July 1607); equally, courtiers and representatives of the crown were still regular visitors to civic ceremonies, such as royal entries and the feasts of the Lord Mayor. The City of London was incorporated into the rituals of monarchical power through the presence of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen at rites of royal passage: coronations, weddings, funerals, and so on. Such ceremonial acts gave civic endorsement to the exercise of the royal prerogative; and these loyalist celebrations filtered down below the elite level in the form of sermon cycles, bellringing, bonfires and street parties – in celebration of

³⁰ Valerie Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution: City Government and National Politics, 1625-43* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 3.

³¹ For the economic ties between the crown and big business, see Robert Ashton, *The City and the Court 1603-1643* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 83-157.

³² Ian Archer, 'Discourses of History in Elizabethan and Early Stuart London', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68 (2005), 205-26.

momentous occasions such as a monarch's accession or providential deliverances, like the defeat of the Spanish Armada or the Gunpowder Plot.³³

Even the multiplying instances of disillusion and dispute between the Caroline regime and the City Corporation never resulted in rebellion. Growing friction between the aldermanic Bench and the court during the personal rule over a range of matters – chiefly forced loans, the actions of the City's Irish Society in the Londonderry Plantation, and jurisdictional authority over the City liberties and suburbs – was resolved in 1637 by the City's agreement to pay a composition fee to the crown to reconcile their differences.³⁴ Whatever misgivings there were amongst London's aldermanic and oligarchic elite were insufficient for them to abandon their rhetoric of loyalty and fealty. Charles' unprecedented and heavy reliance on London money markets to raise revenue, as well as his tactless and insensitive methods of dealing with the City Corporation, fostered only resentment and not total alienation from the court. In the event, rebellion was not to come from London's civic elites.

It was to be collective agitation amongst godly Protestants in the capital that was to help to precipitate the constitutional crisis of 1640 to 1642. A growing sense of grievance amongst middling London citizens, as well as the propertyless and non-freemen of the City, threatened the balanced oligarchic constitution of the municipal government and the composition of the Court of Aldermen. As Pearl argues, as late as September 1640 the officeholders on the aldermanic Bench were predominantly sympathetic to the royalist cause. Crucially, five of those Aldermen were dead by late autumn 1642, of whom at least four were

³³ See David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Tudor and Stuart England* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989).

³⁴ Ashton, *The City and the Court 1603-1643*, p. 158.

closely connected and loyal to the court.³⁵ Only five Aldermen who were members of the Bench in September 1640 became part of the parliamentary opposition. Likewise, members of the Common Council did not support Pym's faction and the citizens' petitions to the crown. But the parliamentary firebrands in the Commons were far more in tune with popular sentiment in the City than the municipal government. As the lower house gave an institutional platform to citizens' petitions and demonstrations, the City Corporation found it harder to ensure law and order on the streets. London's Trained Bands felt an instinctive affinity to their protesting neighbours and were averse to arresting fellow citizens for views they privately shared. Mass demonstrations against episcopal government in December 1641 revealed royalist support to be shallow, confined to the leaders of the municipal government and City magnates.

The turning-point in City politics was the annual elections to the more popular assembly, the Common Council, held on 21 December 1641. The old guard loyal to the crown was edged out by a new body holding active Puritan sympathies.³⁶ Royalist historians perceived a sea change in the social rank of those holding office in the City as 'grave and substantial citizens were left out' in favour of those 'most disaffected to the Church, though never of so mean estates'.³⁷ The author of *Persecutio Undecima* recorded the election as the culmination of a long struggle by the parliamentary cause to gain a foothold in City offices.³⁸ London radicals had obtained the institutional legitimacy for their promotion of the godly cause. The change in personnel in City government allowed Pym's reform policies to be pursued concurrently in parliament and the City: 'Thus a faction in the City conspired with a faction in the parliament...' and so 'as two strings set to the same tune...one two severall

³⁵ Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution*, p. 114.

³⁶ Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution*, p. 132.

³⁷ Hyde, *The History of the Rebellion*, i 275.

³⁸ *Persecutio Undecima. The Churches Eleventh Persecution* (London: Printed by H. Brugis, 1648), p. 58.

Violls...if you touch one, the other by consent renders the same sound, so, the *House of Commons* and the *Common-councill* of this City, were now grown to such a Sympathy, that the motions and endeavours of one, were the work of both'.³⁹

When the king came to arrest the five members of the House of Commons on 4 January 1642, they fled to the parish of St. Stephen's Coleman Street, the most infamous pool of religious radicals.⁴⁰ Citizens stood guard all night in anticipation for fear of a royalist intervention, while the City Militia were mobilised by the Common Council on 6 January without the Lord Mayor's authorisation. The strength of feeling amongst London's radical citizens had begun to impede the constitutional fulfilment of the offices of the chief magistrates of the City. The mayoralty and aldermanic Bench could no longer uphold their authority in the face of opposition from within the City government and the House of Commons. Decision-making moved in the municipal government from the Court of Aldermen to the Common Council, especially since the newly elected Committee of Safety were invested with authority over the City's Trained Bands (which affected both local and national security, as well as headed off the possibility of royalist counter-revolution in the City).

A well-organised core of City Puritans began to make their voices heard in both the corridors of power and on the streets. New forms of political agitation and organisation

³⁹ *A Letter from Mercurius Civicus to Mercurius Rusticus: Or, Londons Confession but not Repentance* (Oxford: s.n., 1643), pp. 19, 22.

⁴⁰ On the notoriety of Coleman Street's radical community see Adrian Johns, 'Coleman Street', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 71 (2008), 33-54. Johns argues that mortalism, Socinianism, and radical Independency were the dominant religious ideas in the area between 1640-5, but Baptism, Quakerism, and Fifth Monarchism became increasingly influential during the Protectorate. In Cowley's epilogue to *Cutter of Coleman Street*, the feigned cavalier Cutter describes Coleman Street as 'the Fifth Monarch's Court'; Abraham Cowley, *Cutter of Coleman-Street. A Comedy* (London: Printed for Henry Herringman, 1663), p. 71.

emerged during the Long Parliament.⁴¹ The root and branch petition is the most famous instance of the mass circulation of petitions by London's active and restless citizens. Contemporary estimates as to the number of signatories place the figure between 10,000 and 20,000.⁴² The radical anti-episcopalian petition was presented to the House of Commons by the austere puritanical Alderman Isaac Penington on 11 December 1640 accompanied by a socially heterogeneous crowd of Londoners. The petition, and many others besides, showed the strength of popular feeling towards radical church reform and brought crowd politics into play as a driver of politico-religious change. City MPs acted as self-appointed intermediaries between the parliamentary opposition and London's citizens. But Puritan tactics moved from circulating petitions to the organisation of large-scale demonstrations outside the House of Parliament.⁴³ For example, prior to the vote on the Bill of Attainder for Strafford's execution, MPs had to pass through two lines of belligerent citizens before entering the chamber at Westminster Hall. If we are to believe royalist polemic, the crowds located in Palace Yard and Whitehall became progressively meaner in social rank and more intimidating in manner during the second and third readings of the bill and before the royal assent.⁴⁴ London's radical leadership whipped up a frenzy amongst the City 'rabble' that lingered in the remembrances of royalists and moderate Presbyterians. Circulating petitions and mass demonstrations were the seditious innovation of elites arousing popular support amongst the

⁴¹ Historians have taken an interest in the growing sophistication of non-elite politics in the seventeenth century, partly due to increased literacy rates in this period: David Underdown, *Revel, Riot, and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603-60* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); Richard Cust, 'News and Politics in Early Seventeenth-century England', *Past and Present* 112 (1986), 60-90; Pauline Croft, 'Libels, Popular Literacy and Public Opinion in Early Modern England', *Historical Research* 68 (1995), 266-285.

⁴² Keith Lindley, *Popular Politics and Religion in Civil War London* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1997), pp. 101-3.

⁴³ Westminster's unique topography meant the institutions of government were acutely vulnerable to popular demonstrations, as J.F. Merritt has shown; *Westminster 1640-60: A Royal City in a Time of Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013). The lack of a single corporate body governing in the 'royal city' meant responses to civil disorder were woefully slow. Since the only municipal authority was the Court of Burgesses (established by a 1585 Act of Parliament; see J.F. Merritt, *The Social World of Early Modern Westminster: Abbey, Court and Community, 1525-1640* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 27, 91), which amounted to little more than a modernised manorial court, there was often confusion over whose jurisdictional authority it was to ensure public order in the precincts surrounding the Houses of Parliament.

⁴⁴ Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution*, p. 217.

lowest classes of London society. Hobbes remarked on the overwhelming force of popular opinion at moments of crisis in the second dialogue of *Behemoth*: ‘This method of bringing Petitions in tumultuary manner, by great multitudes of clamorous people, was ordinary with the House of Commons, whose ambition could neuer haue been serued by way of prayer and request, without extraordinary terrour’.⁴⁵ In reality, the protestors and petitioners were not the uncontrollable rabble of royalist argument, but included the ‘middling sort’ of merchants and liverymen as well as apprentices and the labouring classes. Godly ministers and lecturers could be relied on to disseminate information in both the pulpit and the street, as well as canvas door-to-door, collect signatures for petitions and raise voluntary levies. Zealous citizens met in taverns, clubs and larger assembly spaces (such as Moorfields and St. George’s Fields, Southwark) to share political intelligence. To royalist scribblers this new sociability signalled an alarming development in the transmission of seditious ideas. The image of London mobs roaming the streets free of social controls would be pointedly recalled during the Exclusion Crisis. After Charles I fled Whitehall Palace on 10 January 1642 in the teeth of raging crowds, he would not return to the capital until as a prisoner awaiting trial.

Once the constitutional changes in City government during 1642-3 reduced the influence of royalists within the Corporation, the king’s supporters were either pushed underground or flocked to the de facto royalist capital of Oxford.⁴⁶ Consequently, London was put onto a war footing by the fiery spirits within the municipal government. Fearing a prolonged siege, an eleven-miles-long network of forts, batteries and hornworks, surrounded by ramparts and ditches, was constructed by volunteers around the City of London,

⁴⁵ Hobbes, *Behemoth or The Long Parliament*, p. 234.

⁴⁶ Oxford’s role in the Civil Wars are examined in F. J. Varley, *The Siege of Oxford: An Account of Oxford during the Civil War, 1642-1646* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932); David Eddershaw, *The Civil War in Oxfordshire* (Stroud: Sutton, 1995); John Barratt, *Cavalier Capital: Oxford in the English Civil War 1642-1646* (Solihull: Helion, 2015).

Westminster, and Southwark.⁴⁷ This defensive circuit came to be known as the ‘Lines of Communication’.⁴⁸ Additionally, portcullises, turnpike gates and guarded barricades were erected on open streets to guard against the threat of infighting within the City walls. The Corporation’s Militia Committee undertook a program to expand the number of citizen soldiers during March and April 1642. The Trained Bands increased from 6000 to 8000 men through the reorganisation of the regiments and their conscription boundaries.⁴⁹ The wealth of the capital ensured the City’s urban military guild had some of the finest weaponry and ordnance in the parliamentary armies.

London and its hinterlands became the backbone of the parliamentary war effort through the seemingly infinite supply of money and manpower, ‘an inexhaustible fountain’ in the words of one royalist chronicler.⁵⁰ In Daniel Defoe’s fictional account of the mid-century crisis, seen through the eyes of a Cavalier, the ‘City of *London* was their inexhaustible Support and Magazine, both for Men, Money, and all things necessary’.⁵¹ In addition to London’s industrial capacity, the parliamentary command benefitted from the bureaucratic machinery of Whitehall. Substantial financing came from both the voluntary collection of subscriptions from citizens and regular taxation in the form of a weekly assessment. Moreover, the municipal government and livery companies were prepared to provide loans in anticipation of future revenues. London’s commitment to the parliamentary cause meant that the Commons had access to lucrative trading and financial networks that were closed to the

⁴⁷ Details of the location and planning of this network of fort are discussed in Norman Brett-James, ‘The Fortification of London in 1642-3’, *London Topographical Record* 14 (1928), pp. 1-35; David Sturdy, ‘The Civil War Defences of London’, *The London Archaeologist* 2 (1975), 334-8; A. Kemp, ‘The Fortification of London during the Civil War’, *Oxoniensia* 42 (1977), 237-47.

⁴⁸ Victor Smith and Peter Kelsey, ‘The Lines of Communication: The Civil War Defences of London’, in *London and the Civil War*, 117-48, at p. 117.

⁴⁹ Lawson Nagel, ‘“A Great Bouncing at Every Man’s Door”: The Struggle for London’s Militia in 1642’, in *London and the Civil War*, 65-88, at p. 77

⁵⁰ Philip Warwick, *Memoirs of the Reign of King Charles I* (Edinburgh: J. Ballantyne, 1813), pp. 298-9.

⁵¹ Daniel Defoe, *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, ed. James Boulton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 179.



2. George Vertue, a retrospective plan of London's fortifications during the Civil War, established by a 1642 Act of Parliament (1738). London, British Library, Maps Crace Port. 1.39. © British Library.

king's allies. 'Could Saye or Pym and their beggarly confederates', wrote one contemporary, 'have found money to levy an army against their liege lord, that had not money to pay their own debts, had not London...furnished them?...If...posterity shall ask...who would have pulled the crown from the *Kings* head, taken the government off the hinges, dissolved Monarchy, inslaved the *Lawes*, and ruined their Countrey; say, 'twas the *proud, unthankfull, Schismaticall, Rebellious, Bloody City of London*'.⁵² In the attritional warfare of the first Civil War, London's resources allowed the parliamentary forces to outsupply and outlast their enemy.

Whilst the parliamentary war effort continued unabated, church government in London was reorganised along Presbyterian lines. The Civil War sowed the seeds of unbridled radicalism in matters of church and state. The vestigial consensus that existed in the Puritan cause during Charles' personal rule and the early years of the Civil War disintegrated during 1644 and 1645. Ecclesiastical uniformity in the Presbyterian church became an impossibility as separatist congregations and ministries branched off. The old Anglican incumbents and their congregations suffered threats from below, in the form of molestation by recalcitrant and iconoclastic crowds, or were sequestered and imprisoned by the City authorities. Radical preachers achieved their positions through both parliamentary appointment and parochial election. The growing religious plurality of the City parishes loomed larger than anywhere else in the country, stretching from moderate Presbyterians to Quakers, Baptists, Ranters, Fifth Monarchists, and so on.⁵³ Confessional struggles, the like of which hadn't been since the Reformation, were being played out in a concentrated form within the City parishes. According to the Puritan divine Roger Williams, 'The church or

⁵² *A Letter from Mercurius Civicus to Mercurius Rusticus*, p. 32.

⁵³ The proliferation of radical sects is studied in Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1991).

companies of worshipers, whether true or false, is like unto a body or college of physicians in a city...or any other society or company in London, which company may hold their courts, keep their records, hold disputations, and in matters concerning their society may dissent, divide, break into schisms and factions, sue and implead with each other at the law, yea, wholly break up and dissolve into pieces and nothing'.⁵⁴ Williams' argument that the foundation and dissolution of Independent congregations and churches need not threaten the nation's peace was unlikely to convince royalists. Liberty of conscience reduced London to a modern Tower of Babel as the Puritan diaspora spoke a multiplicity of competing tongues.

The spectre of Independency haunted the minds of both Anglican and Presbyterian clergy during the revolutionary decades. In his archival survey of parish records, Liu finds Independents occupied pulpits in forty-five parishes in the City of London during the Puritan Revolution.⁵⁵ This figure is also likely to be somewhat conservative given the absence of documents for some parishes. However, the presence of an Independent preacher in a City parish does not mean the parish as a whole was unanimously Independent in its religious outlook. In the absence of the Anglican hierarchy, parochial communities were dominated by radical sects throughout the years of the Cromwellian Protectorate and the growing polarisation in religious politics between 1648 and 1653. But Anglicanism was never entirely silenced as a religious culture. The 'activities of orthodox Anglican clergymen, however difficult and unlawful, and the resilience of the tradition of the Church of England, however tenuous and constantly under attack, indicate that loyalty to the Anglican tradition continued to be an important force in the City'.⁵⁶ Anglican clergymen found opportunities to preach,

⁵⁴ Quoted in *Puritanism and Liberty: Being the Army Debates (1647-49) from the Clarke Manuscripts with Supplementary Documents*, ed. A. S. P. Woodhouse (London: Dent, 1974), p. 267.

⁵⁵ Tai Liu, *Puritan London: A Study of Religion and Society in the City Parishes* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1986), p. 107.

⁵⁶ Liu, *Puritan London*, p. 130.

particularly in the more traditional parochial communities as a counter-revolutionary reaction against some of the more fanatical sects. Indeed, some parishes even tried to have Anglican churchmen elected as ministers during the Puritan Revolution – although such efforts were rarely successful. The recrudescence of Anglican forms of worship in the City parishes during the 1650s was evidence that the capital would never be a single voice in matters of theology and church government.

London had become a hotbed for debate, protest and reform through the massive explosion of printing after crown controls over licensing were dismantled in 1641.⁵⁷ Londoners had unparalleled access and exposure to printed material, aided in no small part by the higher literacy rates in the metropolis. According to David Cressy, some 59 per cent of London tradesmen and craftsmen could sign their names at ecclesiastical courts in the 1670s.⁵⁸ George Thomason's collection of printed material – amassed between 1640 and 1661 – is the greatest body of evidence we have for the rapid proliferation in the publication of pamphlets, newsheets, sermons, and other printed books. He gathered together some 22,000 tracts from the stalls and shops of London booksellers. Despite some parliamentary regulation of the press from July 1643, Thomason still accumulated an average of 1413 texts each year between 1643 and 1647.⁵⁹ The Thomason Tracts are only a substantial collection of the political polemic and 'high' literary culture of London during the English Revolution; more accurate figures for the complete corpus of printed material are included in the statistical tables appended to *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Volume IV:*

⁵⁷ Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks 1641-1649* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 29.

⁵⁸ David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 147.

⁵⁹ *Catalogue of the Pamphlets, Books, Newspapers, and Newspapers Relating to the Civil War, the Commonwealth and Restoration Collected by George Thomason, 1640-1661*, 2 vols. (London: William Cowper and Sons, 1908), i xxi.

1557-1695. In the 1640s, book production reached 18247 publications (compared with 6394 during the 1630s), eighty-six per cent of which were printed in London.⁶⁰

The exchange and dissemination of ideas and print brought a sense of free intellectual expression to the streets, clubs and taverns of London. Newsbooks and pamphlets had a higher circulation through the spoken word and physical exchange amongst social communities. This remarkable period of liberty in oral and print culture found its most articulate defender in John Milton:

the shop of war hath not more anvils and hammers waking, to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth, than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching Reformation; others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement...⁶¹

In Milton's description of a city liberated from press censorship, the distinction between writing and fighting collapses; England's wars of religion and politics are to be fought with paper bullets. Milton's conception of the capital is as of a modern fulfilment of an ancient democratic city-state, in which freeborn citizens can exercise their natural reason in the pursuit of truth and the true faith: 'Let her [truth] and Falshood grapple; whoever knew truth put to the worst, in a free and open encounter'.⁶² The public sphere of London citizens reading and writing points towards a virtual parliament for the exercise of liberty.⁶³ Radical

⁶⁰ John Barnard and Maureen Bell, 'Statistical Tables', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Volume IV: 1557-1695*, ed. John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 779-94, at p. 783.

⁶¹ Milton, *Prose Works*, ii 553-4.

⁶² Milton, *Prose Works*, ii 561.

⁶³ See Sandra Sherman, 'Printing the Mind: The Economics of Authorship in *Areopagitica*', *English Literary History* 60 (1993), 323-47; David Norbrook, 'Areopagitica, Censorship, and the Early Modern Public Sphere', in Richard Burt (ed.), *The Administration of Aesthetics: Censorship, Political Criticism, and the Public Sphere* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), pp. 3-33; Stephen Burt, "'To The Unknown God": St. Paul and Athens in Milton's *Areopagitica*', *Milton Quarterly* 32 (1998), 23-31.

thinkers exploited the new community of discourse that London's pamphleteering press had opened up during the 1640s and 1650s.⁶⁴ The 'quantitative and qualitative shift in reading, writing, publishing, and in the formation of opinion' gave an immediacy to public debates in the metropolis in a manner inconceivable in the provinces.⁶⁵

London's counter-revolution in July 1647 demonstrates the mutability of political fortunes in the City. After the king was abducted by a small group of soldiers from Holdenby House in Northamptonshire, Independents within the New Model Army dictated terms to their parliamentary allies. In response, the City Militia Committee and the moderate Presbyterian wing within parliament organised a counter-insurgency. London's streets succumbed to violent disturbances as a mob of apprentices, reformadoes and royalists stormed parliament on 26 July 1647. The occasion for the disorder was the presentation of a petition for the revocation of the new Militia Ordinance instituted on 23 July, which demanded a peace settlement with the crown. After parliament rejected the petition – presented by a deputation of Aldermen and Common Councilmen – the crowds stormed

⁶⁴ The relationship of pamphlets to literary culture in this period has been extensively researched: Michael Wilding, *Dragons Teeth: Literature in the English Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Thomas Healy and James Sawday (eds.), *Literature and the English Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Thomas Corns, *Uncloistered Virtue: English Political Literature, 1640-1660* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); James Holstun (ed.), *Pamphlet Wars: Prose in the English Revolution* (London: Frank Cass, 1992); Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England, 1640-1660* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994); Sharon Achinstein, *Milton and the Revolutionary Reader* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994); David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics 1627-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Blair Worden, *Literature and Politics in Cromwellian England: John Milton, Andrew Marvell, Marchamont Nedham* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁶⁵ Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 255.



3. Anonymous, view of the execution of Charles I in front of the Banqueting House, Palace of Whitehall (1649). London, London Metropolitan Archives, p751825x. © London Metropolitan Archives.

Westminster Hall and threatened the sitting MPs. Eyewitnesses reported seeing members of the Common Council actively incite rioting and intimidation tactics.⁶⁶ So when Fairfax's army came to occupy London from 6 August onwards, they could plausibly claim to be defenders of constitutional order after the counter-revolutionary agitation in the City and Westminster. The occupying New Model soldiers distinguished themselves in their discipline and integrity in stark contrast to the disorderliness and menace posed by the apprentices and reformadoes. London's quiescence in the second Civil War testified to the harrowing experience of civil disorder the previous summer.⁶⁷ The army exploited their occupation of the capital to purge the City government of crypto-royalists and install Independents. Robert Brenner has documented how a new generation of radical merchant leaders, who made their money in colonial-interloping trades, came to prominence after the army's intervention. These merchants would go on to make up 'the economically substantial, war-party, quasi-republican, and, to a great extent...religiously Independent elements that composed the mainstream of City political independency'.⁶⁸ Religious dissent flourished alongside the expansion of unregulated overseas trade.⁶⁹ Their seizure of power in the municipal government mirrored the events in national government as radical, militant forces displaced the Presbyterian establishment. Qualifications for voting and office-holding in the City were manipulated to ensure electoral victory for the City Independents. London's new leadership mobilised mass support from amongst separatist congregations and democratic movements, but their fortunes were to depend on the army. When the army moved against the king and parliament during Pride's Purge, London's radical leadership came to a position of

⁶⁶ Robert Ashton, 'Insurgency, Counter-Insurgency and Inaction: Three Phases in the Role of the City in the Great Rebellion', in *London and the Civil War*, 45-64, at pp. 55-6.

⁶⁷ Ian Gentles, 'The Struggle for London in the Second Civil War', *Historical Journal* 26 (1983), 277-305.

⁶⁸ Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 495.

⁶⁹ Robert Brenner, 'The Civil War Politics of London's Merchant Community', *Past and Present* 58 (1973), 53-107.

unprecedented influence in both local and national politics. They played a key role in the king's trial as individuals, but collectively helped establish the republic and secure the revolution settlement.⁷⁰ Additionally, they provided much of the personnel for the Commonwealth's financial and administrative apparatus.

When the revived republican regime faltered during 1659, it would be the hostility of most London citizens that would bring an end to two decades of constitutional revolution. The Commonwealth's failure to maintain the support of the capital proved instrumental in the Restoration. After the death of Richard Cromwell, the restored Rump failed to convince a critical mass of active London citizens that they represented a free parliament or were receptive to calls for a free parliament.⁷¹ A pragmatic coalition of Stuart loyalists and Reformed Protestants resisted the regime on account of onerous levels of taxation in the midst of an economic depression, as well as an unelected parliament backed by a deeply resented military establishment. Yet again, London's vocal and articulate citizens proved decisive in national affairs. The urban movement for a free parliament, coupled with General Monck's disillusionment with the Rump, pushed the country towards a new political settlement. In the sequence of events that led to Charles' Restoration, it was the citizens of London who were making the political weather. Pepys vividly described the joyous scenes in the City of London, where 'the common joy...was everywhere to be seen!...all along burning and roasting and drinking for rumps – there being rumps tied upon sticks and carried up and down...Indeed, it was past imagination, both the greatness and suddenness of it'.⁷² The almost universal euphoria in the capital at the restored monarchy concealed unresolved tensions. The Puritan Lucy Hutchinson documented Charles' own confusion at witnessing

⁷⁰ Brenner counts twenty well-established London radicals on the high court chosen for the trial of Charles I; *Merchants and Revolution*, p. 548.

⁷¹ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, p. 39.

⁷² Pepys, *Diary*, i 52.

prostrate Londoners welcoming him, many of whom had contributed to his father's downfall only a decade earlier:

[when Charles II entered London] with an universall joy and triumph, even to his owne amazement; who, when he saw all the nobility and gentry of the land flowing into him, askt, Where were his enemies? For he saw nothing but prostrates, expressing all the love that could make a prince happie; and indeed it was a wonder in that day to see the mutability of some, and the hipocrisie of others, and the servile flattery of all.⁷³

The mutability of the urban mob was not to be forgotten by Anglican loyalists. Events in London during the Great Rebellion were inexorably imprinted on the minds of those loyal to the crown. Unlike his father, Charles II learnt the importance of political management of the City. One of Charles' advisers, the Duke of Newcastle, reinforced the need to master 'that great leviathen, that monster...that rebellious citteye': the way to achieve such internal control was disarming the military capacity of City ('no more citie captins or colonels, artillery yeard, or miletary yard'; 'The cheefe busines is to master London...master London & you have done your worke').⁷⁴ The crown recognised that they too had a London constituency, which could be mobilised as an agent of change.⁷⁵ If the monarchy was to ensure stability, it required the careful management of municipal affairs. When the threat of radical sects and popular rule reared its head during the Exclusion Crisis, the king's supporters found an

⁷³ Lucy Hutchinson, *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, ed. James Sutherland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 227.

⁷⁴ T. P. Slaughter (ed.), *Ideology and Politics on the Eve of the Restoration: Newcastle's Advice to Charles II* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1984), pp. 6-7.

⁷⁵ The Waller plot in March 1643, named after the chief plotter Edmund Waller, revealed the residual caucus of royalist commitment for the royalist cause in the capital. In March, Charles issued a commission to seventeen influential London citizens to undertake an armed uprising. However, by the time the conspiracy was triggered on the fast day of 31 May, most of the foremost conspirators had been arrested. Unlike two of the conspirators who were hanged, Waller survived through a combination of bribery and informing. See Michael Braddick, *God's Fury, England's Fire: A New History of the English Civil Wars* (London: Allen Lane, 2008), pp. 291-3.

alarming revolution in contemporary history. Tory polemicists knew that to secure the capital was to secure the kingdom.

Some Notes on Methodology

Such tumultuous events were a formative influence on Dryden's literary career. As we will see, the threat of unbridled street politics is ubiquitous in Dryden's texts. Although much of this thesis will be devoted to Dryden's response to urban politics and mass protest, there is considerably more to his relationship to metropolitan life. London was the site of production for Dryden's corpus; it was the implicit or explicit setting, subject or topographical framework for a sizeable proportion of his poems, plays and prose. Of the voluminous writings on his literary career, the only direct contributions to our understanding of Dryden's relationship to London literary culture are two essays published at the turn of the millennium.⁷⁶ Throughout their careers, the two scholars in question – Lawrence Manley and Harold Love – studied London as a distinctive literary milieu across the early modern period. While both Manley and Love's essays present plenty of illuminating and thoughtful arguments about Dryden and urban modernity, their essays are inevitably brief given the circumstances of their publication. This thesis attempts to offer a more comprehensive study for what, according to Love, was 'Dryden's greatest subject...the emergence into history of the modern city'.⁷⁷ For many scholars of Dryden's writing, London is only peripheral to the meaning of the texts in question. I will seek to restore a sense of place to the study of John

⁷⁶ Harold Love, 'Dryden's London', in *The Cambridge Companion to John Dryden*, ed. Steven Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 113-30; Lawrence Manley, 'Dryden's London', in *John Dryden (1631-1700): His Politics, His Plays, and His Poets*, ed. Claude Rawson and Aaron Santesso (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), pp. 15-35.

⁷⁷ Love, 'Dryden's London', p. 113.



4. Anonymous, view of Charles II's royal procession into the City of London through one of the triumphal arches (1660). London, London Metropolitan Archives, p749332x. © London Metropolitan Archives.

Dryden's writing. Understanding the topography, social milieus and political institutions of Dryden's London reveals a thoroughly metropolitan writer, immersed in the literary culture and commerce of the capital. Rather than simply a passive observer and recorder of London's politics, people and places, Dryden shaped its modes of discourse.

Throughout this thesis, I will take advantage of the exceptional work on urban politics in the Restoration undertaken in recent decades by Gary De Krey and Tim Harris.⁷⁸ Both have complicated a previously oversimplified perception of the capital as being inherently oppositional to the crown's interests, especially during the Restoration crisis of government. By acknowledging the existence of pockets of loyalist support in both London's crowds and civic institutions, we can gain a greater sense of the metropolitan dimension of Dryden's polemical works. Furthermore, topographical allusions shall be brought to the fore. Place names – often difficult even impenetrable to a modern reader – reveal a wealth of political and literary connotations. My intention is to dig archaeologically dig for those resonances lost over the centuries.

The structure of this thesis is primarily chronological. Aside from the first two chapters (on manuscript and print circulation, and the Town as an architectural, social and literary invention), the chapters examine familiar Dryden texts alongside less frequently studied works. The first two chapters are distinct in that they deal with London as a locus for sociability, literary production and transmission. Remaining chapters look at particular texts – or groups of texts – clustered at important phases in London politics. In so doing, the thesis will place Dryden's literary works purposely alongside both canonical and non-canonical

⁷⁸ Of particular importance are: Gary De Krey, *London and the Restoration, 1659-1683* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) and *A Fractured Society: The Politics of London in the First Age of Party, 1688-1715* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II: Propaganda and Politics from the Restoration until the Exclusion Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

texts that respond in some way to metropolitan affairs. What emerges is a man of letters more fully engaged in the challenges and opportunities of urban modernity than previously supposed.

Dryden's Textual London

Any analysis of Dryden's habits of publication is inevitably an analysis of London places and persons.¹ There is a spatial geography to the transmission of his printed and scribal texts. If one were to imagine a map charting the movement of Dryden's texts, each one linked by a physical journey, London would always be the point of origin.² The topography of print is even more straightforwardly metropolitan than that of manuscript. With book production overwhelmingly concentrated in the capital – indeed, certain environs of the capital, as we shall see – it is easier to reconstruct the movement of printed texts: beginning in the printing house, texts would move from booksellers' shops to the libraries of owners or communal spaces of reading.

To get a sense of London's supremacy in textual culture, we must remind ourselves of the economic, cultural and communicational hegemony of the capital. The remarkably high rates of literacy and book ownership relative to smaller settlements and rural hinterlands testifies to the appetite for knowledge and text. Keith Wrightson records that illiteracy was as low as 28 per cent in the two London parishes for which usable records survive, while Adam Fox suggests as many as eighteen per cent of households in London owned books by 1675.³

¹ In this chapter, I shall treat the term 'publication' to mean simply 'to make public' rather than the later conflation with the printed text alone.

² Numerous manuscript copies of Dryden's poems were evidently sent from London residents to relatives in the country. See, for example, Staffordshire Record Office, D(W) 1721/3/246, which are from the papers of Walter Bagot's family. The manuscript is a collection letters or packets sent from an unknown metropolitan source to the family estate at Blythfield Hall.

³ Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 202. Wrightson uses the capacity to sign their names as the common signifier of literacy. However, Keith Thomas argues that formal signatures underestimates literacy as reading skills were more widely diffused than writing skills; 'The Meaning of Literacy in Early Modern England', in *The Written Word: Literacy in Transition*, ed. Gerd Bauman (Oxford: Clarendon

The book trade, always centred on London, responded to the demand of metropolitan inhabitants and institutions. Even in the later seventeenth century, the dominance of the London book trade was conditioned by the incorporation of the Stationers' Company in 1557. The Licensing Act had the unintended consequence of stifling the provincial book trade and concentrating print culture in the metropolis. It was only the two university towns, which functioned as satellites of London, that had any sort of economic scale. The provincial reading public could access texts such as Dryden's only through London networks of transmission. The numerical figures appended to *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Volume IV: 1557-1695* attest to the preponderance of book production in the capital. In the period between 1660 and 1695, annual book making in the capital accounted for over 80 per cent of the total in each decade (reaching as high as 88 per cent between 1660 and 1670).⁴ Reading in the country depended on the transport network radiating from London; provincial booksellers, although extant, were more likely to operate as distributors of books than publishers of new titles.

Whilst the publishing and distributive capacity of the metropolis eclipsed that of provincial centres, London's book trade had its own 'commercial topography': 'printers and booksellers clustered in yards, lanes and streets close to churches and religious houses, taverns, coffee-houses, the Inns of Court, Stationer's Hall...and the Royal Exchange'.⁵ Certain environs developed piecemeal and chaotically into communities of printers and booksellers. John Macky, the author of an early eighteenth-century guide book to the capital,

Press, 1986), pp. 97-131. Adam Fox, 'Words, Words, Words: Education, Literacy and Print', in *A Social History of England, 1500-1750*, ed. Keith Wrightson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 129-51, at p. 147.

⁴ See 'Appendix 1' in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Volume IV: 1557-1695*, ed. John Barnard and D.F. McKenzie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 779-84. This statistical dominance only ebbs away in the closing decades of the century, accelerated of course by the lapse of statutory licensing in 1695.

⁵ James Raven, *Bookscape: Geographies of Printing and Publishing in London before 1800* (London: The British Library, 2014), pp. 1, 2.

observed that ‘the Booksellers of Antient Books in all Languages are in *Little-Britain* and *Pater-Noster-Row*; those for *Divinity* and *Classicks* on the North side of *St Paul’s Cathedral*; *Law, History* and *Plays* about *Temple-bar*; and the *French-Booksellers* in the *Strand*’.⁶ We can also piece together other important loci for particular kinds of books: legal texts, newsheets and political pamphlets in and around Westminster Hall; plays, poems and songs in Covent Garden and the New Exchange; legal texts around Fleet Street and Temple. Giles Mandelbrote argues that, in ‘terms of specialisation by subject, and by clientele, the London book trade mirrored the topography and occupational structure of the city’.⁷ Although St. Paul’s Churchyard and Little Britain were the nucleus of printing and bookselling, there was a clear identification of subjects and genres with particular places.⁸ Newsbooks, pamphlets and other ephemeral material were especially prominent around the Royal Exchange as the Lord Mayor and aldermanic Bench bemoaned in 1679: ‘the City and Liberties thereof, and especially the Street of Cornhill and Passages to the Royal Exchange, are much pestered with a sort of loose and idle persons, called Hawkers, who do daily Publish and Sell Seditious Books, Scurrilous Pamphlets, and scandalous Printed Papers’.⁹

Although booksellers occupied spaces close to their patrons’ places of business, they encouraged customers to browse, exchange news and gossip, as well as talk about books.¹⁰ In terms of newsgathering and information exchange, bookshops were as much a forum for

⁶ John Macky, *A Journey Through England* (London: Printed by J. Roberts for T. Caldecott, 1714), p. 205.

⁷ Giles Mandelbrote, ‘From the warehouse to the counting-house: booksellers and bookshops in late 17th-century London’, in *A Genius for Letters: Booksellers and Bookselling from the 16th to the 20th Century*, ed. Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Winchester: St Paul’s Bibliographies, 1995), 49-84, at p. 50.

⁸ For the centrality of St. Paul’s Churchyard and its environs in the print trade, see Peter Blayney, *The Bookshops in Paul’s Cross Churchyard* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1990).

⁹ *The London Gazette* (7 August 1679). The most complete survey of the print culture of the Royal Exchange is Laurence Worms, ‘The Book Trade at the Royal Exchange’, in *The Royal Exchange*, ed. Ann Saunders (London: London Topographical Society, 1997), pp. 209-26.

¹⁰ If one was looking to obtain Dryden’s books in Restoration London, one would likely find Dryden’s earliest panegyrics in the bookstalls of Westminster Hall alongside royal proclamations and political literature. See Henry R. Plomer, ‘Westminster Hall and its Booksellers’, *The Library* 6 (1905), 380-90.

polite sociability as the coffeehouse or more formal meeting places.¹¹ Roger North recalled the social function of bookshops in the later seventeenth century when writing the life of his older brother, Dr John North (died 1683): ‘Then Little Britain was a plentiful and perpetual emporium of learned Authors; and Men went thither as to a Market. This drew to the Place a mighty Trade; the rather because the Shops were spacious, and the learned gladly resorted to them, where they seldom failed to meet with agreeable Conversation. And the Booksellers themselves were knowing and conversible Men, with whom for the sake of bookish Knowledge, the greatest Wits were pleased to converse.’¹²

Dryden and the London Publishing World

When we think of Dryden’s relationships in London, we tend to first think of fellow writers or theatrical impresarios (or even his mistress, Anne Reeves), but central to both his literary and commercial status was his longstanding affiliation with two London booksellers: Henry Herringman and Jacob Tonson.¹³ Dryden depended on the support of Henry Herringman after the collapse of the Protectorate and, according to *The Medal of John Bayes*, ‘turn’d a Journey-man t’a Bookseller; / Writ Prefaces to Books for Meat and Drink’.¹⁴ In addition to being one of the most vendible and prolific authors published by Herringman until 1678, when their partnership ended, Dryden arguably had a hand in writing prefaces for other Herringman titles.¹⁵ Herringman’s operation at the sign of the Blue Anchor commenced

¹¹ See Charles Rivington, *Pepys and the Booksellers* (York: Sessions Book Trust, 1992) and Kate Loveman, *Samuel Pepys and his Books: Reading, Newsgathering, and Sociability, 1660-1703* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 165-94.

¹² Roger North, *The Life of the Honourable Sir Dudley North...and of the Honourable and Reverend Dr John North* (London: Printed for John Wiston, 1744), p. 241.

¹³ A chronology of contemporary references to Anne Reeves is illuminatingly brought together in Winn, *John Dryden and His World*, pp. 532-39.

¹⁴ Thomas Shadwell, *The Medal of John Bayes: A Satyr Against Folly and Knavery* (London: Printed for Richard Janeway, 1682), pp. 8-9.

¹⁵ James Osborn’s findings are inconclusive as to whether Dryden was formally commissioned to write prefaces for Herringman; *John Dryden: Biographical Facts and Problems*, pp. 184-99.

around 1653 and he sold books at this shop for almost fifty years.¹⁶ After the death of Humphrey Moseley in 1661, Herringman was the foremost stationer and bookseller of *belles-lettres* until Jacob Tonson established himself through his collaborations with Dryden. Alongside buying up the copyrights of deceased poets (Cowley, Suckling, Denham and Waller to name but a few) from Humphrey Moseley's estate, he attached himself to the most successful young dramatists – Orrery, Howard, Etherege, and Dryden – who began to flourish after the reopening of the London theatres. The 'Bilk't Stationer' (l. 104) Herringman, as he was cast in *Mac Flecknoe*, continued to sell Dryden's works even after the laureate left him for Tonson in 1678. It was only in 1699 that Herringman relinquished his intellectual property rights to Dryden's pre-1678 catalogue; during that period, he had reissued more than forty Dryden publications.¹⁷

Herringman's success (he became master of the Stationers Company in 1685) as publisher and bookseller of polite literature owes much to the location of his bookshop. His shop in the New Exchange, a two-story gallery of around one hundred shops selling fine wares and luxuries, catered for the upper echelons of Town society.¹⁸ Dryden's writings – alongside plays, poems, histories, classical texts – sat in the marketplace together with the more modish consumer items produced by the occupant drapers and mercers. Although we might like to think of copies of *Annus Mirabilis* or *Aureng-Zebe* as rarefied literary artefacts, for many Restoration consumers they could be as much an object of social display as jewellery or furs. Herringman's shop became a fashionable meeting place for Town

¹⁶ Despite his impressive trade list and literary contacts, Herringman has received remarkably little attention from modern book historians. See Henry R. Plomer, *A Dictionary of the Booksellers and Printers Who Were at Work in England, Scotland, and Ireland, from 1641-1667* (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1907), pp. 96-97; C. William Miller, 'Henry Herringman, Restoration Bookseller-Publisher', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 42 (1948), 292-306; 'Henry Herringman', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/37538>> [accessed 16 December 2018].

¹⁷ Miller, 'Henry Herringman, Restoration Bookseller-Publisher', 292-306, at p. 302.

¹⁸ Linda Levy Peck, *Consuming Splendour: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 46-61.

customers, drawn in by the well-informed proprietor, tempting stock, and the possibility for newsgathering and gossip; Pepys counted himself a long-standing patron of Herringman's for his stock of 'all the late new plays'.¹⁹ It is important to remind ourselves of the social function of bookshops: Herringman encouraged public discussion of his titles, for he knew word of mouth recommendations were the most likely stimulus to trade. Herringman's was one of the few bookshops of which we have evidence of a substantial female clientele. Whereas most bookshops were homosocial spaces, women were considered an unremarkable fixture at Herringman's.²⁰

Herringman's trade serendipitously benefitted from an act of god. The loss of stock in the Great Fire, exacerbated by the topographical density of the trade in the City, became a catalyst for change in the metropolitan print industry.²¹ The obliteration of stock and property in the environs of Little Britain, Paternoster Row and St. Paul's Churchyard stimulated trade for booksellers in Westminster and the West End. Migration westwards, already in progress alongside the inchoate development to the demography and built environment of the West End, benefitted booksellers such as Herringman in both the short and long term. In the absence of established book traders in the City, customers relied on the stock in Herringman's for access to the latest drama or poetry publications.

¹⁹ Pepys, *Diary*, vii 103.

²⁰ Loveman, *Samuel Pepys and his Books: Reading, Newsgathering, and Sociability, 1660-1703*, p. 175.

²¹ During the conflagration, books were stored in St. Faith's Church under St. Paul's, whose parishioners were mostly booksellers. Giles Mandelbrote demonstrates the physical dislocation, loss of capital and trade after the Great Fire in 'Workplaces and Living Spaces: London book trade inventories of the late seventeenth century', in *The London Book Trade: Topographies of Print in the Metropolis from the Sixteenth Century* (London: The British Library, 2003), 21-44, at pp. 21-26.

We cannot be certain as to why Dryden dispensed with Herringman as publisher after 1678 and settled on a little-known stationer in his early twenties.²² Although never Dryden's exclusive publisher, Tonson was to be his business partner for the rest of his literary life.²³ After establishing their relationship via *Troilus and Cressida* with its preface on tragedy (1679) and *Ovid's Epistles* (1680), Tonson became known as Dryden's publisher, and he worked diligently to keep the writer's name and writings before the public. As one of Tonson's biographers has noted, not a single year went by in Dryden's remaining years without Tonson either publishing or republishing at least one title by him, ensuring his pre-eminence as England's foremost man of letters.²⁴ He began buying up the rights to Dryden's earlier works during the 1680s, as well as those of many other prestigious names in Restoration literature, including Milton, Rochester and Behn. Tonson, as 'Chief Merchant of the Muses', was a determined defender of the literary marketplace. He was one of the chief advocates of the Copyright Act of 1709-10, which established statutory defence for literary property.

Dryden and Tonson's surviving correspondence offers us a glimpse of both the business of bookselling, as well as the sometimes turbulent and fractious relationship between the two men. From the letters, we learn that Tonson in general paid authors a flat

²² The most substantial studies of Jacob Tonson and his work are: G. F. Papali, *Jacob Tonson, Publisher: His Life and Work (1656-1736)* (Auckland: Tonson Publishing House, 1968); H. M. Geduld, *Prince of Publishers: A Study of the Work and Career of Jacob Tonson* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969); Kathleen M. Lynch, *Jacob Tonson, Kit-Kat Publisher* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1971); Raymond N. McKenzie, 'Jacob Tonson, the elder', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/27540>> [accessed 3 January 2019]. In a brief note, Stephen Bernard suggests Herringman's move towards wholesale publishing may have precipitated Dryden's migration towards Tonson; 'Henry Herringman, Jacob Tonson, and John Dryden: The Creation of the English Literary Publisher', *Notes and Queries* 62 (2015), 274-7.

²³ The occasions when Dryden was to be published by someone else during the 1680s and 1690s tended to be minor prose works, such as the translation of *De Arte Graphica* (published by W. Rogers at the Sun near St. Dunstan's Church), or politically sensitive publications, like *Don Sebastian* (published by Joseph Hindmarsh at the Golden Ball in Cornhill). Hindmarsh had been fined for publishing seditious pamphlets in April 1691; but it is also a possibility, as Kathleen Lynch suggests, Tonson may simply have shown little interest and was outbid for the copyright (Lynch, *Jacob Tonson, Kit-Kat Publisher*, p. 26).

²⁴ Geduld, *Prince of Publishers*, p. 60.

rate per line of verse, with commissioned prefaces, notes, and other editorial matter paid for separately. He performed quotidian tasks for the writer that go beyond mere professional expedience in keeping his most valuable writer happy, including handling Dryden's correspondence, buying him snuff, melons and sherry, collecting rents from his Northamptonshire properties, paying tradesmen, and so on. A number of letters signal the warmth in their relationship. In one letter, he thanks Tonson for his companionship on a journey to visit Sir Matthew Dudley's estate in Clapton, Northamptonshire ('I am ashamed of my self, that I am so much behind hand in your kindness. above all things I am sensible of your good nature in bearing [me] company to this place').²⁵ However, Dryden quarrelled with him on several occasions about money and his contractual obligations. Samuel Johnson highlighted their frequently quarrelsome relationship, especially during the composition of *The Works of Virgil*: in his youth, Lord Bolingbroke reported to William King of Oxford that he called upon the former laureate at home in Gerrard Street and heard another person enter the house. 'This', Dryden purportedly said, 'is Tonson. You will take care not to depart before he goes away; for I have not completed the sheet which I promised him; and if you leave me unprotected, I must suffer all the rudeness to which his resentment can prompt his tongue.'²⁶ In fact, Dryden felt compelled to write a satiric triplet that circulated in manuscript from around 1698 in response to Tonson's demanding and mercenary behaviour: 'With leering Looks, Bull-fac'd, and freckl'd fair, / With frowzy Pores poisoning the ambient Air, / With two left Legs and Judas-colour'd Hair' (ll. 1-3). Malone describes the lines' genesis as 'Tonson having refused to advance him a sum of money for a work on which he was employed, he [Dryden] sent a second messenger to the bookseller, with a very satirical triplet; adding, "Tell the dog, that he who wrote these lines, can write more"'.²⁷

²⁵ *Letters*, p. 58.

²⁶ Johnson, *The Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets; With Critical Observations on Their Works*, ii 145.

²⁷ Malone (ed.), *The Critical and Miscellaneous Prose Works of John Dryden*, i 525.

As with Herringman, Tonson's shop – first at the Judge's Head in Chancery Lane and at the Inner Temple Gates from 1694 – was not just for buying books, but for browsing, chatting and being seen. Tonson actively recruited new literary talent and promoted careers; he was a common figure in coffeehouses, and there his attention was sought by aspiring authors. But the greatest achievement of Tonson and Dryden's collaboration was to be a series of pioneering miscellanies and composite translations, which owed as much to Dryden's urban milieu as to Tonson's business acumen. Part of the attraction of Dryden to Tonson was the literary and social networks he built up in his decades living and working in the capital.²⁸ The multi-authored collections established Dryden as the great translator of the age, whilst bringing a new generation of writers to the public's attention. Such poetical collections 'by several hands' avoid political and religious controversy through their generic selection. As Gillespie and Hopkins point out in the introduction to their facsimile edition of the Dryden-Tonson miscellanies, the collections largely eschew the literary and personal lampoons, as well as divisive religious verse, so characteristic of manuscript publication of the period. The only exception to this is the prologues and epilogues which, in their topicality, can be highly partisan and controversial. Their presence owes much to the kinds of social exchange – witty, conversational, provocative – made possible by urban modernity. Furthermore, a substantial selection of the verse creates and nurtures a sense of literary community. Commendatory verses from one poet to another or elegies for lost peers 'shaped a literary world of mutual obligation and defined a canon of contemporary writers'.²⁹ The Dryden-Tonson collaborations were inclusive politically and religiously, shunning

²⁸ Stuart Gillespie and David Hopkins (eds.), *The Dryden-Tonson Miscellanies, 1684-1709*, 6 vols. (Routledge: Abingdon, 2008), i xix.

²⁹ Paul Hammond, *The Making of Restoration Poetry* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2007), p. 8.

partisanship and vituperation. Instead, the miscellanies have a shared sense of literary community centred on London.

The earliest venture into composite translation, *Ovid's Epistles*, included a total of seventeen hands, four of whom were dramatists already published by Tonson (Dryden, Nahum Tate, Thomas Otway, Aphra Behn), John Somers (a close friend of Tonson), and Richard Duke (a protégé of Dryden, who also attended Westminster School and Trinity College, Cambridge). Like the later miscellanies, the translation of Ovid's *Heroides* exploited the contacts of both men. The surviving evidence we have – comprised mostly of anecdote and epistolary networks – suggest that the contributors to *Ovid's Epistles* were either in, or on the periphery of, Dryden and Tonson's literary circle. Whether it was Dryden or Tonson who initiated the project, the contributions could have been solicited informally by either man. Likewise, the new edition of *Plutarch's Lives* (printed in five volumes between 1683 and 1686) has a preponderance of Old Westminsters and Trinity alumni. It was, as Arthur Sherbo argues, 'Dryden's Plutarch in the sense that he was the editor, that he selected the collaborators, and that he heavily favoured Cambridge University over Oxford University in his selections'.³⁰ Of those thirty-eight contributors for which there is a biographical record, it is clear that they were Dryden's contacts and not Tonson's. Eleven attended Westminster School, nine of whom followed Dryden's progression to Trinity College, and seven were members of the Royal Society.

³⁰ Arthur Sherbo, 'The Dryden-Cambridge Translation of Plutarch's *Lives*', *Études Anglaises* 32 (1979), 177-84, at p. 182. See also Arthur Sherbo, 'Dryden as a Cambridge Editor', *Studies in Bibliography* 38 (1985), 251-61.

It seems that *Miscellany Poems* (1684) was assembled in far more haphazard and fortuitous circumstances than the earlier composite translations.³¹ The bibliographical vagaries of the volume's arrangement imply that the Dryden satires opening the volume – *Mac Flecknoe*, *Absalom and Achitophel*, and *The Medall* (though the poems are unattributed) – were set in type with the intention of issuing them in octavo sometime in late 1682, when the pirated copy of *Mac Flecknoe* had been published by D. Green.³² The continuous pagination of the satires ends at *The Medall*, where there is no catchword. And Dryden's name did not seem to merit promotion on the title page which reads: 'Miscellany Poems. Containing a New Translation of Virgill's Eclogues, Ovid's Love Elegies, Odes of Horace, and Other Authors; With Several Original Poems. By the Most Eminent Hands'.

Typographically, the title page reduces the status of the original poems and promotes the translation component of the volume. Tonson evidently wanted to incorporate the original verse, already set up in type, with the commissioned material without undermining the status of the latter. The contributors to *Miscellany Poems* were as much a product of Dryden and Tonson's literary circle as the composite translations. Of the eighteen writers, only six had never been published by Tonson; most were drawn from the existing pool of translators who had contributed to *Ovid's Epistles*. Four were alumni of Dryden's old school and college (Thomas Adams, George Stepney, John Cooper, Richard Duke), and Sir Carr Scrope was a product of Westminster alone. Thomas Creech, contributing to one of Dryden and Tonson's collaborative enterprises for the first time, had translated the complete Horace for Tonson the year before. He also developed a close friendship with Dryden: he dedicated one of his Theocritus translations (published 1684) 'To his very good Friend *John Dryden* Esquire'

³¹ See Stuart Gillespie, 'The Early Years of the Dryden-Tonson Partnership: The Background to their Composite Translations and Miscellanies of the 1680s', *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660-1700* 12 (1988), 10-19.

³² Paul Hammond analyses the bibliographical anomalies of the volume in 'The Printing of the Dryden-Tonson "Miscellany Poems" (1684) and "Sylvae" (1685)', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 84 (1990), 405-12.

along with the dedication to the Horace translation ('To the very much Esteemed John Dryden, Esq' praises Dryden's role as 'Protector' and 'Patron' to Creech, whose name adds a 'Luster [that] might shed some Reputation to this Work' (dated 25 May 1684)).³³

Dryden and Tonson's selection and supervision of contributors to the miscellanies relies on the sense of communal support and obligation between writers. One document demonstrates the way in which the writer-publisher partnership folded in new contributors to their literary coterie. In 1683, whilst Creech was glorying in the reception of his Lucretius, the young don 'came to Town and was very much caressed & esteemed'. After having 'brought him to Mr. Dryden' and 'Mr. Waller y^e Poet', Tonson recalls Creech writing to him 'to get mr Dryden and mr Waller to write some verses to put before y^e 2^{de} Edition'.³⁴ By soliciting promotional material for other writers, Tonson drew new poets into the culture of reciprocity and gift exchange. The later miscellanies and composite translations – including *Sylvæ* (1685), *The Satires of Decimus Junius Juvenalis* (printed 1692; dated 1693) *Examen Poeticum* (1693) and the *Annual Miscellany* (1694) – leave no doubt as Dryden's role as solicitor of contributions and editor. He sits at the centre of a metropolitan circle of professional writers, booksellers, and scholars.

We can get a greater sense of the metropolitan character of Dryden's readership through evidence of the subscription list to *The Works of Virgil* (1697).³⁵ Existing work on

³³ Thomas Creech, *The Idylliums of Theocritus with Rapin's Discourse of Pastorals* (Oxford: Printed for Anthony Stephens, 1684), p. 87. Thomas Creech, *The Odes, Satyrs, and Epistles of Horace* (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1684), pp. 1, 2.

³⁴ Stephen Barnard (ed.), *The Literary Correspondences of the Tonsons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 37.

³⁵ In this paragraph, I am indebted to the list of subscribers appended to John Barnard's 'Dryden, Tonson, and the Patrons of *The Works of Virgil* (1697)', in *John Dryden: Tercentenary Essays*, ed. Paul Hammond and David Hopkins (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 174-239, at pp. 223-39. Barnard has further detailed the politics of the subscription list in 'Dryden's Virgil (1697): Gatherings and Politics', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 109 (2015), 131-9.

the readership of the Virgil translation has largely concentrated on the political complexion of the subscribers or the combination of traditional patronage and commercial innovation.³⁶

Although drawn from all political and religious sections of society in a literary scheme for the nation's benefit, the subscribers are broadly consistent in their urban milieu. Alongside the state officials and courtiers amongst the first subscribers are representatives of the moneyed interest in the City and other metropolitan cultural projects. Twelve of the subscribers, like Dryden himself, were elected fellows of the Royal Society; ten were later affiliated to the Kit-Kat Club (1702 is the earliest date for which we have evidence of membership).³⁷ Indeed, the church and universities are far less well represented than other professions: twenty-one subscribers were practising lawyers, plus a further forty-three who were educated at one of the Inns of Court and were otherwise employed. City merchants are confined to the second subscription list, evidently deemed not of the precedence to merit inclusion in the first list. Moreover, the long list of two-guinea subscribers include theatrical and literary associates – Thomas Betterton, Anne Bracegirdle, William Walsh, Thomas Blunt, Mary Chudleigh, and Thomas Southerne – contacts built up over decades.

A Brief Digression on Coffeehouses

The overlapping spheres of literary London coalesce with the coffeehouse. They were a new kind of urban space, associated with a specific kind of discourse or mode of sociability, that first appeared in Oxford in 1650 and the capital two years later.³⁸ Early in the

³⁶ Dustin Griffin, 'The Beginnings of Modern Authorship: Milton and Dryden', *Milton Quarterly* 24 (1990), 1-7; Barnard's later essay also acts as a corrective to some of his statements in 'Dryden, Tonson and Subscriptions for the 1697 Virgil', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 57 (1963), 129-51.

³⁷ The uncertain date of origin of the Kit-Cat Club is discussed in Field, *The Kit-Cat Club*, pp. 20-32.

³⁸ See Markman Ellis, *The Coffee-House: A Cultural History* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2004) and Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005) for the origins of coffeehouse culture.

eighteenth century Pope paid tribute to Dryden's role in fostering a literary culture centred on the coffeehouse: 'It was Dryden who made Will's Coffee-House the great resort for the wits of his time'.³⁹ Although operating in a world prior to the formation of literary clubs with exclusive membership and political affiliation, such as the Kit-Cat Club or the Scriblerians, coffeehouses fostered literary networks based on friendship and shared interest. The coffeehouse became a 'public sphere' somewhere between the official institution of the state and domestic spaces.⁴⁰ As well as a locus for newsgathering, coffeehouses were a source of learned discourse and a forum for the transmission of literary texts that cut across different sections of London society.⁴¹ Will's, in particular, functioned as an informal home for publishers, booksellers and writers.

In the later seventeenth century, Will's or the Wits Coffeehouse was synonymous with Dryden and his circle. Established by William Urwin after 1660, Will's was located at the corner of Russell Street and Bow Street in Covent Garden (its patronage by poets and wits owed much to its proximity to the public theatres). Samuel Pepys is said to have frequented Will's between 1663 and 1668. On 3 February 1663/4, he records visiting the 'Great Coffee-house' in Covent Garden, 'where Drayden the poet (I knew at Cambridge) and all the wits of the town...'⁴² The room on the first floor had a special chair for Dryden, set beside the fire in winter and the balcony in summer. According to Johnson's recollection, Colley Cibber called Dryden the 'arbiter of critical disputes at Will's'.⁴³ Macaulay, writing

³⁹ Spence, *Observations, Anecdotes and Characters of Books and Men*, i 25, 29.

⁴⁰ The classic statement of the coffeehouse's role in the public sphere is Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989). See also Lawrence Klein, 'Coffeehouse Civility, 1660-1714: An Aspect of Post-Courtly Culture in England', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 59 (1997), 30-51.

⁴¹ On coffeehouses as a source of news, see Steve Pincus, "'Coffee Politicians Does Create": Coffeehouses and Restoration Political Culture', *Journal of Modern History* 67 (1995), 807-34 and Mark Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation in Later Stuart Britain: Partisanship and Political Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 250-1.

⁴² Pepys, *Diary*, v 37.

⁴³ James Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ed. R.W. Chapman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 770.

one hundred and fifty years after the fact, wrote that Will's was 'sacred to polite letters': 'The great press was to get near the chair where John Dryden sate... To bow to him, and to hear his opinion of Racine's last tragedy or of Bossu's treatise on epic poetry, was thought a privilege. A pinch from his snuff box was an honour sufficient to turn the head of a young enthusiast'.⁴⁴ Gaining access to Dryden's inner circle was marked symbolically through the proffering of snuff from Dryden's own oversized snuffbox. In the *London Spy*, Ned Ward thought 'a parcel of young, raw, second-rate beaux and wits... were conceited if they had but the honour to dip a finger and thumb into Mr. Dryden's snuff-box'.⁴⁵

Oral and literate culture comingled as patrons discussed the printed and scribal texts ubiquitous on the premises. There was a patent social experience to the transmission of texts.⁴⁶ Will's was not only a site for the distribution of printed or scribal texts; visitors could listen or discuss without direct contact with the works. Unlike in the countryside, where shared reading was primarily a domestic activity, the capital offered numerous sites of sociability suitable for such public interaction. The available evidence suggests that the textual culture of Will's encouraged reading together as the basis for communal entertainment, performance, and debate.⁴⁷ In *The Humours and Conversations of the Town* (1693), a fictional dialogue between characters in London life, Mr. Pensive praises 'the Company of the Author of *Absalom* and *Achitophel*' because 'what he says, is like what he

⁴⁴ Thomas Babington Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second*, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1856), i 117.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Bryant Lillywhite (ed.), *London Coffee Houses: A Reference Book of Coffee Houses of Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1963), p. 662.

⁴⁶ Stephen Colclough has demonstrated the prevalence of reading aloud in both public and domestic spaces; *Consuming Texts: Readers and Reading Communities, 1695-1870* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 69-74. Although looking at domestic reading in the eighteenth century, Abigail Williams, *The Social Life of Books: Reading Together in the Eighteenth-Century Home* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017) makes some important observations on the practical necessity of communal reading.

⁴⁷ Even the most salacious or seditious verse could be read aloud or sung, instead of being the preserve of surreptitious reading in private spaces (as Anthony Hamilton's account of the circulation of Rochester's lampoons at the court of Charles II shows; see Harold Love, 'Hamilton's *Mémoires de la vie du comte de Grammont* and the reading of Rochester', *Restoration* 19 (1995), 95-102).

writes'.⁴⁸ Whereas in Dryden's day 'you us'd to see *Songs, Epigrams, and Satyrs*, in the Hands of every Man you met' at Will's, lamented Richard Steele in the first issue of the *The Tatler*, 'you now have only a Pack of Cards; and instead of the Cavils about the Turn of the Expression, the Elegance of the Style, and the like, the Learned now dispute only about the Truth of the Game'.⁴⁹ Will's became a space in which established and fledgling writers would seek the approval and guidance of the poet-dramatist and his circle.⁵⁰ Dryden became a patrician figure to younger poets and dramatists uninitiated in the literary culture of the metropolis. After Dryden was handed the manuscript of Congreve's *The Old Bachelor* by Thomas Southerne, he 'sayd he never saw such a first play in his life, but the Author not being acquainted with the stage or the town, it would be pity to have it miscarry for want of a little Assistance...it wanted only the fashionable cutt of the town.'⁵¹ Even Jonathan Swift was said to have shown his 'Ode to the Honourable Sir William Temple' to the aging Dryden on coming up to London in one (possibly apocryphal) account, receiving a damning and humiliating verdict. 'I have been told that Dryden, having perused these verses, said, "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet;" and that this denunciation was the motive of Swift's perpetual malevolence to Dryden.'⁵²

⁴⁸ [James Wright], *The Humours and Conversations of the Town, Exposed in Two Dialogues* (London: Printed for R. Bentley, 1693), p. 73.

⁴⁹ Richard Steele, *The Tatler*, no. 1 (12 Apr. 1709), in *The Tatler*, ed. Donald Bond, 3 vols. (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1987), i 19.

⁵⁰ In later life, it is apparent that it was mostly young poets and dramatists surrounding Dryden in the 1690s as many of the fellow dramatists of his own generation – notably Etherege, Otway, and Lee – were dead. This is one possible explanation for the persistent mocking of Dryden's enemies that he was holding court over a group of callow and sycophantic young poetasters.

⁵¹ BL MS Add, 4221, fol. 341, quoted in Hugh Macdonald, *John Dryden: A Bibliography of Early Editions and of Drydeniana* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), p. 54. *The Old Bachelor* went on to enjoy a lucrative run in the spring of 1693.

⁵² Johnson, *The Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets*, iii 191. Swift himself satirises the fawning of the wits at Will's in 'To Congreve' (ll. 132-46); *Jonathan Swift: The Complete Poems*, ed. Pat Rogers (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), p. 71. The origins of Swift's dislike of Dryden is studied in Robert M. Philmus, 'Dryden's 'Cousin Swift' Re-Examined', *Swift Studies* 18 (2003), 99-103.



5. Anonymous drawing of the interior of a London coffeehouse (c. 1690). Notable is the prevalence of written material across the tables. London, British Museum, 1931, 0613.2. © Trustees of the British Museum.

Regardless as to whether this exchange took place at all, it was common for Dryden and his circle to critique the writings of the Town. Aphra Behn recollects visiting Will's in the preface to *The Lucky Chance* (1686); 'a Wit of the Town, a friend of mine, at Will's Coffee House, the first night of the play, cry'd it down as much as in him lay, who before had read it and assured me he never saw a prettier comedy'.⁵³ To his enemies, it appeared that Dryden was sitting in judgement, along with his tribunal of critics, on the Town's literary productions. His literary circle was accused of being self-congratulatory, self-serving and hypocritical. *The Rehearsal* (1672) scorns the sociability of the coffeehouse as a ruse to steal the wit of others for his commonplace book: Bayes says, 'I come into a Coffee-house, or some other place where wittie men resort, I make as if I minded nothing; (do you mark?) but as soon as any one speaks, pop I slap it down, and make that, too, my own.'⁵⁴

The Prologues and Epilogues in Print and Manuscript

As I have shown, the public discourse of the coffeehouse was complemented by the spread of printed and scribal texts; but it was only one urban space in which Dryden's writing was spread. Of all the literary works published during Dryden's lifetime, the prologues and epilogues have a unique bibliographical status. Their earliest publication occurs not in their transmission through print or scribal copies, but in their spoken performance in the theatre. Dryden must have been well aware of the concept in classical rhetoric of declamation as publication. Once spoken in the public playhouse, the prologues and epilogues entered the public sphere free to circulate in a variety of forms. This social circulation of texts lies behind Harold Love's definition of the term 'publication', which is the 'movement from a private

⁵³ Quoted in Lillywhite (ed.), *London Coffee Houses*, p. 656.

⁵⁴ George Villiers, *The Rehearsal* (London: Printed for Thomas Dring, 1672), p. 4.

realm of creativity to a public realm of consumption'.⁵⁵ This definition is helpful in broadening our understanding as to how texts circulated amongst London networks of sociability. In this context, the oral performance of the prologues and epilogues implies that the author has relinquished control over future social uses of the text. It is notable that Dryden, in general, lacks a 'bibliographical ego' or authorial persona in print, simply allowing the texts to fulfil the immediate purpose for which they were written.⁵⁶ (By this I mean the absence of the incredibly fastidious care over the printed text and material book of a Jonson or a Pope). The relationship between the oral transmission of these texts and the urban audience is crucial to grasping the haphazard and fragmentary manner in which the prologues and epilogues appeared in print and manuscript.⁵⁷

The prologues and epilogues had a life independent of their initial performance in the theatre for which they were written. If we are to recreate the experience of a reader coming to these texts for the first time (away from their spoken performance in the public playhouse), we must look at their principal mode of written publication: print.⁵⁸ The print publication of Dryden's prologues and epilogues is fairly straightforward. Those prologues and epilogues composed for one of Dryden's own plays, or for one of his associates, were conventionally printed alongside the drama for which they were written. Any prologues and epilogues contributed to other writers' plays were reprinted alongside those plays in later editions or impressions. However, the stage orations written for specific occasions, such as the opening of a new playhouse or the annual visit of the King's Company to Oxford, were only accorded

⁵⁵ Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 36.

⁵⁶ The term derives from Joseph Loewenstein's study of Jonson's authorial identification with printed writing: *Ben Jonson and Possessive Authorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 1.

⁵⁷ The contingency in the transmission of Dryden's texts is studied in Paul Hammond, 'The Circulation of Dryden's Poetry', in *The Making of Restoration Poetry*, pp. 139-67.

⁵⁸ Much of my analysis of the printed publication of Dryden's prologues and epilogues is based on the descriptive bibliography found in Macdonald, *John Dryden: A Bibliography of Early Editions and of Drydeniana*.

the permanence of print in special circumstances. As a consequence, these pieces tended to find their way into scribal publication (to which I will return). But fourteen prologues and epilogues were printed in separate form, the vast majority of which date from the years of the political controversy surrounding the Exclusion Crisis (from 1680 to 1683). Only once the prologues and epilogues began to serve the ends of partisan polemic during the fears of a Popish succession were these texts printed in their own right. To take a couple of examples, the Prologue to *The Duke of Guise* appeared in a folio pamphlet immediately after the premiere, headed as *Prologue, To The Duke of Guise*.⁵⁹ Published by Tonson in a single half-sheet in c.1682, Luttrell's copy in the Huntington Library now has the following dates in manuscript on B1r: '30 Nov' and '4 Dec 1682', which suggest the dates of the performance and purchase. Likewise, the 'Prologue and Epilogue Spoken at *Mithridates*' was first printed anonymously on a folio half-sheet titled *A Prologue spoken at Mithridates King of Pontus, the First Play Acted at the Theatre Royal this year, 1681*, printed for J. Sturton. As Harrington Smith argues, the earliest copies probably derive from a shorthand transcription made in the theatre, an authorial manuscript, or a manuscript provided by the actors and rushed from the printing press.⁶⁰ By printing the political prologues and epilogues separately, either in Oxford or London, Dryden and his publishers (normally Tonson) could respond quickly to ongoing events.⁶¹ To sway public opinion at moments of crisis, Tory propaganda needed to reach the largest possible audience. Separate printing would cut down the time between the first performance and the spread of printed pamphlets. Controversial pieces evidently held the attention of the Town, given that the 'Prologue and Epilogue Spoken at *Mithridates*' was reported as 'extreamly talked of' in Richard Janeway's Whig paper *The*

⁵⁹ Headnote to 'Prologue, Epilogues and Songs from *The Duke of Guise*', in *Poems*, ii 135.

⁶⁰ John Harrington Smith, 'Dryden's Prologue and Epilogue to *Mithridates*, Revived', *PMLA* 68 (1953), 251-67.

⁶¹ Other topical prologues and epilogues from the height of the Exclusion Crisis, 1681-3, published in broadside form are in *Prologues and Epilogues*, i xviii-xx and nos. 315, 319, 320, 321, 324, 326, 328, 332 and 334.

Impartial Protestant Mercury (28 October 1681) as well as in Nathaniel Thompson's Tory paper *The Loyal Protestant, and True Domestick Intelligence* (29 October): 'Whereas Mr. Janeway in his *Partial Protestant* of yesterday, is pleased to make use of a *Prologue* to a reviv'd Play lately acted at the *Theatre Royal*, with this grave Authors Animadversions upon the same. By his good leave, I'll incert a Part of the Epilogue to the same Play, and leave it to the chewing of the Brotherhood'.⁶² The quotation and appropriation of the prologues and epilogues suggests the ease with which separate pamphlets could be circulated and become the talk of the Town. Booksellers were unmistakably spreading prologues and epilogues to be heard and read in the London's streets, taverns and coffeehouses, as well as in the home.

In addition to publication in separate pamphlets and alongside the plays themselves, a selection of the prologues and epilogues appeared in poetic anthologies. The first such instances are the pieces printed in the popular miscellanies, *Covent Garden Drolery* (1672; reprinted 1672) and *Westminster Drollery, The Second Part* (1672). *Covent Garden Drolery* prints the Prologue to *Albumazar* anonymously (dated 1668), the Prologue and Epilogue to *Marriage A-la Mode* (1671), the Prologue and Epilogue to *Secret Love* (1672), and the Prologue to *Wit without Money* (also 1672).⁶³ Equally, the second edition of *Westminster Drollery* prints the text of the Prologue to *Wit without Money*, which had been omitted from the original miscellany. It is highly likely that the texts used as the basis for these editions originated in the playhouse. The unusual appearance of these prologues and epilogues in this context can partly be explained by the disastrous circumstances of the King's Company in the early 1670s. After the Theatre Royal in Bridges Street burnt down on 25 January 1672 (along with all the costumes and stage machinery), the King's Company was in financial turmoil

⁶² Quoted in Harrington Smith, 'Dryden's Prologue and Epilogue to *Mithridates, Revived*', 251-67, at p. 253.

⁶³ The textual problems associated with the Prologue and Epilogue to *Marriage A-la Mode* and its implications for editors are discussed in Paul Hammond, 'The Prologue and Epilogue to Dryden's *Marriage A-la Mode* and the problem of *Covent Garden Drolery*', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 81 (1987), 155-72.

struggling to attract an audience.⁶⁴ The company were doubtless thankful for the public exposure offered by these ephemeral miscellanies.

But it was the first in a series of Dryden-Tonson collaborations – the *Miscellany Poems* of 1684 – which gathered together the prologues and epilogues into a coherent genre of writing.⁶⁵ The nineteen prologues and epilogues included in *Miscellany Poems* are arranged into a single group.⁶⁶ Dryden seems to have taken great care in the selection of material for inclusions in the volume, for he wrote to Tonson that ‘since we are to have nothing but new, I am resolvd we will have nothing but good, whomever we disoblige’.⁶⁷ The insertion of prologues and epilogues follows a distinct pattern. Those pieces which had already appeared with his own plays or those of his colleagues were not reprinted (with the exception of ‘Epilogue to *The Unhappy Favourite*’, headed here as ‘An Epilogue for the Kings House’). But those occasional prologues and epilogues which had not yet appeared in separate pamphlet form (such as the Exclusion Crisis addresses from the early 1680s) were printed in full.⁶⁸ No evidence survives to suggest any authorial revision to the texts originally supplied to the actors. By 1684, then, all but one of Dryden’s prologues and epilogues had some sort of literary afterlife in print beyond the immediate context of their performance.

There is a significant culture of scribal transmission for the prologues and epilogues.

Detailed analysis of Peter Beal’s bibliography of English literary manuscripts reveals the

⁶⁴ Winn, *John Dryden and His World*, p. 232.

⁶⁵ The organisation of the miscellany into satires, translations, and prologues and epilogues suggests that either Dryden or Tonson saw them as a discrete genre of text.

⁶⁶ The only exception is the ‘Epilogue for Calisto’, which appears at the end of the main section of *Miscellany Poems* – despite being listed on the title-page with the other prologues and epilogues. Paul Hammond explains this anomaly as a late entry into the compilation: ‘The Printing of the Dryden-Tonson *Miscellany Poems* (1684) and *Sylvae* (1685)’, 405-12, at p. 406.

⁶⁷ *Letters*, p. 23.

⁶⁸ Anomalously, there is also the July 1681 ‘Prologue at Oxford’ which was only printed in *Examen Poeticum*.

higher frequency at which Dryden's prologues and epilogues appeared in scriptorium anthologies in comparison to the work of his contemporaries.⁶⁹ Whether or not Dryden intended his stage orations to circulate scribally is irrelevant, for his texts existed in an urban culture in which scribal transmission was a common method of publication. Manuscript copies could be taken from a variety of sources: transcriptions from the oral performance, texts taken from the theatre company and its actors, including autograph manuscripts, or even from the printed editions (as we shall see). Any attempt to understand the manuscript tradition lying behind the prologues and epilogues must deal with the verse miscellanies in which they appear. The larger context for a miscellany provides a basis for understanding the contents of an individual prologue or epilogue. The miscellany, as Mary Hobbs writes, 'is a communal as well as individual construct, to be read for what it shows about the communities in which it was created and revised'.⁷⁰ By their very compilation, the verse miscellanies show the social environment and historical circumstances of reading. If we are to recreate the conditions of production and networks of transmission for these prologues and epilogues, we must pay close attention to the contents of these verse miscellanies.

Some patterns of circulation can be outlined for scribal copies of the prologues and epilogues. In the extant manuscripts, the prologues spoken at Oxford during the annual visits of the King's Company are especially well represented, partly as a result of the scholarly coterie in the university town and the absence of printed editions for many of these pieces until *Miscellany Poems*. University towns functioned as satellites of the metropolis in the free movement of compilers and scribal material. Several of the extant manuscripts have an Oxford provenance: Bodleian Library, MS Top. Oxon. e. 202 is a quarto miscellany

⁶⁹ Peter Beal, 'John Dryden', in *A Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts 1450-1700* <www.celm-ms.org.uk/authors/drydenjohn.html> [last checked 11 September 2019].

⁷⁰ Mary Hobbs, 'Early seventeenth-century verse miscellanies and their value for textual editors', *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700* 1 (1989), 182-210, at p.189.

containing literary verse and academic orations, and is probably a student's commonplace book compiled between c.1663 and 1671; Bodleian Library, MS Don. f. 29 is another commonplace book, compiled by William Doble of Trinity College (c. 1669-74), which includes a number of the prologues and epilogues spoken by the King's Company on their annual tour to the university city; British Library, Add. MS 14047 is a small quarto, gathering together three neo-Latin plays by George Wilde, Fellow of St John's College, alongside the prologues spoken in Oxford in the early 1670s; British Library, Add. MS 4455 is a composite miscellany of verse and prose in several hands, compiled by John Bennet of Hart Hall, Oxford in 1672; Society of Antiquaries, MS 330 is a duodecimo miscellany of verse on affairs of state with Latin academic exercise, compiled by a university man in a single hand.⁷¹ It would be unnecessary and tedious to list all the verse miscellanies with university connections. Suffice it to say the manuscripts enumerated here are only those compiled by members of the university during their time in Oxford. Both prologues and epilogues spoken at Oxford and in public performance in London figure prominently in the university manuscripts. Those pieces spoken at Oxford could well have been transcribed from their first performance or via access to the travelling actors' texts. The extant copies of university compilations probably only represent a fraction of the total of those which once existed, but the prologues and epilogues were certainly popular rhetorical compositions amongst the well-educated students, possibly because they showed the rhetorical value of the academic exercises and compositional regime undertaken as part of the university curriculum. This university context is a valuable witness for the copying, distribution and compilation of the prologues and epilogues.

⁷¹ Dating is made easier by the presence of 'A Catalogue of Books printed at Oxon 1666' [ff. 96r-104r], which runs until 1671. The manuscript contains the prologue and epilogue to *Marriage A-la Mode* [ff. 121r-22r].

Another major pattern in the manuscript circulation of the prologues and epilogues is the occurrence of scriptorium anthologies from metropolitan networks. The subjects of a number of the manuscripts assume a familiarity with the workings of London. Bodleian Library, MS Don. b. 8 is a large folio miscellany of verse and prose compiled by Sir William Haward with the employment of a professional scribe.⁷² In its heterogeneous assemblage of texts, Dryden's prologues and epilogues to *The Conquest of Granada*, *Amboyna* and Etherege's *Man of Mode* appear alongside texts which show signs of their urban circulation. Affairs of the Town loom large throughout the collection.⁷³ Texts such as 'A Libell on the Coffee-Houses' [p. 557], 'The Citty Maggott' [an invective against the City, pp. 579-81], and 'London's Defiance to Rome. A Perfect Narrative of the Magnificent Procession' [an ironic prose account of the Pope burning procession, dated 17 November 1679; pp. 606-9] attest to the company the prologues and epilogues kept. Haward, we can suggest, had easy access to London networks of scribal publication throughout the 1660s and 1670s. Dryden's prologues and epilogues were seen as fitting accompaniments to the town satires for an educated urban audience. Haward's collection is one instance of a recurring pattern of scribal transmission amongst coterie London readerships.

But manuscript circulation is not a form of publication confined to those prologues and epilogues which had not yet been printed. One must not be wilfully blind to the preponderance of scribal transmission alongside print. A number of the political stage orations from 1680-2 survive in manuscript form, despite many of the pieces already have gone into print as separate pamphlets. Some limited circulation of the prologue and epilogues

⁷² Haward was a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber at the courts of successive kings as well as an MP for Bletchingley, Surrey. He was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1665, and lived sometime in Scotland Yard.

⁷³ It also presents thirteen poems from the Marvell canon and eleven poems confidently attributed to Rochester, including 'A Letter from Artemiza in the Town to Chloe in the Country' [pp. 490-94].

to *The Duke of Guise* and *The Spanish Friar* (which polemically seek to turn the tide of public events against the City) suggests sufficient public excitement surrounding the political controversy for manuscripts to still be copied. Outside of the Exclusion Crisis pieces, there seems to be no discernible pattern as to which previously printed prologues and epilogues were afforded the status of scribal publication. However, some ideas might tentatively be suggested. Those other epilogues and prologues to survive tend to be reproduced in large formal folio miscellanies in professional hands or in the hands of their gentry owners (like Bodleian MS Don. b. 8, which contains the prologues and epilogues to *Amboyna* and *The Conquest of Granada*). Given the prestige attached to manuscript copies, it is possible that the compilers thought the pieces to be of sufficient value to posterity to warrant a unique handwritten copy. Some prologues and epilogues may have been seen as more easily detachable from the plays with which they were printed, which is certainly the case for the stage orations in these manuscripts which make no reference to the plays themselves and could be poems in their own right.

One thing we can be certain of is that certain prologues and epilogues appeared in manuscript for which we no longer have any direct textual evidence. As Paul Hammond has shown, John Oldham knew Dryden's 1673 'Prologue to the University of Oxford' as he echoed it in a manuscript draft from c.1678.⁷⁴ In fact, the prologue was published in the 1684 *Miscellany Poems* several months after Oldham's death. Here, Oldham must have access to a scribal copy even though none survive in his papers. Given that Oldham was an undergraduate at Oxford in 1673, it is good probability that he made notes from it himself in the theatre performance or received a copy from the players. A further example are the drafts

⁷⁴ Hammond, 'The Circulation of Dryden's Poetry', p. 156. The draft is printed in *The Poems of John Oldham*, ed. Harold Brooks and Raman Selden (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 545.

for ‘A Letter from the Country’ (composed March and July 1678), in which he echoes Dryden’s Prologue to Shadwell’s *A True Widow*.⁷⁵ Although the play was staged in early March 1678, it was not printed until 1679 after the ‘Letter’ was completed, suggesting that Oldham is recalling the spoken word or has access to scribal networks.

The most distinct pattern of scribal publication for the stage orations is the ‘Prologue to *The Prophetess*’ (first performed June 1690), which has seventeen surviving copies according to Peter Beal’s catalogue.⁷⁶ Dryden contributed the prologue to Betterton’s *The Prophetess: or, The History of Dioclesian* – an adaptation of an old text by Fletcher and Massinger. The content of the prologue leaves the text open to Jacobite interpretations. The financial strain put on the United Company’s production is likened to the expensive wars pursued by the Williamite regime. Evelyn thought that William’s first parliament, dissolved in early February 1691, had ‘produc’d as universal a discontent, against K. William & themselves, as was before against K: James’. Chiefly this discontent was on account of the ‘prodigal & careless menaging [of] the monys raised for the reduction of Ireland’.⁷⁷ In the politically charged atmosphere of William’s departure for Ireland, the ‘Prologue to *The Prophetess*’ proved a point of controversy. Recognising the double meaning reflecting on the Revolution, the new laureate Shadwell, contemporaries believed, saw to it that the prologue was banned. It was only spoken at the first performance. The suggestion that Shadwell saw to it that the prologue be suppressed is first recorded in John Oldmixon’s *Muses Mercury* from 1707.⁷⁸ This possibly apocryphal story gains a degree of plausibility by the absence of the prologue from most of the printed copies of the play. Although Tonson published the play in

⁷⁵ *The Poems of John Oldham*, p. 543.

⁷⁶ Beal, ‘John Dryden’ <<http://www.celm-ms.org.uk/authors/drydenjohn.html>> [last checked 11 September 2019].

⁷⁷ John Evelyn, *The Diary*, ed. E.S. de Beer, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), i 2, 22.

⁷⁸ John Oldmixon, *Muses Mercury: or the Monthly Miscellany* (London: Printed for Andrew Bell, 1707), p.14.

1690 (advertised in the *London Gazette* 12-16 June 1690), very few copies of the play include Dryden's prologue; it was only printed on a disjunct leaf for particular purchasers. In the absence of a significant print run, copies of the prologue began circulating in Jacobite manuscript miscellanies on affairs of state. The extant manuscripts worked to bind Jacobites into a community of readers with a shared sense of political marginalisation. Compilers were obviously alert to the Jacobite charge of Dryden's prologue as it accompanies explicitly Jacobite poems and songs which were unprintable after the Revolution. To get a sense of what company this prologue keeps, I shall take one example: British Library, Add. MS 21094, which belonged to Basil Feilding, 4th Earl of Denbigh. It presents polemical prose tracts on the forced abdication of James II alongside Jacobite beast fables and songs, satires against Whiggism, verses on the dangers of political factionalism and moderation, as well as Dryden's 'Upon the Death of the Viscount Dundee' which was not printed until after Dryden's death (in *Poems on Affairs of State; From 1604 to this Present Year 1704*).⁷⁹ Indeed, the 'Prologue to The Prophetess' was circulated only with other pieces with a Jacobite provenance and agenda, demonstrating how meaning is encoded by groups of readers. This underground network reveals the methods by which Jacobite verses could nourish a set of shared values amongst a politically homogenous coterie.

The Social Topography of Scribal Publication

Although an author without the disdain for the typographical medium of some of his aristocratic contemporaries, especially amongst the Rochester and Buckingham circles, Dryden was still part of the Restoration culture of scribal transmission. Those texts of his

⁷⁹ 'Upon the Death of the Viscount Dundee' also appears alongside the 'Prologue to *The Prophetess*' in Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet. c. 18, and Bodleian Library, MS Firth e. 6.

which were scribally circulated had a far more restricted availability than any of the printed text, but retained a place in the commerce of texts in Restoration London. As I will show, manuscript circulation has a more significant role than as ‘a minor adjunct’ to the principal mode of publication in print.⁸⁰ Not one of the aristocratic or gentry authors bridled by the ‘stigma of print’, Dryden chose print as the medium by which to reach the widest audience, often for polemical or propagandist purposes.⁸¹ Furthermore, neither Dryden or the King’s Company resisted the print publication of his plays. The only play which enjoyed any kind of circulation in manuscript was *The State of Innocence*, which was prevented from entering production (it remained closet drama). In the preface to the 1677 quarto, Dryden complained in the preface that ‘many hundred Copies of it being dispers’d, abroad without my knowledge or consent: so that every one gathering new faults, it became at length a Libel against me’ (XII, p. 86).⁸² Unusually for a Dryden play text, seven copies survive and it is not implausible that far more copies were available, if perhaps not the many hundreds Dryden suggests. It is unusual for manuscript copies to survive of texts that already had enjoyed a print run: notable exceptions include *Heroique Stanzas* (which survives in fifteen copies, as Herringman did not proceed to publish), *Annus Mirabilis* (British Library, Add. MS 69396, ff. 33r-63v), *Absalom and Achitophel* (Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. poet. 12, ff. 68r-100r; North Yorkshire Record Office ZDA MIC 1254/1659), and *The Hind and the Panther* (Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. poet. 115, ff. 1r-51v). Extracts in commonplace books are far more common; those complete copies that do survive tend to be in scriptorium anthologies, in which great prestige is placed on owning a handwritten copy.

⁸⁰ Hammond, ‘The Circulation of Dryden’s Poetry’, p. 150.

⁸¹ The phrase is derived from J. W. Saunders, ‘The stigma of print: a note on the social bases of Tudor poetry’. *Essays in Criticism* 1 (1951), 139-64.

⁸² See Marion H. Hamilton, ‘The Manuscripts of Dryden’s *The State of Innocence*’, *Studies in Bibliography* 6 (1954), 237-46.

Among the poems, it is only *Mac Flecknoe* and the collaborative *Essay upon Satire* that were intended for scribal circulation, and Dryden would have exercised little control over their dissemination after their initial publication. But such poems tell us a great deal about Dryden's role in the culture of London scribal coteries. They share an affinity with Town lampoons, developed around the new social formation and community of readers in the West End.⁸³ Their manuscript context distinguishes them from the older urban entities of the court and City. Unlike court satires, these verses appeal to a readership accustomed to the newly-instituted hedonistic social round of visits, theatres, coffee and chocolate houses, and the Mall. By examining the provenance of the manuscripts of *Mac Flecknoe*, to begin with, we can see learn something of the topographical distribution of early copies. Dryden probably released a manuscript copy of the poem into circulation in the London literary world sometime in 1676 (Will's could have been the ideal place to release the poem to a select audience).⁸⁴ David Vieth has established that none of the fifteen extant manuscripts were copied from any of the others, and perhaps twenty or thirty copies were in circulation before its first appearance in print in 1682.⁸⁵ That means the poem likely had a small early readership amongst Dryden's literary circle, men who were connected to London's theatrical and literary scene. However, we should also remind ourselves that the existence of physical copies does not correlate with total readership. Word of mouth and oral recital of the poem would open up a far larger audience than the tens of copies suggests.

⁸³ The genre of Town lampoon is defined and discussed in Harold Love, *English Clandestine Satire, 1660-1702* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 66-98.

⁸⁴ The poem's date is ascertained in David M. Vieth, 'The Discovery of the Date of *Mac Flecknoe*', in *Evidence in Literary Scholarship*, ed. Rene Wellek and Alvaro Ribiero (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), pp. 63-87.

⁸⁵ David M. Vieth, 'Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe*: The Case against Editorial Confusion', *Harvard Library Bulletin* 24 (1976), 204-45.

Mac Flecknoe survives primarily in two forms: in single leaves or booklets, in which the poem was presumably first passed hand to hand, and manuscript miscellanies produced either by individual readers or professional scribes for sale. Of the separates, a number of the copies bear the marks of having been folded as letters or packets (including Lambeth Palace Library MS 711 and Yale, Osborn Poetry Box IV/54, which both by their folding suggest having been bundled into someone's coat pocket at some point). The semi-clandestine way in which the poem was circulated in this form suggests publication functioned as a means of social or peer group bonding. Likewise, a couple of the scriptorium anthologies including *Mac Flecknoe* draw attention to communities of reading in the Town. For example, Leeds University, Brotherton Library, MS Lt. 54 (known as the Robinson miscellany) is a quarto miscellany of poems on affairs of state.⁸⁶ Conventionally for this kind of verse miscellany, *Mac Flecknoe* sits alongside lampoons and court verse by authors such as Rochester, Charles Sackville, and Andrew Marvell. But this professionally-produced anthology was evidently a gift for Charles Robinson, an officer in the King's Regiment of Foot Guard. The miscellany is inscribed on the stubs and endpapers by 'matt Calihan', 'To C^{pt} Robinson att Ca^{pt} Elwes near ye Watch house in Marlbur^hroagh street'; 'For Cap^t. Robinson at his Lodginges in Charing Cross'. Such detail allows us to locate, topographically and socially, the transmission networks of early copies of Dryden's poem to new built developments between Whitehall and the leisured environs of Covent Garden.

Only two manuscripts attribute the poem to Dryden – Yale, Osborn MS b 105 and National Library of Ireland, MS 2093; early readers of the poem either were unable or uninterested in discovering the author of the poem. The attribution or misattribution of *The*

⁸⁶ Discussed with a facsimile of pp. 1-10 in Paul Hammond, 'The Robinson Manuscript Miscellany of Restoration Verse in the Brotherton Collection, Leeds', *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society* 18 (1982), 275-324.

Essay upon Satire was far more controversial, based on the false assumption that Dryden was the chief author rather than John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave – a misattribution that would instigate a grievous attack either by the Duchess of Portsmouth or Rochester.⁸⁷ Most modern editors ignore the contemporary assumption that Dryden was the author rather than possibly a later reviser. But he was perceived to be a part of the clandestine culture of Town lampoons on behalf of the Mulgrave faction. ‘The Miseries of Visits’, a verse satire on the factional culture of lampooning, includes Dryden amongst the more familiar names of clandestine scribal publication – such as Rochester, Buckingham, Mulgrave, Dorset, and Scrope.⁸⁸ If we are to believe Restoration attributions, Dryden had a far broader circulation in manuscript than we would expect. Two particular misattributions tell us something about Dryden’s position between the rival cultures of print and scribal publication. ‘A Familiar Epistle to Mr Julian Secretary to the Muses 1677’ is attributed to Dryden by five closely related manuscript sources, but is more likely the work of Buckingham or someone in his circle. The attribution rests on the unflattering descriptions of members of the Buckingham-Rochester group. ‘The King of Hearts’ is a far more compelling misattribution (appearing in University of Nottingham, Pw V 48 and Yale, Osborn Poetry Box XIII/50). According to Malone, the poem was originally attributed by Tonson to Dryden, who disowned it in favour of a young imitator, Arthur Maynwaring, then residing in Essex Street.⁸⁹ The poem mocks the Whig aristocrat Lord Delamere’s departure from the City of London after the 1688 Revolution. In a Drydenian deflationary mock-epic, Delamere is a new ‘Achitophel’ who ‘With all the Learning he receiv’d from Hell, / Refin’d the hot-brain’d Lout, & taught him to rebel’. He proceeds in pageant down the Strand as a rabble-rousing orator (‘They kiss’d his proffer’d

⁸⁷ Edward Saslow, ‘The Rose Alley Ambuscade’, *Restoration* 26 (2002), 27-49.

⁸⁸ The poem survives in two manuscripts: Leeds University, Brothor Library, MS Lt. 87 and Lincolnshire Archives Office MS Anc 15/B/4. Paul Hammond, ‘‘The Miseries of Visits’’: An Addition to the Literature on Robert Julian, Secretary to the Muses’, *The Seventeenth Century* 8 (1993), 161-63.

⁸⁹ Malone (ed.), *The Critical and Miscellaneous Prose Works of John Dryden*, ii 125.

hand and worships paid / To that dull Calf which They an Idol made’).⁹⁰ That Tonson and contemporaries should ascribe the poem to Dryden should be unsurprising given the verse’s biblical analogies, Jacobite principles, and mob politics. What is more significant is the underlying assumption that Dryden had continued writing substantial Jacobite verse for manuscript circulation.⁹¹

A final mode of publication amongst London print and scribal networks is worth consideration. *Alexander’s Feast. Or the Power of Musique* was first performed at Stationers’ Hall on 22 November 1697, and published as a separate folio pamphlet by Tonson, possibly distributed or sold at the performance itself.⁹² Like the *Song for St. Cecilia’s Day* in 1687, the folio sheet was to accompany the musical celebrations. But the poem also enjoyed a parallel existence in scribal publication: seven manuscripts survive, all of which were originally unbound folio or quarto sheets taken from the first printed edition of the ode. Such copies were transmitted for recitation in the home or public places rather than silent reading. As Pebworth has shown for the earlier seventeenth century, some texts written for a social or ceremonial occasion might be discarded once the event passed, only occasionally findings its way into manuscript or print.⁹³ Here, we not only have printed edition, but also copies transcribed onto single sheets for those not present at the first performance. It attests to both the interconnection of print and manuscript in Restoration London and the public demand for texts for public performance – both of which owe much to social and bibliographical possibilities offered by urban culture.

⁹⁰ University of Nottingham, Pw V 48, pp. 29, 31.

⁹¹ This is in addition to the brief verses ‘Upon the Death of the Viscount Dundee’, which circulated exclusively in manuscript anthologies of Jacobite verse.

⁹² Macdonald, *John Dryden: A Bibliography of Early Editions and of Drydeniana*, pp. 59-60.

⁹³ T. L. Pebworth, ‘John Donne, coterie poetry, and the text as performance’, *Studies in English Literature 1600-1900* 29 (1989), 61-75.

Dryden as Poet and Spokesman for the Town

To many of his contemporaries – both friend and enemy alike – Dryden was perceived as advocate and representative for a new cultural entity: the Town.¹ In Rochester's *Allusion to Horace*, 'Poet Squobb' lacks the social graces to please the court wits, but is an industrious professional pleasing the leisured classes of the West End.² The 'Five hundred Verses [Dryden] every morning writt' is the hallmark of a scribbling author not a wit. Although Rochester's designation of the poet laureate as one amongst the 'Poets of the Town' is in part an act of literary snobbery and hierarchy, it also reveals a set of anxieties about the growing cultural capital of this new entity.³ The court was no longer the sole arbiter of literary taste, learning and fashion. London's literary marketplace became an alternative source of patronage for aspiring writers.⁴ In fact, the nonchalance and gentlemanly ease of the *Allusion* was 'an attempt on behalf of the leading court patrons...to reassert their waning authority over matters of literary judgement and the making and breaking of reputations'.⁵ But what are we to understand by the term the Town?

¹ Matthew Prior's burlesque of the urbane poet of the Town, Mr. Bayes, scorns those uninitiated in the persons, places and mores of the capital ('I would...represent the vanity of the *Town-Fop*, who pretends to be acquainted at all those good Houses [such as Will's, Groleau's or Pontack's], though he nere was in 'em'; *The Hind and the Panther Transvers'd to the Story of the Country-Mouse and the City-Mouse* (London: Printed for W. Davis, 1687), p. 18).

² Matthew C. Augustine cautions us against too crude a binary between the virtuoso aristocratic amateur and the hardworking professional living off the proceeds of his pen. As he argues, it is perhaps more helpful to think in terms of audiences: court coteries or the Town audience in the commercial theatre; 'Trading places: Lord Rochester, the laureate and the making of literary reputation', in *Lord Rochester in the Restoration World*, ed. Matthew Augustine and Steven Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 58-78.

³ John Wilmot, *The Works of John Wilmot Earl of Rochester*, ed. Harold Love (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 73, 74.

⁴ Dryden's dedications demarcated separate spheres for poet and patron. See Dustin Griffin, *Literary Patronage in England, 1650-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 70-98; John Barnard, 'Dryden and Patronage', in *The Cambridge Companion to John Dryden*, pp. 199-220.

⁵ Harold Love, 'Shadwell, Rochester and the Crisis of Amateurism', *Restoration* 20 (1996), 119-34, at p. 122.

In the ‘Prologue to *Marriage A-La Mode*’ (first performed November 1671), Charles Hart gives voice to the players’ willingness ‘T’ oblige the Town, the City and the Court’ (l. 37). A similar tripartite division of the audience is repeated in the epilogue, this time through Michael Mohun. Dryden’s compartmentalising of the audience is simultaneously a theatrical signifier – denoting the court in the boxes, the City in the middle gallery, and the Town which fills the pit – and a demographic division of the metropolis into various social communities. A whole litany of prologues and epilogues from the Restoration stage make a similar distinction.⁶ Whereas the City of London and Westminster were long-established entities, the ‘Town’ was a new cultural invention and built environment.⁷ In the earlier seventeenth century, the word itself was not used as a proper noun, referring to towns and cities in the abstract. Only after the Restoration could the Town be defined by urban geography, demography, characteristic forms of association, and by distinctive values. Dryden’s prologues and epilogues helped articulate the role of the Town in London society to those who comprised such a body.

In the Tudor period there had been no Town in this sense – between the City of London and the village of Westminster largely lay open space, except for the detached mansions of certain aristocratic families along the south side of the Strand, stretching from Essex Palace in the west to Temple to the east.⁸ Jacobean and Caroline governments sought

⁶ It appears, amongst other places, in: Shadwell’s ‘Epilogue to *The Sullen Lovers*’, in *Prologues and Epilogues*, 1. i., p. 283; Lee’s ‘Epilogue to *Theodosius*’, in *Prologues and Epilogues*, 2. i., p. 256; Buckingham’s ‘A Familiar Epistle to Mr Julian, Secretary to the Muses’, in *Plays, Poems, and Miscellaneous Writings Associated with George Villiers, Second Duke of Buckingham*, ed. Robert Hume and Harold Love, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), ii 80; Otway’s *The Soldier’s Fortune*, in *The Works of Thomas Otway*, ed. J.C Ghosh, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), ii 186; Crowne’s *The English Friar*, in *The Comedies of John Crowne: A Critical Edition*, ed. B.J. McMullin (New York: Garland, 1984), p. 522.

⁷ The Town as a new cultural domain is described in Lawrence Manley, *Literature and Culture in Early Modern London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 481-97 and Martin Butler, *Theatre and Crisis, 1632-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 141.

⁸ Such town mansions tended mirror the country seats of the owners. Amongst those lining the Strand were Somerset House, Russell House, York House and Northumberland House. New palaces continued to be erected after the Restoration, distinct from the town houses of the lesser aristocracy and gentry, like Buckingham House

to prevent the growth of the metropolis through a succession of royal proclamations. On 20 June 1632 a royal proclamation was issued ‘commanding the Gentry to keepe their Residence at their Mansions in the Countrey, and forbidding them to make their habitations in London, and places adjoyning’.⁹ These documents were designed to discourage migration from the provinces to the increasingly fashionable residential quarter of the West End (except for those public officials and courtiers who held office in the royal household or council). The crown wanted to keep the gentry on their landed estates to fulfil their parochial duties: namely, by dispensing justice, of ministering to the poor, and leading the shires as ceremonial patriarchs.¹⁰ According to Felicity Heal, James I issued no fewer than ten proclamations against London residence, threatening absentee landowners with prosecution in star chamber.¹¹ Stuart kings believed in the power of central government to achieve near-impossible feats of social engineering, in this case, the capacity of the crown to enforce restriction on inward migration through fiat. But demographic trends became irresistible as London became more attractive to the upper classes (especially after the Restoration), working as a centripetal force around which markets, tastes, fashions and ideas moved. Indeed, Charles II recognised the perennial problem of London’s juxtaposition of leisure and civic responsibility. So, when he

in Pall Mall, named after the 1st Marquess of Buckingham, Arlington House in St. James’s Square, built by the Secretary of State Lord Arlington and Clarendon House in Piccadilly, the residence of Lord Chancellor Clarendon.

⁹ James Larkin (ed.), *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973-83), ii 350-1.

¹⁰ Yet it was not only heads of families who were ordered to return to their counties, but also their wives and families. Festal seasons, especially Christmas, were targeted as being the most likely time of year for the gentry and their families to be resident in the western suburbs. James I lamented the influx of ladies for the London seasons in verses from 1622:

You women that does London love so well
whome scarce a proclamacon can expel
and to be kept in fashion fine and gaye
Care not what fines there honest husbands pay.
You dreame on nought but vizitts maskes and toyes

And thinke the cuntrey contributes noe ioyes... (James I, *Poems*, ed. J. Craigie, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: Scottish Text Society, 1955-8), ii 178). Beneath the misogynist sentiments is a frustration at the growing appeal of the London season, as well as the abdication of responsibility for hospitality and local governance in the provinces.

¹¹ Felicity Heal, ‘The crown, the gentry and London: the enforcement of proclamation, 1596-1640’, in *Law and Government Under the Tudors*, ed. Claire Cross et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 211-26, at p. 213.

sought to build a new palace modelled on Louis XIV's Versailles, Charles chose Winchester as the new home for the entire royal administration in an effort to drag courtiers away from the metropolis.¹²



6. Wenceslaus Hollar, a bird's-eye-view etching of the west central neighbourhoods of London (the built environment that came to be known as the Town), including Lincoln's Inn Fields, Holborn, Covent Garden piazza and the Strand (c. 1660-1666). London, British Museum, Q, 6.136. © Trustees of the British Museum.

Despite the attempts made to crack down on the proliferation of town houses in the West End, ambitious speculative builders and aristocratic landowners collaborated to

¹² Christopher Wren designed the buildings on land purportedly the meeting palace of King Arthur's knights of the Round Table. Although construction began in 1683 at the height of the Tory reaction, it was incomplete at Charles' death and fell into abeyance during the reign of his brother. See John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Harper Collins, 1997), pp. 8-10.

transform the urban environment.¹³ Open fields between the City and Westminster were carved up for development, provided they adhered to royal standards. The earliest discernible phase of western property development was during the 1630s, when Lincoln's Inn Fields, between Chancery Lane and Drury Lane, Covent Garden, and the environs of Long Acre came into being.¹⁴ Furthermore, the residential buildings around Westminster expanded in the early decades of the seventeenth century to meet the growing demand for houses for public officials, members of the royal household, and courtiers who wanted urban seats (much to the chagrin of the Stuart kings). London's townscape burst the confines of the walled City and Westminster. The bipartite division of London as two towns connected by an umbilical cord along the Strand was replaced by a multi-centred conurbation. 'Some have compared it to a Carpenter's Rule; but it much resembles the Shape (including *Southwork*) [sic] of a great *Whale*, Westminster being the under Jaw, *St James's Park* the Mouth; the *Pall mall* &c. Nd [the north], the upper Jaw; *Cock and Pye Fields*, or the meeting of the *7 Streets*, the Eye; the rest of the City and *Southwork* to Eastsmithfield, the Body; and thence Ed [east] to Limehouse, the Tail; and 'tis probably in as great a Proportion the largest of Towns, as that is of Fishes.'¹⁵ The coming of the Civil Wars brought a halt to the previous advance of the built environment. Only after the return of the exiled Stuart monarchy did the West End come into being as we would understand it today. The birth of this new residential quarter of the metropolis – the West End – meant an influx of aristocratic and gentry families different from the previous generations of economic migrants to the City. Elegant terraces and squares were thought to be the most salubrious and profitable management of space in the western suburbs. As a consequence, spaces influenced by the architectural style of Inigo Jones such as Covent

¹³ Indeed, parliament pushed through an act imposing a fine of one year's rent on all properties since 1620 within ten miles of London which did not have four acres of land attached to those properties.

¹⁴ See Norman Brett-James, *The Growth of Stuart London* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1935), pp. 151-87.

¹⁵ Edward Hatton, *A New View of London: Or, An Ample Account of that City*, 2 vols. (London: Printed for John Nicholson, 1708), i ii.

Garden and Bloomsbury Square laid the pattern for future development as self-contained neighbourhoods built around central piazzas. The narrow-fronted terraces boxed in enclosed green spaces to give the impression of a rural village relocated into the metropolis.

Nonetheless, the West End was *sui generis*, a self-contained enclave built up piecemeal over the course of the seventeenth century by aristocratic grandees. Because of the aristocratic ownership of the land, a ducal iron grip was exercised over the tenants of West End properties. The leases stipulated the size, material, design and comfort of the houses, and that they should not be used as places of work for artisans and tradesmen. As a result, landowners could ensure the social exclusiveness of the fashionable residential developments. In Roy Porter's words, the 'hierarchy of ranks was stamped upon the topography of the town'.¹⁶

The Town was comprised of a number of overlapping social groups: aristocratic magnates, who required large houses for occupation and hospitality when in Town attending court; the country elite, made up of baronets, knights and squires, who were most likely to visit only during the social and legal seasons, or when parliament was sitting (one notable example being the Verneys of Middle Claydon, who rented a modest house in a terrace block near Covent Garden piazza); lesser parish gentry, who tended to rent a furnished house for London visits for a few weeks or months in the year; finally, the professional classes drawn to the West End for the work provided by the leisured elite. In fact, Lawrence Stone has argued that the West End was a remarkably socially homogeneous subdivision within London society. He argues 'that the residential segregation between the monied and landed classes actually increased rather than diminished over the course of the seventeenth century'.¹⁷ Somewhat unexpectedly, there was very little infiltration of City merchants into

¹⁶ Roy Porter, *London: A Social History* (London: Penguin, 1994), p.117.

¹⁷ Lawrence Stone, 'The Residential Development of the West End of London in the Seventeenth Century', in *After the Reformation: Essays in Honour of J.H. Hexter*, ed. Barbara Malament (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), pp. 167-212.

the western suburbs, which remained the exclusive preserve of professional men, courtiers and landed classes. Whereas the landed classes migrated westwards over the course of the seventeenth century, it seems the monied elite were not moving with them. The only nobility left in the City of London tended to be aldermanic or merchant knights. Records of tenancies for Covent Garden, Lincoln's Inn Fields, St. Martin's Lane and Golden Square reveal that of the almost two thousand merchants and bankers living in the capital from 1677, only four per cent lived in the West End, and these were often the decaying eastern peripheries closest to the City walls.¹⁸ Such social differentiation between Town, City and court was as assiduously observed in the early eighteenth century as it was during the Restoration period. The tripartite division of the metropolis found in Dryden's prologues and epilogues is delineated by Joseph Addison in *The Spectator*: 'When I consider this great city in its several quarters and division, I look upon it as an aggregate of various nations, distinguished from each other by their respective customs, manners and interests. The Courts of two countries do not so much differ from one another as the Court and the City in their peculiar ways of life and conversation. In short, the inhabitants of St. James's, notwithstanding they live under the same laws and speak the same language, are a distinct people from those of Cheapside, who are likewise removed from those of the Temple on the one side and those of Smithfield on the other by several climates and degrees in their way of thinking and conversing together'.¹⁹

In addition to demographic difference, the Town became associated with new modes of sociability in contrast to the hieratic Court and commercial City.²⁰ Instead of being an

¹⁸ Stone, 'The Residential Development of the West End of London in the Seventeenth Century', p. 187.

¹⁹ *The Spectator* 403 (12 June 1712), in *The Spectator*, ed. Donald Bond, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), iii 124. Likewise, Richard Steele remarked on the same social division, noting the capital was divided into 'the very different nations of Cheapside, Covent Garden and St. James's'; *The Tender Husband*, ed. C. Winton (London: Edward Arnold, 1967), p. 14.

²⁰ City sociability was based around the meetings and feasts of the livery companies, while the ruling pattern of court society was still that of the levee: in the morning, clients would wait at the houses of the upper aristocracy, who would often proceed later in the day to the royal household and wait on members of the court or stand as silent spectators of meals taken in state.

inferior imitation of the style of the court, the Town was to have its own identity (although, of course, many of the fashions of the court were still aped). London's West End hosted a significantly large leisured class whose demands for recreation, pleasure and social intercourse led to new notions of urban civility. Unlike the insufferably dull life in the country, London offered a freer atmosphere for association, consumption and forbidden pleasures.²¹ Absence from the Town was perceived as a form of exile in *The Wild Gallant* – 'like a wild Beast in the Wilderness' (III. i. 233) according to Isabelle. Being out of the loop in the rumour, gossip and fashions of the Town is a source of social embarrassment in Rochester's *A Letter from Artemiza in the Towne to Chloe in the Countrey* ('I find my selfe ridiculously growne / Embarrassé with being out of Towne, / Rude, and untaught, like any Indian Queene; / My Countrey nakednesse is strangely seene').²² New arrivals were thankful for lives free from the ambit of circumscribed rural hierarchies. According to jealous Mr Pinchwife in *The Country Wife* (1675), Town women are defined by sexual license, as well as number of other hedonistic pleasures ('naughty Town Women...love Plays, Visits, fine Coaches, fine Cloaths, Fiddles, Balls, Treates').²³ Chief among the new modes of urban sociability unique to the Town was the modish fashion for visiting in a coach, as Susan Whyman has shown in relation to the social rituals of the Verney family.²⁴ Such rites were to teach manners, to signal gentility, and sustain personal networks.²⁵ This sociable pursuit of

²¹ Harriet in *The Man of Mode* laments her impending return to the country in the following terms: 'Pitty me, who am going to that sad place. Methinks I hear the hateful noise of Rooks already – Kaw, Kaw, Kaw – There's musick in the worst Cry in London! My Dill and Cowcubers to pickle' (V. ii. 321-3), in *The Dramatic Works of Sir George Etherege*, ed. H. F. B. Brett Smith, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), ii 282.

²² Wilmot, *The Works of John Wilmot Earl of Rochester*, p. 66.

²³ William Wycherley, *The Country Wife* (London: Printed for Thomas Dring, 1675), p. 17.

²⁴ Susan Whyman, *Sociability and Power in Late-Stuart England: The Cultural Worlds of the Verneys 1660-1720* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.91.

²⁵ In 1675, Hannah Woolley described the governing precept of the visit to be civility rather than familiarity. Her conduct book suggested that one should listen attentively to those of higher status without interrupting them, but it was possible to disagree with them if the politest possible words were used. Nor should one make 'a bold entrance without Ceremony' but do it 'quietly and civilly' without 'bawling noise or obstreperousness'. One was never to whisper in company 'and much less to laugh when you have done' (*The Gentlewoman's Companion; or, A Guide to the Female Sex* (London: Printed for Edward Thomas, 1675), pp. 49-50).

pleasure meant that the Town became the pleasure district of the metropolis, replacing the less salubrious and reputable environs along the south bank of the Thames. Here, it is worth noting Dryden's own inhabitancy of London geographies as most of his writing career was spent in residence in the Soho and Covent Garden areas. These precincts had become the fashionable haunt of artists, literati and rakes. Literature itself was made more respectable by the movement of writers and audiences from Southwark to north of the Strand.

What I have been describing is the process by which a newly developed region of the metropolis attracted a leisured body of inhabitants who saw themselves as distinct from both the City and court, and who fashioned new ways of thinking and behaving as a community. Unique among the new modes of Restoration sociability was the playhouse. The Restoration theatre was a crucial public institution for the Town, acting as a point of social confluence for country, court, and City. In particular, the spoken prologues and epilogues frequently question how one should behave as a member of the Town. The theatre audience was a central representative body for the Town to which affairs of the Town could be referred, especially on first nights. Stage orations, then, took on an important role in defining and shaping urban civility and social identities within the Town community. As some of the most witty and effortless examples of the genre, Dryden's prologues and epilogue allowed the poet to escape from his own inadequacies as a speaker and impromptu wit by having his words delivered up by actors.²⁶ The theatre audience is fashioned into a Town Senate with appropriate models for critical judgement and social behaviour held up for emulation.

²⁶ In 'A Defence of an Essay of Dramatique Poesie' (1667), Dryden admitted to lacking some of the particulars of Town wit: 'I want that gayety of humour which is required to it. My Conversation is slow and dull, my humour Saturnine and reserv'd: In short, I am none of those who endeavour to break Jest in Company, or make reparties' (ix 8).

Because the prologues and epilogues entailed direct communication between the actors and audience, they have been used as by many scholars as documents of theatre history, revealing the stage conditions of the later seventeenth century – notably, the composition and repartition of the audience, the physical layout of the public playhouses, the fortunes of rival companies, and even the interaction between Londoners.²⁷ Although the long-held myth that the audience was dominated by a dissolute courtly coterie has been discredited, many scholars look to the internal evidence of prologues and epilogues to gauge the composition of theatre audiences.²⁸ But the rhetorical statements made by dramatists on the composition and behaviour of the Restoration audience should not be taken at face value; material delivered from the stage should be treated with extreme caution when used as the basis for generalisations about the audience to whom it was spoken. Purely descriptive prologues and epilogues would be dull and uninteresting for playhouse audiences on the first night. Instead, they function as ‘an ingenious kind of distorting mirror held up to the audience’ (in Harold Love’s words) on a unique rhetorical occasion.²⁹ In each stage oration, the poet can pursue various subdivisions within the audience in good faith through social raillery and friendly repartee. The ritualised mockery of cits, wits and beaux was surely offered as an affirmation of their social status rather than as outright abuse. It is a form of audience management in which measured irony was to apportioned while avoiding the disastrous consequences of driving the audience away. Indiscriminate satire on those

²⁷ Pierre Danchin somewhat fallaciously draws three main conclusions from his analysis of the content of Restoration prologues and epilogues: firstly, that the audience became increasingly raucous and disorderly between 1660 and 1700; the audience can be divided into courtiers, gentry, gallants, citizens, and whores; and that the season of 1671-2 marks a turning point in theatrical taste as military leaders departed to fight in the Third Dutch War, meaning playwrights had to appeal to a growing number of citizens (‘Le Public des théâtres londoniens à l’époque de la Restauration d’après les prologues et les épilogues’, in *Dramaturgie et Société*, ed. Jean Jacquot, 2 vols. (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1968), ii 847-88).

²⁸ See Avery Emmett, ‘The Restoration Audience’, *Philological Quarterly* 45 (1966), 54-61 and Robert Hume, *The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 19-32.

²⁹ Harold Love, ‘Who were the Restoration Audience?’, *The Yearbook of English Studies* 10 (1980), 21-44, at p.24.

perceived as social inferiors is hardly a model for a successful commercial enterprise. As a result, the measured insult of various elements within the playhouse fostered a sense of social identity, particular in relation to the Town which is fashioned into a coherent entity with its own tastes and capacity for literary judgement.

When Dryden appeals to the ‘Town, the City, and the Court’ in the ‘Prologue to *Marriage A-la Mode*’, the theatre is at once a physical and discursive space.³⁰ It refers to both the internal geography of the playhouse and the demographic divisions within London. The ‘Court’ is made up of the royal household and their dependants along with those who aligned themselves, whether politically or culturally, with the crown. The term ‘City’ enjoys a similarly narrow definition. It entails only those citizens within the City of London who were members of the livery companies and were entitled to a voice in City government. By contrast, the ‘Town’ is the most difficult component to circumscribe since it marks the most important innovation in the social composition of London society (as we have seen). It encompasses the fashionable bourgeoisie who did not entirely belong to the traditional categories of City or court in terms of social class and urban geography. In the tri-partite division of the physical space of the playhouse, the Town would have occupied the pit.³¹ The physical construction of the auditorium lent itself to the division of space into the pit, the boxes (occupied by the court), and the two galleries (occupied by the City). In this respect, the Restoration theatre became a microcosm of the metropolis. Although this division may be somewhat over-schematic, where one sat became a marker of social identity. Certain physical areas were conceived as distinct and independent territories, each of which became home to a

³⁰ The social divisions within the Restoration audience are noted elsewhere in the ‘Prologue to *The Rival Ladies*’ (l. 24), the ‘Epilogue to *The Indian Emperor*’ (l. 4), and the ‘Prologue for the Women’ (ll. 11-17).

³¹ Of course, there were subtler discriminations between groups of people, especially in the pit which was the most socially heterogeneous of the three subdivisions. Certain rows within the pit were known to be the preserve of fops, wits, and so forth.

particular social class or group of like-minded individuals.³² But the Town was the most amorphous and socially diverse component within the audience, for all but the highest and meanest would have frequented the pit. Dryden's prologues and epilogues speak to and construct this territorial grouping as the chief audience to which a professional dramatist must appeal.

The theatre audience is a senate which passes judgement on both the dramatic performance and the kinds of behaviour of the Town.³³ According to Edmund Stacy, the pit is 'where sits the *Judges, Wits and Censurers*, or rather the *Censurers without either Wit or Judgement*. These are the *Bully-Judges*, that *damn and sink the Play at a venture*...in common with these sit the *Squires, Sharpers, Beaus, Bullies, and Whores*, and here and there an extravagant *Male and Female Cit*'.³⁴ Likewise, Dryden can be equally vituperative in his criticism of the taste and judgement of the occupants of the pit. In the 'Second Prologue to *Secret Love*' (1667), the 'little Hectors of the Pit' (l. 24) are too inexperienced and rambunctious to offer genial criticism of his writing, while the 'Judges' in the pit described in the 'Prologue to *The Rival Ladies*' (1664) are but as 'losing Gamesters' and 'Hang-men' (ll. 27, 31) who condemn the play out of jealousy for the author's wit and dramatic endeavour. Likewise, the Town audience are but the 'Infernal Judges of the Pit' (l. 10) in the 'Epilogue to *The History of Bacon in Virginia*' (1689) – hellish critics of the underworld analogous to Aeacus, Minos and Rhadamanthus judging souls – who are incapable of appreciating

³² Love, 'Who were the Restoration audience?', 39.

³³ The theatre is an important locus for the public judgement of Town behaviour and the close scrutiny of social identity. For example, in Southerne's *The Wives' Excuse* (1692), Mr Friendall is given the choice of possible places to make a public apology for an affront, for which he is given the options of 'in full *Mall*, before the Beau's, or the Officers of the Guard; or at *Will's* Coffee-House before the Witts, or in the Play-House, in the Pitt, before the Vizard Masks, and Orange Wenches; or behind the Scenes, before the Women-Actors; or any where else, but upon the Stage' (*The Works of Thomas Southerne*, ed. Robert Jordan and Harold Love, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), i 304). He chooses 'in the Side-box, before the Ladies' out of the available options.

³⁴ Edmund Stacy, *The Country Gentleman's Vade Mecum* (London: Printed for John Harris, 1699), p.39.

anything other than low farce. The endless stream of satire at the expense of the debased tastes of the Town audience need not be enumerated. Suffice it to say that, in the prologues and epilogues, Dryden demonstrates the rhetorician's supreme authority over a recalcitrant and backsliding audience.

However, the recurrent expressions of contempt for the taste and judgement of the audience within the pit serves a purpose: namely, to reform the tastes and conduct of that audience. Often this manifests itself with the figuration of the poet as priest. 'Prologues' are 'like Bells to Churches' in the 'Prologue to *The Assignment*' (1673); the only difference between 'Pit and Pue' is that the priest's power of judgement far surpasses that of the audience ('You damn the Poet, but the Priest damns you'; ll. 1, 3-4). Meanwhile, stage orations in the 'Epilogue to *Sir Martin Mar-all*' (1667) are analogous to 'Sermons' as 'Country Vicars' (l. 1) preach to an unruly congregation looking for succour. If the audience is the church's congregation, Dryden is its priest. Only 'the better sort may stay' as the 'Vulgar Rout' (ll. 3-4) have no intention of receiving the reforming words offered in the sermon-epilogue. This attempt to find a fit and worthy audience is a persistent pattern in the prologues and epilogues. Those few discriminating members of the Town audience are '*Like Jews...scatter'd through the Pit*' ('Epilogue to *An Evening's Love*'; l. 4): that is, similar to the Israelites dispersed after the years of Babylonian captivity.³⁵ Independent-minded and judicious members of the pit are as God's chosen people in Dryden's typological trope. Dryden's enduring frustration at failing to find the right audience is found in his prose writings as well as the dramatic pieces. In the 'Dedication of the *Aeneis*' (1697), the audience with the lowest 'capacity of judging' is that of 'our Upper-Gallery Audience in a Play-House;

³⁵ For Dryden's use of sacred analogy in the public poems, see Steven Zwicker, *Dryden's Political Poetry: The Typology of King and Nation* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1972).

who like nothing but the Husk and Rhind of Wit; preferr a Quibble, a Conceit, an Epigram, before solid Sense, and Elegant Expression...these are Mobb-Readers' (v 326). In other words, the citizens who occupy the galleries are poor judges of theatrical performances, even though they 'make the greatest appearance in the Field, and cry the loudest' (v 326). They are more suited to the low pleasures of City entertainments such as 'on a Mountebank's-Stage' or as 'Masters of the Ceremonies in a Bear-Garden' (v 327). Men and women of sound literary taste and judgement sit elsewhere in the Restoration playhouse. Indeed, only a small fraction of the Town audience has the capacity to judge his plays with learned discrimination.

Prologues and epilogues spoken at the King's Company's annual visit to Oxford explicitly contrast the corrupted tastes of metropolitan audiences to the '*Athenian Judges*' ('Prologue to the University of Oxon. [1673]'; l. 2) of the university, who are educated to sit through the performance in silence rather than leave the judgement of the drama to the clapping and outcries of the vulgar crowd. 'Poetique prizes' (l. 4) are awarded from the 'Senates hands' (that is, the university wits) instead of the '*Prætorian bands*' (l. 40) of the Town. The learned audience of the university is more supportive of the protean wit of the Ciceronian orator (as Dryden presents himself) than the 'infected Town' ('Epilogue to the University of Oxon. [1673]'; l. 4). Genuine poetic achievement is compromised by the need for the London-based author to satisfy the mundane demands of professional authorship, stooping to please the pit for his 'Trade' (l. 29).³⁶ The patronage of the university town is an emancipation from the bondage of the metropolis, where elaborate stage machinery – the 'wicked Engine' – has replaced verbal dexterity ('Thunder and Lightning now for Wit are Play'd; ll. 22-23). Only through the reasoned judgements of the students can Dryden 'be

³⁶ Whether or not the poet prostitutes himself to satisfy the wants of the audience is a persistent concern in the prologues and epilogues. The question of whether or not the poet can maintain his integrity as he becomes a tradesman in words is evident in the 'Epilogue to *Aureng-Zebe*' (1675) and the 'Prologue to *A True Widow*' (1678).

made Free of *Rome*' ('Prologue to the University of Oxford [1676]'; l. 30): that is, free from having to satisfy the ignorant fops and cits in London. This is to some extent, however, a rhetorical posture as Dryden admitted to his gross flattery of Oxford audiences in a 1673 letter to Rochester, pointing to 'how easy 'tis to passe any thing upon an University'.³⁷

However, since Dryden relied on the audience of the Town for his income, it is hardly surprising that he took a serious interest in reforming their behaviour. In the epideictic oratory of the prologues and epilogues, certain models of conduct and judgement are held up for praise and blame. Dryden's stage orations promote an appreciation of Town living, serving as both survival manuals and descriptions of inappropriate patterns of behaviour to be avoided if urban civility was to be achieved. One recurrent theme is the superiority of Town values to the empty pursuit of profit endemic to the City, as well as the greater sophistication of the Town to the country.³⁸ Simultaneously, dramatic representations of the absurd extremes witnessed under the playhouse roof are common:

our Bear-Garden Friends are all away,
 Who bounce with Hands and Feet, and cry *Play, Play*:
 Who to save Coach-hire trudge along the Street,
 Then print our Matted Seats with dirty Feet;
 Who, while we speak, make Love to Orange Wenches,
 And between Acts stand strutting on the Benches;
 Where got a Cock-horse, making vile Grimaces,
 They to the Boxes show their Booby Faces.
 ('Prologue to *Cleomenes*' (1692); ll. 3-10)

Such rowdy and exhibitionist acts are presented here not as an accurate description of ordinary behaviour, but as a parade of abuses of Town decorum in order to discourage imitation. Polite gentry of the Town are to distance themselves from the ribald behaviour of

³⁷ *Letters*, p. 10.

³⁸ The 'Prologue to *Marriage A-la Mode*' (1671) mocks the gaudy fashion for empty spectacle favoured by citizens, especially as much of the pit lay empty as the preparations for the Third Dutch War were under way.

citizens and fops. The literary style of the prologues and epilogues themselves – witty, urbane, self-conscious and non-hierarchical (in the sense that no one is beyond gentle satire) – is a manifestation of the new sociability of the Town. They are open to the new possibilities and pleasures of urban sociability, whilst maintaining an ironic awareness of some of its patent absurdities.

Crucially, the prologues and epilogues gave poetic voice to a new community – the Town – and taught it how to speak and conduct itself. Dryden’s prologues and epilogues are both *about* the Town and *of* the Town; the poet is speaking in the Town’s own language about its own concerns. Unlike a courtly amateur like Rochester, Dryden is a Town professional who relies on the financial support available from the emergence of a new social community in the West End. In the absence of a courtly Maecenas to his Virgil, Dryden cast himself on the growing literary marketplace made possible by the leisured elites of the western suburbs. In so doing, literary authority slowly moved away from its traditional centre at Court to an emergent public sphere.

Civic Identity in the Aftermath of the Great Fire

In 1975 Michael McKeon published a magisterial study of Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*, in which he situated the poem in its polemical context.¹ McKeon was keen to adopt the perspective of contemporaries who would have made up Dryden's earliest audience. The monograph seeks to establish as far as possible the answer to the question, 'how would the first readers of *Annus Mirabilis* have responded to its rhetorical strategies?'. McKeon's study was very successful in collapsing the crude division between political and poetic readings of the poem. 'The dogmatism of the poetic reading', he remarks, 'must be balanced by a reductive interpretation of the public discourse with which it is concerned, just as the reductionism of the political reading requires the dogmatic reinterpretation of the relevant public discourse'.² A plethora of documents – pamphlets, sermons, newsheets, and poems – was mined to gain access to the habits of thought of Dryden's contemporaries. Both Anglican and nonconformist vocabularies of apocalyptic prophecy demonstrably shape the intellectual milieu of *Annus Mirabilis*. During the study, it becomes clear that Dryden is as indebted to royalist as to dissenting traditions of eschatological speculation on the nature of the year 1666; Apocalyptic prophecy was not the property of dissenting sects; rather, it formed part of a common linguistic and epistemological discourse.

However, McKeon's preoccupation with these overlapping and reconcilable exegetical, astrological and numerological traditions means that little space is afforded to the

¹ Michael McKeon, *Politics and Poetry in Restoration England: The Case of Dryden's Annus Mirabilis* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1975).

² McKeon, *Politics and Poetry in Restoration England*, p.40.

metropolitan context for the poem. *Annus Mirabilis* repeatedly employs the same vocabulary which Dryden and his readers knew from pamphlets, sermons and poems touching on London's history of civil disobedience.³ Dryden appropriates the terms of these tracts and redefines them for his own purposes, rhetorically compounding their semantic and ideological connotations. The urban rabble and the City's disloyalty to the crown casts a terrible shadow over the excursus on the Great Fire. It is my contention that the impulse to simultaneously remember and expunge London's past haunts the poem. As a consequence, Dryden necessarily drives the poem away from the contingencies of the present into a renewal of time.

The Great Fire

Londoners had long lived with the threat of imminent fire. The possibility of a cataclysmic inferno was a very real one in a society without fire or property insurance, especially in the claustrophobic and highly combustible wooden tenements of the City of London. As citizens lost all their earthly possessions, absolute destitution was the likely consequence of surviving a major conflagration, exacerbated by London's demographic pressures. But the Great Fire of London was unique in London's history only in scale. In the early life of the metropolis, when buildings concentrated within the ancient city walls were predominantly built from timber, sections of the City were frequently consumed by fire.⁴ After the Norman Conquest, the City witnessed four serious fires between 1071 and 1136, meaning the urban environment had to be reconstructed four times in sixty years.⁵ The Great Fire was not even the first

³ See introduction.

⁴ The earliest recorded fire in London took place soon after the city's foundation in 60 AD, when Boudicca burnt the Roman settlement to the ground. In fact, St. Paul's Cathedral had been reduced to ashes before, too. The first St. Paul's was levelled in 675, the second in 961, and the third in 1087.

⁵ Porter, *London: A Social History*, pp. 20, 22.

notable fire in the seventeenth century. Substantial fires occurred in 1630, when fifty houses were destroyed, and in 1633 (predominantly on London Bridge and in the parish of St. Magnus Martyr).⁶ The medieval contours of the Old London – discernible until the Great Fire – were an inflammatory network of narrow streets, a ‘wooden, northern, and inartificiall congestion of Houses’ in Evelyn’s words.⁷ The tangled web of timber-constructed buildings (many with thatched roofs), lit by candles and heated by open hearths, seemed ready to fuel a looming bonfire. Unlike the new buildings in the fashionable West End, which were constructed according to strict regulations (almost entirely in brick and stone), the walled city was neglected. Wealthier citizens often migrated westwards, leaving only crowded, unsanitary and dilapidated houses within the City of London.

So, when an innocuous fire began in the bakery of Thomas Farrinor (or Farynor) in Pudding Lane, near Fish Street, in the early hours of Sunday 2 September 1666, pandemonium ensued.⁸ The fiery tempest raged for four days and four nights, aggravated by a north-eastern breeze and a prolonged dry spell in the metropolis. The flames were initially fuelled by the incendiary stock in the warehouses and cellars of Thames Street near London Bridge, many of which were filled with tallow, oil, spirits and pitch. Crude fire-fighting equipment and property demolition failed to assuage the conflagration until Wednesday 5 September, when the fire was checked by midnight (owing, in no small part, to a drop in the wind). The extent of the destruction was breathtaking. Londoners returning to the calcined ruins of the City had an experience far beyond the imagination of those living during the

⁶ Stephen Porter, *The Great Fire of London* (Stroud: Sutton, 1996), pp. 3-5.

⁷ John Evelyn, *A Character of England, As it was Lately Presented in a Letter, to a Noble Man of France* (London: Printed for John Crooke, 1659), p. 9.

⁸ The best narrative accounts of the Fire are: Walter George Bell, *The Great Fire of London in 1666* (London: Bodley Head, 1920); Gustav Milne, *The Great Fire of London* (London: Historical Publications, 1986); Adrian Tinniswood, *By Permission of Heaven: The Story of the Great Fire of London* (London: Pimlico, 2004).



7. Anonymous, oil on canvas painting of the Great Fire of London (1666). London, Guildhall Art Library, accession number 1379. © Guildhall Art Library.

Blitz. Only a fifth of the area of the medieval City was left standing, while the Liberties to the west of the City towards Temple Bar had been reduced to ashes.⁹ This included some eighty-seven parish churches, forty-four livery-company halls, circa 13,200 houses, and a host of major public buildings (such as St. Paul's Cathedral, the Royal Exchange, the Guildhall, the Customs House, Bridewell and the Fleet Prison). The total area of devastation amounted to 373 acres within the City itself, and sixty-three acres of the extramural parishes.¹⁰

Contemporary estimates for the total losses in the Great Fire varied enormously: Thomas DeLaune's *Present State of London* (first printed 1681) is the most detailed contemporary estimate, and puts the total sum at £9,900,000 in lost public buildings and houses, goods and property.¹¹ Despite the gargantuan scale of the urban disaster, there were few fatalities. The *London Gazette* reported just eight deaths, although this is probably an underestimate as the deaths of poor people and vagrants could well have gone unnoticed in an age of little governmental record-keeping.¹² While the population was intact, the institutions of government and justice in the City were wiped out. As a consequence, the authorities were faced with 100,000 homeless Londoners, the charred remains of a city, and a succession of opportunistic plans for its rebuilding.¹³

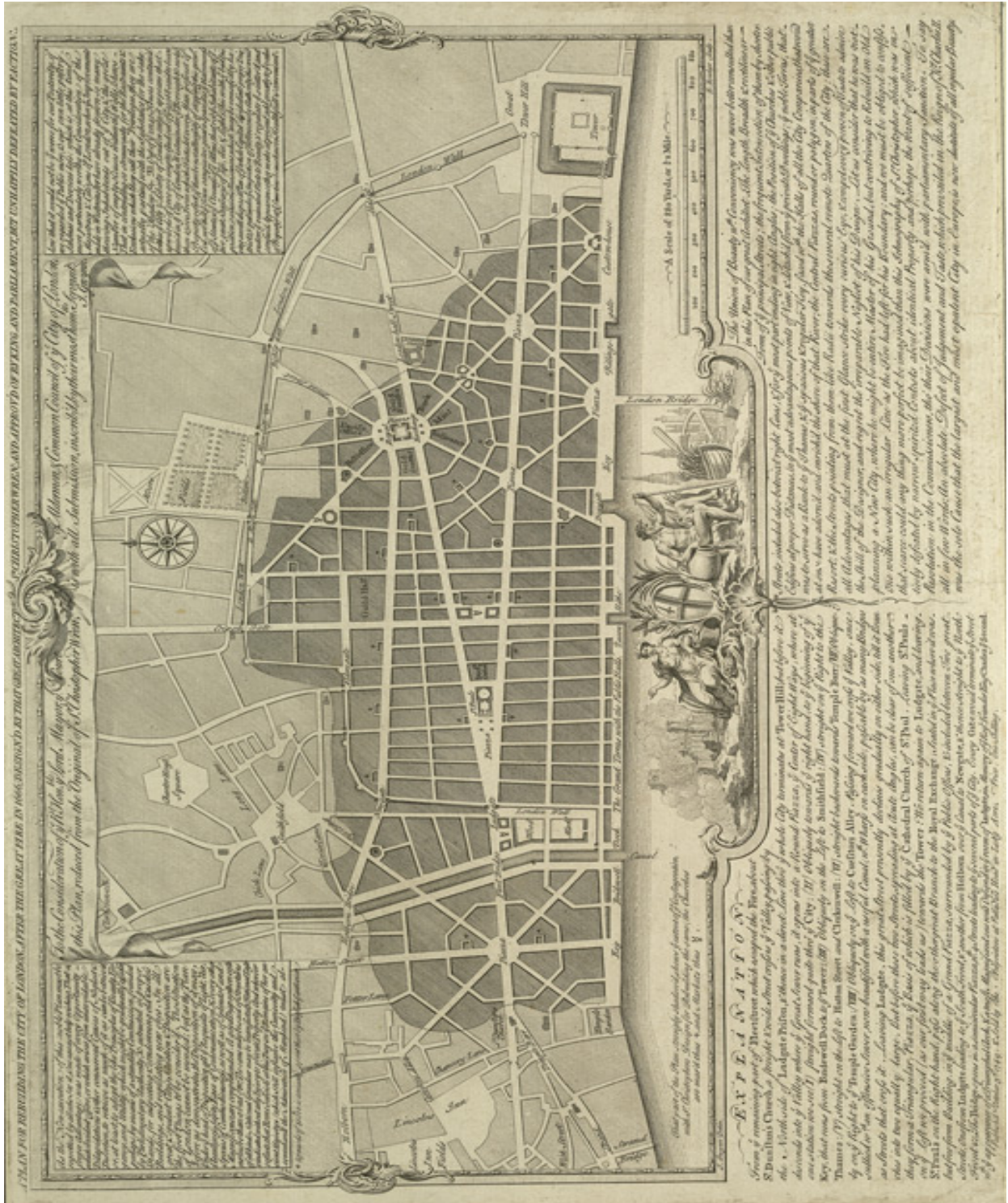
⁹ Bell, *The Great Fire of London in 1666*, p. 210.

¹⁰ Bell, *The Great Fire of London in 1666*, p. 212.

¹¹ Thomas DeLaune, *The Present State of London: Or, Memorials comprehending a Full and Succinct Account of the Ancient and Modern State thereof* (London: Printed for G.L. by Thomas Harris, 1681), p. 19. DeLaune's figures are based on the corrected surveyor's findings.

¹² Bucholz and Ward, *London: A Social and Cultural History, 1550-1750*, p.325.

¹³ For the ideal redrawings and actual reconstruction of the New London (especially by Wren, Newcourt and Evelyn), see T.F. Reddaway, *The Rebuilding of London after the Great Fire* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1940), pp. 40-67. In the event, municipal enterprise was the driver of the rebuilding process, but progress was slow and *ad hoc* in accordance with a growing body of regulation. The bulk of private building was completed or under way by 1670; grander public buildings were less forthcoming. Guildhall and the Royal Exchange were rebuilt in 1671, twenty-five of the parochial churches by 1683, the livery-company halls by 1685, and St. Paul's was only finished in 1710.



9. Sir Christopher Wren, reduced version of Wren's plan for rebuilding of the City of London (1749). London, London Metropolitan Archives, k1268905. © London Metropolitan Archives.



10. John Evelyn, plan for rebuilding the City of London featuring twelve interconnecting squares and piazzas (1666). London, British Library, Maps Crace 17.8. © British Library.

Apocalyptic Visions of London

It is not difficult to see why Londoners invariably found evidence of God's wrath in the fuliginous city. Events during the Second Anglo-Dutch War, Plague and Fire left current affairs open to apocalyptic and eschatological readings. 'There has never been such a fire', a contemporary wrote, 'since the destruction of Jerusalem, nor will be till the last conflagration. Had you been at Kensington, you would have thought for 5 days, that it had been Doomsday, from the fire and howlings of the people'.¹⁴ The infinite fury was 'extremely dreadfull', according to Pepys, 'for it looks just as if it was at us, and the whole heaven on fire'.¹⁵ Diary accounts preserve the immediacy and apocalyptic terror of the ruinous embers of Old London. John Evelyn's passage through the smouldering ashes of the city is a neurasthenic journey through hell: 'stones of *Paules* flew like Granados, the Lead mealting downe the streetes in a streame, & the very pavements of them glowing with fiery rednesse, so as nor horse nor man was able to tread on them'.¹⁶ On 2 September he notes 'a resemblance of Sodome, or the last day: It call'd to mind that of 4 *Heb: non enim hic habemus stabilem Civitatem*: the ruines resembling the picture of Troy: London was, but is no more'.¹⁷ Evelyn's scriptural pre-text is from Hebrews 8: 14 ('For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come'), which brings the hope of a New Jerusalem through anagogical interpretation.¹⁸

¹⁴ *The Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Charles II*, ed. Mary Anne Everett Green et al (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1902), vii 713.

¹⁵ Pepys, *Diary*, vii 274.

¹⁶ Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, iii 454.

¹⁷ Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, iii 454.

¹⁸ On another occasion, Evelyn prophetically figures himself as Lot preserved by God's mercy as he returns home untouched: 'in the midst of all this ruine, I was like Lot, in my little Zoar, safe and sound'; *The Diary of John Evelyn*, iii 457.

The events of 1665-6 intensified a growing mood of disenchantment and disillusionment in the capital which had so recently welcomed the restored monarch with such joy and acclamation.¹⁹ Natural disaster only compounded a growing sense of military and political malaise: the Second Anglo-Dutch War was turning into a national embarrassment, rumours of plots and insurrections proliferated, Clarendon's downfall was imminent, and the government seemed rudderless. When the Great Fire came in September 1666 – to destroy ‘four-fifths of the historical, commercial, topographic, and imaginative centre of London within four days’²⁰ – poets, pamphleteers and preachers readily accepted it as a fiery apocalypse:

God's *Bellows* blow the *Coals*, and ev'ry where
Toss wanton *Fire-balls* dancing in the *Air*.
The *liquid Pitch* in *flaming clouds* doth rowle,
(The *draught* of *Heaven shrivell'd* to a *scrowle*)
And *clammy Lightnings* in strange *Figure*, falls,
Like *sparks*, from *beaten Links* at *Funeralls*.
The *scared Citizens*, with trembling, *gaze*
To watch the *downfall* of the *hovering blaze*:
Till, where least *fear'd*, it *lights*; and *fatal showres*
Through *Chimney-tops* into their *dwellings* powres.²¹

The hyperbolic rhetoric of the Fire poets (of whom Simon Ford was the most prolific) was echoed unsurprisingly in the apocalyptic visions of many sermons.²² Exegetical,

¹⁹ The role of the City of London in Charles II's Restoration is examined in detail in De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, pp. 19-69.

²⁰ Cynthia Wall, *The Literary and Cultural Spaces of Restoration London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 5

²¹ Simon Ford, 'The Conflagration of London', in *London in Flames, London in Glory: Poems on the Fire and Rebuilding of London 1666-1709*, ed. Robert Arnold Aubin (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1943), p. 8.

²² Sermons which draw a parallel between the Fire and the Day of Judgement include (but by no means are limited to): Seth Ward, Bishop of Exeter, *A Sermon Preached before the Peers, in the Abby-Church at Westminster* (London: Printed for E.C. by James Collins, 1666); Edward Stillingfleet, *A Sermon Preached before the Honourable House of Commons, At St. Margarets Westminster* (London: Printed by Robert White for Henry Mortlock, 1666); John Tabor, *Seasonable Thoughts in Sad Times, Being some Reflections on the Warre, the Pestilence, and the Burning of London* (London: Printed for Ann Seil, 1667); Thomas Brooks, *Londons Lamentation: Or, A Serious Discourse concerning that Late Fiery Dispensation that Turned our (once renowned) City into a Ruinous Heap* (London: Printed for J. Hancock and N. Ponder, 1670).

numerological and historical speculation on the meaning of the year 1666 had previously been the preserve of Fifth Monarchists in the mid-century, but gained popular currency in light of events.²³ A growing body of opinion expected the year 1666 to be the beginning of the Last Days due to the biblical prophecy of Revelation viii 18, in which 666 is the number of the beast.²⁴ A series of pamphlets sought to persuade (their largely literate, urban readership) ‘that upon us the ends of the world are come, and that God is now making *hast to consummate* his *whole* work in the earth, and prepare the way for his *Son to take unto himself his great power and reign*’.²⁵ The *Mirabilis Annus* tracts were often roundly mocked by those suspicious of millenarian interpretations of prodigious events, principally High Anglicans who found in them the ‘over-fervent spirits of some Fanaticks’ and sedition.²⁶ But while the portents of 1666 were discountenanced by many of a more worldly and unexcitable religious temper, the Great Fire was still a source of disturbing fascination.

Such tracts were not confined to the literature of enthusiasm; apocalyptic prophecy was common not only among dissenting sects and commonwealthmen, but also amongst Anglicans and Catholics, courtiers and administrators, poets and lawyers.²⁷ The divine

²³ In fact, a host of dissenting tracts around the time of Charles’ Restoration hinted at biblical punishment in the imminent burning of London. To take a few examples: Daniel Baker, *A Certain Warning from a naked Heart* (London: Printed for M.W., 1659), pp. 6, 7; *England’s Alarm, the State-Maladies, and Cure: a Memento to the Soldiers, and a parallel of Egypts Plagues with Englands Sinnes* (London: Printed by Thomas Johnson, 1659), p. 4; Humphrey Smith, *The Vision of Humphrey Smith, Which he saw concerning London* (London: Printed for Thomas Simmons, 1660), p. 2. Incidentally, Roger L’Estrange censored a number of almanacs printed earlier in 1666 for their eschatological prognostications that London would burn.

²⁴ The most famous of these was Francis Potter’s *An Interpretation of the Number 1666* (Oxford: Printed by Leonard Lichfield, 1642). Indeed, Pepys called into his booksellers on 18 February 1666 ‘for a book, writ about twenty years ago in the prophecy of this year coming on, 1666’, which he found to be ‘mighty ingenious’ despite his initial scepticism (Pepys, *Diary*, vii 46-7.)

²⁵ *ENIAYTOS TERASTIOS. Mirabilis Annus, or, the Year of Prodigies and Wonders* (London: s.n., 1661), sig. A4v.

²⁶ Richard Baxter, *Reliquæ Baxterianæ*, ed. Matthew Sylvester (London: Printed for T. Parkhurst, J. Robinson, J. Lawrence, and J. Dunton, 1696), p. 432.

²⁷ The post-Fire poems occupy a common rhetorical ground with the sermons, which is perhaps why so many of them are unadventurous and uninspired. One cannot help but agree with the damning assessment of the nineteenth-century Laureate Robert Southey, who posited that the Great Fire ‘inspired more bad poetry than was happily destroyed by it’; quoted in Aubin (ed.), in *London in Flames, London in Glory: Poems on the Fire and Rebuilding of London 1666-1709*, p. ix. But unlike the hopelessness of the sermons, the poems tend to be far more optimistic in imagining compensatory heterotopias.

punishment of religious and civil discord in the Great Fire had a full panoply of interpretations: ‘The Quakers say [the Fire occurred as retribution] for their Persecution. The Fanaticks say tis for banishing and silencing their Ministers. Others say tis for the Murther of the King & Rebellion of the City. The Clergy lay the blame on Schism & Licentiousness, while the sectaries lay it on Imposition and their Pride’.²⁸ In his *Third Advice to a Painter*, Marvell likewise ponders whom to point the finger of blame at for the fiery destruction: ‘War, fire, and plague against us all conspire; / We the war, God the plague, who rais’d the fire?’²⁹

Of the various explanations for the Great Fire, the one of greatest importance for our purposes is its attribution to the civil disobedience of the City in the 1640s and 1650s. Righteous Anglican royalists thought the wreck of the kingdom was a divine admonition to greater loyalty towards the monarch. William Sancroft, Dean of St. Paul’s and later Bishop of London, placed the burden of blame on internal disunity:

dream no longer of *Granadoes* or *Fire-Balls*, or the rest of those witty Mischiefs; search no more for *Boutefieus* or *Incendiaries*, *Dutch* or *French*: The Dutch Intemperance, and the French Pride and Vanity, and the rest of their Sins, we are fond off [sic], are infinitely more dangerous to us, than the Enmity of either Nation: for these make God our Enemy too. Or if you’ll needs finde out the Incendiary, look not abroad... Turn your Eyes inward into your own Bosoms; there lurks the great Make-bate, and grand *Boutefieu* between Heaven and us.³⁰

The notion that religious nonconformity and regicide provoked the year of wonders was a common belief beyond Anglican divines. That London itself was perceived as a consuming flame, a terrible phoenix, was voiced in the conservative reaction to the godly rule of the late

²⁸ ‘Letters concerning the Great Fire in London Sept. 1666’; Bodleian MS Gough London 14, fol. 38r.

²⁹ Andrew Marvell, *Third Advice to a Painter*, in *POAS*, i 86.

³⁰ William Sancroft, *Lex Ignea: Or the School of Righteousness* (London: Printed for Timothy Garthwaite, 1666), pp. 21-2.

1640s (a particularly poignant moment in London's history, when Independents and sectarians kept the New Model Army well supplied): 'When the whole kingdom shall rise in a flame, what will be your lot but smoke in our eyes, and at last a consuming fire in your bowels: when you only should be left to maintain this domineering Army with your blood?'³¹ Likewise, this association between civil rebellion and destructive fire is articulated in Dryden's panegyric to Edward Hyde, *To My Lord Chancellor* (1662): the 'banishment' of monarchy, 'Wit and Religion' (including literary culture) during the Puritan revolution was as if the nation, figured as a city, went up in flames:

Thus once when *Troy* was wrapt in fire and smoak
 The helpless Gods their burning shrines forsook;
 They with the vanquisht Prince and party go,
 And leave their Temples empty to the fo
(ll. 19-22)

Charles' banishment is likened to Aeneas' exile from the flaming ruins of Troy. Bereft of monarchical rule, the city falls into the hands of conspirators and religious fanatics. However, of all the poems composed in response to the Great Fire, Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* (licensed November 1666) is the most alert to the shadow of London's past.

Having fled the plague after the theatres closed in the summer of 1665, Dryden completed a series of works at the Wiltshire seat of his father-in-law, Thomas Howard, Earl of Berkshire – the *Essay of Dramatick Poesie*, *Secret Love*, and, for an account of the war and fire, *Annus Mirabilis* – without any personal experience of unfolding events in London. Instead, he relied on documentary sources – news reports like the *London Gazette* and *Current Intelligence*, along with a smorgasbord of pamphlets – sent up from London.³² The

³¹ *A Seasonable Caution to the Citie of London* (London: s.n., 1648), p. 7.

³² For a summary of Dryden's sources, see 'Sources' to *Annus Mirabilis*, in *Poems*, i 108-9.

fiery annihilation wrought on a sizeable section of the urban landscape took away the personal, cultural and political meanings attached to distinct topographies. Buildings and streetscapes ceased to hold the collective memory – built up over decades, even centuries – and were wiped out in one catastrophic event. This loss of urban memory is not felt as loss, however; it is an escape from the disloyalty and recalcitrance of London’s past. London becomes a *tabula rasa*, on which royal authority can impose meaning.

Remembering London’s Past

The problem of reconstructing London’s past runs through *Annus Mirabilis*. What to remember and what to consign to oblivion about the Great Rebellion was a larger matter to preoccupy Restoration politics.³³ In the febrile political landscape of 1660s England, eye-witness accounts of the struggles easily fell into partisanship. To discuss the rights and wrongs of persons or forces at work during the English Revolution was to touch a hornet’s nest, especially as 1649 had become the controlling discourse for later seventeenth-century history. While the victorious loyalist cause sought to disown recent history through legislation such as the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion, oppositional factions sought to keep the memory of the Good Old Cause alive. According to Matthew Neufeld, ‘public remembering of the English civil wars and Interregnum after 1660 was not ultimately concerned with re-fighting the old struggle, but rather commending and justifying, or contesting and attacking, the Restoration settlements that underlay the Anglican confessional

³³ The Licensing Act (1662) reinforced state censorship of the press after the Interregnum. As a result, the Stuart regime granted patronage or its imprimatur only to historians or works which were favourable to a particular interpretation of the Civil Wars. Although the Licensing Act could not exercise a complete stranglehold on printed histories, almost no prose historical writing by opposition voices was circulated in the early years of the Restoration.

state.³⁴ War-guilt and treason were foisted on a discernible section of the body politic: Puritan sectaries. State-sanctioned histories placed the guilt for blood spilt during the Civil Wars firmly on republican sympathisers and religious fanatics.³⁵ Out of this state-approved pattern of historical publication the post of ‘Historiographer Royal’ emerged – held in the first instance by James Howell in 1661. (It is surely no coincidence that Dryden was granted the title shortly after the laureateship, partly for his shaping of England’s collective memory in *Annus Mirabilis*). A flurry of royalist histories appeared in print soon after the Restoration that paid little attention to Charles’ exile or personal characteristics.³⁶ Instead, loyal histories focussed on the cult of King Charles the martyr or the story of Charles II’s escape from the Battle of Worcester.³⁷ Martyrologies and biographies celebrated the loyal deeds of Anglican Cavaliers throughout the 1640s and 1650s, representing them as the blameless victims of rebellious violence. The undeniable pain and misery wrought by the war-induced loss of life and property – not to mention the unleashing of internecine political and religious schisms – meant that Restoration society keenly sought to disown or efface markers of the recent past.³⁸ Public markers of the republic’s rule, and embarrassing or disconcerting facts, were concealed; Charles II’s reign came to be recorded as beginning at the moment of his father’s execution. The publication of royalist histories was an important mechanism for upholding the legitimacy of monarchical and episcopal governance after the Restoration. The

³⁴ Matthew Neufeld, *The Civil Wars After 1660: Public Remembering in Late Stuart England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013), p. 2.

³⁵ For early historians of the Civil Wars, see: Royce Macgillivray, *Restoration Historians and the English Civil Wars* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974); R. C. Richardson, *The Debate on the English Revolution Revisited* (London: Routledge, 1998); David Cressy, ‘Remembrances of the Revolution: Histories and Historiographies of the 1640s’, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68 (2005), 257-68.

³⁶ Macgillivray, *Restoration Historians and the English Civil Wars*, pp. 48-9. Such historical works as John Davies’ *The Civil Warres of Great Britain and Ireland* (1661) and James Heath’s *A Chronicle of the late Intestine War in the three Kingdoms* (1663) underscore the divine approbation for the Stuart monarchy, true religion and the confessional state.

³⁷ Harold Weber, ‘Representations of the King: Charles II and His Escape from Worcester’, *Studies in Philology* 85 (1988), 489-509.

³⁸ Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and his Kingdoms, 1660-1685* (London: Penguin, 2006), p. 46.

authorities, in Neufeld's words, sought to 'shape a useable public memory of the recent past' through historical writing.³⁹

This injunction to avoid public remembering of the English Revolution in the Act of Oblivion was allied to the impossibility of forgetting the late troubles. Consequently, there were two impulses in play in the Restoration settlements: firstly, to bind the nation's wounds (a phrase echoed in *Annus Mirabilis*) and blot out the past; secondly, to remember the rebellious actions of Puritans.⁴⁰ Civil War memories helped Restoration society to think of its current status as sunlit uplands. According to Joshua Coniers' preface to *The History of the Commons Warre* (1662), the past lingered in public consciousness 'like a Skeleton': 'the felicity of memory consists not in the bare reminding us of miseries past, but as it points and directs our sense to a greater complacency and content in the happiness we repossess'.⁴¹ The remembrance and punishment of those responsible for the bloodshed and damage to the body politic was a crucial function of the Cavalier Parliament. Paul Seaward has argued that the slightest division in parliament was seen as an attempt to drag the nation back into civil rebellion.⁴² The accusatory finger pointed at former radical sectaries served as an intervention in an ongoing debate about the dangers of dissenting culture to religion and the constitution. That desire to simultaneously efface and commemorate the irreparable breach in church and state, which I have been describing, runs through Dryden's poetry. Nowhere is this truer than in the revisitation of civil violence on London in the fiery conflagration of *Annus Mirabilis*.

³⁹ Neufeld, *The Civil Wars After 1660: Public Remembering in Late Stuart England*, p. 18.

⁴⁰ See Paulina Kewes, 'Acts of Remembrance, Acts of Oblivion: Rhetoric, Law and National Memory in Early Restoration England', in *Ritual, Routine, and Regime: Institutions and Repetition in Euro-American Cultures*, ed. Lorna Clymer (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2006), pp. 109-28.

⁴¹ Joshua Coniers, 'The Stationer to the Reader', in *The History of the Commons Warre of England. Throughout These three Nations: Begun from 1640. and continued till this present Year 1662* (London: Printed for Joshua Coniers, 1662), sig. A4.

⁴² Paul Seaward, *The Cavalier Parliament and the Reconstruction of the Old Regime, 1661-1667* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 325.

Civic Panegyric

The sweeping obliteration of municipal history is keenly felt in the poem's dedication, 'To the Metropolis of Great Britain, The Most Renowned, and Late Flourishing City of London', which is a remarkable document of public panegyric. Surprisingly, the Dedication has elicited very little response from critics, despite the poem's thematic concern with City affairs.⁴³ It lays the pattern for Dryden's construction of myth from a selective reading of history; London history is appropriated for a distinct polemical purpose. Dryden is aware of the novelty of dedicating a historical poem to the 'Metropolis of any Nation' ('the first Example of such a Dedication'; i 48) – partly because the demonstrative (or epideictic) address is directed to the City Corporation rather than a prince or great person, but also because of the identification of the metropolis as a distinct political entity in verse. The rhetorical policy of the dedication may seem to be one of unabashed sycophancy, yet the praise of 'true Loyalty, invincible Courage and unshaken Constancy' (i 48) is suspiciously disingenuous given the City's record of resistance to the Crown. In fact, the City of London over previous decades had been a hotbed of political and religious sectarianism, a base of support for the Barebones Parliament, and was an engine of military strength for the parliamentary cause. Its citizens' exercise of popular rights had made the relationship between Crown and City especially fraught during the struggles of 1642-3 and 1648-9.⁴⁴ Rabble-rousing citizens and their elected representatives assumed a greater influence in the affairs of the Corporation of London as political and religious agitation was exported to other

⁴³ No criticism of the poem attempts to relate the polemical strategy of the Dedication with the passages dealing to the Great Fire. In particular, the editorial matter of the *California Dryden* makes no mention of Dryden's ironic tribute to the City of London, while McKeon, *Politics and Poetry in Restoration England*, passes cursorily over its significance.

⁴⁴ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, p. 6.

parts of the capital and the provinces. Such details could hardly have gone unnoticed by a reader approaching Dryden's text in the 1660s.

It is, however, less surprising when we remind ourselves that panegyric served a purpose far beyond mere flattery or obsequiousness. The festival oration or panegyrics (modelled on Isocrates' *Panegyrikos*) spoken according to Greek custom were designed to promote shared kinship and national reconciliation after conflict.⁴⁵ Dryden appealed to such classical authority and tradition as justification for a genre open to charges of demeaning flattery in his dedicatory letter to *Eleonora* (1692): 'Isocrates amongst the Grecian orators, and Cicero, and the younger Pliny, amongst the Romans, have left us their precedents for our security' (iii 233). Likewise, Erasmus made an influential defence of panegyric in a letter to the official oratory of the University of Louvain: 'Those persons who think Panegyrics are nothing but flattery, appear not to know with what design this kind of writing was invented by men of great sagacity, whose object it was, that by having the image of virtue put before them, bad princes might be made better, the good encouraged, the ignorant instructed, the mistaken set right, the wavering quickened, and even the abandoned brought to some sense of shame'.⁴⁶ Panegyric establishes virtue as an ideal to strive for, not as an existing precondition for praise. In 'To the Metropolis of Great Britain', piety is a citizen's virtue as well as a king's.

The fulsome praise divests the Corporation of the City of London and its citizens of responsibility for its seditious past; it is a clarion call for future loyalty. Instead of a passive recognition of the former events, Dryden ignores them altogether. The whole dedication

⁴⁵ James Garrison, *Dryden and the Tradition of Panegyric* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 7.

⁴⁶ Erasmus, 'Epistle 177', in *The Epistles of Erasmus*, trans. Francis Morgan Nichols, 3 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, 1901), i 366.

becomes a rhetorical exercise in *praeteritio*. It is notable that the ‘Account of the ensuing Poem’ ties *Annus Mirabilis* to a rigid historicity as he calls it ‘*Historical*, not *Epick*’ in that it exhibits ‘but broken action, ti’d too severely to the Laws of History’ (i 50). Dryden’s generic identification of *Annus Mirabilis* as an historical poem makes certain claims about its veracity. Behind the claims to historicity is a rhetorical argument of impartiality and objectivity (that is, that the poet is speaking the truth about near history). London’s virtues have been attained through trials of ‘War, a consuming Pestilence, and a more consuming Fire’ (i 48). Memories of the disloyalty and civil disobedience of the Old London melt away in an act of divine rewriting. Citizens have become passive victims of the expensive ‘trials’ and ‘Judgements of Heaven’ (i 48). All that remains is a loyal submission to the monarch: ‘Never had Prince or People more mutual reason to love each other, if suffering for each other can in dear affection’ (i 48). Their shared trials – of ‘long Exile’ and ‘various traverses of Fortune’ (i 48) – marry Charles II and his metropolis together in paternal solicitude and marital fidelity. The silver-tongued praise of the ‘Christian and Civil Virtue’ (i 49) encourages a pattern of pious behaviour and submission to divine authority to be followed in the future. Rather than a godly punishment, the Fire was simply a trial of Virgilian piety, of ‘dutiful care for one’s country’ (*OED* 2). It has purged the Old London of its sectarian politics – what Milton described as ‘a City of refuge, the mansion house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with [God’s] protection’⁴⁷ – and entered freely into a prosperous union with the Crown, ‘a pair of matchless Lovers’ (i 48), with the King as patriarchal ruler. The Dedication to *Annus Mirabilis* is the single piece of writing in which Dryden has anything other than explicit hostility to the City – and that is because the lost city is to be resurrected Christ-like as ‘a *Phoenix*...a great Emblem of the suffering Deity’; i 49). In the future,

⁴⁷ Milton, *Prose Works*, ii 553-4.

London shall be conceived only as a Platonic ideal ('an immortal Monument on your own ruins'; i 49).

Although the notion that panegyric is inevitably ironic, satirical or paradoxical is a later invention, many contemporaries would have failed to see the dedication as anything but an ironic commentary on London's disobedience. As Dryden's later satires demonstrate, the conventional topoi of panegyric could feasibly be adapted for deflationary satire, especially since Dryden's 'career bridges the gap between the serious Renaissance appreciation of panegyric and its comic inversion in the eighteenth century'.⁴⁸ Consequently, the poem's dedication, 'To the Metropolis of Great Britain' offers two interpretative handles for the reader: as suggestive irony at London's past or sincere hope for London's future.

Civic Rebellion

The legacy of the past twenty years rears its head in the advancing flames. The Great Fire is conceived as a historical personification of civil rebellion on the streets of London. Monstrous rebellion and sedition are '*Hydra-like*' ('the fire, / Lifts up his hundred heads to aim his way'; ll. 993-4), an infernal urban mob (which, coincidentally, is closely followed in the language of Joseph Guillim's poem '*Ἀκάματον Πύρ. Or, The Dreadful Burning of London*', in which the fire '*Hydra-like lifts up a hundred heads*').⁴⁹ Dryden's Lernaean Hydra simile is fitting in that it holds the simultaneous power of destruction and regeneration – as every head is chopped off, new heads proliferate. Allegorical interpretations of the classical myth from the Renaissance saw Heracles' triumph as a parable of good government over

⁴⁸ Garrison, *Dryden and the Tradition of Panegyric*, pp. 36-7.

⁴⁹ Joseph Guillim, '*Ἀκάματον Πύρ. Or, The Dreadful Burning of London*', in Aubin (ed.), in *London in Flames, London in Glory*, p. 36. Given that Guillim's poem went into print months after *Annus Mirabilis*, the phrasing implies clear borrowing.

disorder.⁵⁰ The myth held a special place in royalist iconography, however. In John Ogilby's description of the grand ceremonial procession that accompanied Charles II's accession to the throne, he records the iconographical mythologies attached to the entertainments and triumphal arches.⁵¹ As Gerard Reedy observes, the two-day coronation ceremony entertained London crowds with a concerted pattern of 'noumenal propaganda' designed to legitimate Stuart rule beyond physical appearances.⁵² The first triumphal arch was on the corner of Leadenhall Street. On its north side is a pedestal with a woman 'personating REBELLION, mounted on a Hydra, in a Crimson Robe, torn, Snakes crawling on her Habit, and begirt with Serpents, her Hair Snaky, a Crown of Fire on her Head, a bloody Sword in one Hand, a charming Rod in the other'.⁵³ The attendant figure 'CONFUSION' has a torn crown and ruined castles on her head along with broken sceptres in each hand. On the reverse of the arch is a 'Representation of BRITAIN'S MONARCHY', including the imperial robes with a silver fringe of water, quelling the flames of rebellion.⁵⁴ Self-evidently, the royal triumph over the rebellious fire is a victory over the republican rump, which is reduced to a grotesque annihilation of their bodies. What is more, the painting on the north side of the arch also includes a representation of popular uprising. The painting is a 'Trophy with decollated heads' beneath the epigraph 'ULTOR A TERGO DEUS', which is derived from the Horatian *sequitur Rebelles / Ultor a tergo Deus* ['God's vengeance follows the rebel's heels']. According to Ogilby, the trophy is an example of 'Gods Justice upon the Rebels, who

⁵⁰ H. David Bumble, *Classical Myths and Legends in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: A Dictionary of Allegorical Meanings* (London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998), pp. 173-4.

⁵¹ Charles' ceremonial entry was in stark contrast to his predecessors. While James I only begrudgingly endured his entry through London, Charles I refused a public display of his monarchical role. The Carolean regime wanted to capitalise on the popular acclamation in the City of London on the king's return from exile.

⁵² Gerard Reedy, 'Mystical Politics: The Imagery of Charles II's Coronation', in *Studies in Change and Revolution: Aspects of English Intellectual History 1640-1800*, ed. Paul J. Korshin (Menston: Scolar Press, 1972), 19-43, at p. 21.

⁵³ John Ogilby, *The Relation of His Majesties Entertainment Passing through the City of London, to his Coronation: With a Description of the Triumphal Arches, and Solemnity* (London: Printed by Thomas Roycroft, 1661), p. 2.

⁵⁴ Ogilby, *The Relation of His Majesties Entertainment*, p. 2.



11. David Loggan, engraved plate of the first triumphal arch on Leadenhall Street, printed in John Ogilby's *The Entertainment of His Most Excellent Majestie Charles II, in His Passage through the City of London to his Coronation* (1662). London, Victoria and Albert Museum, E.571-1890. © Victoria and Albert Museum.

committed that most horrid Murther upon his Majesties Royal Father'.⁵⁵ One of the most evocative images of the burning flames in *Annus Mirabilis* comes from a shared cultural memory.

Whereas the hydra is conventionally a figure for the rude multitude, Dryden sees the fire as a reincarnation of the treacherous actions of the past.⁵⁶ The flames hold in them the memory of popular government. Citizens plundering goods in the chaotic clamour of London is analogous to the collapse in social hierarchy of the Interregnum years ('The rich grow suppliant, & the poor grow proud: / Those offer mighty gain, and these ask more'; ll. 997-8). Such scenes hold a latent fear of anarchy or public disorder. In Dryden's writing on the crowd politics of Restoration London, the 'ignoble crowd' (l. 999) is in the same pejorative semantic field of reference as the vulgar and ignorant masses of the Exclusion Crisis satires.⁵⁷ The actions of the people – in both the popular misrule of the Civil Wars and the aftermath of the Great Fire – are a far cry from the omniscient citizens (the intelligent, informed, politically active guardians of liberty) idealised in Milton's writing.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Ogilby, *The Relation of His Majesties Entertainment*, p. 3. Likewise, the second arch contains an iconographic representation of usurpation. The painting sees the King with 'USURPATION flying before him, a Figure with many ill-favoured Heads, some bigger, some lesser, and one particularly shooting out of his Shoulder, like CROMWELL'S; Another Head upon his Rump, or Tayl' (p. 4). This image relies on the association of usurpation with popular insurrection, notably the many-headed monster of the poor. 'People is a Beast which Heads hath many', remarked James Howell reflecting on the potency of the common sort during the English Revolution; *Twelve Several Treatises, of the Late Revolutions in these Three Kingdoms* (London: Printed by J. Grismond, 1661), frontispiece.

⁵⁶ Notably, the idea appears in *Coriolanus*, III. i. 92 (and elsewhere in Dryden's poetry: *Absalom and Achitophel*, l. 541; *Threnodia Augustalis*, l. 464). Mob rule is figured as many-headed in *Albion and Albanus*, too, when the Earl of Shaftesbury is physically perverted into 'a Man with a long, lean, pale Face, with Fiends Wings, and snakes twisted round his Body: He is incompast by several Phanatical Rebellious Heads, who suck poison from him, which runs out of a Tap in his Side' (xv 53).

⁵⁷ For instance, urban crowds have the power to overwhelm kingly rule in *Absalom and Achitophel* ('Drawn to the dregs of democracy' (l. 227). Here, evidently, democracy is a term of abuse, a concept which hovers dangerously close to mob rule).

⁵⁸ Milton's shifting attitude towards 'the people' is studied in Paul Hammond, *Milton and the People* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

The analogous relationship between the Great Fire and civil disobedience echoes similar epithets in a host of Fire poems. For example, the shadows of the past are invoked in John Crouch's *Londinenses Lachrymae* (1666), in which memories of 'when fiery *Cromwell* domineer'd' flicker in the rising flames.⁵⁹ Regicide and religious nonconformity are a destructive fire analogous to the 'lawless sway' (l. 850) of the Interregnum. The prodigious fire – like some 'rich or mighty Murderer, / Too great for prison' (ll. 873-4) – is a contagion that spreads from 'mean buildings' (l. 858) to infect the body politic. Its westwards movement to 'Palaces and Temples' (l. 860) enacts topographically the direction of the Great Rebellion against the twin pillars of monarchy and episcopacy. St. Paul's, too, was 'prophan'd by Civil War' (l. 101) as horses were stabled in the southern nave during the parliamentary war effort. In contrast to the obliteration of history in the Dedication to the City of London, what I am describing is Dryden's remembrance of guilt. This suspension of a specific historical moment reaches its apotheosis in the disturbing vision of regicides impaled on London Bridge⁶⁰ (reminiscent of the public beheading of surviving regicides – watched over by the king himself – along with the impaling of their heads above Westminster Hall):

The Ghosts of Traitors, from the *Bridge* descend,
 With bold Fanatick Spectres to rejoyce:
 About the fire into a Dance they bend,
 And sing their Sabbath Notes with feeble voice.
 (ll. 889-92)

Here, the flames function as both a punishment and purgation of the traitors. In an infernal ritual, their crimes against the nation are held in suspension as their flesh burns away in a Dantean firestorm. The ghosts of the regicides keep their sins alive in remembrance through

⁵⁹ John Crouch, *Londinenses Lachrymae*, in Aubin (ed.), in *London in Flames, London in Glory*, p. 48.

⁶⁰ 1661 was the final year in which traitor's heads were displayed above the gate on the Southwark end of London Bridge. The heads on pikes had for centuries functioned as a reminder of royal authority in the City.

Puritan psalms; antimonarchical imagery lingers on as a prescient warning to Londoners. As James Winn has shown, the stanza shares the same rhyme scheme with the Sternhold and Hopkins translation of the hundredth psalm.⁶¹ The congregational singing of metrical psalms was regarded as controversial by the authorities: in particular, hymn-singing came to be associated with radical sects, and flourished after the breakdown of ecclesiastical controls in the 1640s and 1650s.⁶² Consequently, the verse form enacts formally the tradition of religious dissent in the City of London.

It is no coincidence that the evocation of popular anarchy immediately precedes the King's Prayer. Charles' prayer serves an important purpose at the moment of the poem's publication. The divinity of Charles' kingship had taken a significant blow in the crisis years of 1665-7, when observers could no longer accept Stuart iconography regarding monarchical ruler. The king's profligate and licentious lifestyle left him open to gossip and moralising as he took one mistress after another. London radicalism had lain dormant in the early years of the Restoration, but came to life with great force during 1665-7 when poets and pamphleteers found subversive and ironic ways of representing kingly power. Popular discontent with the traditional idea of the king's two bodies and the hereditary principle found their way into verse satires on the person of the king.⁶³ In the 'Advice to a Painter' genre, the king's private body along with his sexual obsessions were opened up to ironic deflation. In response, the King's Prayer pays little heed to the private, physical body of the king. Instead, Charles' Davidic kingship shares in the attributes of God himself (the almighty alone is Charles' 'patron', 'Guide', and 'Judge'; ll. 1045, 1046, 1049). Consequently, Charles holds absolute

⁶¹ Winn, *John Dryden and His World*, p. 177.

⁶² Christopher Hill, *A Turbulent, Seditious, and Factious People: John Bunyan and His Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 260-66.

⁶³ For attempts to delegitimize the king's sacral body, see Paul Hammond, 'The King's Two Bodies: Representations of Charles II', in *The Making of Restoration Poetry*, pp. 107-36.

authority over the future of London. He becomes patriarch over the citizens of London ('I since have labour'd for my People's good: / To bind the bruises of a Civil War'; l. 1050-1); as God's anointed deputy, he holds absolute authority in the administration of justice and mercy in the City. Success in pleading for divine mercy leads to an inauguration of a new time as 'The fugitive flames, chastis'd, went forth to prey / On pious Structures, by our Fathers rear'd' (l. 1089-90). The renewal of time frees the metropolis from the vestiges of former disobedience ('Heav'n thought it fit to have it purg'd by fire'; l. 1104). During the King's prayer, the vocabulary of Christian providentialism overtakes classical notions of historical causation. God's 'immutable and fix'd' (l. 1078) law displaces the capricious and indiscriminate forces of 'fate' (l. 846) and 'Fortune's way' (l. 852) as the fiery conflagration is subjugated to divine grace.

The Royal Hive

At the same time as the sins of the treacherous mob are memorialised by the Great Fire, a new model of political contract between Crown and City emerges from the conflagration. Rather than the urban rabble of the Civil War years of rebellion and revolution, London's citizens are an industrious hive of bees. The association of bees with monarchical government was a polemical battleground during the seventeenth century. Vigorous promotion of beekeeping in programs of agricultural reform encouraged the analogical interpretation of a natural phenomenon.⁶⁴ Renaissance apiculture looked back to the

⁶⁴ Samuel Hartlib was foremost amongst a generation of agricultural improvers who saw that beekeeping could serve the ultimate aim of national self-sufficiency, chiefly with the publication of his book on bees, *The Reformed Common-wealth of Bees* (London: Printed for Giles Calvert, 1655). Whereas traditional apicultural writing tended to rely on classical authority or native experiential accounts, Hartlib embarked on a comprehensive study using the new experimental methodology. See Timothy Raylor, 'Samuel Hartlib and the

conceptual importance the bee held in Virgil's fourth book of the *Georgics*. In Shakespeare's *Henry V* (1599), the Archbishop of Canterbury counsels the king that the formal art of the bees sets a template for the body politic ('so work the honey-bees, / Creatures that by a rule in nature teach / The act of order to a peopled kingdom'; I. ii. 187-89). Bees helped legitimise and mythologise the monarchical state on the premise that their presence in nature meant the pattern was divinely ordained. Since bees were closest in the animal kingdom to the divine – and, by implication, to the impulses and habits of humans – they became an image for the philosophical pursuit of higher knowledge. The bee was subject to unbounded admiration in classical antiquity. Particular features were praised: its productivity and industry, its rationality, its piety and cleanliness, its loyalty and obedience to authority, and its strict hierarchy. It was bees' proximity to the divine mind which was the cause of such political and economic sagacity.

In the seventeenth century, bees and beekeeping offered contemporary models for the social contract. Studies in the Hartlib circle looked for traces of God's laws in the natural world; bees taught practical lessons for the governance of the state.⁶⁵ Although for supporters of the parliamentary cause, such as Samuel Hartlib, the bee served as a model for the reformation of the Cromwellian state, the motif was more commonly the preserve of Stuart loyalists.⁶⁶ Izaak Walton's observation of the natural world in *The Compleat Angler* was charged with monarchical argument: people 'have judged it worth their time and costs, to make *Glass-hives*, and order them in such a manner as to see how *Bees* have bred and made their *Honey-Combs*, and how they have obeyed their King, and governed their Common-

Commonwealth of Bees', in *Culture and Cultivation in Early Modern England: Writing and the Land*, ed. Michael Leslie and Timothy Raylor (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp. 91-130.

⁶⁵ Raylor, 'Samuel Hartlib and the Commonwealth of Bees', p. 106.

⁶⁶ W. H. Greenleaf, *Order, Empiricism and Politics: Two Traditions of English Political Thought 1500-1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 24-5.

wealth'.⁶⁷ Other royalists were far more outspoken in their promotion of the moral example of the hive. According to Charles Butler, 'Bees abhorre as well Polyarchie, as Anarchie, God hauing shewed in them vnto men, an expresse patterne of A PERFECT MONARCHIE, THE MOST NATURAL AND ABSOLUTE FORM OF GOVERNMENT'.⁶⁸ The association of the ruling bee with monarchy rather than commonwealth flourished during the early Stuart kings and again in the Restoration.⁶⁹

However, the idea that the monarchical hive was a fitting model for civil government never attained any kind of supremacy in natural analogy. Instead, it was a space for polemical contest in the seventeenth century, especially when ideological faultlines hardened during the Civil Wars and Cromwellian Protectorate.⁷⁰ Royalist iconography could be subversively rewritten or negated by oppositional thinkers. In many apiary analogies, royal authority is circumscribed by the common will. In defence of the English state, *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio* is Milton's most outspoken deconstruction of Salmasius' claims that the beehive symbolises the naturalness of absolute monarchy.⁷¹ In Milton's commonwealth of bees, the leader is not a tyrant but governs according to popular sovereignty: 'The government of the

⁶⁷ Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton, *The Compleat Angler*, ed. Marjorie Swann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 108.

⁶⁸ Charles Butler, *The Feminine Monarchie, or A Treatise Concerning Bees, and the Due Ordering of Them* (Oxford: Printed by Joseph Barnes, 1609), sig. B2v.

⁶⁹ In the Restoration period, the royal 'Bee Master' (that is, beekeeper to the king), Moses Rusden, made the explicit connection between bees and ruling princes in *A Further Discovery of Bees Treating of the Nature, Government, Generation & Preservation of the Bee* (London: Printed for the author, 1679) – as did John Worlidge's *Apiarium; or A Discourse of Bees* (London: Printed for Thomas Dring, 1676), sig. A3v.

⁷⁰ Milton, amongst other commonwealthmen, argues that the ant was a more appropriate model for civil society. He rebuts Salmasius' suggestion that the loyalty of bees to their queen set an example for human society. In the dying embers of the Good Old Cause, Milton wrote *The Readie and Easie Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth*, in which the ant was the creature of republicanism: *Go to the Ant, thou sluggard, saith Solomon, consider her waies, and be wise; which having no prince, ruler, or lord, provides her meat in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest.* Which evidently shows us, that they who think the nation undone without a king, though they swell and look haughtie, have not so much true spirit and understanding in them as a Pismire' (Milton, *Prose Works*, vii 362).

⁷¹ Milton's attitude towards the emblematic power of bees shifts over time, as detailed by Karen Edwards, 'Milton's Reformed Animals: An Early Modern Bestiary A-C', *Milton Quarterly* 39:4 (2005), 183-292, at pp. 219-26.

bees is a commonwealth, and is so described by scientists; the king they have is harmless, and is more a leader than a tyrant; he does not flog or prod or kill his subject bees. It is then no wonder they respect him so'.⁷² In contrast to the common drones of the bee-kingdom, which are subject to the stings of their ruler (by which Salmasius attempts 'to give tyranny some basis in nature'), the commonwealth of bees is governed by popular consent.⁷³ The interpretation of the hive as analogous to a commonwealth or limited monarchy was far more prevalent during the late Elizabethan period and Interregnum than during the years of Stuart rule.⁷⁴

So, in this ideological battleground in which the hive could be appropriated or manipulated for rhetorical ammunition, the references to bees in *Annus Mirabilis* have an important political charge. As the flames encroach upon the London houses in the depth of night, the citizens like 'weary Bees in little Cells repose' (l. 909). London's 'well-stor'd Hive' (l. 910) is no longer a refuge for antimonarchist sentiment and nonconformist meeting-houses, but is a 'waxen City' (l. 911) governed by a royal prince. The phrasing 'waxen City' is poignantly echoed in the language of Book VII of *Paradise Lost* in which the 'waxen cells' (l. 491) of Milton's bees are dislodged of their monarchical connotations.⁷⁵ Milton's drones are stripped of hierarchy – existing 'numberless' in 'popular tribes / Of commonalty' (ll. 492, 488-9) – identical to the 'just equality' (l. 487) of the ant. Similarly, the hall of Pandæmonium swarms with bees as the fallen angels are conspiratorial drones ('thick the airy

⁷² Milton, *Prose Works*, iv 348.

⁷³ Milton, *Prose Works*, iv 427.

⁷⁴ See Edmund Southerne, *A Treatise Concerning the Right Vse and Ordering of Bees* (London: Printed by Thomas Orwin, 1593) and Thomas Moffett, *Insectorum Sive Minimorum Animalium Theatrum* (written 1590; London: Printed by Gabriel Hope, 1634) as examples from the late Elizabethan period. Samuel Purchas' *A Theatre of Political Flying-Insects* (London: Printed by R.I. for Thomas Parkhurst, 1657) is an unusual analogy which encodes the author's political preference for Cromwellian rule at a moment when the Protectorate took on the attributes of a natural monarchy, bolstered by popular sovereignty. Purchas' hive-ruler has a natural authority over its apiary subject.

⁷⁵ References to Milton's poem are from *Paradise Lost*, ed. Alistair Fowler (London: Routledge, 2013); line numbers are cited parenthetically in the text.

crowd / Swarmed and were straitened'; l. 775-6). In Milton's hell, Karen Edwards remarks, the 'infernal bees' are stripped 'of most of the qualities for which classical antiquity praised the bee'.⁷⁶ All that is left in 'their straw-built citadel' (l. 773) is a servility to a monarch and a stinging recalcitrance. Whereas Milton's Satanic beehive is no exemplum for civil government, Dryden figures the citizen-hive as a symbol of the unquestioned authority of the king bee. The pious industry and good husbandry of London's bees as they scramble to put out the fire (the 'streets grow throng'd and busie as by day'; l. 913) implies a loyalty and discipline appropriate for a monarchical state. The Cromwellian fire is quelled by an army of citizens who operate under the king's supervision ('an Army worthy such a King'; l. 972); it is no longer a City militia but a royal retinue.

The Virgilian virtues of the bee reappear in the digression on the Loyal London ('The Phoenix daughter of the vanish'd old'; l. 602), which metonymically stands for the City's redemption from the ashes.⁷⁷ The 'goodly London' (l. 601) was a replacement for a ship called the London (constructed 1656), but which was destroyed on 7 March 1665. The building of the Loyal London was financed through a subscription by the City of London Corporation, and was launched on 10 June 1666. Its resurrection was seen as a preamble to London's revival. Symbolically, the ship of state is repaired after the internecine struggles of the previous two decades. Like 'labouring Bees' (l. 574), citizens refit the ship and 'bind the bruises of a Civil War' (l. 1051); the 'Royal work grows warm' (l. 573) as the industrious hive remakes the City anew. Such loyalty to the patriarchal ruler will distinguish the Loyal London (a 'martial Present' of 'The Loyal City'; ll. 613, 614) from her rebellious predecessor. The civil merits of the city-swarm are derived from their freedom from the taint

⁷⁶ Edwards, 'Milton's Reformed Animals: An Early Modern Bestiary A-C', p. 224.

⁷⁷ Likewise, the destruction of the Loyal London was metonymic for London's destruction in Elkanah Settle's *An Elegy on the Late Fire and Ruines of London*: 'The Ship was burnt which late bore Londons Name / As the forerunner of its Authors flame' (London: Printed for W. Crook, 1667), p. 6.

of former disobedience ('With glewy wax some new foundation lay / Of Virgin combs'; ll. 577-8). The Loyal London's 'new foundation' echoes the later locution in the description of London's future rebirth ('Her widening streets on new foundations trust'; l. 1179), which has its contextual origins in sovereign attempts to limit urban development in early seventeenth-century London to brown-field sites.⁷⁸ Bees were venerated in the seventeenth century as model geometers and architects; perfect hexagonal cells implied rational construction and an ordered universe. Unlike the godly commonwealth of ants, Dryden's reconfiguration of City affairs into a hierarchical beehive serves a pointed moral and political lesson for the nation.

The New London

However, the vestiges of the Old London are so fleeting in *Annus Mirabilis* that we are necessarily impelled towards the future. Dryden's seventeenth-century version of the apocalyptic destruction of the city is a typological fulfilment of the violent transformations of the Book of Revelation, where God's elect are refined by fire in order to enter the celestial city. In a phoenix-like diptych, London's rise is implicit in its fall. Various scriptural texts are a crucial source of imaginative power for the imagining of a New London in the poem. In Revelation viii 5-9, after the seventh seal is opened, a raging inferno consumes a third of the earth's trees and grass, while the sea is turned to blood and its creatures destroyed. Fire is a recurring leitmotif in the Book of Revelation, acting as a fiery fulfilment of the prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible: 'For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire' (Isaiah lxvi 15). But, I would argue, the closing vision of the poem (stanzas 288-304) most closely resembles Revelation xxi, in which the streets of the New Jerusalem are paved with gold and

⁷⁸ Jonathan Pritchard, 'Dryden's 'New Foundations'', *Notes and Queries* 57 (2010), 51-7.

precious stones. Precious metals are the building stock from which the paradisaical city are to be constructed ('With Silver pav'd, and all divine with Gold'; l. 1172). Burning purgation – 'this Chymick flame' (l. 1169) – transforms base metals into gold by divine refinement. In the Book of Revelation, fire is a source of Christian inspiration and a manifestation of divine wrath. It cleanses the elect and removes the sin from the world. That fire is both a destructive and generative power was evident to the French natural philosopher Nicholas de Locques, who argued that '[fire is] internal or external; the external fire is mechanical, corrupting and destroying, the internal is spermatic, generative, ripening'.⁷⁹ The force of regeneration in flames would be recalled in *The Conquest of Granada, Part I* (1672):

Almanzor. My joyes indeed are dreams; but not my pain;
 'Twas a swift ruin; but the marks remain.
 When some fierce fire lays goodly buildings wast,
 Would you conclude
 There had been none, because the burning's past?
Almahide. Your Heart's, at worst, but so consum'd by fire
 As Cities are, that by their falls rise high'r.
 Build Love a Nobler Temple in my place;
 You'l find the fire has but enlarg'd your space.
 (V. i. 432-40)

The notion that London's rise is incipient in its fall has become a recurring metaphor in Dryden's play through the displaced description of the Great Fire. The Great Fire signifies destruction and renewal in *Annus and Mirabilis* too. It opened up the symbolic hope of a renewed covenant between the elect and God. Steven Zwicker has located the poem within a tradition of putting the English-Israelite nation into a redemptive history.⁸⁰ This common motif was put to rhetorical use amongst Dryden's religious and political opponents. In *The Readie and Easie Way*, for example, Milton saw the Restoration as a return to Egyptian

⁷⁹ Quoted in Nigel Smith, 'Making fire': conflagration and religious controversy in seventeenth-century London', in *Imagining Early Modern London: Perceptions and Portrayals of the City from Stowe to Strype 1598-1720*, ed. J. F. Merritt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 273-93, at p. 273.

⁸⁰ Zwicker, *Dryden's Political Poetry: The Typology of King and Nation*, pp.78-83.

bondage after the virtuous liberty of the English Republic.⁸¹ Milton's appropriation of the biblical narrative sees the Children of Israel longing for the servitude of kingship. In his words, the 'noxious humor of returning to bondage' (that is, the innate predisposition towards servitude) extant before the return of monarchy is the result of 'bad principles and fals apprehensions among too many of the people'.⁸² The 'Lent of Servitude' under the Carolean monarchy comes from the 'rash, rebellious, hypocritical and impious' actions of the backsliding and recalcitrant English-Israelite multitude.⁸³ Their rejection of the just and noble cause of a free commonwealth in favour of king and bishop is only a hiatus, however. The flocking of the urban mob to the king's feet at the Restoration – and, in Milton's thinking, slavery – was abhorrent and an abrogation of God's gift of liberty ('Is it such an unspeakable joy to serve, such felicitie to wear a yoke? to clink our shackles, lockt on by pretended law of subjection more intolerable and hopeless to be ever shaken off').⁸⁴ By contrast, the language of sacred analogy is appropriated in *Annus Mirabilis* to show God's will towards London.

Whereas Dryden's account of the naval battles identifies heavily with the trials and judgements of the Israelites in Old Testament history, the envisioning of the New Jerusalem/London requires the recurrent trope of renewed time found in the New Testament. In the allusion to the Israelites' building of 'Their Royal City' (l. 1159), Dryden's sacred analogy moves from the reconstruction of Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity (described in Ezra 1-3) to its typological fulfilment in Revelation. The flourishing commerce and agriculture of the closing stanzas is a fulfilment of the promise of favour for covenanted

⁸¹ This notion of a covenanted nation delivered from the bondage and ungodliness of pre-Civil War England by God's grace is recurring theme of dissenting pamphlets on the Restoration: Baker, *A Certain Warning from a naked Heart*; Ester Biddle, *A Warning from the Lord God of Life and Power, unto thee O City of London, and to the Suburbs round about thee...* (London: Printed for Robert Wilson, 1660); Smith, *The Vision of Humphrey Smith*.

⁸² Milton, *Prose Works*, vii 407-8.

⁸³ Milton, *Prose Works*, vii 408, 422.

⁸⁴ Milton, *Prose Works*, vii 448.

nations found in Isaiah and Ezekiel. London's walled city becomes a global city-state, an entrepot of international trade, attached to a *chora*. This universal state – 'one City of the Universe' (l. 651) – is to break down national boundaries and restore a prelapsarian stage of *homo economicus*.⁸⁵ The reinvigoration of London's 'Trade' and 'Navy' (ll. 1202, 1204) is a seventeenth-century realisation of the eschatological antitype of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Unlike the fallen cities of ancient Greece and Rome, the New London becomes the eternal city at the end of days.⁸⁶ This renewed covenant between God and the New London has a distinct political purpose. Alongside the renewal of time is the renewal of the City 'Charters date' (l. 1175), which is no longer guaranteed by the King but by heaven itself ('Which Heav'n will to the death of time allow'; ll. 1176). The reference to the City charter would have immediately brought up a number of corporate and municipal resonances to Londoners, particularly given the heightened efforts of the Crown to enforce new charters on a number of towns after 1665 (notably Reading in 1667).⁸⁷ After the fiery sacrifice of London, divine authority is to be the protector of the rights of liberties of the City of London Corporation.⁸⁸

Nevertheless, the anagogical language is less secure than it seems in the vision of the New London. The syntax is not that of ensured prophecy, but insecure and contingent: 'Me-thinks...I see'; 'seems' (ll. 1169-70, 1175). The city cannot fully recover the glories of Augustan Rome and the Elizabethan Golden Age; Dryden's apocalyptic vision is wary about the limits of human foreknowledge. London's destruction only heralds a circular renewal of

⁸⁵ The Augustan prophecy of a Golden Age of peace and plenty feeds directly into the opening vision of Pope's *Windsor Forest* (1713). See Pat Rogers, 'Trade and Dominion: *Annus Mirabilis* and *Windsor Forest*', *Durham University Journal* 38 (1976-7), 14-20.

⁸⁶ The classical hinterland of the poem is discussed in Paul Hammond, *Dryden and the Traces of Classical Rome* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), pp. 92-105. Ancient topoi of destruction and renewal are flagged in the poem's marginal glosses and epigraph.

⁸⁷ Jennifer Levin, *The Charter Controversy in the City of London, 1660-1688, and its Consequences* (London: The Athlone Press, 1969), p. 3.

⁸⁸ Reference to the City Charter are also found in the 'Prologue to *Albion and Albanus*', the 'Prologue to the King and Queen', and *The Medall* - that is, works written during the Exclusion Crisis in response to the charter controversy.

the past, both a death and a rebirth. The conspiracies of previous decades were a revolution (in its literal sense) through a series of political settlements that only return to their natural and fittest state, monarchy.⁸⁹ The ‘Royal City’ is a restoration of all that was lost in its fall. London’s circular renewal – of fall and rise, beginnings and ends – allows Dryden to hold the past and future in suspension.

⁸⁹ Dryden’s notion of historical causation as revolution was shared by contemporary thinkers. ‘I haue seen in this reuolution a circular motion’, Hobbes writes, ‘of the Soueraigne Power...from King Charles the first to the long Parliament, from hence to the Rump, from the Rump to Oliuer Cromwell, and then back againe from Richard Cromwell to the Rump, thence to the Long Parliament, and thence to King Charles the second, where long may it remaine’ (Hobbes, *Behemoth or The Long Parliament*, pp. 389-90).

Mac Flecknoe and the ‘Suburban Muse’

In a letter to Alexander Pope on 16 July 1728, Swift reflected on the inaccessibility of the topographical and personal allusions of the 1728 *Dunciad* to audiences outside the capital: ‘I have long observed that twenty miles from London nobody understands hints, initial letters, or town facts and passages; and in a few years not even those who live in London...I am sure it will be a great disadvantage to the poem, that the persons and facts will not be understood, till an explanation comes out, and a very full one’.¹ Swift’s reticence about publication of so impenetrable a poem to readers uninitiated in London’s literary culture is unlikely to have applied to the single most influential analogue for Pope’s mock-heroic, *Mac Flecknoe*.

Whereas *The Dunciad* and its successors – *The Dunciad Variorum* (1729) and *The Dunciad, in Four Books* (1743) – went through multiple impressions and editions, Dryden’s poem was circulated anonymously and clandestinely amongst a restricted coterie.² Its scribal publication is circumscribed to the socially well-connected insider, familiar with both the internecine squabbles of London’s theatrical world and the capital’s social geography.³ As I have shown previously, the provenance and scribal context of the seventeen surviving manuscripts assume a readership familiar with the productions of the Town. *Mac Flecknoe*’s copious literary and topographical detail would only have been intelligible to a selection of aristocratic and Town wits familiar with Shadwell’s character and work.

¹ Jonathan Swift, *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, ed. Harold Williams, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963-5), iii 293.

² *Mac Flecknoe* only reached print publication in a pirated 1682 edition, and an authorised copy in *Miscellany Poems* (1684).

³ The dating the poem has been firmly established in Vieth, ‘The Discovery of the Date of *Mac Flecknoe*’, in *Evidence in Literary Scholarship: Essays in Memory of James Marshall Osborn*, pp. 63-87.

The immediate literary controversy that elicited *Mac Flecknoe*'s composition in July-August 1676 need not be reiterated here.⁴ Instead, I want to focus on the metropolitan context for the poem. There is an alertness to topography in *Mac Flecknoe* not found elsewhere in Dryden's oeuvre. Partly this can be explained as an indirect reaction to the Great Fire. London's surveyors immediately sought to relay the street plan. The inscription on the south panel of the Great Fire Monument (erected 1671-7) makes exaggerated claims for the rapidity of London's reconstruction: *resurgit Londinum, majore celeritate an splendore incertum: unum triennium absolvit quod saeculi opus credebatur* ['London rises again, whether with greater speed or greater magnificence is doubtful; three short years complete that which was considered the work of an age']. In fact, after three years more than a third of the foundations had yet to be staked.⁵ Greater than the process of citizens surveying, planning and rebuilding the burnt environs of the City of London was the concomitant reconceptualisation of urban spaces. Post-Fire writing – whether literary, subliterate or non-literary – shows a heightened awareness of urban spaces according to Cynthia Wall. There was a 'widespread cultural effort within the City to remap itself imaginatively, to resignify its spaces, to rename itself'.⁶ Street names and meanings became more prominent as cartographers, surveyors, pamphleteers and poets sought to delineate and reimagine London's topography.⁷ Whereas the burnt areas of the City underwent an incremental improvement in building standards –

⁴ The literary circumstances are summarised in R. Jack Smith, 'Shadwell's Impact upon John Dryden', *Review of English Studies* 20 (1944), 29-44. Documents relating to the debate are reproduced in Richard L. Oden (ed.), *Dryden and Shadwell: The Literary Controversy and 'Mac Flecknoe' (1668-1679)* (Delmar, New York: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1977). Winn persuasively suggests that it was Shadwell's provocative comments about the laureate's financial dependence on his government posts in the dedication to *The Virtuoso* that stung Dryden into a response; Winn, *John Dryden and His World*, pp. 289-90.

⁵ Reddaway, *The Rebuilding of London after the Great Fire*, p. 244.

⁶ Wall, *The Literary and Cultural Spaces of Restoration London*, p. 116.

⁷ Notably, there was a movement amongst map makers away from the Renaissance tradition of birds-eye images to cartographical accuracy after the Great Fire.

including regulation of street width, building materials, sanitation, and so on – the suburbs often remained a haphazard, overcrowded and disgusting warren of streets.

Dryden was not immune to the renewed sensitivity to London topographies. Elsewhere I have shown the tendency towards translation of Restoration London into the mythological, scriptural, and ahistorical; here such mythology is built upon a set of physical and discursive spaces. Pat Rogers has shown the potency with which the Scriblerian circle and its contemporaries established a moral symbolism around the literary subculture of Grub Street. He acts as ‘a sort of gazetteer’ and provides ‘a route-map to explore the comedy of Grub Street’.⁸ Although the environs of *Mac Flecknoe* are subtly different, the methodology is invaluable in reconstructing the mythological geography of Shadwell’s procession.

However, before I look in detail at the poem’s topographical argument, I want to demonstrate how *Mac Flecknoe* borrows its vocabulary from royal coronation entries and mayoral pageants. Traditionally, the royal entry was a processional rite in which the Lord Mayor and Aldermen in scarlet robes would escort the monarch into the City.⁹ Liveried dignitaries on horseback and foot would always be expected to accompany any monarch passing through the capital. The ceremony sought to display the crown as ultimate source and guarantor of the Corporation’s privileges, while London’s crowds conferred popular acclaim on the incoming monarch. On the eve of his coronation, Charles II was led through the streets of the City of London by the Lord Mayor carrying his sword of office.¹⁰ The processional

⁸ Pat Rogers, *Grub Street: Studies in a Subculture* (London: Methuen, 1972), p. 6.

⁹ For the tradition and decline of royal ceremonial in the seventeenth century, see R. M. Smuts, ‘Public ceremony and royal charisma: the English royal entry in London, 1485-1642’, in *The First Modern Society: Essays in English History in Honour of Lawrence Stone*, ed. A. L. Beier, David Cannadine and James Rosenheim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 65-93.

¹⁰ Although there is no reference to Dryden’s presence at the procession, I think it probable that he would have witnessed at least some component of the ceremony.

route was lined with spectators in a manner that articulated civic hierarchies within the livery companies and Corporation, accompanied by neo-Roman triumphal arches and orations.¹¹ John Ogilby devised ‘the poetical part of the show’, and Peter Mills (City surveyor and architect) designed the arches with Balthasar Gerbier (artist and architect). Since Londoners would only have been able to see a section of the procession, and the speeches would likely have only been audible to the king’s entourage and the liverymen immediately lining the route, many relied on John Ogilby’s account of the day, *The Entertainment of His Most Excellent Majestie Charles II.*¹² *Mac Flecknoe* alludes to the iconographical scheme of the 1661 entry. *Poems* notes that ‘Monarch Oakes, that shade the plain’ (l. 27) recalls the first triumphal arch’s invocation of the Royal Oak in which Charles hid himself in the aftermath of the Battle of Worcester.¹³ Shadwell’s passage down the Thames echoes the so-called Naval Arch, while the popular legitimation for Shadwell’s coronation (‘He paus’d, and all the people cry’d *Amen*’; l. 144) has a referent in Ogilby’s *Entertainment* (‘and all the *People* shouted’).¹⁴

Although Charles’ triumphal entry was ‘the last of its kind in English history’, mayoral pageantry continued.¹⁵ The annual installation of the Lord Mayor on 29 October, the day after the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude, was a formal alternative to the coronation

¹¹ Ian Archer describes the fraught exercise in political communication in Charles II’s entry given the ideological fissures that had riven municipal and national politics during the Interregnum; ‘Royal Entries, the City of London, and the Politics of Stuart Successions’, in *Stuart Succession Literature: Moments and Transformations*, ed. Paulina Kewes and Andrew McRae (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 257-80.

¹² John Ogilby, *The Entertainment of His Most Excellent Majestie Charles II, in His Passage through the City of London to His Coronation* (London: Printed by Thomas Roycroft, 1662).

¹³ *Poems*, i 316.

¹⁴ Ogilby, *Entertainment*, p. 183.

¹⁵ Howard Erskine-Hill, *The Augustan Idea in English Literature* (London: Edward Arnold, 1983), p. 216.

entry.¹⁶ It enacted a covenant between civic London and royal London.¹⁷ The Lord Mayor progressed up the Thames accompanied by livery company barges to swear an oath of allegiance at the Exchequer in Westminster Hall. The return leg passed through city streets attended by dramatic tableaux mounted on pageant wagons with a stock of mythological, allegorical and municipal characters. Civic pageantry was modelled as a neo-Roman triumph: as the ‘ancient *Romaines*,...the first Creators of Consuls and Senators for publike rule and honorable government, used yearlie triumphall shoves and devices, to grace their severall Inauguration’, London ‘devis’d and continued the like love and carefull respect, at the Creation of her worthy Consuls and Magistrates’.¹⁸ Both inauguration ceremonies of the Lord Mayor and royal entries furnished Dryden with the language and imagery of Shadwell’s succession.

In the poem’s Augustan myth of succession, the prophet-king Shadwell has his coronation in a space far less salubrious and auspicious than London’s ceremonial artery along Cheapside, between St. Peter’s Cornhill and St. Paul’s Churchyard.¹⁹ M. J. Power argues there was a physical hierarchy to London streets: ‘A street was a major thoroughfare, wide and perhaps paved; a lane a narrow thoroughfare; a yard or a court an enclosed space entered from a turning off the street or lane; and an alley a very narrow way between buildings. The four names suggest a progressive decline in space and physical

¹⁶ The origins of the early modern London Mayor’s Show in the 1530s and 1540s are studied in Anne Lancashire, *London Civic Theatre: City Drama and Pageantry from Roman Times to 1558* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 171-84. See also Sheila Williams, ‘The Lord Mayor’s Show in Tudor and Stuart Times’, *The Guildhall Miscellany* 10 (1959), 3-18; Michael Berlin, ‘Civic ceremony in early modern London’, *Urban History Yearbook* 13 (1986), 15-27; Ian Archer, “‘Civic Culture’ in Later Medieval and Early Modern London”, *Journal of Urban History* 34 (2008), 370-79.

¹⁷ As Edward Holberton has shown, the mayoral pageants struggled to reinvent themselves under republican conceptions of citizenship during the Cromwellian years; *Poetry and the Cromwellian Protectorate: Culture, Politics, and Institutions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 37-60.

¹⁸ Anthony Munday, *Cruso-thriambos* (London: Printed for William Jaggard, 1611), sig. A3.

¹⁹ The traditional routes of the Lord Mayor’s Day procession and royal entries is mapped out in Manley, *Literature and Culture in Early Modern England*, pp. 221-41.

graciousness.²⁰ Shadwell's 'Coronation' (l. 95) procession is static rather than peripatetic, fixed in both urban space and literary principle. Shadwell's 'Realms of *Non-sense*' (l. 6) are based on a set of vestigial historical and topographical truths. Most of the place names referenced in the poem are within the forty-three acres of the parish of St. Giles' Cripplegate, which was coterminous with the ward of Cripplegate Without.²¹ For a seventeenth-century Londoner, St. Giles' Cripplegate would have a cluster of associations around lawlessness, decay, disease, poverty, licentiousness, and madness. Dryden's poetaster receives a false sense of his own elevation and pomp in his surroundings:

Close to the Walls which fair *Augusta* bind,
 (The fair *Augusta* much to fears inclin'd)
 An ancient fabrick, rais'd t' inform the sight,
 There stood of yore, and *Barbican* it hight:
 A watch Tower once; but now, so Fate ordains,
 Of all the Pile an empty name remains. (ll. 64-69)

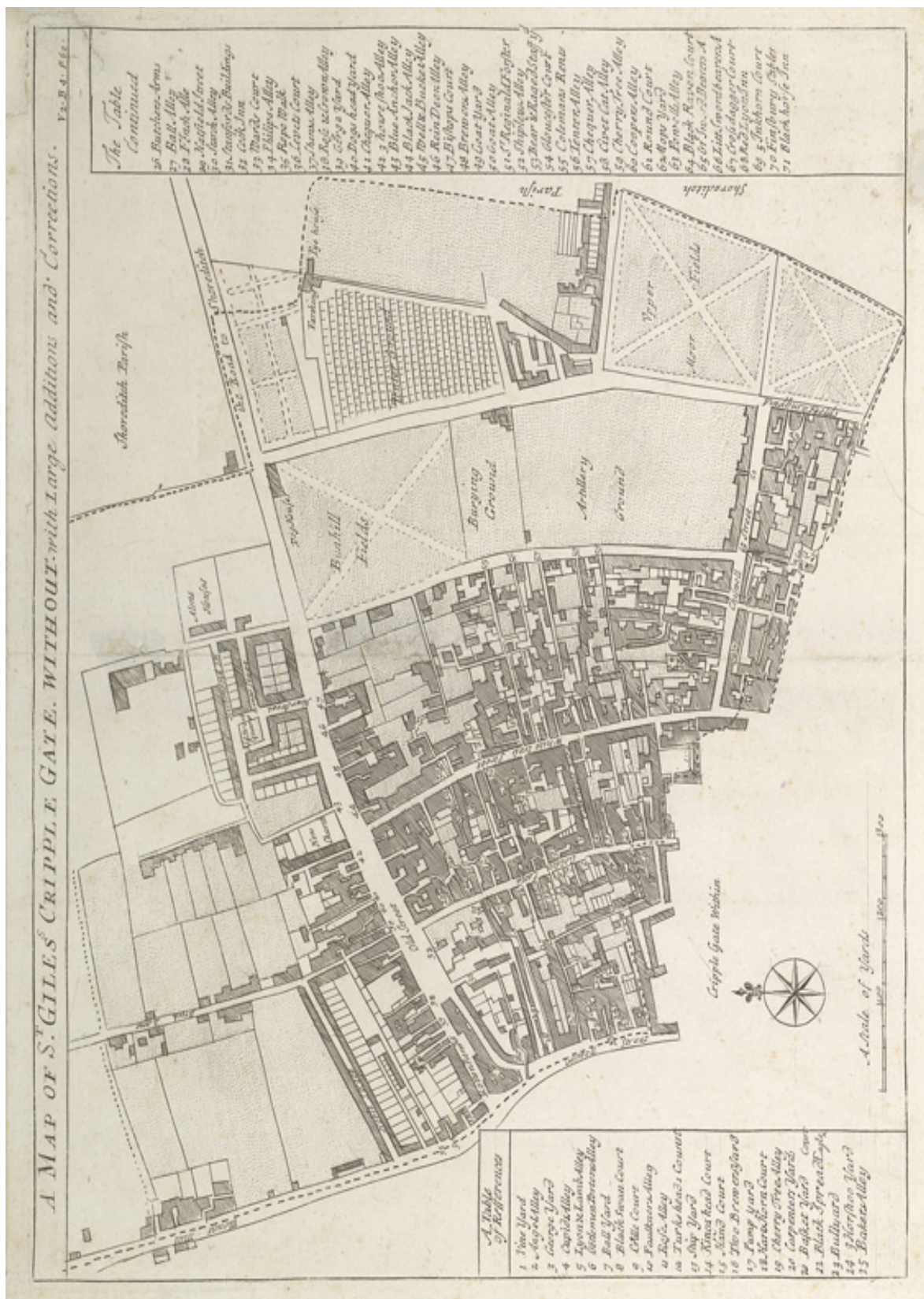
Stow traces the origins of the Barbican as 'a Burgh-Kening or Watch Tower of the Cittie called in some language a Barbican, as a bikening is called a Beacon'.²² It was 'placed on a high ground, and also builded of some good height' to be used 'as a Watch Tower for the Cittie, from whence a man might behold and view the whole Citie towards the South'.²³ But the Barbican had been torn down four centuries earlier, during the reign of Henry III. The Barbican, 'Monument of vanisht minds' (l. 82), signifies the decay of municipal, ecclesiological and cultural authority over the purlieus of St. Giles' Cripplegate. The sights of Shadwell's London are not architectural manifestations of royal and civic order.

²⁰ M. J. Power, 'The Social Topography of Restoration London', in *London 1500-1700: The Making of the Metropolis*, 199-223, at p. 209.

²¹ John Stow thought the origins of the name Cripplegate or 'Creplegate' lay in 'the Criples begging there'; *A Survey of London: Reprinted from the Text of 1603*, ed. Charles L. Kingsford, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), i 33.

²² Stow, *A Survey of London*, i 302. Kingsford argues that Stow's philological work is misleading: Barbican entered the English language through the Old French *barbacane* or the medieval Latin *barbacana*, meaning an outwork (i 302, n.).

²³ Stow, *A Survey of London*, i 70.



12. [Richard Blome], plan of the parish of St. Giles Cripplegate Without, published in John Styrpe's first annotated edition of Stow's *A Survey of London* (1720). London, British Library, Maps Crace Port. 16.1.(1.). © British Library.

That Dryden should choose St. Giles' for Shadwell's enthronement should be unsurprising given its record of religious and civic disobedience. Joseph Williamson, the unofficial intelligence chief for the crown, recommended on 23 November 1671 dismantling the 'Nursery' (l. 74), the playhouses' training school, and its environs for being a cradle for dissenting sects: 'Pull down that [the nursery] and coffee-houses, and nothing can be more to the establishment of the government. The City government is too lax already. The citizens already, even those that are of the Church of England, prefer to have fanatic children, rather than those bred in their own way... Since the fire, fanatics have increased, because the people wanted churches.'²⁴ The parish had long suffered from the paucity and lethargy of Anglican pastoral supervision. A Presbyterian lectureship was instituted during the Interregnum, and the ward of Cripplegate Without hosted more dissenting conventicles than any other ward during the Restoration.²⁵ Shortly before his death in 1731, Ned Ward cried in his poetic will, 'O bury not my peaceful corpse / In Cripplegate, where discord dwells / And wrangling parties jangle worse, / Than alley's scolds or Sunday's bell.'²⁶ The fraught and divided community became a refuge for cripples, beggars, prostitutes and dissenters. Shadwell's poetic kingdom is not the resplendent 'Augusta' of *Annus Mirabilis* (ll. 1169-1216); it is the domain of the 'suburbian Muse' (l. 83), an urban space beyond the refined tastes of both Town and court.²⁷

Shadwell seeks popular applause for his succession to 'true dullness' (l. 115).

'Empress *Fame*' (or Rumour; l. 94) calls on denizens of a specific topography. They are from

²⁴ *The Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, January to November, 1671* (London: Printed by Eyre and Spottiswood, 1895), p. 581.

²⁵ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, p. 280. The adjoining ward to the west, Aldersgate Without, had a similar heritage in the political and religious agitation of the Interregnum. It was also home to a number of leading Whig aristocrats, notably the Earl of Shaftesbury.

²⁶ Quoted in Walter Thornbury and Edward Walford, *Old and New London*, 6 vols. (London: Cassell, Petter & Galpin, 1878), v 328.

²⁷ 'Suburbian' was a term of abuse: '(in early use often with negative sense) with reference to the immoral or licentious practices of the suburbs, esp. of London' (*OED*).

‘near *Bun-Hill*, and distant *Watling-street*’ (l. 97). Such places, as Pat Rogers says in relation to Pope’s Smithfield, functioned as a ‘semantic coral reef in which there were encrusted myriads of fossilised allusions, practically all of them pejorative in character’.²⁸ These topographical denotations deserve some explication. Bunhill, originally open meadows in the Manor of Finsbury, probably has its etymological origins in Bone Hill.²⁹ Initially enclosed in 1665-6 by the City Corporation as a burial ground for plague victims, it appears never to have been used for its intended purpose. Instead, Bunhill Fields became known as the ‘cemetery of Puritan England’ or the ‘great dissenters’ burial ground’ as a consequence of the religious persecution established by the 1662 Act of Uniformity. Sitting outside the boundary of the City Corporation – on the north side of the Artillery Yard, adjacent to the parish of St. Giles’ Cripplegate – Bunhill Fields was the only cemetery in either the capital or nation that would inter religious communities that refused to be buried according to the rites of the Book of Common Prayer. It pulled in dissenting congregations who were denied burial rights in their home counties. Prior to the later interments of more famous persons such as John Owen (d. 1683), John Bunyan (d. 1688), George Fox (d. 1691) and Roger Morrice (d. 1702), there was already a strong association with the whole gamut of dissenting sects by the time Dryden came to compose *Mac Flecknoe*: Independents, Baptists, Quakers, and Presbyterians.³⁰ Whilst meeting-houses multiplied in surrounding areas, Bunhill became a spiritual home for those excluded from the confessional state. To any Anglican loyalist, it must have seemed a

²⁸ Pat Rogers, *Hacks and Dunces: Pope, Swift, and Grub Street* (London: Methuen, 1980), pp. 157-58.

²⁹ The most helpful histories of Bunhill Fields are: Isabella Holmes, *The London Burial Grounds: Notes on their History from the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1896), pp. 133-35; Susan Easton Black, *Bunhill Fields: the Great Dissenters’ Burial Ground* (Utah: Brigham Young University, 1990); Corporation of London, *The Official Guide to Bunhill Fields* (London: Corporation of London, 1991).

³⁰ Burial records testify to the prevalence of Restoration dissenters who had figured in the religious struggles of the 1640s and 1650s. Vavasor Powell (d. 1670) was a factious Independent preacher of millenarian sympathies during the Interregnum; he became a *persona non grata* to the Restoration monarchy, intermittently imprisoned for his preaching in London and his native Radnorshire. The Independent John Loder (d. 1673) was a pastor at Silver Street, London, after his ejection from the Lectureship of Bartholomew when the Act of Uniformity came into force. A number of those buried in Bunhill Fields – such as Hanserd Knollys (d. 1691), a Baptist minister – had held government posts during the Cromwellian Protectorate. London Metropolitan Archives, CLC/271/MS00897 has a record of the inscriptions on gravestones that survived in 1869.

veritable sinkhole of factious abuses and disobedience.³¹ Despite the initial beautification of the site, it fell into a state of disrepair and neglect: ‘a resort of idle and disorderly persons’.³² Bunhill and its hinterlands had functioned as a refuge for seditious elements wanting to escape the supervision of royal or municipal authorities.³³ When we think of the milieu of the talentless scribbler, we must therefore recognise the association between inspired religion, insurrectionary politics and lack of literary ‘sense’.³⁴ Shadwell’s entourage of dunces are from ‘near *Bun-Hill*’ rather than the geographically and culturally ‘distant’ Watling Street (a major thoroughfare stretching eastwards from St. Paul’s Churchyard, parallel to Cheapside in the heart of the City).³⁵ Such mythologisation draws satiric energy from the association of Shadwell’s literary topography with dissenting religion. In this context, it seems less startling that the unauthorised 1682 printing of the poem as *Mac Flecknoe, or a Satyr upon the Trew-Blew-Protestant Poet* should draw attention to the partisan implications of what was ostensibly a purely literary controversy.

The evocation of the nursery theatre dwells on the harlequinades, puppet-shows and empty spectacle one expects of a popular dramatist.³⁶ Leslie Hotson has assiduously revealed the erection of a booth or playhouse near the Barbican, despite the entrenched opposition of residents. He shows that the nursery was situated south of the Barbican in Playhouse Yard

³¹ Strangely, Milton was buried near the altar in St. Giles’ Cripplegate rather than Bunhill Fields. It is an odd choice for him to be interred in an Anglican church given that his home was virtually opposite Bunhill Fields; Gordon Campbell and Thomas Corns, *John Milton: Life, Work, and Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 379-80.

³² *The Inscriptions upon the Tombs, Grave-Stones, &c. in the Dissenters Burial-Place near Bunhill Fields* (London: Printed for E. Curll, 1717), p. 25.

³³ The Blue Anchor alehouse in Moorfields, directly south of Bunhill, provided shelter for Fifth Monarchist Thomas Venner and his followers after the failure of his rising in January 1661.

³⁴ *Poems*, i 314 outlines the literary genealogy and meaning of ‘nonsense’.

³⁵ Watling Street is likely the London offshoot of the Roman highway of that name between Dover and St. Albans. See *The London Encyclopaedia*, ed. Ben Weinreb, Christopher Hibbert, Julia Keay and John Keay (London: Macmillan, 2008), p. 994.

³⁶ G. Blakemore Evans, ‘Dryden’s *Mac Flecknoe* and Dekker’s *Satiromastix*’, *Modern Language Notes* 76 (1961), 598-600 notes the rhetorical similarities between Dekker’s ‘prophecy’ and Dryden’s description of the nursery.

prior to the establishment there of an Anabaptist meeting house.³⁷ The pandemonium of ‘Brothel-houses’ (l. 70), ‘Mother-Strumpets’ (l. 72) and ‘Queens’ (a pun on quean; l. 75) is the territory of the professional scribbler. London’s suburbs were a haven for prostitution. In *The Kind Keeper* (first acted 1678), the ‘Pious Baudy-house[s]’ (I. i. 18) of the suburbs evince the religious hypocrisy of the inhabitants. According to Strype, ‘any common Women of their Bodies, or Harlots’ were excluded from the City ‘to eat and drink, or otherwise be conversant or abide, or thither to haunt or frequent...upon pain of Imprisonment’.³⁸ Shadwell’s ‘Throne’ (l. 86) bathetically manages to maintain its mock-heroic grandeur amongst London’s prostitutes: there is a congruence between the prostitution of hack writing, dramatic and sexual performance. In the triplet

Where unfledg’d Actors learn to laugh and cry,
Where infant Punks their tender Voices try,
And little *Maximins* the gods defy. (ll. 76-78)

there is unnatural growth. Breaching the confines of the familiar couplet, the triplet enacts syntactically the expansiveness of which it speaks. The couplet becoming a triplet is heralded by a beginning again: ‘And...’. The anaphora of the preceding three lines (‘Where.../Where.../Where...’) underscores the generative power of the nursery. Corrupt activity grows and spreads amidst the ‘old Ruins’ (l. 70) of the Barbican. Topographical settlement thus shapes a literary and moral character for Shadwell.

³⁷ Leslie Hotson, *The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1928), pp. 176-94.

³⁸ John Stow, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster*, ed. and rev. John Strype, 2 vols. (London: Printed for A. Churchill, J. Knapton, et al., 1720), ii 316.

Numerous analogues, literary as well as historical, have been put forward to explain the mock-panegyric account of Shadwell's progress down the Thames.³⁹ But I contend that early readers would see the annual Lord Mayor's waterborne pageant along the Thames. Shadwell's 'Royal Barge' (l. 39) could as well be a civic barge. The popular response to his inflated sense of his own musical talents derives from some unexpected quarters: 'Echoes from *Pissing-Ally*, *Sh*— call, / And *Sh*— they resound from *A*— *Hall*' (ll. 47-48). '*A*— *Hall*', or Ashton Hall, is not in London. It refers to the ancestral home of Edmund Ashton in Lancashire, Chadderton Hall. Ashton, as well as an officer in the king's troop of Life Guards, was a companion to court wits and versifier.⁴⁰ Although much disparaged as a poet by contemporaries, I have been unable to find any manuscript sources containing verses attributable to Ashton. Shadwell enjoyed a lifelong friendship with Ashton and was a regular guest at Chadderton Hall, where, it seems, the pair spent most of their time drinking and soliciting women.⁴¹ The place name 'Pissing Alley' is evidently a denotation dictated by occupation, but its precise location has eluded editors for some time. There are three Pissing Alleys recorded in Ogilby and Morgan's *London Survey'd* (1677), which were preserved in the post-Fire reconstruction: between the Strand and the Thames; in St. John's Street; and parallel to Fleet Street.⁴² However, 'Pissing Alley' was also the sobriquet applied to Canon Alley between St. Paul's Churchyard and Paternoster Row, the home to a number of unlicensed booksellers. Lying to the north of St. Paul's, it was a narrow, dark passageway

³⁹ *Poems*, i 317, regards it as likely to refer either to Shadwell serenading Queen Catherine of Braganza on the royal barge or Aeneas' voyage up the Tiber. Elsewhere, Paul Hammond argues that it is a travesty of Flecknoe's passage from Lisbon; 'Flecknoe and *Mac Flecknoe*', in *The Making of Restoration Poetry*, 168-79, at p. 176. David McInnis, 'Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe*', *The Explicator* 66 (2008), 71-73, argues that it is a mock-heroic rendering of Shakespeare's tableau of Cleopatra on the Nile.

⁴⁰ There is a potted biography of Edmund Ashton in David M. Vieth, *Attribution in Restoration Poetry: A Study of Rochester's Poems of 1680* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), pp. 254-66.

⁴¹ Ashton was the subject of much derision in literary circles in the Town, subject to a number of satiric verses including the lampoon beginning 'Thou Comon Shore of this Poetique Town' (in which he is one of a number of poetasters hawked by Robert Julian).

⁴² Ogilby and Morgan's *Survey* has been reproduced as *The A to Z of Restoration London*, ed. Ralph Hyde, John Fisher and Roger Cline (London: London Topographical Society, 1992).

overshadowed by the high vertical extensions of bookshops and printing houses. Mill's and Oliver's *Survey* notes its reshaping in September 1672: 'There is laid into the alley called pissing alley to make the same 14 Foot wide – 10 Foot in Breadth for 66 Foot in length without superficial is 660 Foot and Certified'.⁴³ Even amongst neighbouring spaces connected to the book trade, Canon Alley/Pissing Alley had a particular reputation for noxious assaults on the senses.⁴⁴ The scatological signifier for Canon Alley was recorded as early as 1574.⁴⁵ What makes Canon Alley the most likely candidate for Shadwell's Pissing Alley is both its proximity to the Thames and the association with London's print trade. *Mac Flecknoe* is undoubtedly a poem distancing itself from the low culture of popular print. It is, in Harold Love's words, 'an anti-print poem, picturing a world choked up with the mighty yet evanescent products of the press'.⁴⁶ Unlike the scribal lampooners of court and Town, Shadwell belongs exclusively to the world of print. His kingship, the 'Throne of his own Labours rear'd' (l. 107), is the soiled product of the excrescences of London scribblers. The surfeit of print obstructs the thoroughfares of the capital ('loads of *Sh*— almost choakt the way; l. 103). The satirical allusion to the commercial uses of waste paper has a classical genealogy: 'From dusty shops neglected Authors come, / Martyrs of Pies, and Reliques of the Bum' (l. 100-1).⁴⁷ In the second book of Horace's *Epistles*, the poet is brought to his final resting place, the grocer's shop: ...*Defarar in vicum vendentem thus, & odores, / Et piper, & quidquid chartis amicitur ineptis* ['brought into the street where they sell frankincense and perfumes and peppers and everything else wrapped in sheets of useless paper'; II. i., ll. 169-

⁴³ Peter Mills and John Oliver, *The Survey of Building Sites in the City of London after the Great Fire of 1666*, ed. P. E. Jones and T. F. Reddaway. 5 vols. (London: London Topographical Society, 1962-67), v 156.

⁴⁴ Raven, *Bookscape: Geographies of Printing and Publishing in London before 1800*, p. 46.

⁴⁵ Eilert Ekwall, *Street-Names of the City of London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. 176.

⁴⁶ Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England*, p. 296.

⁴⁷ See also Persius I, ll. 41-43: *an erit qui velle recuset / Os populi meruisse: & cedro Digna locutus, / Linquere nec scombro metuentia carmina, nec thus?* [Dryden's translation: 'For does there Breath a Man, who can reject / A general Fame, and his own Lines neglect? / In Cedar Tablets worth to appear; / That need not Fish, or Frankincense to fear?', ll. 80-83].

70].⁴⁸ Shadwell is truly the inheritor of the classical tradition of discarded verses, heir to the disposable.

The lineal descent of Shadwell is an ironic panegyric to the patrilineal literary system found elsewhere in Dryden's writing, such as in 'To My Dear Friend Mr Congreve' (1693) and the preface to *Fables Ancient and Modern* (1700).⁴⁹ *Mac Flecknoe* deflates the venerable genealogies of his literary opponent: rather than a successor to Jonson, Shadwell is heir to Richard Flecknoe. Obsessed as the poem is by professed and genuine patrimony and bloodlines, the self-styled Son of Ben also has a legitimate claim to the inheritance of City poets: 'Heywood and Shirley were but Types of thee, / Thou last great Prophet of Tautology' (ll. 29-30). Like 'ancient Decker' (l. 87), they belong to a theatrical tradition embodied in Christopher Beeston's company at the Red Bull.⁵⁰ Spectacle took primacy over any other dramatic considerations. But they are important forebears as all three acted as official City poet, laureate of the Lord Mayor's Show. The role demanded they devise the spectacles and speeches that would accompany the mayoral pageant through the City's jurisdiction.⁵¹ Their literary endeavours were to give 'great loud voyc'd inauguration' to the liberties, immunities and privileges held at the pleasure of the crown.⁵² One can get a sense of the visual appeal of mayoral pageants by looking at Dekker's *Troia-Noua Triumphans* (1612), which included a

⁴⁸ Cornelius Schrevelius (ed.), *Q. Horatius Flaccus cum commentariis selectissimis Variorum...Accurate Corn. Schrevelio* (Leiden: F. Hackium, 1653), pp. 757-58

⁴⁹ Dryden's motifs of literary succession and inheritance are studied in: Jennifer Brady, 'Dryden and negotiations of literary succession and precession', in *Literary Transmission and Authority: Dryden and Other Writers*, ed. Earl Miner and Jennifer Brady (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 27-54; Jeff Espie, 'Literary Paternity and Narrative Revival: Chaucer's Soul(s) from Spenser to Dryden', *Modern Philology* 114 (2016), 39-58.

⁵⁰ See Tom H. Towers, 'The Lineage of Shadwell: An Approach to *Mac Flecknoe*', *Studies in English Literature* 3 (1963), 323-34.

⁵¹ For analysis of the printed texts of Tudor and Stuart mayoral pageants, see David Bergeron, *English Civic Pageantry, 1558-1642* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971), pp. 123-308; Tracey Hill, *Pageantry and Power: A Cultural History of the Early Modern Lord Mayor's Show, 1585-1639* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), pp. 214-69.

⁵² Thomas Heywood, *Londini Status Pacatus: or, Londons Peaceable Estate* (London: Printed by John Okes, 1639), sig. B1.

sea-chariot, a throne of Virtue, a House of Fame, and an embattled castle along the route.⁵³

Such shows were held in contempt by the gentry: the sight of rambunctious and carnivalesque crowds gawping at vulgar spectacle provoked a snobbish response. Their audience cut across civic society and upheld a set of mercantile values. Thus, when the poem acclaims Shadwell the true poetic heir of Heywood, Shirley and Dekker, it reduces him in both social status and poetic endeavour. His popular entertainments are provender to the urban crowd.⁵⁴

Mac Flecknoe pricks the delusional pretensions and affectations of Shadwell through association: association with the decaying, sordid and disobedient environs of London, and by association with a decidedly vulgar form of drama. By fixing Shadwell in a moral topography and literary milieu, Dryden makes a laughingstock of his claims to a noble poetic heritage.

⁵³ Thomas Dekker, *Troia-Noua Triumphans. London Triumphant* (London: Printed by Nicholas Okes, 1612).

⁵⁴ Significantly, another of Dryden's literary sparring partners, Elkanah Settle, acted as official City poet (from 1691), devised pope-burning processions during the Exclusion Crisis and shows for Bartholomew Fair. In the *Dunciad Variorum*, Settle's Lord Mayor's shows are the apotheosis of the empire of Dullness.: 'Settle was alive at this time, and Poet to the City of London. His office was to compose yearly panegyrics upon the Lord Mayors, and Verses to be spoken in the Pageants: But that part of the shows being by the frugality of some Lord Mayors at length abolished, the employment of City Poet ceas'd; so that upon Settle's demise, there was no successor to that place... This important point of time our Poet has chosen, as the Crisis of the Kingdom of Dulness...' (*The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. John Butt et al., 11 vols. (London: Methuen, 1939-69), v 69-70).

London and the Restoration Crisis of Government

In late 1678, Titus Oates' allegations of a popish plot to overthrow the government and ensure a Catholic succession brought the political nation into a period of chronic fear, uncertainty and confusion. The subsequent chain of events in church and state came to be known as the Exclusion Crisis. The parliamentary opposition struggled with the crown over three successive parliaments to debar the heir-presumptive from the throne. Such polarisation of opinion led to the formation of political parties: Whig and Tory.¹ The party labels were terms of abuse for 'fanaticks, covenanters, [and] bromingham protestants' on the one hand, or for 'tantivies, Yorkists, [and] high flown church men' on the other.² Few historians now see the political crisis of 1678-83 as solely a crisis about exclusion – that is, the parliamentary removal of the Duke of York from the hereditary succession.³ Instead, 'the crisis and men's responses to it were more complex than was once thought'.⁴ The Popish Plot set in train a broader series of ideological disputes beyond the matter of the succession, particularly around religious toleration, arbitrary government and popular sovereignty.⁵ It has been suggested that

¹ The origins of the party names are studied in: Robert Willman, 'The Origins of 'Whig' and 'Tory' in English Political Language', *Historical Journal* 17 (1974), 247-64; Tim Harris, *Politics under the Later Stuarts: Party Conflict in a Divided Society 1660-1615* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).

² Narcissus Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1857), i 124.

³ The constitutional disputes between factions in parliament were the chief focus of an earlier generation of historians, including: J. R. Jones, *The First Whigs: The Politics of the Exclusion Crisis 1678-1683* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961); John Miller, *Poperly and Politics in England, 1660-1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); J. P. Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (London: Heinemann, 1972); J.P. Kenyon, *Stuart England* (London: Allen Lane, 1978); John Miller, 'Charles II and his Parliaments', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 32 (1982), 1-23.

⁴ Mark Knights, *Politics and Opinion in Crisis, 1678-81* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 368.

⁵ Jonathan Scott has argued that the tumultuous years between 1678 and 1683 constituted a larger crisis of government rather than simply an 'Exclusion crisis': 'England's Troubles: Exhuming the Popish Plot', in *The Politics of Religion in Restoration England*, ed. Tim Harris, Paul Seaward, and Mark Goldie (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), pp. 107-31; *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis, 1677-1683* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 182-204.

the crisis became an opportunity for further reformation of the Protestant faith.⁶ Some historians have argued that opposition ideas were far more radical than has hitherto been appreciated, especially the revival of republican principles and resistance theory in the City.⁷

Civic affairs have been an especially valuable avenue of enquiry for Restoration historians; it is not difficult to see why.⁸ Much of English society understood the crisis of government in terms of London politics. Every election for municipal office, every mass demonstration or petitioning campaign, could become a turning-point in the ongoing constitutional and religious warfare. The struggle for control of the institutions and offices of the City Corporation – the Common Council, mayoralty, and shrievalty – became a synecdoche for national politics. London's citizens seemingly held the balance of power in the country. Charles II's success in frustrating the exclusionist movement through the adroit use of the royal prerogative in calling, proroguing and dissolving parliamentary sessions meant the Whig faction turned to collective agitation on the streets of the capital. Once the Exclusion Bill was dead in the water after the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament in March 1681, the public gaze was turned towards the Whig stronghold in the City of London. The crown felt itself to be in a robust enough position to regain control of City government.⁹ In

⁶ Gary De Krey, 'Reformation in the Restoration Crisis, 1679-1682', in *Religion, Literature, and Politics in Post-Reformation England, 1540-1688*, ed. Donna Hamilton and Richard Strier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 231-52.

⁷ See Richard Ashcraft, *Revolutionary Politics and Locke's Two Treatises of Government* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986); R. L. Greaves, *Secrets of the Kingdom: British Radicals from the Popish Plot to the Revolution of 1688-89* (California: Stanford University Press, 1992), pp. 5-53; Melinda Zook, *Radical Whigs and Conspiratorial Politics in Late Stuart England* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999); Tim Harris, 'The Leveller legacy: from the Restoration to the Exclusion Crisis', in *The Putney Debates of 1647: The Army, the Levellers, and the English State*, ed. Michael Mendle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 219-40.

⁸ The most important studies are: D. F. Allen, 'The Crown and the Corporation of London in the Exclusion Crisis, 1678-1681' (Cambridge, unpublished PhD thesis, 1977); Harris, *London Crowds*; Gary De Krey, *London and the Restoration*.

⁹ It is important not to overstate the strength of Whig support within the City Corporation. The balance of power on the Court of Aldermen lay with the Tories, outnumbering the Whigs by fourteen to nine (with three Aldermen of uncertain allegiance), while the Tories controlled the lieutenancy of the Trained Bands; see D. F. Allen, 'The Political Role of the London Trained Bands in the Exclusion Crisis, 1678-81', *English Historical Review* 87 (1972), 287-303, at pp. 288, 302.

particular, most threatening to the crown's interest was the Whig mayoralty (held by Sir Patience Ward and Sir Robert Clayton in 1679-81) which could exercise influence over the City's legislative body, the Court of Common Council, recognised as the voice of the people in the municipal government since all freemen had a vote in the election of Common Councilmen.¹⁰ Additionally, the election of two leading civic nonconformists (Slingsby Bethell and Henry Cornish) as sheriffs of London in June 1680 meant that the opposition had the power to empanel juries in both the City of London and Middlesex (as did the return of Whig sheriffs Thomas Pilkington and Samuel Shute the following year). This 'republican capture of London' by the City friends of Algernon Sidney in the 1680 shrieval elections was to frustrate Tory attempts to prosecute enemies of the crown, notably in the *ignoramus* verdict brought down on Shaftesbury by a grand jury of prominent exclusionists and Whig merchants.¹¹ (The occupation of municipal government posts by radical Whigs was far more alarming to Charles than the incumbency of exclusionist City Members of Parliament, Sir Robert Clayton, William Love, Sir Thomas Pilkington, and Sir Thomas Player during the three exclusion parliaments). In the succession of Corporation elections after Shaftesbury fled to Holland, the political and legal initiative was decisively with the crown and civic loyalists. A growing Tory reaction in the capital led to the installation of a Tory mayor in 1681, followed by Tory sheriffs from 1682 onwards. Charles sought to deliver a final hammer blow against the Corporation's charter, the document underpinning the liberties and privileges of London's citizens.¹² London's Whigs were politically paralysed after the collapse of their legal strategy, and the surrender of the charter to the king after the final meeting of Common

¹⁰ In theory, the legislative power of Common Council was independent from the Lord Mayor and aldermanic Bench, but in practice the mayoralty could convene or dissolve the body while Aldermen held a veto over proceedings.

¹¹ Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis*, pp. 115, 162-73.

¹² The legal implications of the battle for the Corporation Charter are studied in Levin, *The Charter Controversy in the City of London, 1660-1688, and its Consequences*. John Miller has looked at the London charter controversy as part of a wider move by the crown for control of provincial borough charters; 'The Crown and the Borough Charters in the Reign of Charles II', *English Historical Review* 100 (1985), 53-84.

Council on 2 October 1683 allowed Charles to authorise commissioners to govern the City on his behalf.¹³ The crown's *quo warranto* had seemingly broken the City's resistance. Many loyalists thought the subordination of London's courts, chartered and electoral rights to the crown heralded a 'second Restoration' from which there could be no reversal.

I have not the space here to offer a detailed narrative account of London's full role in the Restoration crisis, for which there are far more accomplished and comprehensive studies. Instead, it would be more valuable for our purposes to describe the forms and modes of political participation in London between 1678 and 1685 to which Dryden was responding, as well as the political theatres in which the struggles between Whig and Tory citizens were conducted. During the Exclusion Crisis, Whig citizens understood themselves to have innate rights and privileges which could often put them in opposition to the crown's interests. London radicals recognised their political heritage in the Good Old Cause and were committed to popular forms of civic government. In their conception of the civic constitution, City officials were not the king's urban commissioners but representatives of the popular will, servants or stewards of the commons. Their promotion of popular authority, vested in citizen-freemen, was at the expense of the oligarchic constitution of the City Corporation, much like the method of government inaugurated by the 1649 civic revolution. Radical Londoners were firmly empowered by ideas regarding citizenship, chartered liberties, popular sovereignty, and the precedents of the ancient constitution.¹⁴ These notions signalled an abrupt departure from the state-sanctioned conventions surrounding passive obedience, the divine right of kings, along with the established authority of church and crown. London

¹³ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, p. 385.

¹⁴ Citizens' rights and customs were descended from the common laws of the ancient constitution. There had been a revival in interest over previous decades in how immemorial liberties of the Anglo-Saxon constitution could be used to legitimate a democratic civic order. See J. G. A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law: English Historical Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 335-89.

Whigs had brought into the mainstream, argues Gary De Krey, ‘many pre-1660 political arguments once associated with Levellers and commonwealthmen, just as Restoration Presbyterians and independents had mainstreamed sectarian arguments about conscience’.¹⁵ The alliance between the exclusionist movement in the House of Commons and reformers, radicals and republicans in the City of London became the backbone of opposition to the Duke of York’s succession. Heterogenous coteries of London Whigs rallied a cohesive dissenting community, hardened by decades of persecution, in the organised resistance to the crown’s will.

Thanks to the work of Gary De Krey we can now map out the topography of party in London during the Restoration crisis of government. London’s political and religious communities had much to do with the enduring identities left over from the conflicts of the mid-century, but the urban politics of these communities were polarised after the Popish Plot scare.¹⁶ In his analysis of the election results to Common Council between 1680 and 1683, De Krey shows that there existed coherent blocs of support for the parties.¹⁷ Whig-dominated spaces included Aldersgate Without and Cripplegate Without to the north-west of the medieval wall, Aldgate and Portsoken around the eastern wall, as well as six smaller wards dotted around the centre of the City. These wards remained unresponsive to Anglican-Tory candidates in Common Council elections even in 1682-3. These were wards with weak parochial organisation and few active Anglican clergymen. As a result, dissenting sects were especially strong in these areas, conspicuously the parish of St. Giles Cripplegate in Cripplegate Without which had more conventicles than anywhere else. Unsurprisingly, the

¹⁵ Gary De Krey, ‘Radicals, reformers and republicans: academic language and political discourse in Restoration London’, in *A Nation Transformed: England after the Restoration*, ed. Alan Houston and Steve Pincus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 71-99, at p. 92.

¹⁶ It goes without saying that many of the wards had no discernible partisan allegiance.

¹⁷ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, pp. 275-92.

Inner City wards had been at the heart of Puritan London a generation earlier. Whig leaders tapped into the heritage and practices of Reformed Protestantism in these environs in fomenting crowd politics. However, London's wards were not without pockets of support for Anglican loyalism. Common Council elections reveal that twelve City wards or parts of wards were sympathetic to Tory-Anglican interest during the Restoration crisis.¹⁸ Toryism held a greater popular appeal in these wards and the court could call on a greater number of supporters. In the two most ardently loyalist City wards, Tower and Billingsgate, there are no known dissenting meeting houses. Many of the spaces most sympathetic to the Stuart court had connections to the Anglican Church, royal power or the legal establishment (for example, in the areas surrounding the Inns of Court, Fleet Prison, Bridewell or the Court of King's Bench in the ward of Farringdon Without). For this reason, we must regard seventeenth-century observations that the City of London was a Whig-only enclave as rhetorical argument rather than statements of fact. The Tories had an active base of support much like the Whig opposition.

Both parties sought to convince London's citizens of the righteousness of their cause. Tim Harris argues against the longstanding assumption that the anti-Catholicism of Londoners meant the majority of citizens were naturally sympathetic to the Whig cause and the Protestant succession. Rather, there was a fundamental divide in London's political culture, particularly around the question of religious dissent.¹⁹ Whigs and Tories both looked to crowd politics as a means of demonstrating to the government fundamental and widespread public support for either exclusion or the Duke of York's succession. Collective agitation was not the preserve of populist Whiggism; a counter-movement emerged in

¹⁸ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, p. 284.

¹⁹ Harris, *London Crowds*, pp. 118-29.

defence of the principles of hereditary succession and passive obedience, especially after the initial fears of a Catholic conspiracy died away. Non-elite politics in the form of popular demonstrations reached an intensity after the Popish Plot unseen since the Interregnum.

The most common and publicised form of street theatre was the pope-burning processions, held on festival days in the anti-Catholic calendar, such as gunpowder treason day (5 November) and Queen Elizabeth's accession day (17 November).²⁰ An effigy of the pope would be carried through the streets of the City in imitation of the papal coronation ceremony.²¹ Normally, the effigies would be burnt at either Temple Bar, the boundary between the jurisdictions of the City Corporation and Westminster, or Smithfield, the famous site for the burning of Protestant martyrs in Marian England. The pageants grew ever more elaborate and grander over the course of the Exclusion Crisis as the numbers of Londoners witnessing the procession increased. Pope-burning processions attracted huge crowds, not all of whom were necessarily sympathetic to the Whig cause; one opposition periodical reports seeing an audience of 200,000 Londoners for the burning of the pope at Temple Bar on Queen Elizabeth's accession day 1679.²² According to Burke, the pope-burning processions were 'a kind of inverse lord mayor's show'; that is, antagonistic to the legitimation of civic and royal authority found in traditional ceremonies.²³ Crowds were not necessarily drawn to the processions purely out of partisan devotion, but also out of a nationalistic sense of shared Protestant identity established by the Elizabethan Religious Settlement – or a simple clamour

²⁰ In fact, Shaftesbury's exclusionists commissioned the City poet Elkanah Settle, who was extraordinarily prolific in writing anti-Catholic satires during the crisis, to plan and manage the pageants through the City of London.

²¹ Further details of the content and purpose of the pageants can be found in: Sheila Williams, 'The Pope-Burning Processions of 1679, 1680, and 1681', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 21 (1958), 104-18; O. W. Furley, 'The Pope-Burning Processions of the Late Seventeenth Century', *History* 44 (1959), 16-23.

²² *Domestick Intelligence; Or, News both from City and Country*, no. 40 (21 November 1679).

²³ P. Burke, 'Popular Culture in Seventeenth-Century London', in *Popular Culture in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. Barry Reay (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 31-58, at p. 47.

for spectacle. The pageant routes typically were through the northern and eastern outparishes of the City – chiefly around Moorfields, Bishopsgate and Aldgate – environs with a heavy concentration of nonconformist citizens. Such popular demonstrations tapped into virulent anti-Catholic sentiment. On the occasion of the pope-burning procession of 17 November 1680, the crowds were heard to chant ‘No Popery, God bless the King, Protestant Religion, The Church, and Dissenting Protestants, both whom God Unite’.²⁴

By contrast, Tory rituals were designed to undermine Whig claims of a popular consensus in the capital. Presbyter-burning ceremonies, as well as public celebrations of the king and Duke of York’s birthdays, were a deliberate counter to the pope-burning processions of the exclusionist movement. Loyalist apprentices revelled in public bonfires at which effigies of Cromwell, Jack Presbyter and leading Whigs were burnt, along with prominent documents of civil disobedience such as mock bills of exclusion, Shaftesbury’s ‘Association’, or the Solemn League and Covenant. In addition to royal birthdays, Tory supporters appropriated days in the anti-Catholic calendar for their rallies. For example, gunpowder treason day 1681 was the occasion of the first presbyter-burning procession (organised by the Society of St. Peter’s College, Westminster). The vehemently loyalist scholars of Westminster School burnt the effigy in Dean’s Yard, with the effigy bearing the pamphlet ‘Vox Patriae’ in one hand and the Solemn League and Covenant in the other (Dryden would have been exposed to such a loyalist ethos under Dr Richard Busby).²⁵ The Duke of York’s return from exile in Scotland on 24 February 1680 was the occasion for loyalist protestations of devotion too. He was met by both an official welcome (the ceremonial firing of guns from ships on the Thames and the Tower) and grass roots

²⁴ ‘The Solemn Mock Procession...through the City of London, November the 17th, 1680’ (London: Printed for Nathaniel Ponder, Jonathan Wilkins, and Samuel Lee, 1680), broadside.

²⁵ Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*, i 142.

celebrations, such as widespread bonfires around Temple and the Strand accompanied by the chanting of loyalist songs and bellringing, which proceeded despite official prohibition from the Lord Mayor.²⁶ The appropriation of festivals for loyalist counter-demonstrations often brought the two factions into violent conflict on the streets. Roger Morrice records the escalating crowd agitation of 5 November 1682, when a group of Whig apprentices proceeded to attack the property of known Tories and visible symbols of Toryism: ‘when some others cried a York, a York, they cried a Monmouth, a Monmouth, and put faggots [for burning] to the Mitre Tavern in the Poultry’.²⁷ Instances such as these reveal that crowd activity could be both organised and sponsored from above, as well as a genuinely spontaneous and bottom up phenomenon.

Both parties dismissed opposition rallies as inauthentic or poor expressions of public opinion, managed from above without any popular appeal. But ‘encouragement from above could only have been effective if there was fertile ground upon which to work’.²⁸ Together with the search for dominance in the streets, petitioning campaigns were organised by the Whigs to influence government during the crisis of parliaments in 1679-81. Charles’ capacity to restrict parliamentary sessions resulted in a series of mass petitions. Whig agents collected signatures in taverns, coffeehouses, shops and even congregations across Westminster and the City of London. Many such spaces were furnished with petition forms, pens and paper for the task. One gargantuan petition calling for a parliamentary sitting on 26 January 1680 was presented to the king.²⁹ Contemporary accounts put the number of signatories between 50-

²⁶ Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and his Kingdoms, 1660-1685*, p. 264.

²⁷ Roger Morrice, *The Entering Book of Roger Morrice 1677-1691*, ed. Mark Goldie et al., 6 vols. (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2007), ii 330.

²⁸ Harris, *London Crowds*, p. 171.

²⁹ A detailed examination of this petitioning campaign can be found in: Mark Knights, ‘London’s ‘Monster’ Petition of 1680’, *Historical Journal* 36 (1993), 39-67; ‘Petitioning and the Political Theorists: John Locke, Algernon Sidney and London’s ‘Monster’ Petition of 1680’, *Past and Present* 138 (1993), 94-111. Knights has also looked at the genesis of Exclusion Crisis petitioning in ‘London Petitions and Parliamentary Politics in 1679’, *Parliamentary History* 12 (1993), 29-46.

60,000 people from across the City, Westminster and Southwark, in a roll of paper some three hundred feet long.³⁰ Numbers on this scale reveal the vast support for parliamentary sessions amongst London citizens (even when we take into account forged signatures, repeated signatories, or those otherwise fraudulently obtained). Bouts of petitioning followed each prorogation or dissolution of the exclusion parliaments; Whig leaders sought to legitimise the petitioning movements by having City officials present them to the crown.

Much like the Whig pope-burning processions and the Tory reaction, loyalist citizens inaugurated their own counter-movement of public addresses and abhorrences, which denounced the seditious habit of petitions. The promoters of the abhorrences thought themselves to be fulfilling a civic duty to church and state. Following from the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament, loyal addresses praised the king for his handling of the disobedient parliament. A loyal address signed by some 18,000 City apprentices was presented to the king in June 1681 in defence of the royal person and the true succession.³¹ In fact, petitions expressing abhorrence of Shaftesbury's Protestant 'Association' flooded in from bodies across the capital – chiefly, the Southwark grand jury, the Middlesex bench, lawyers from the Inns of Court, as well as the lieutenancy of the City militia.³² Most of the petitions and abhorrences were sponsored from above by local party elites and the royal government. But they were intended to be propaganda rather than an accurate barometer of public opinion; the publicity surrounding loyalist demonstrations was more important than the event itself. Both sides alleged the opposition only acquired signatories for their petitions and addresses through deception, misinformation or coercion. It fits a familiar pattern of discrediting the

³⁰ Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*, i 31.

³¹ Harris, *London Crowds*, p. 174.

³² K. H. D. Haley, *The First Earl of Shaftesbury* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 640, 687.

extent of popular support amongst the opposition, whilst proclaiming that they themselves were the true voice of the people.

Crowd politics in London was accompanied by an emergent public sphere from which political activity was directed, including the public theatres (to which I will return later in this chapter). Political clubs became a more potent political entity during the Exclusion Crisis than the free association of like-minded individuals. The Green Ribbon Club at the King's Head (distinguished by their green ribbons, the old Leveller colour) near the Temple in Fleet Street and the republican club of John Wildman (associated with the Duke of Buckingham) at the Nonsuch Tavern are only the most famous Whig clubs accused of being nurseries of sedition and caballing by their Tory detractors.³³ Begun in 1674, the meetings of the Green Ribbon Club increased in frequency as their political usefulness became apparent during the crisis of government. The 177 members collected funds to pay those impersonating popish dignitaries of the church in the processions.³⁴ Ministers and Tory supporters exaggerated the reach and influence of the Green Ribbon Club in inciting mass demonstrations and popular unrest. Whig leaders, such as Shaftesbury and his circle, still tended to meet in private houses. The Hedge-Lane Lords – comprising thirteen Whig leaders, notably Monmouth, Shaftesbury and Essex – met frequently during 1681 and 1682 at the Swan Tavern, Fleet Street, and at Shaftesbury's house in Aldersgate to coordinate the campaign for calling parliament.³⁵ Shaftesbury's coterie allied themselves closely to leading London citizens, owing in no small part to their City mansions. But City-based political clubs were not confined to the Whig faction. The 'loyal society or club' met at an unnamed tavern in Fuller's

³³ Rarely were the Whig clubs in the shadow of the court and parliament in Westminster. Instead, the majority were dispersed throughout the City.

³⁴ J. R. Jones, 'The Green Ribbon Club', *Durham University Journal* 49 (1956), 17-20, at p. 19.

³⁵ Newton Key, 'High feeding and smart Drinking': Associating Hedge-Lane Lords in Exclusion Crisis London', in *Fear, Exclusion and Revolution: Roger Morrice and Britain in the 1680s*, ed. Jason McElligott (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 154-173, at p. 161.

Rents between 1679 and 1684, while the Tory Club convened at Warder Within Ludgate from the autumn of 1681.³⁶ Clubmen firmly loyal to Tory-Anglican principles became important lobbyists for the crown and House of Lords. Tory clubmen were uninhibited in speaking on controversial public affairs, a freedom resented by their Whig opponents. Indeed, the Tory Club functioned as a go-between for the Privy Council and leading loyal citizens.

The proliferation of coffeehouses presented a new dynamic in public discourse and political participation. Coffeehouses symbolised a new representative space for public debate outside governmental control, where print and oral exchange could proceed unsupervised with the concomitant threat of misinformation and disinformation. Proprietors of coffeehouses were careful to provide sufficient reading material – polemical pamphlets, periodicals, satires (often unlicensed books or unpublished manuscripts) – to stimulate lively conversation, foster opinion, and furnish patrons with the language for debate. Coffeehouse culture encouraged the distribution and circulation of newsheets and pamphlets, which in turn had a symbiotic relationship with libellers and agents of sedition. Margaret Ezell suggestively notes the concentration of coffeehouses around St. Paul’s and Covent Garden, home to much of London’s printing and bookselling community.³⁷ Such liberty or licence to debate matters of church and state incurred the wrath of the authorities. The availability of print and ‘free’ speech resulted in a bold attempt to clamp down on coffeehouses in a proclamation of 29 December 1675; they are described as ‘a comon nusance’ as ‘common assemblys to discours of matters of state news & great persons’.³⁸ After the initial failure to enforce the proclamation, coffeehouses reopened on the condition that the owners would prevent treasonable discourse. The incipient dangers of the coffeehouse came out into the open

³⁶ D. F. Allen, ‘Political Clubs in Restoration London’, *The Historical Journal* 19 (1976), 561-80, at p. 566.

³⁷ Margaret Ezell, *The Oxford English Literary History, Volume 5: 1645-1714: The Later Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 256.

³⁸ Quoted in John Spurr, *England in the 1670s: ‘This Masquerading Age’* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), pp. 176-7.

during the Exclusion Crisis. London's new site of sociability moved away from idle discussion to the spread of false intelligence, misinformation and seditious thought. Those normally excluded from public discourse were able to sit in judgement on politics, organise rallies, foment sedition, and pull down kings. Tory nightmares of unsupervised association and conversation were exacerbated by the lapse of print censorship in the summer of 1679.

Public conduct in London during this period was transformed by massive growth in the number of newsheets, pamphlets, broadsides and ballads. 'Now there were Papers, Speeches, Libels, publiquely cried in the streetes against the Duke of York, & Lauderdale &c obnoxious to the Parliament, with too much, & indeede too shamefull a liberty', observed Evelyn in a diary entry of for 6 July 1679, 'but the People and Parliament had gotten head, by reason of the vices of the great ones'.³⁹ The licensing system, passed by Act of Parliament in June 1662 in 'An Act of Preventing the frequent abuses in printing Seditious, Treasonable, and unlicensed Books and Pamphlets; and for the Regulating of Printing and Printing Presses', fell into abeyance between 1679 and 1685 as a hostile and preoccupied parliament failed to support the crown's censorship regime. Noxious pamphleteering and news mongering that spread seditious, blasphemous and treasonous ideas was effectively limited earlier in the Restoration. In the heightened tensions of the Exclusion Crisis, however, Whig parliamentarians were fearful of the deleterious effects of stricter licensing laws on their cause, since it reduced their capacity to reach a mass audience outside Westminster. Sir Roger L'Estrange no longer held his position as 'surveyor of the imprimery and printing presses' and as official licenser for most books (except those texts within the purview of the church authorities). He could no longer pursue authors and printers, as well as booksellers

³⁹ Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, iv 172.

and street hawkers, with his customary zeal.⁴⁰ In the absence of legislation, Charles proceeded to curtail press freedom through the common law of seditious libel, treason statutes, and by exercising the royal prerogative over the Stationer's Company.⁴¹ But such measures were nowhere near as effective as the Licensing Act in controlling the transmission of seditious or blasphemous ideas. Targeting printing houses was no longer an option; the crown could only pursue offending printers and booksellers once the printed material had hit the streets.⁴² London's incendiary liberty of the press threatened a return to the social conditions of the 1640s. The printed exchange of news and ideas was a 'chaotic power characterised by lawless multiplicity, unruly growth and increase'.⁴³

Although the proliferation of print never reached the peaks of 1641-2, 1648-9 or even 1659-60, there was a veritable amplification and broadening of political debate in print. This dramatic expansion in publishing and reading can be understood by reference to the raw figures alone. Tim Harris estimates the number of books and pamphlets increased from circa 1,081 in 1677 to 1,978 in 1681, which suggests that between five and ten million pamphlets were in circulation between 1679 and 1681.⁴⁴ The explosion of unlicensed periodicals, beginning with Benjamin Harris' *The Domestick Intelligence* in July 1679, attests to the

⁴⁰ There are a number of works looking at L'Estrange's career as Licensor of the Press: George Kitchin, *Sir Roger L'Estrange: A Contribution to the History of the Press in the Seventeenth Century* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner & co., 1913); Peter Fraser, *The Intelligence of Secretaries of State and their Monopoly of Licensed News, 1660-1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956); Geoff Kemp, 'L'Estrange and the Publishing Sphere', in *Fear, Exclusion and Revolution*, pp. 67-90; Peter Hinds, *'The Horrid Popish Plot': Roger L'Estrange and the Circulation of Political Discourse in Late Seventeenth-Century London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁴¹ Timothy Crist, 'Government Control of the Press after the Expiration of the Printing Act in 1679', *Publishing History* 5 (1979), 49-77, at pp. 52-3.

⁴² The crown turned to the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen to regulate street hawkers who distributed material within the City of London, especially the environs surround Cornhill and the Royal Exchange (occupied by a number of opposition printers and booksellers). Orders were issued for the arrest of any hawker found in the act of selling scandalous material, but gaining convictions was near impossible in the City due to 'Ignoramus' juries.

⁴³ Harold Weber, *Paper Bullets: Print and Kingship under Charles II* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996), p. 134.

⁴⁴ Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and his Kingdoms*, p. 142.

greater public demand for more news, especially domestic news, which was not being satisfied by the government's official newssheet, *The London Gazette*.⁴⁵ Given that adult male literacy was as high as seventy per cent in the two London parishes for which serviceable evidence survives, the capital provided a far larger marketplace for written propaganda.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, the written word could be mediated for illiterate citizens through oral communication – a process known to historians of orality as bridging.⁴⁷

The new partisan periodicals reported and speculated on waves of accusations and counter-accusations, testimonies and animadversions, plots and intrigues.⁴⁸ Similarly, pamphleteering was as infected by partisanship as the newsbook, with writers and publishers pursuing the sympathy and support of London's active citizens. The print warfare on the streets of London intersected with the battles taking place in parliament, the court rooms, and Guildhall. London's print crisis was an extension and exacerbation of the political crisis. The press' active role in shaping public opinion and allegiances bewildered loyalists who saw in the phenomenon the dangerous emergence of a 'fourth estate'.

Tory Argument

So far, my analysis has been devoted to the modes and spaces of political participation in London; now I shall turn to the polemical language in which the struggles between crown and City during the Restoration crisis of government were conceptualised.

⁴⁵ John Childs has demonstrated the diminution of sales figures for *The London Gazette* as the press was liberated from sales controls. Its preoccupation with foreign news and domestic affairs made it unattractive to readers keen for news of the Popish Plot and parliamentary proceedings; 'The Sales of Government Gazettes During the Exclusion Crisis, 1678-81', *English Historical Review* 102 (1987), 103-6, at p. 104.

⁴⁶ Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680*, p. 202.

⁴⁷ R. S. Schofield, 'The Measurement of Literacy in Pre-Industrial England', in *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, ed. J. Goody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 311-26, at pp. 312-13.

⁴⁸ A narrative of the expansion in the number of newsbooks can be found in James Sutherland, *The Restoration Newspaper and its Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 12-22.

Rather than detailing Dryden's specific debts to contemporary poems and pamphlets, it would be more rewarding to look at the larger semantic field in which Exclusion Crisis London was understood. I will examine the rhetorical arguments deployed by Tory polemicists, especially the two most ubiquitous and distinctive loyalist pens of the Exclusion Crisis: Sir Roger L'Estrange and John Dryden. Indeed, Dryden was described as little more than a versifier for the journalism of loyalist hacks in Shadwell's *The Protestant Satire* (1684): 'Muse, prick him till the jaded hackney feels, / And lash him lagging at l'Estrange's heels; / Scatt'ring at second hand, t'amuse the age, / The froth and foamings of that madman's age'.⁴⁹ He even earned the pejorative nickname 'Towser the Second' as servant and heir to L'Estrange.⁵⁰

Whig propaganda justified the exclusionist movement through focussing on the threat popery posed to individual liberty, religious freedom and property. Rather than attacking the king's person or the royal prerogative, the opposition stressed the inherent dangers of a Catholic successor to the rights and privileges of parliament. But the lack of a positive ideal in moderate Whiggism left more radical interpretations open to London citizens. Radical Whig citizens thought a Protestant republic existed in embryonic form in London's godly community. By contrast, loyalist writers were in no doubt about the responsibility of London for the crisis in government. Roger North remarked that the City faction was the pivot on which the future of the nation balanced:

I have indeed wondered often that, among the many books, of one sort or another, that have come out...none have offered at a clear relation of these city doings; although the importance of them to the public, was great...For the transactions, however

⁴⁹ Thomas Shadwell, *The Protestant Satire*, in *POAS*, iii 525.

⁵⁰ Henry Care, *Towser the Second, A Bull-Dog. Or a Short Reply to Absalom and Achitophel* (London: Printed for T.J., 1681).

limited within the liberties of the City...improved to a grand crisis of state, and hinged about the whole machine of King Charles II's government.⁵¹

London's continued disobedience is one of the most salient features of Tory propaganda. In *A Loyal Satire against Whiggism* (1682), the *locus amoenus* of pre-exclusion England is corrupted by the 'cloud of faction' from the capital ('What daring treasons were but now maintain'd / By Shrieves and City, both in faction train'd'). Whilst loyalty grows in the provinces 'without man's care or industry', factionalism is the unnatural birth of a Whig enclave within the City.⁵²

Initially slow to respond to the explosion of opposition propaganda, the Tory counter-offensive campaign proceeded through negative inference. Loyalist periodicals and pamphlets, spearheaded by L'Estrange and Nathaniel Thompson, did not seek to promote high political theory, but to reinforce the existing prejudices and fears of their readers. They were more concerned to disprove the libels, misinformation and seditious notions of their opponents. The full title of *Heraclitus Ridens* (published weekly from 1 February 1681) – *Heraclitus Ridens; Or, a Discourse between Jest and Earnest, where many a True Word is spoken in opposition to all Libellers against the Government* – reveals a shared corrective strategy amongst Tory polemicists. Their aim was, as L'Estrange put it, was to act as journalist-physicians: 'Tis the Press that has made 'um Mad, and the Press must set 'um Right again. The distemper is epidemical; and there's no way in the World, but by Printing, to convey the Remedy to the Disease'.⁵³ Or, as he reframed it in a later issue, 'Noise rhymes to Noise; and Noise...must be Oppos'd to Noise'.⁵⁴ Infectious hysteria across the capital

⁵¹ Roger North, *Examen: or, an Enquiry into the Credit and Veracity of a Pretended Complete History* (London: Printed for Fletcher Gyles, 1740), p. 595.

⁵² *A Loyal Satire against Whiggism*, in *POAS* iii 358-9.

⁵³ Roger L'Estrange, *The Observer: In Question and Answer*, no. 1 (13 April 1681).

⁵⁴ L'Estrange, *The Observer*, no. 411 (27 September 1683).

concerning popish plots and tyrannical government could only be eradicated in the medicalised language of diagnosis and treatment. *The Observer*, along with other loyalist periodicals, was the ‘paper for the coffee houses, taverns, church porches, bookshops, jury rooms and wardmotes of London’, in Mark Goldie’s words.⁵⁵ Their satirical targets were as much the agitators in the Guildhall, the fiery dissenting preachers of the City parishes, and the *ignoramus* juries, as the Whig grandees in parliament.

Underpinning Tory hostility to the proliferation of print was an undeniable scepticism about the capacity of ordinary readers to understand the texts themselves. The ‘*Plying of the Multitude perpetually with Allarms, and Terrors does in a maner [sic] turn [the readers’] very Brains, take away their Judgements; and render them fit Instruments for the boldest, and most Unwarrantable Undertakings*’.⁵⁶ Their inability to perceive and make sense of the political environment leaves the rude multitude open to manipulation. The people could be led to the wrong conclusion through the misinformation, rumour and erroneous polemic. Whilst opposition writers were mere scribblers or hacks, civic loyalists belonged to a ‘high’ literary culture. Tory poets exploited a common ‘set of associations between enthusiasm, commercialism, and populism which [were] ultimately derived from Royalist ideology’.⁵⁷ Loyalist anti-enthusiastic discourse is a common thread in the attacks on City Whigs during the Restoration crisis of government. It was a common motif in courtly culture to decry the abandonment of poetic wit under godly Protestant rule. In the *Essay of Dramatick Poesie*, Neander laments the suffocation of literary achievement by ‘a barbarous race of men, Enemies of all good learning’ who had ‘buried the Muses under the ruines of Monarchy’

⁵⁵ Mark Goldie, ‘Roger L’Estrange’s *Observer* and the Exorcism of the Plot’, in *Roger L’Estrange and the Making of Restoration Culture*, ed. Anne Dunan-Page and Beth Lynch (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 67-88, at p. 71.

⁵⁶ Roger L’Estrange, *L’Estrange’s Narrative of the Plot* (London: Printed for Henry Brome, 1680), p. 13.

⁵⁷ Abigail Williams, *Poetry and the Creation of a Whig Literary Culture 1681-1714* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 22.

(xvii 63). There was a correspondence between poetic achievement, monarchy and the confessional state. According to John West, Tory critiques of literary enthusiasm were stamped by the experience by the experience of mid-century political and religious radicalism.⁵⁸ In Tory political aesthetics, bad politics equated to bad poetry. Dryden and his fellow loyalist polemicists drew attention to a rhetorical gap between rabble-rousing civic propaganda and the true wit and sense of high literary culture. He implicitly targets an audience identified with aristocratic or gentle tastes. The laureate doubts the aptitude of the multitude to evaluate dramatic verse through the character of Neander in the *Essay of Dramatick Poesie*. ‘If by the people you understand the multitude, the *οί πολλοί*, ’tis no matter what they think; they are sometimes in the right, sometimes in the wrong; their judgment is a meer Lottery. *Est ubi plebs rectè putat, est ubi peccat* [Loeb translation: ‘At times the public see straight; sometimes they make mistakes’]. Horace sayes it of the vulgar, judging Poesie’ (xvii 73). The crass commercialism and fanatical enthusiasm of Dryden’s discursive opponents only appeals to the low educated and ignorant.⁵⁹ In the unpublished fragment ‘In Praise of Poetry’, John Oldham implied that literary judgement was the preserve of a select few gentlemanly men of letters rather than the *hoi polloi*: ‘Stand off unhallow’d Rabble! these high misteries / Are seen only by clear enlighten’d Eys: / All rude unknowing Readers they disdain’.⁶⁰

Even though loyalists collapsed the distinction between ephemeral propaganda (such as pamphlets, newsheets, and broadsides) and more discernibly literary texts of Whiggish

⁵⁸ John West, *Dryden and Enthusiasm: Literature, Religion, and Politics in Restoration England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 54-93. According to West, enthusiasm could simultaneously be a powerful force in poetics and a dangerous epistemological concept that could lead to both fanaticism and false judgement (in both literary culture and politics).

⁵⁹ Michael Heyd, ‘*Be Sober and Reasonable*’: *The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), p. 5.

⁶⁰ John Oldham, *The Poems of John Oldham*, p. 333.

sentiment in a pervasive rhetoric of anti-populism, they themselves sought to take the arguments of High Toryism into the realm of cheap print.⁶¹ L'Estrange recognised the importance of encouraging popular loyalism through the printed word. The distinctive typographic style found in L'Estrange's newsheets and pamphlets imitates the modulations of the spoken voice.⁶² He puts to paper the coffeehouse talk – direct, demotic and rebarbative – familiar to his readers. As the loquacious talker of a Tory coffeehouse, L'Estrange appeals to the widest possible audience of Londoners, arming readers with a set of witticisms and aphorisms to be recycled in public debate. In this way, literate readers could help disseminate and mediate texts for their less educated peers.

The appeal to the masses posed a major problem for Tory polemicists: namely, how to encourage popular participation amongst loyalists while denouncing the City Whigs as the party of ochlocracy? For it is undoubtedly the case that Tory rhetoricians exploited fears of popular anarchy, of mob rule orchestrated from above. As one Anglican clergymen put it, 'Sad Experience should inform us, that the Multitude is an unruly head-strong Beast: they are ever and anon for making themselves Kings...and they must be curbed and managed by a strait Rein, or they will kick, and fling, and attempt to throw the Rider'.⁶³ The rhetorical strategy of Tory polemicists was to construct a basic dichotomy between elite and popular politics, between the legitimate political nation and the '*mobile vulgus*', 'the rabble' or the 'rude multitude' who relied on extra-parliamentary collective action. For as long as their political competitors claimed that they, and they alone, spoke for 'the people' as their

⁶¹ This paradox is studied in Dorothy Turner, 'Roger L'Estrange's Deferential Politics in the Public Sphere', *The Seventeenth Century* 13 (1998), 85-101.

⁶² The preponderance of dialogic print in early newspapers has not gone unnoticed by critics: T.A. Birrell, 'Sir Roger L'Estrange: the journalism of orality', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Volume IV*, pp. 657-61; Nicholas Brownlees, 'Spoken Discourse in Early English Newspapers', in *News Networks in Seventeenth Century Britain and Europe*, ed. Joad Raymond (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 67-84.

⁶³ John Standish, *A Sermon Preached at the Assizes at Hertford, 9 March 1682/3* (London: Printed for Thomas Milbourn, 1683), pp. 26-7.

legitimate representatives, the Tories could paint the Whigs as reliant on the direct and unmediated support of the masses. In this respect, some strands of Whig thought share one of the more salient features of modern populism in having ‘a claim to a moral monopoly on representing the real people’.⁶⁴ Tories pushed against opposition appeals to popular sovereignty as demagogic and mendacious.⁶⁵ ‘The people’, as a single homogeneous entity that cannot falter, has no place in public life. Therefore, popular politics is conceived as a contagion or cancer rather than an emancipatory force, an alternative in an age of restricted franchises.

However, as I have shown in the previous section, Tories were not averse to populist activity through addresses and demonstrations. Tim Harris has demonstrated the ambivalent and schizophrenic attitude to crowd activity in the Restoration.⁶⁶ The explanation to the somewhat paradoxical conceptualisation of popular politics in Tory polemic lies in partisanship. Tories saw their own crowd activity as a corrective to the Whig notion that sovereignty lay fundamentally with the people.⁶⁷ Sections of the Tory press venerated the London crowds provided they served a just political cause. Crowd politics amongst their own supporters could be praised and defended, whilst condemned in others.

⁶⁴ Jan-Werner Müller, *What is Populism?* (London: Penguin, 2017), p. 109. For other modern definitions of populism, see Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner (eds.), *Populism: Its Meaning and National Character* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969); Margaret Canovan, *Populism* (London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981); Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser (eds.), *Populism in Europe and the Americas: Threat or Corrective Force for Democracy?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

⁶⁵ Finding no scriptural sanction for the election of rulers by the multitude, Sir Robert Filmer declared ‘[t]here is no Tyranny to be compared to the Tyranny of a Multitude’ (*Patriarcha; or the Natural Power of Kings* (London: Printed for Ric. Chiswell, Matthew Gillyflower and William Henchman, 1680), p. 70).

⁶⁶ Tim Harris, ‘Perceptions of the crowd in later Stuart London’, in *Imagining Early Modern London: Perceptions and Portrayals of the City from Stow to Strype, 1598-1720*, ed. J.F. Merritt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 250-73.

⁶⁷ One anti-Whig tract mocked the suggestion that the people had the right to call their rulers to account when they violated the social contract: *A Letter to a Friend. Shewing from Scripture, Fathers and Reasons, How False that State-Maxim is, Royal Authority is Originally and Radically in the People* (London: s.n., 1679).

As a result, Tory polemicists discredited the rabble-rousing activities of their opponents through a pattern of opposition and denial. Although the divisions in popular support on London streets were cut vertically not horizontally, Whig crowds were necessarily composed of the meaner sorts. (Although direct action was possibly the most effective method of making one's voice heard if one was of humble social origins, crowds also contained more affluent, politically enfranchised citizens). In *The Car-Man's Poem: Or, Advice to a Nest of Scriblers* (1680), the common man is mocked for his temerity in sitting in judgment on kings and judges. Car-men, London carters or carriers, who 'swarm in ev'ry Street, in ev'ry Shop', are of too low social status to discuss affairs of state.⁶⁸ In contrast, Tory supporters had the breeding and intelligence to understand politics. Whig apprentices were of lowly social status, just as loyalist apprentices were 'the greatest, and best bred part of London Apprentices'.⁶⁹ Furthermore, Nathaniel Thompson described the apprentices' loyalist address to the king in June 1681 in such terms: 'those that carried [it] were of the most eminent Rank 4 Merchants, 2 Mercers, 2 Drapers, and a Goldsmith', while 'the subscribers in general (who were above 20,000)' were 'those of the greatest hopes both for Fortunes and Ingenuity in the City'.⁷⁰

If Tory scribblers could not defend the social composition of their urban crowds, they could praise their integrity, manners and order. Tory demonstrations were conducted in the most orderly and dignified way possible. The celebratory bonfires that greeted the Duke of York's return to the capital after his prolonged spell in Scotland were undertaken with full written permission of the authorities. In the *Loyal Protestant Intelligence*, the householders in the liberty of the Savoy even sought official permission for their street party through the

⁶⁸ 'The Car-Man's Poem: Or, Advice to a Nest of Scriblers' (London: s.n., 1680), broadside.

⁶⁹ *A Letter of Advice to the Petitioning Apprentices* (London: Printed by Nathaniel Thompson, 1681), p. 1.

⁷⁰ *The Loyal Protestant, and True Domestic Intelligence; Or, News both from City and Country*, no. 35 (5 July 1681).

Captain of the Guard in order to maintain civic order.⁷¹ Any disorder was entirely the result of recalcitrant opposition crowds; the loyalist celebrations were peaceful, law-abiding events attended by the most respectable section of London society, not the actions of an unruly, fanatical mob. Both factions were quick to argue their own supporters outnumbered the opposition's rebels, but it was the language of Tory anti-populism that Dryden refined to delegitimise the City mob.

Likewise, the rhetorical appropriation of the past became a powerful weapon in the Tory print offensive. The threat to the principle of hereditary succession and the recrudescence of radical sectarianism in the City seemed to echo the struggles of the Interregnum. In John Crowne's *City Politiques* (1683), civic exclusionists are colourfully observed as the progeny of Interregnum statesmen ('Some of 'em were Foundlings, one found under a Rump, another was a Maggott in *English Noll's Nose*').⁷² Equally, loyalist pamphlets readily turned demands for religious reformation in 1679-85 into a revival of the principles of the Solemn League and Covenant. Those crying out for liberty of conscience and reformation want to 'pull down *Monarchy* and *Hierarchy*...turning *Union* into *Dissention*, and the *Church* into a *Conventicle*...destroying the best of *Kings* to become *Slaves to five hundred Tyrants*'.⁷³ The language of untrammelled popular sovereignty resurgent was biting and damaging in the Restoration; the bloodshed and destruction of the civil wars invoked painful memories to all but the most radical opponents of the crown.⁷⁴ The unambiguous parallels between the Puritan Revolution and Shaftesbury's 'Association'

⁷¹ *The Loyal Protestant, and True Domestic Intelligence*, no. 141 (13 April 1682).

⁷² John Crowne, *City Politiques* (London: Printed for Richard Bently and Joseph Hindmarsh, 1683), p. 46.

⁷³ *A True Description of the Bull Feast* (London: s.n., 1683), p. 2.

⁷⁴ *The Disloyal Forty & Forty One, and the Loyal Eighty* (London: Printed for T. B., 1680) summarised the likenesses and differences between the two rebellions in the form of a table.

became something of a cottage industry amongst Tory circles.⁷⁵ Indeed, a newspaper was produced – the *Weekly Discovery of the Mystery of Iniquity* (printed from February 1680 onwards) – which explicitly related current affairs to events in the run up to the Puritan Revolution. Conceptually, there was no way of understanding the internecine conflict of the Interregnum other than as rebellion in the hegemonic discourse. The role of London has a special place in these invocations of 1641 and 1648-9. Thomas Durfey's song *The Whigs' Exaltation* (1681/2) mocks the Whigs as a new type of commonwealthmen and regicides. He reimagines an image from the Civil War, in which citizens vandalised a portrait of the king's father in Guildhall: 'We'll smite the idol in Guild Hall, / And then (as we were wont) / We'll cry it was a Popish Plot'.⁷⁶ The fungibility of London's disobedient citizens in Tory polemic allows disparate events to be held in suspension; the Good Old Cause has been brought to life in new conditions.

In fact, Dryden's major pamphlet intervention during the Exclusion Crisis, *His Majesties Declaration Defended* (1681), seizes on this argument.⁷⁷ The text proceeds through witty argument and insinuation as a response to the challenge posed to the king's prerogative in *A Letter from a Person of Quality to his Friend* (1681), written after Charles' defence of his decision to dissolve the Oxford Parliament.⁷⁸ He deploys the rhetorical threat of a return to inflammatory and divisive populism: 'Popish and Arbitrary, are words that sound high amongst the multitude, and all men are branded by those names, who are not for setting up Fanaticism and a Common-wealth' (xvii 196-7). Dryden invokes sinister analogues in the

⁷⁵ L'Estrange and the government press left no ambiguity in their use of historical analogies, like in the pamphlet *The Parallel; or, The New Specious Association an Old Rebellious Covenant*, composed by Dryden's associate John Northleigh, which drew a parallel with the Solemn League and Covenant agreed between the House of Commons and the Scottish forces on 25 September 1643.

⁷⁶ Thomas Durfey, *The Whigs Exaltation*, in *POAS*, iii 13.

⁷⁷ Dryden's authorship of the pamphlet was established in Roswell G. Ham, 'Dryden as Historiographer Royal: The Authorship of His Majesties Declaration Defended, 1681', *Review of English Studies* 11 (1935), 284-98.

⁷⁸ *A Letter from a Person of Quality to his Friend concerning His Majesties late Declaration* (London: s.n., 1681).

swelling tide of popular agitation in the capital: the Whig faction invests ‘supream power, and the management of all things’ in the people, ‘as it was in Wat Tyler and Jack Cade of famous memory’ (xvii 201). He reaches beyond the Great Rebellion for typologies of unruly crowds marching on the City of London to enforce regime change. For as long as popular fears around the Popish Plot continue unabated (described as a ‘Jewel’), the ‘Antimonarchical Party...make themselves masters of the people’ (xvii 9). Dryden deconstructs the rabble-rousing rhetoric of his opponent’s pamphlet: the defence of illegal activity by the Whigs is ‘either Enthusiasm, or the head-strong will of a whole Nation combin’d’ (xvii 217). In the absence of the authoritative pillars of state, the popular anarchy his opponent seditiously promotes only leads to regicide and republic: ‘Law grounded on reason is resolv’d into the Absolute Power of the People; and this is Ratio ultima *Reipublicæ*’ [the final argument of republicanism] (xvii 217).

An alternative thread to Tory polemic (of which Dryden was a part) was the sustained policy of character assassination of leading Whigs. Loyalist writers took on the charismatic and totemistic Whig leaders who were seen to personify the struggle against the popish threat in the Commons and Guildhall. They resented the popular appeal of Monmouth, Shaftesbury, Buckingham, and Bethel. In particular, Shaftesbury was consistently and satirically identified as a scheming Machiavel, a leader of the rabble, and a fallen angel. *The Waking Vision* (1681), written after the *ignoramus* verdict, is typical of the wave of an anti-Shaftesbury satires. Shaftesbury-Achitophel holds the crowd’s attention as he speaks: ‘He fac’d about, and waving round his wand, / The cringing rout stood still upon his command’.⁷⁹ There is a suspicion in Tory propaganda about the orator’s hold over the urban mob: the ‘Snake-like Achitophel’ speaks ‘With roaring voice and visage most austere / When to his echo all the

⁷⁹ *The Waking Vision*, in *POAS*, ii 420.

rout gave ear, / All big with expectations'.⁸⁰ The author situates the genesis of party, the infection of the body politic by faction, in the king's murder, when 'all out Party in one humor stood / To bleed the nation, tap the royal blood'.⁸¹ Shaftesbury calls upon the attentive mob to 'play the Old Game over once again' as their fathers did, for 'Eighty-One offers us a mark as fair / As ever Forty did'.⁸² The strike at the king and his counsellors is couched in the language of the Protestant faith and the innate liberties of the freeborn citizen. A number of loyalist poems find the City to be an alternative source of accommodation and patronage for Whig oligarchs bereft of influence at court. In *Old England* (1682), Buckingham 'flies disgrac'd from Court here [the City] grows, / And still where Caesar frowns the city bows; / The blackest traitors here a refuge find'.⁸³

During the Restoration crisis of government, Tories also undertook a propaganda offensive against the growing habit of independent meetings amongst citizens in coffeehouses and political clubs. Rather than a public space for free individuals to pursue their own reason, valued for the quality of 'sociality' or 'sodality' ['fellowship, brotherhood or society'], it offered civil society a forum to criticise the government.⁸⁴ Such concerns had been registered prior to the Exclusion Crisis, including in *The Character of a Coffee-House* (1673), the most famous Restoration condemnation of coffeehouse culture. The coffeehouse is 'a *Lay-Conventicle*, Good-fellowship turn'd *Puritan*, Ill-Husbandry in *Masquerade*'.⁸⁵ However, Tory polemicists intensified their assault on coffeehouses as seminaries of sedition between 1679 and 1685. Certain coffeehouses were renowned as haunts for discontented

⁸⁰ *The Waking Vision*, in *POAS*, ii 420.

⁸¹ *The Waking Vision*, in *POAS*, ii 420.

⁸² *The Waking Vision*, in *POAS*, ii 421.

⁸³ [Nahum Tate], *Old England*, in *POAS*, iii 191.

⁸⁴ Edward Phillips, *The New World of Words. Or a General English Dictionary* (London: Printed for R.W. for Robert Harford, 1678), p. 354.

⁸⁵ *The Character of a Coffee-House, with the Symptomes of a Town-Wit* (London: Printed for Jonathan Edwin, 1673), p. 1.

radicals and doubled up as political clubs, such as the Amsterdam Coffeehouse (frequented by Titus Oates), Combe's Coffeehouse, and Elford's Exchange Alley Coffeehouse.

According to Steve Pincus, loyalist pamphlets formed part of a wider 'high church cultural construction of the coffeehouses as neopuritan places of sedition'.⁸⁶ Pincus' supposition is borne out by Tory periodicals, notably in *Heraclitus Ridens*: 'Conventicle and Coffee-House...there's no great difference, but that the Law allows one and not the other, 'twill be all one a hundred years hence, they are both full of Noise and Phanaticks, only the Turks Head within makes more scurvy faces than his that's hang'd without'.⁸⁷

Although Whig satirists attacked Tory-dominated clubs and coffeehouses, the most vituperative and sustained offensive on the new modes of sociability came from loyalists. Tory coffeehouses could be as ideological driven as the coffeehouses frequented by Whigs, both moderate and radical. Roger L'Estrange employed Sam's Coffeehouse as a redoubt for the Tory campaign. Will's Coffeehouse in Covent Garden, favourite haunt of Dryden and London's men of letters, was the location for a public demonstration on 8 April 1682, when a group of Anglican-loyalists publicly burnt a pole erected over a bundle of faggots with the Rump, covenant, Association, and green ribbons attached.⁸⁸ Like the representation of London crowds, the patronage of coffeehouses by leading Tories leaves them open to the charge of hypocrisy. Again, the difference lies in the credulity and fickleness of Whig citizens, who were susceptible to false intelligence and seditious principles. Ill-tempered and fanatical citizens, unable to exercise their critical faculties, turn to treasonous talk and conspiracy (their 'Ignorance is Hate, / They understand not, therefore blame the State').⁸⁹ Consequently, the coffeehouse becomes its own hellish state, governed according to

⁸⁶ Pincus, "Coffee Politicians Does Create", 807-34, at p. 809.

⁸⁷ *Heraclitus Ridens*, no. 12 (19 April 1681).

⁸⁸ Harris, *London Crowds*, p. 170.

⁸⁹ 'The Deliquium: Or, the Grievances of the Nation Discovered in a Dream' (London: s.n., 1681), broadside.

democratic principles. Yet coffeehouses, along with the other the other bugbears of Tory satire I have been describing, found their most damning and imaginative critic in John Dryden. It is to his writings on the Restoration crisis of government that I now turn.

Prologues and Epilogues

Of all the spaces of political participation during the crisis over public affairs, the public theatres held a unique position. They gave dramatists involved in this war of partisan polemic an opportunity to speak directly to Londoners (through the voice and body of professional actors), and indirectly in their subsequent publication in single folio sheets or via manuscript circulation. Unusually for the publication pattern of Dryden's prologues and epilogues, fourteen stage orations written in response to the political controversy surrounding the Exclusion Crisis were printed in separate form.⁹⁰ To take a couple of examples, the 'Prologue to *The Duke of Guise*' appeared in a folio pamphlet immediately after the premiere, headed as 'Prologue, To the Duke of Guise'. Published by Tonson in a single half-sheet, Luttrell's copy in the Huntington Library now has the following dates in manuscript on B1r: '30 Nov' and '4 Dec 1682', which implies the dates of the performance and purchase. Likewise, the 'Prologue and Epilogue Spoken at Mithridates' was printed anonymously on a folio half-sheet titled 'A Prologue spoken at Mithridates King of Pontus, the First Play Acted at the Theatre Royal this year, 1681', printed for J. Sturton. As Harrington Smith argues, the earliest copies probably derive from a shorthand transcription made in the theatre, an authorial manuscript, or a manuscript provided by the actors and rushed from the printing

⁹⁰ In spite of their print publication, there was some limited scribal circulation of the prologues and epilogues to *The Spanish Fryar* and *The Duke of Guise*, suggesting there was sufficient public excitement around the pieces to warrant manuscripts to still be copied. These pieces are found in: University of Chicago, MS 553; Los Angeles, Huntington, RB 135830, No. 52; London, British Library, Add. MS 27408; Lincoln, Lincolnshire Archives Office, Anc 15/B/4.

press.⁹¹ By printing the highly topical prologues and epilogues separately, Dryden and enterprising publishers (predominantly Tonson) could respond quickly to ongoing events. Separate printing would cut down the time between the first night and the spread of printed pamphlets. Prompt publication was essential to capitalise on the immediate commercial appeal of hotly controversial material, as well as to influence public opinion as events unfolded in the capital.

Although attempts have been made to understand Dryden's Tory propaganda in its contexts, along with the representation of crowd politics in his drama, sparse consideration has been given to the role of the prologues and epilogues in political persuasion. If the prologues and epilogues functioned as partisan polemic, we must first ascertain the political composition of the Restoration audience. We should be cautious about employing the internal evidence of prologues and epilogues as the basis for historical judgements on the complexion of the audience; literary representation is ineluctably marked by satiric exaggeration and rhetorical gesture. However, Susan Owen posits that the 'audience...was predominantly Tory' and 'most prologues and epilogues were Tory'.⁹² These suppositions are worth considering briefly. Firstly, it must be noted that the prohibitive prices of the two playhouses (with the cheapest tickets priced at one shilling) would have limited the attendance of the less affluent citizens in the theatre. Jocelyn Powell has demonstrated that, 'though it was not the mere plaything of the Court, the theatre was not for the people either'.⁹³ Poorer Londoners were more likely to patronise the playhouses en masse on festive occasions (such as Christmas or Lord Mayor's Day) when special performances were put on for a citizen

⁹¹ Harrington Smith, 'Dryden's Prologue and Epilogue to *Mithridates, Revived*', 251-67, at pp. 257-8.

⁹² Susan Owen, *Restoration Theatre and Crisis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 14.

⁹³ Jocelyn Powell, *Restoration Theatre Production* (London: Routledge, 1984), pp.12-13.

audience.⁹⁴ Notably, Dryden wrote in his ‘Vindication of *The Duke of Guise*’ (1683) that his critics cannot accuse him of inciting the urban mob because such individuals were likely absent from the theatre audience: ‘But what *Rabble* was it to provoke? Are the *Audience* of a *Play-house* (which are generally Persons of Honour, Noblemen and Ladies, or at worst, as one of your Authors calls his Gallants, *Men of Wit and Pleasure about the Town*) are *these* the *Rabble* of Mr. *Hunt*? I have seen a *Rabble* at Sir *Edmundbury Godfreys* Night, and have heard of such a name, at *true Protestant Meeting-houses*; but a *Rabble* is not to be provoked, where it never comes’ (xiv 320). Dryden’s defence of his inflammatory parallel in *The Duke of Guise* is rather disingenuous: collective agitation was not the preserve of a disobedient underclass of Whig citizens, while more respectable and affluent citizens present in the audience could well have been provoked by the incendiary provocations in the play.

There is certainly plenty of force to Owen’s suggestion that the audiences were predominantly Tory in composition. Contemporaries observed instances of political disturbance in the playhouses such as in 1680, for example, when Whiggish theatre-goers attacked the playhouses themselves for being Tory territory, ‘calling all the women whores and the men rogues’ and ‘flinging Links at the Actors’. Meanwhile, instances of loyalist disorder were confined to attacks on individual Whigs in the auditorium.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, I suspect that the political divisions within the audience would have varied from performance to performance. Theatre-goers would likely have adjusted their attendance of the public playhouses in line with the likely political connotations of plays. Civic Whigs came out in droves to support the attacks on High Church Anglicanism and popery in Settle’s *The Female Prelate* (1680) and Shadwell’s *The Lancashire Witches* (1681). Indeed, Dryden seems to

⁹⁴ Allan Richard Botica, ‘Audience, Playhouse and Play in Restoration Theatre, 1660-1710’ (Oxford, unpublished PhD thesis, 1986), p. 119.

⁹⁵ William Van Lennep and Avery Emmett (eds.), *The London Stage 1660-1800, pt. I: 1660-1700* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), p.284.

have surprisingly little concern that his abuse of City Whigs might drive away their patronage of the theatre. That the theatre audiences remained politically heterogeneous – even as party fortunes fluctuated – should be axiomatic when we consider the case of John Crowne’s *City Politiques*, which is a militantly loyalist play acted in January 1683, by which time the court faction had a stranglehold over the offices in civic government. In the audience, there was ‘a Confluence of Spectators under both qualifications of Whigg and Tory’, and ‘there were mighty Clappings among the people of both partyes in Expressing either their satisfaction or pleasure’ according to one of the *Newdigate Newsletters*.⁹⁶

The subject matter of Dryden’s prologues and epilogues moves from a concern for high politics to mass political agitation after the Popish Plot. The increasingly tense and feverish political atmosphere is first registered in the ‘Prologue to *Caesar Borgia*’ (staged May 1679), where the ‘City swarms, / From *Leaden-hall* to *Ludgate*’ (ll. 9-10) at the rumour and gossip promulgated by seditious pamphleteers (‘You love to hear of some prodigious Tale, / The Bell that toll’d alone, or *Irish Whale*’; ll. 19-20). Hanging over the prologue is an unease over the transferral of cultural and political authority from the court to urban crowds: ‘One Theatre there is of vast resort, / Which whilome of Requests was call’d the Court. / But now the great *Exchange* of News ’tis hight, / And full of hum and buzz from Noon till Night’ (ll. 22-25). The Court of Requests, located from 1662 on the second floor of Westminster Hall, seems to have succumbed to crowds of idle gossips and newsmongers who used a formerly respectable organ of state to spread rumour after the Popish Plot. Dryden mocks the credulity of London citizens who have transported the idle gossiping and slander of the Royal Exchange to the environs of Westminster. The prologue anatomises the various modes of partisan persuasion – seditious verses, ballads, broadsides, and newspapers – to draw a

⁹⁶ Quoted in *Prologues and Epilogues of the Restoration*, ii 445.

distinction between elite and popular politics. Given the politically tense atmosphere of the summer of 1679, newsmongering is a source of anxiety for the King and his ministers. The ‘hum and buzz’ (l. 25) as citizens disseminate news and opinion is appropriate to the drones who spread sedition in the apiary-state. By circumscribing the extent of the popular threat from ‘*Leaden-hall to Ludgate*’ (that is, the eastern limits of the City at Cornhill to the west end of St. Paul’s at Ludgate Hill), Dryden narrows seditious and violent democracy to its source.

The prologues and epilogues satirise how the urban masses could be courted, manipulated and misled by Whig writers. Bad politics necessarily leads to bad writing in the ‘Prologue to *The Loyal Brother*’ (spoken February 1682). The relationship between poets and critics is akin to that between ‘Lawfull Monarchs’ and ‘Damn’d Whiggs’ (ll. 1-2); the Whig-critic strikes at supreme authority of the poet-king. No distinction is made between the ephemeral pamphleteers and the literary authors who support the Whig cause: both rely on the acquiescence of gullible citizens who accept mediocrity (‘Tho Nonsense is a nauseous heavy Mass, / The Vehicle call’d Faction makes it pass’; ‘Epilogue to *The Loyal Brother*’, ll. 18-19). Good poets suffer as hacks and booksellers flog their Whig propaganda to an unsuspecting City (‘They thrive by Treason and we starve by wit’; l. 19). The prologue and epilogue to *The Loyal Brother* share a political rhetoric with a host of Tory stage orations in the autumn and winter of 1681. The prologue to Behn’s *The False Count; or, A New Way to Play an Old Game* (probably first performed in October 1681) rails against the debasement of literary taste in order to pursue a partisan agenda: ‘Renouncing all that has a pretence to Witt, / T’obleige the Reverend *Brumingshams* o’ th’City’.⁹⁷ Likewise, the staunchly loyalist

⁹⁷ Aphra Behn, ‘Prologue to *The False Count*’, ll. 46-47; *Prologues and Epilogues*, ii 340. The same is true of the prologue to Nahum Tate’s *The Ingratitude of a Commonwealth; or, The Fall of Caius Marius Coriolanus* (December 1681), written by Sir George Raynsford, in which unreflective criticisms of the play entirely from the ‘Wit-dissenters’ rather than the ‘Loyal Criticks of the Pit’ (ll. 2-3); *Prologues and Epilogues*, ii 350.

argument of the prologue to Thomas d'Urfey's *The Royalist* (January 1682) draws an analogy between the civic opposition and the critics in the pit ('For th'Pit (methinks) looks like a *Commonweal*; / Where Monarch Wit's baf'l'd by ev'ry Drudge, / And each pert Railing *Brimingham's* a Judge'.⁹⁸ In this prevalent loyalist argument, there is a correlation between literary achievement and sound politics.

Disobedience amongst the London citizenry is an inexorable return to the struggles of the Good Old Cause in the prologues and epilogues. The mob behind the exclusionist movement was analogous to the London crowds of 1641, which solicited Charles I to make concessions to the Long Parliament and diminish his prerogative powers. In *The Observer*, L'Estrange mockingly pronounced the Protestant Plot 'the History of *Forty-One* over again, to a single Circumstance, and Syllable...the Stile of *One and Forty*, to a hair'.⁹⁹ The ghost of John Hewson, a famous regicide and Independent who had fled the country at the Restoration, speaks the prologue to Aphra Behn's *The Roundheads* (December 1681). He sardonically calls upon the audience to cherish the memory of the former struggle: 'Look back on our success in *Forty One*, / Was ever braver Villanies carried on / Or new ones now more hopefully begun'¹⁰⁰ Dryden's prologues and epilogues take a satirical charge from the analogies between Shaftesbury's 'Association' and its political antecedents. In the 'Prologue to *The Loyal General*' (performed December 1679), citizens and their polemical spokesman are reduced to their forebears from the Great Rebellion: 'The stile of *Forty One* our Poets write, / And you are grown to judge like *Forty Eight*' (ll. 16-17). These lines simultaneously express the impression that if drama became political, politics became theatrical. The

⁹⁸ Thomas d'Urfey, 'Prologue to *The Royalist*', ll. 4-6; *Prologues and Epilogues*, ii 356.

⁹⁹ L'Estrange, *The Observer*, no. 5 (18 April 1681).

¹⁰⁰ Aphra Behn, 'Prologue to *The Roundheads*', ll. 8-10; *Prologues and Epilogues*, ii 346. The champions of the English Commonwealth were mercenary scribblers exploiting the credulity of the masses, like their successors ('Pay those that Rail, and those that can delude / With scribbling Nonsense the Loose Multitude'; ll. 17-18).

opposition scribbler has his ancestor in the Presbyterian pen from the 1640s, while the regicides who executed Charles I are as heckling cits in the public playhouses. Equally, the machinations of exclusionist rebels are analogous to the Irish rebellion of November 1641 in the ‘Prologue to the University of Oxford [1680]’, when ‘Renegades’ (l. 25) and ‘barb’rous *Macs*’ led to a ‘second Massacre’ (ll. 29-30) against the Protestant settlers. Rebellious citizens raise the spectre of a second civil war.

The rhetorical strategy of limiting the extent of civil rebellion to an enclave within the City of London is most discernible in the ‘Prologue to *The Duke of Guise*’ (initially ready for performance in July 1682 but banned until 28 November). The harsh invective of the ‘Prologue to *The Duke of Guise*’ takes advantage of the increasingly dominant position of Tory loyalists within municipal government. The prologue takes aim at the Whig ‘hot-brain’d Sheriffs’ (l. 3) in office for 1681-2, Thomas Pilkington and Samuel Shute, whose succession entrenched resistance to the crown through their impanelling of juries.¹⁰¹ By the second half of 1682 the incumbent Tory Lord Mayor, Sir John Moore, had chosen as candidates for the shrievalty two civic loyalists: Dudley North (elected May 1682) and Ralph Bow (who had been ‘fined off’ from the office in September). After this inexorable shift in favour of the loyalist party within the City Corporation, Tory jeremiads began to be directed almost exclusively at the *Ignoramus* Juries and dissenting sects within the City. In the ‘Prologue to *The Duke of Guise*’, there is no longer any mention of party. Instead, all that is left is a small stronghold or faction distinct from the legitimate political nation:

Make *London* independant of the Crown:

¹⁰¹ The ramifications of the Tory capture of the shrievalty was not lost on civic opponents of Dryden’s. Shadwell’s ‘Lenten Prologue Refus’d by the Players’ (spoken April 1683) is a defensive satire against the Tory reaction. It mocks the Tory manipulation of the shrievalty in impanelling juries – a dishonest tactic Tory polemicists were attacking only the previous year: ‘Our gracious Statesmen vow not to forsake / Law-----that is made by Judges whom they Make. / Behind the Curtain, by Court-Wires, with ease / They turn those Plyant Puppets as they please’ (ll. 42-45; *Prologues and Epilogues*, ii 459).

A Realm apart; the Kingdom of the Town.
 Let *Ignoramus* Juries find no Traytors:
 And *Ignoramus* Poets scribble Satyrs.
 And, that your meaning none may fail to scan,
 Do, what in the Coffee-houses you began;
 Pull down the Master, and Set up the Man. (ll. 41-47)

Here, opposition to the crown is confined to a tiny enclave within the City of London, a state within the state; the factious dissenting community of the City is a diseased cell expelled from the body politic. The threat of those who ‘Cry Freedom up with Popular noisie Votes’ (l. 30) is deflated along with the sense of public alarm. Government progress reduced the power base of the opposition to a hard core of nonconformist fanatics and commonwealthmen sheltered by the City walls and their charter. Disloyal citizens are likened to an infection or plague – theirs is a ‘pois’ning way’ (l. 15) – drawing on the medicalised imagery of infection and cure.

In contrast to the political maelstrom of London, popular protest is absent from the Tory stronghold in Oxford. The gownsmen in the university town had long been a counterweight to the angry crowds of citizens in London.¹⁰² Parliament was summoned to meet in Oxford in order to move the exclusionists away from their locus of power in the capital. The annual visit of the King’s Company to Oxford was always received by the vehemently loyalist students of the university.¹⁰³ Dryden does not fail to flatter his university audience in the ‘Epilogue Spoken to the King’ (spoken March 1681), where Oxford is the last bastion of an England uncorrupted by the broils of civil rage. It is a synecdoche for a future political

¹⁰² For the role of the university and its students in the royalist war effort, see introduction.

¹⁰³ In the 1673 letter to Rochester quoted earlier, Dryden wrote remarked on the ease with which dramatists could satisfy the students in contrast to London audiences. The annual visit of the King’s Company to Oxford is studied in Sybil Rosenfeld, ‘Some Notes on the Players in Oxford 1661-1713’, *Review of English Studies* 19 (1943), 366-75.

settlement, where ‘crowded *Oxford* represents Mankind, / And in these Walls *Great Brittain* seems Confin’d’ (ll. 5-6). Because the ‘Ark’ of state has ‘in Tempest Long been tost’ (that is, in the party strife of London; l. 17), the covenanted people are sheltered in Oxford. In the prophetic vision of the epilogue, ‘a New World’ is to be free from the disease of partisanship (‘Civil Rage’ and ‘ruines of the former Age’; ll. 19, 20).

London in the Major Public Writing

The prologues and epilogues I have discussed offer an immediate and impromptu perspective on Dryden’s evolving perceptions and projections of London. But it is the major public works of this period – *Absalom and Achitophel*, *The Medall*, and *The Duke of Guise* – that most effectively show the subtle changes in rhetorical strategy when dealing with the subject of the City. Phillip Harth describes two distinct phases to the Tory propaganda offensive: that is, before Shaftesbury’s *ignoramus* verdict at the grand inquest of 24 November 1681, and the period until the summer of 1683 when the crisis had passed.¹⁰⁴ But I will argue that an alternative turning-point was the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament on 28 March 1681, which ushered in a new field of extra-parliamentary conflict between the crown and loyalists, on the one hand, and the civic exclusionists, on the other. Although the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament heralded the beginning of a ‘second Restoration’, the Tory reaction would not take hold unless loyalists regained hegemony in the City Corporation. London’s role in the Restoration crisis of government became more pronounced after Oxford than it had been before. Charles’ supreme authority could not be ensured until he regained the initiative in the capital. In the immediate months after the Oxford Parliament,

¹⁰⁴ Phillip Harth, *Pen for a Party: Dryden’s Tory Propaganda in its Contexts* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 138.

civic loyalists ‘fashioned a more vigorous partisanship, employing religion and ideology, historical reflection, local organization, and ministerial support’.¹⁰⁵ Tory supporters turned their gaze on the impending political struggle in the capital. Both loyalist and opposition polemicists restarted the press war swiftly after the Whig grandees returned to the City empty-handed.¹⁰⁶ The struggle to establish control over the City of London entailed the intertwined fight for control of the law and the courts, and the offices and institutions of the municipal government. With loyalist control over the courts and juries, the crown could more effectively prosecute conspirators, plotters, and recusants. It was not until the king’s supporters attained the offices of the London shrievalty – and hence the power to empanel sympathetic juries – in the summer of 1682 that the Tories could have an unassailable position in the City. It would also bring about an end to the succession of *ignoramus* verdicts that made legal enforcement so difficult.

Dryden’s *Absalom and Achitophel* was likely composed in the summer months of 1681, when London Tories began their offensive on the metropolitan Whigs and dissenters through a series of legal and constitutional manoeuvres.¹⁰⁷ One only need look at the contemporary reception of the poem to recognise the metropolitan character of Dryden’s verse. Many copies of the poem were annotated by early readers with identifications of the characters signified in Dryden’s mock-biblical allegory. For example, the copy owned by Benjamin Godfrey, the younger brother of the Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey whose murder ballooned into the Popish Plot, is marked with a host of significant identifications. The annotations describe ‘The Jews’ (l. 45) as ‘the Citizens of London’ rather than the English

¹⁰⁵ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, p. 222.

¹⁰⁶ L’Estrange’s *Observer* was the most notable publication to be established in the immediate aftermath of the dissolution in early April.

¹⁰⁷ Dryden’s most recent editors think it highly probable that Dryden began composing the poem immediately after the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament for publication in November 1681: ‘Date and Publication’ for *Absalom and Achitophel* in *Poems*, i 445.

nation generally.¹⁰⁸ Dryden's ostensibly moderate intervention on the Duke of Monmouth's ambition was met by a torrent of responses challenging the poem's satirical identifications.¹⁰⁹ Samuel Pordage's *Azaria and Hushai* elides the distinction between the English-Israelites and the citizens of London/Jerusalem.¹¹⁰ But Elkanah Settle's *Absalom Senior* is the most sustained revision of the standard Tory interpretation of 2 Samuel. In his appropriation of scriptural history, Settle contrasts the true loyalty of London/Jerusalem with the recalcitrant Jews sheltering the rebellious pretender (Duke of York/Absalom) in Hebron-Scotland: 'No wonder *Hebron* such devotion bears / T'Imperial Dignity and Royal Heirs; / For they, whom chronicle for high renowns / For selling Kings, should know the price of Crowns'.¹¹¹ The headstrong, backsliding component of the Anglo-Judaic nation is not in the metropolis, but elsewhere. Like many of the Whig rejoinders to *Absalom and Achitophel*, Settle rewrites the typological identification of Shimei.¹¹² Rather than the religious hypocrisy and disobedience of Slingsby Bethel, Settle's Shimei is the loyalist City Recorder, Sir George Jeffreys, who acted as the king's chief servant in the municipal government while the civic loyalists were on the back foot.¹¹³ Jeffreys' self-interest and self-righteous enthusiasm as the 'late loud-tongu'd MOUTH of Law' is in contrast to the true inspiration of the god-fearing Hebrews in the City: 'Twas in Jerusalem was Shimei nurst, / *Jerusalem* by *Baals* Prophets ever curst'.¹¹⁴ He represents the arbitrary power encroaching on the liberties of London/Jerusalem's citizens

¹⁰⁸ 'Contemporary References to Dryden', in *John Dryden: Tercentenary Essays*, p. 368.

¹⁰⁹ The use of moderation as a form of political rhetoric is studied in Steven Zwicker and Derek Hirst, 'Rhetoric and Disguise: Political Language and Political Argument in *Absalom and Achitophel*', *Journal of British Studies* 21 (1981), 39-55.

¹¹⁰ Samuel Pordage, *Azaria and Hushai, a Poem* (London: Printed for Charles Lee, 1682), p. 11.

¹¹¹ Elkanah Settle, *Absalom Senior: or, Achitophel Transposed* (London: Printed for S. E., 1682), p. 14.

¹¹² Like Settle and other exclusionists, Christopher Nease suggests that it is Dryden and loyalist pens that are bringing diseased factionalism into the City: he 'Pulls up the Sluce, lets in foul Inundations / Which overwhelms Lands, Cities, Corporations; / Making those Times most Pious, which indeed / Were the most Impious' (*A Key (With the Whip) To open the Mystery & Iniquity of the Poem called, Absalom & Achitophel* (London: Printed for T. Snowden, 1682), p. 2).

¹¹³ Jeffrey used his leverage as City Recorder to try to stymie the campaign in Common Hall to have Bethel and Cornish elected to the shrievalty.

¹¹⁴ Settle, *Absalom Senior*, pp. 18, 19.

(‘To bite their Heels this City-Snake was bred, / Till *Absalom* got strength to bruise their Head’).¹¹⁵ By considering the poem in the context of Whig answers to the crisis of government, we can see how far contemporaries interpreted Dryden’s poem as a poem of, and about, a London crisis.

Many of the opposition responses to *Absalom and Achitophel* focus on crowd politics and public opinion. In the anonymous *Satyr to His Muse* (1682), Dryden’s rhetorical conflation of the people with the mob is rebuked. Here, ‘the people’ represent legitimate voices in the affairs of state, not a ‘Rude Force, or a Tumultuous Croud’ (‘The peoples voice, of old, the voice of God’).¹¹⁶ In these exclusionist responses, political sovereignty is vested in the people rather than divinely-appointed magistrates. During the polemical contest to win the support of Londoners, the people are represented either as the voice of God or an unwanted intrusion into public affairs (caused by the disease of party). The Whig appeal to popular support rests on a different assumption as to who ‘the people’ were.

Dryden’s Davidic tale of temptation and deliverance is firmly rooted in metropolitan literary contexts. The opening of the poem firmly situates the struggle for the succession in ‘*Sion*’ (a biblical alternative for Jerusalem; l. 42). According to Michael Conlon, Dryden’s poem describes the unrest as ‘a radical attempt by the Whig party to subvert the established government and to impose the will of the few upon the many’.¹¹⁷ However, I would argue that it is only noble statesmen who defend the lawful government against the rude multitude – a ‘small but faithful Band / Of Worthies’ who act as a bulwark against ‘th’ united Fury of the

¹¹⁵ Settle, *Absalom Senior*, p. 19.

¹¹⁶ *Satyr to His Muse. By the Author of Absalom & Achitophel* (London: Printed for D. Green, 1682), pp. 7, 10.

¹¹⁷ Michael J. Conlon, ‘The Passage on Government in Dryden’s *Absalom and Achitophel*’, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 78 (1979), 17-32, at p. 19.

Land' (ll. 914-15, 916).¹¹⁸ The representation of 'the people' in the poem is inflected by the current rabble-rousing in the City. The 'Factious Croud' (l. 68), the '*Solymæan* Rout' (l. 513), and 'Rascall Rabble' (l. 579) represent London's disobedient and recalcitrant citizens.¹¹⁹

Dryden returns to the image of the many-headed hydra of the urban mob found in *Annus Mirabilis* (ll. 993-4). The Jews have become 'a whole Hydra more' with 'sprouting heads too long, to score' (ll. 541, 542).¹²⁰ In the poem's sacred analogy, the origins of the City's disloyalty can be traced back to 'Th' inhabitants of old Jerusalem' (l. 85), who moved away from the 'rightfull cause' (l. 89) of the Reformation to the destructive iconoclasm of radical Protestantism.

Dryden's poem is sensitive to the appeal of demagoguery to the Jerusalem-London crowds. In the character portrait of Shaftesbury, God's anointed are vulnerable to the rhetorician's art. Shaftesbury is represented as the scheming Machiavel, the deft manipulator of the people's fears and jealousies – a role he has played in Tory propaganda since he took on a prominent role in the campaign for exclusion the previous year. He makes himself the people's champion in the Miltonic locution 'Unbrib'd, unsought, the Wretched to redress' (l. 190); the phrasing sardonically implies Shaftesbury's sophistry is not driven by a benevolence or generosity of spirit.¹²¹ Rather, he has become the instrument or agent of the mob, lending 'the Croud his Arm to shake the Tree' (l. 203). As in 'Hesperian fables' of *Paradise Lost* (IV, l. 250), the poem associates the fruit of the forbidden tree with the eleventh labour of Heracles in gathering the golden apples of the Hesperides. Dryden's

¹¹⁸ David-Charles relies on a righteous and loyal group of statesmen, including the Duke of Ormonde, William Sancroft, the Earl of Mulgrave, and the Marquis of Halifax.

¹¹⁹ The description of Whig appeals to the judgement of the people in Tory propaganda are analysed in Ashcraft, *Revolutionary Politics and Locke's Two Treatises of Government*, pp. 301-3.

¹²⁰ For Renaissance readings of the myth of the Lernaean Hydra, see C. A. Patrides, "'The Beast with Many Heads': Renaissance Views of the Multitude', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 16 (1965), 241-46.

¹²¹ For the Miltonic echoes, see: A. B. Chambers, '*Absalom and Achitophel*: Christ and Satan', *Modern Language Notes* 74 (1959), 592-96; Anne Davidson Ferry, *Milton and the Miltonic Dryden* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968); Harth, *Pen for a Party*, pp. 119-22.

Prince of Tempters takes advantage of the public's credulity and the ease with which false news and rumour can be transmitted ('By buzzing Emissaries, fills the ears / Of listning Crowds, with Jealousies and Fears'; ll. 210-11). What is most striking about the Satanic Achitophel's seduction of the ambitious Absalom are the appeals to the popular acclaim of the crowds. He appeals to the young pretender's place in 'the Peoples Hearts' (l. 444), to his appetite for 'the general Cry', the popular 'Applause' (ll. 291, 297). The frequency with which Achitophel refers to the popular acclamation for the disobedient son recalls Absalom-Monmouth's frequent public appearances in the City in support of the Protestant religion and the Protestant succession.¹²² Absalom's speech to the populace (ll. 698-722) reveals him to be little more than a tool of a more sinister force.

The recurrent presence of the urban mob in the poem raises prudential concerns about the dangers of untrammelled popular sovereignty.¹²³ Achitophel's vision of England-Israel's political settlement is of supreme authority vested in the people not the king ('the People have a Right Supreme / To make their Kings; for Kings are made for them'; ll. 409-10). The notion that Charles' Davidic kingship is only granted by the people is a republican argument formulated during the English Revolution. In *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1650), Milton's defence of regicide, 'the power of Kings and Magistrates is nothing else, but what is only derivative, transferr'd and committed to them in trust from the People, to the Common good of them all, in whom the power remains fundamentally, and cannot be tak'n from them,

¹²² Haley argues that Monmouth's public exposure and expeditions across the country were likely coordinated by Shaftesbury; *The First Earl of Shaftesbury*, pp. 586-7.

¹²³ A speech by Alcibiades in Shadwell's *The History of Timon of Athens* (1677) echoes the arguments for popular sovereignty advanced by leading exclusionist citizens:

...when the Government
Is in the Body of the People, they
Will do themselves no harm; therefore henceforth
I do pronounce the Government shall devolve upon the
People, and may Heav'n prosper 'em. (Thomas Shadwell, *The History of Timon of Athens*,

The Man-Hater (London: Printed for Henry Herringman, 1678), p. 86)

without a violation of thir natural birthright'.¹²⁴ Shaftesbury ventriloquises the antimonarchist arguments prevalent during both the Interregnum and the Restoration crisis of government. Absalom's legitimacy comes from the will of the people not from divine sanction ('he knew, his Title not allow'd / Would keep him still depending on the Crowd'; ll. 224-25). Dryden's distinct phrasing echoes the sentiments of the infamous exclusionist tract, *An Appeal from the Country to the City* (1679): 'instead of *God and my right*, his [Monmouth] Motto may be, *God and my People*'.¹²⁵ The royal prerogative descends not from the God-given right handed down through the patriarchs ('Drawn from the Mouldy Rolls of Noah's Ark'; l. 302), but the grumbling masses ('Drawn to the dregs of a Democracy'; l. 227). In Tory polemic, democracy is a term of abuse for government by the fallible and fickle tastes of the mob. Shaftesbury's seditious resistance to the crown through the mobilisation of London crowds only succeeds through the judicial protection of London's rigged juries, impanelled by civic Whigs themselves. He holds up 'the Buckler of the Peoples Cause, / Against the Crown; and sculk'd behind the Laws' (ll. 206-7). Republicans and schismatics, agitating under the banner of democracy, spuriously hold their principles of government to derive from divine sanction. As Dryden writes in the dedication to the Duke of Ormond prefacing his *Life of Plutarch* (1683), the 'Canting party face their pretences with a call from God, the debauch'd party with a Commission from the people' (xvii 232).

The protective cloak afforded to the king's enemies by London's *ignoramus* juries had become a major obstacle for civic loyalists in the year leading up to the publication of *Absalom and Achitophel*. This was in no small part due to the election of Slingsby Bethel and Henry Cornish as the two sheriffs responsible for choosing jury panels for London and

¹²⁴ Milton, *Prose Works*, iii 202.

¹²⁵ Charles Blount, *An Appeal from the Country to the City* (London: s.n., 1679), p. 25

Middlesex (they were elected on 14 July 1680 but took office only on the Vigil of Michaelmas (28 September)).¹²⁶ According to Roger Morrice, of the approximately three thousand liverymen who gathered in the Guildhall to choose the sheriffs of London and Middlesex for 1680-81, only four hundred were opposed to the election of Bethel.¹²⁷ For the next year, Bethel and Cornish were able to frustrate the efforts of the attorney general, who issued bills of indictment from the government only to be returned marked *ignoramus* by juries of civic Whigs. The efficacy of impanelling sympathetic juries became especially controversial towards the end of their term in office. In the summer months of 1681, when Dryden was likely beginning work on *Absalom and Achitophel*, London and Middlesex juries obstructed the crown's efforts to prosecute cases of treason and seditious printing, most notably refusing to indict Stephen College in July 1681. This may go some way to explain the prominence of Slingsby Bethel in Dryden's poem. If Dryden wanted a City official to satirise as an embodiment of the radical politics of London's dissenting community, Slingsby Bethel was perfect. Bethel allows Dryden to pursue the rhetorical strategy of discrediting London's Whig citizens by associating them with the most extreme wing of their faction. His writing and personal history alarmed loyalists and moderate Whigs alike. Bethel acted as a militia colonel in 1659-60, spent time with republican exiles in Switzerland during the 1660s (including the regicide Edmund Ludlow), and returned to London in 1669 to become a leading civic advocate of liberty of conscience.¹²⁸ Although his election owed more to his longstanding promotion of trade in the City, his Tory opponents seized on his republican past and connections to civic nonconformists.¹²⁹ In fact, Bethel was forced to defend himself

¹²⁶ The first election, held as was traditional on Midsummer's Day (24 June), was thrown out because both Bethel and Cornish refused to swear the oath of allegiance demanded by the Corporation Act.

¹²⁷ Morrice, *The Entering Book*, ii 261-2.

¹²⁸ The fullest available account of Bethel's life is Gary De Krey, 'Slingsby Bethel', *ODNB* [last checked 22 September 2019].

¹²⁹ In *Absalom's IX Worthies*, Shimei-Bethel shields recusants while pursuing divinely-appointed leaders: 'Shimei that curses all that he should love, / That hates all Kings, and Gods because above. / Whose kinder Fasces spares Dissenters Backs, / Though he long since would fain have us'd the Axe' ((London: s.n., 1681), broadside).

against charges that he did not accept the legitimacy of the king and his brother, as well as to deny allegations of support for Charles I's execution. In *The Vindication of Slingsby Bethel Esq.* (1681), he strenuously denied 'being at *Hambrough* [Hamburg] at such time as the late Kings Death was resolved of in *England*, I did there say, That rather than he should want an Executioner, I would come thence to perform the Office'.¹³⁰ Loyalist polemicists, however, argued that his tenure as sheriff was consistent with the commonwealth principles introduced in the City Corporation during 1649. Bethel's election coincided with a growing body of civic opinion that assigned authority in the municipal government to the people rather than the oligarchic magistracy.¹³¹

Dryden's Bethel-Shimei (ll. 584-629) is given more space than most of the poem's rebels. It is important to note that the poem either assumes sufficient familiarity with London politics to recognise the character traits of Bethel or develops Shimei as a transhistorical type of the hypocritical and conspiratorial public official. In the ironic appropriation of the language of Matthew xix 19, Shimei-Bethel distorts the outward duties of the Christian to his fellow man: 'though not prodigal of pelf, / Yet lov'd his wicked Neighbour as himself' (ll. 599-600). His fallen character's inversion of the divinely-governed order of the things manifests itself in the misreading of the theological tenets of the New Covenant. Shimei's misinterpretation of scriptural history leads him to believe obedience to God necessitates disobedience to earthly rulers (his 'Youth did early Promise bring / Of Zeal to God, and Hatred to his King'; ll. 585-86). He establishes and facilitates a conspiratorial, rebellious spirit amongst his peers:

When two or three were gather'd to declaim

¹³⁰ Slingsby Bethel, *The Vindication of Slingsby Bethel Esq.* (London: Printed for Francis Smith, 1681), p. 3.

¹³¹ This argument is forwarded in *The Abridgement of the Charter of the City of London* (London: s.n., 1680) and *The Citizens of London, by their Charter* (London: s.n., 1680).

Against the Monarch of Jerusalem,
Shimei was always in the midst of them (ll. 601-3)

The echo of Christ's promise, 'For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them' (Matthew xviii 20), positions Shimei-Bethel as a prodigal Christ-like figure. But it is not Christ's authority that animates his spiritual congregation, but the authority of Jerusalem's citizens. The triplet collapses the temporal boundaries between the Old Testament history, Christ's new dispensation, and Restoration England. In this ironic reversal of the dissenting habit of scriptural quotation, Shimei-Bethel is the foremost perpetrator of crowd activity (he encourages 'good Company', 'Factious Friends', and 'fellow-feeling'; ll. 605, 606, 608).¹³² He 'taught *Jerusalem* to Curse' (l. 932). Bethel's disobedience to the king is attributable to a misguided belief that he is unanswerable to earthly magistrates, 'For Laws are only made to Punish those, / Who serve the King, to protect his foes' (ll. 610-11). The language works on the basis of the alternative readings available for the noun 'Laws': evidently, godly Protestants such as Bethel interpret it as referring to Mosaic or scriptural law ('The body of commandments which express the will of God with regard to the conduct of His intelligent creatures' (*OED* 9)) rather than the laws of a state or polity. The portrait challenges the biblical exegesis of nonconformists who believe the will of heaven acts in their favour.

Alongside the satire at the expense of Shimei-Bethel's rabble-rousing enthusiasm, Dryden takes aim at his abuses within the institution and offices of the municipal government. His generosity in encouraging popular politics contrasts with his austerity when

¹³² Bethel's perversion of a new kind of urban sociability is echoed in the passage on the Green Ribbon Club (of which Bethel was a prominent member) in *The Second Part of Absalom and Achitophel* (printed November 1682) – a poem in which various editors have detected Dryden's hand. The City's political clubs foster a culture of concealed plotting ('Disdain the Rascall Rabble to persue, / Their Sett Caballs are yet a viler Crew'; ll. 522-23). By sitting in a 'Common Smoak' (l. 524), innocent and unsuspecting citizens are unwittingly intoxicated by the atmosphere of sedition.

it came to public occasions ('Chast were his Cellars, and his Shrieval Board / The Grossness of a City Feast abhor'd'; ll. 618-19). Bethel's attacks on public feasting prior to entering office are driven by a political agenda.¹³³ City feasts – in both the Guildhall and livery companies – were traditional ceremonial occasions for proclamation of allegiance to the reigning monarch. Bethel shuns the 'fumes of Wine' (l. 617) not out of a sense of religious duty but as a civic rebuke to the loyalist displays of plenitude afforded the crown by the municipal government in times of concord. However, he hypocritically chooses to cloak his disloyalty under the cover of biblical sanction ('*Moses's* Laws he held in more account, / For forty days of Fasting in the Mount'; ll. 629-30). As Philip Connell has shown, fundamental to Dryden's polemical onslaught on Whiggism and nonconformity during the 1680s is the exposure of the 'language of religious imposture' and its deleterious effects on the 'credulous tendencies of the multitude'.¹³⁴

The Medall shares the same hostility to crowd politics in London though it was composed and published in markedly different political circumstances in the metropolis. The poem's strident raillery at the expense of dissenting Whig citizens is evidence of an increasingly dominant Tory faction within the municipal government. After a packed grand jury returned the bill of high treason against Shaftesbury marked *ignoramus* [literally, 'we are ignorant of'], a commemorative medal was struck by George Bower.¹³⁵ Although Shaftesbury's acquittal was a victory for the civic Whigs, it was to be the last great *ignoramus* verdict of 1681. The night of 24 November 1681 was marked by public disorder:

¹³³ 'I am not of their opinion, who think popular feastings and good fellowship, called Hospitality, to be in the Interest of the Nation...besides the provoking of the Judgments of God by such inordinate living, Excess weakens mens bodies, spends vainly their time, dulls their wits, and makes them unfit for action and business'; Slingsby Bethel, *The Present Interest of England Stated by a Lover of his King and Countrey* (London: Printed for D. B., 1671), p. 12.

¹³⁴ Philip Connell, *Secular Chains: Poetry and the Politics of Religion from Milton to Pope* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 103.

¹³⁵ The jurors chosen by the Whig sheriffs included nineteen nonconformists, many of whom had been engaged in urban Whig politics since the Popish Plot.

eighty bonfires were lit between Aldersgate and the Royal Exchange, bells were rung, toasts were drunk to Shaftesbury's health, along with other more hostile acts of popular politics.¹³⁶ The incumbent Whig sheriffs – Pilkington and Shute – did anything but calm the rampaging gangs of opposition citizens. However, the court and their civic allies felt themselves to be in a strong enough position to begin *quo warranto* proceedings against the City Corporation's charter within a fortnight. Their challenge to the legal basis of the charter was to reassert royal authority within the City's jurisdiction and limit their right to self-governance.

London's mayoral election of 29 September 1681 brought the court-favoured candidate Sir John Moore into office (despite his sympathy for the cause of some Protestant comprehension and toleration). Charles and his supporters now could rely on the City's chief magistrate to weaken the influence of the Whig controlled shrievalty and Common Council. Furthermore, ten of the jurymen for Shaftesbury's trial were defeated in the December elections to the Common Council. On the evening of Sheriff Pilkington's public dinner for Shaftesbury at the Skinners' Hall on 14 December 1681, the Tory Lord Mayor organised a banquet to galvanise support amongst parliamentary and civic loyalists. Tory voices were growing louder in the metropolis.

Dryden's response to the striking of the medal commemorating the result of Shaftesbury's inquest recognises the changing status of civic loyalists in the capital. By the time the poem was published in early 1682, the acquittal of Shaftesbury would have seemed only a temporary reprieve. As a result, a poem on the medal would have seemed an especially harsh observation on *ignoramus* justice. Phillip Harth has established that Bower's medal was almost certainly a severe compression of Wenceslaus Hollar's pre-Fire etching of London: Bower's framing of the capital by two of its most famous landmarks (old St. Paul's and

¹³⁶ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, p. 236.

London Bridge) transforms ‘Hollar’s open prospect into an image epitomizing the City of London within its ancient walls’¹³⁷ That the City Whigs should choose to commemorate the acquittal was seized on by Dryden. Unlike the rhetorical policy of political moderation and authorial impartiality of *Absalom and Achitophel*, *The Medall* explicitly delimits the opposition cause to the City of London’s hostile dissenting community. In *Absalom and Achitophel*, the enemies of Davidic kingship were not confined to Jerusalem. By contrast, London is here the last resort for the unrepentant and rebellious Israelites. No rebels or usurpers survive outside of the City of London.

Of the vigorous replies to the poem, Shadwell’s *The Medal of John Bayes* (May 1682) recognises most clearly the implications of Dryden’s attack on the City. He defends the ancient liberties of the City against the growing pressure from the government to forfeit the Corporation’s charter (‘Who would thy *ancient Charters* give away, / And all thy *stronger liberties* betray’).¹³⁸ As we have seen, the language of ancient constitutionalism and civic freedom was more firmly entrenched in London’s history at moments of external interference. While Shaftesbury kept ‘our glorious City warm’, the royal prerogative threatens the City’s electoral and commercial rights with Egyptian bondage.¹³⁹ Likewise, Samuel Pordage’s *The Medal Revers’d* (March 1682) rewrites Dryden’s direct address to the City of London in defence of the crown’s legal pursuit of the City Charter: ‘*London*, the happy Bulwork of our Isle, / No smooth and oyle words can thee beguile’.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ Harth, *Pen for a Party*, pp. 173-4.

¹³⁸ Thomas Shadwell, *The Medal of John Bayes: A Satyr Against Folly and Knavery* (London: Printed for Richard Janeway, 1682), p. 18.

¹³⁹ Shadwell, *The Medal of John Bayes*, p. 16.

¹⁴⁰ Samuel Pordage, *The Medal Revers’d. A Satyre Against Persecution* (London: Printed for Charles Lee, 1682), p. 13.

Dryden's poem's references to the factious citizens as 'Ideots' (l. 2), a gullible 'Crowd' (l. 82), and 'the Beast' (l. 120) signal a reinvigorated attack on metropolitan dissent. Shaftesbury, as 'the lowest Bagpipe of the squeaking Train' (l. 35), feigns the inspiration of a dissenting clergyman to appease the crowds.¹⁴¹ London Whigs mistake the 'Idol' (l. 7) and 'Monster' (l. 4) for a prophet of God; they praise 'The Word' (l. 14) of the counterfeit Messiah through the voices of his servants in the City Corporation ('pronounc'd aloud by Shrieval voice'; l. 14). Dryden ironically perverts the distinction between the word of God, as it is written in the Old and New Testaments, with the false prophecies of a modern Lucifer. Instead of the true inspiration offered through biblical exegesis, Shaftesbury infects the rude multitude by the transmission of seditious ideas ('the pox'd Nation feels Thee in their Brains'; l. 266). In its anti-enthusiastic polemic, *The Medall* links the fallibility and fickleness of London crowds to literary enthusiasm: 'Nor Faith nor Reason make thee at a stay, / Thou leapt o'r all eternal truths, in thy *Pindarique* way!' (ll. 93-4).¹⁴² Religious enthusiasm is likened to the unrestrained passion, uncontrolled by judgement or reason, of the versification of Pindar. London crowds are as ungovernable and ethereal as a Pindaric ode. In other words, the speech of Whig demagogues is rhetoric bereft of sense, false inspiration and semantically empty.

The direct address to the City of London is Dryden's most outspoken attack on the disloyal citizens – the citizens whom the king was attempting to suppress through the forfeiture of their charter. He begins

London, thou great Emporium of our Isle,

¹⁴¹ See W. O. S. Sutherland, 'Dryden's Use of Popular Imagery in The "Medal"', *University of Texas Studies in English* 35 (1956), 123-34.

¹⁴² That Dryden should link religious enthusiasm with a specific poetic genre reveals Pindar's politicised reception in the early modern period; West, *Dryden and Enthusiasm: Literature, Religion, and Politics in Restoration England*, pp. 94-129.

O, thou too bounteous, thou too fruitful *Nile*,
 How shall I praise or curse to thy desert!
 Or separate thy sound, from thy corrupted part!
 I call'd thee *Nile*; the parallel will stand:
 Thy tydes of Wealth o'rflow the fattend Land;
 Yet Monsters from thy large increase we find;
 Engender'd on the Slyme thou leav'st behind.
 Sedition has not wholly seiz'd on thee;
 Thy nobler Parts are from infection free. (ll. 167-176)

London's disobedience in packing juries against the crown's wishes is justification for monarchical control over the City Corporation. The Nile/Thames analogy recalls ancient anxieties about the corrupting influence of self-consuming luxury.¹⁴³ The ebbing and flowing of the Thames' tide reveals the hidden or disguised perversion of the City's discharge of its public duties. This passage is a reversal of the apocalyptic vision of a renewed London at the close of *Annus Mirabilis*. In the earlier poem, London's influence was to extend English influence across the globe; now that fecundity is felt as excess, the inundation of London's banks by the Thames plagues the nation with half-formed animals.¹⁴⁴ In *The Parallel* (1682), John Northleigh likens the Whigs to 'Frogs' who 'fill the King's Chambers, with their harsh and discontented Murmurings, as they did the *Aegyptians* once... These little Democraticks, the scum of the beggarly Elements, Mud, and Water; still as mean as the one, and restless as the other'.¹⁴⁵ London's dissident merchants have defrauded the king of both his royal

¹⁴³ In the first book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the cyclical advancing and receding of the tides on the Nile was a symbol of the decadence and vulnerability of Egyptian culture. The passage in question is rendered by Dryden as: 'Thus when the *Nile* from *Pharian* Fields is fled, / And seeks the Ebbing Tides, his ancient Bed, / The fat Manure, with Heav'nly Fire is warm'd; / And crusted Creatures, as in Wombs are form'd / ...Some rude; and yet unfinish'd in their Kind: / Short of their Limbs, a lame imperfect Birth; / One half alive; and one of lifeless Earth' (ll. 565-571).

¹⁴⁴ The image is also found in Izaak Walton's description of the breeding of plagues of rats and mice in *The Compleat Angler*: many 'living creatures are bred in *Egypt*, by the Sun's heat when it shines upon the overflowing of the River *Nilus*: or out of the putrefaction of the earth, and divers other wayes' (p. 122).

¹⁴⁵ John Northleigh, *The Parallel; or, The New Specious Association an Old Rebellious Covenant* (London: Printed for B. Tooke and T. Sawbridge, 1682), p. 4.

prerogative and his customs duties by their grasping pursuit of gain ('Customes to steal is such a trivial thing, / That 'tis their Charter, to defraud their King'; ll. 195-96).¹⁴⁶

Whigs, dissenting sects, and London's citizens coalesce into a single rebellious mass, 'All hands unite of every jarring Sect; / They cheat the Country first, and then infect' (ll. 197-98). There is no longer any opposition to the royal prerogative outside a diseased faction within the City of London. Of course, this mythologising of London as universally hostile to the crown's principles and actions serves a rhetorical purpose in energising Tory supporters across the capital and provinces. The king's loyal servants represent the oligarchic function with the City government (the 'military Chiefs' and 'Head' of the body politic stay true; ll. 179, 181) unlike the mouthpieces of the mob, represented in the Whig shrievalty ('two such gouty Hands'; l. 182). Dryden's vitriolic and triumphalist tone hinges on the growing confidence of civic loyalists that the political instability in the capital was drawing to a conclusion.

The performance history of *The Duke of Guise* attests to the ongoing struggle in metropolitan politics. It would have been staged in July 1682 were it not the Lord Chamberlain's misgivings about the parallelism of Act IV, in which the French King chastises the Duke of Guise for returning to Paris without his leave. In the event, the Lord Chamberlain gave permission for the play to be acted from October (although its first performance was on 28 November). The controversial circumstances surrounding the delayed performance of the play has everything to do with annual shrieval elections and the writ of

¹⁴⁶ Whig poets defended the city as an entrepot for trade in a manner reminiscent of *Annus Mirabilis*. Both Shadwell's *Medal of John Bayes* and Thomas Thompson's *Midsummer Moon: Or the Liveryman's Complaint* (1682) place London in a longer tradition of Thames mythopoesis that includes Denham's *Cooper's Hill* (1642) and Waller's *To My Lord Protector* (1655). For this Whig appropriation of royalist imperial poetry, see Karen O'Brien, 'Protestantism and the Poetry of Empire', in *Culture and Society in Britain 1660-1800*, ed. Jeremy Black (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), pp. 46-62.

quo warranto against the City charter.¹⁴⁷ Dryden went on to defend his collaboration with Nathaniel Lee in *The Vindication* (1683). In this revealing document, he notes ‘the Play was wholly written a month or two before the last Election of the Sheriffs’ (xiv 310), which took place, as I have said, annually on Midsummer’s Day. As James Winn has remarked, the thematic and stylistic continuity between *The Medall* and *The Duke of Guise* is attributable to a sequential writing of the two pieces.¹⁴⁸

The uncompromising partisanship of the play’s parallel – between the Whig Association, the 1576 French Holy League, and the Solemn League and Covenant – has received considerable attention.¹⁴⁹ Its controversial subject matter at a moment of political turmoil made it one of the most fiercely contested works written during the Restoration Crisis of government.¹⁵⁰ Dryden and Lee’s collaboration shares the same anti-populist sentiment as the public poems. Unlike the pre-Exclusion Crisis plays, in which crowd politics rarely intrudes on the stage, *The Duke of Guise* dramatises the failure of loyalist supporters to control public opinion.¹⁵¹ Dryden and Lee’s principal source for the play, Enrico Caterino Davila’s *Historia delle Guerre Civili di Francia* (1630), traces the role printed and oral

¹⁴⁷ The play’s implicit assault on the constitutional and legal independence of the City occasioned a number of responses from civic Whigs, including Thomas Hunt’s *A Defence of the Charter, and Municipal Rights of the City of London* (London: Printed by Richard Baldwin, 1683), which argued that the City’s opponents had ‘already condemned the Charter and City’ and ‘have executed the Magistrates in Effigie upon the Stage, in a Play called the Duke of Guise (quoted in *Works*, xiv 607).

¹⁴⁸ Winn, *John Dryden and His World*, pp. 370-1.

¹⁴⁹ John Wallace, ‘Dryden and History: A Problem in Allegorical Reading’, *English Literary History* 36 (1969), 265-90; Alan Roper, ‘Drawing Parallels and Making Applications in Restoration Literature’, in *Politics as Reflected in Literature*, ed. Richard Ashcraft and Alan Roper (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 29-65, at pp. 48-52; Paulina Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation: Writing for the Stage in England, 1660-1710* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), pp. 162-76.

¹⁵⁰ It fits into a pattern of Tory plays that draw polemical attention to historical parallels. Behn’s *The Roundheads* (first performed in 1681 but published in 1682) marks the parallels between the parliamentary usurpation during the Interregnum and exclusionist Whiggism’s claims of resistance to arbitrary rule. See Rachel Adcock, ‘“Jack Presbyter in his Proper Habit”: Subverting Whig Rhetoric in Aphra Behn’s *The Roundheads* (1682)’, *Women’s Writing* 22 (2015), 34-55.

¹⁵¹ The marginal role popular politics plays in Dryden’s pre-Exclusion Crisis drama is examined in Paulina Kewes, ‘The Staging of Popular Politics’, in *John Dryden: Tercentenary Essays*, pp. 57-92. Kewes shows how the plays move from an interest solely in high politics prior to the performance of *Oedipus* (1678).

propaganda plays in urban crisis. *The Duke of Guise* accentuates the role that clergymen, civic officials and polemicists play in the manipulation of public opinion found in the source material. Indeed, the *Vindication* is unabashed in the similarity between the crowd politics of the two countries: ‘’Tis also true that *Tumults* in the *City*, in the choice of their *Officers* have had no small resemblance with a *Parisian Rabble*. And I am afraid that both *Their Faction* and *Ours* had the *same Good Lord*’ (xiv 314). The implicit correspondence between the vulnerability of the Parisian multitude to educated rhetoricians and the credulity of London’s godly citizenry is most clearly drawn out in the play’s anti-clerical satire. Melanax, the evil spirit in possession of Malicorne’s soul, is a fanatical preacher who conceals his true designs behind his ‘Fanatick Habit’, his ‘Saintship and Zeal’ (IV. ii. 7, 13). He leads enthusiastic priests to gull the gullible rabble, whether London’s dissenters or Parisian Catholics, into rebellion. Dryden and Lee’s clergymen enflame the masses through misinformation, especially perjury and the malicious transmission of slanderous rumour. In act one, the Cardinal of Guise encourages his curates to spread false testimony about a sheriff loyal to the king: ‘Give out he’s Arbitrary; a *Navarrist*; / A Heretick; discredit him betimes; / And make his Witness void’ (I. i. 139-41). Like their dissenting counterparts in London, Parisian priests seek to promote resistance to the crown and civil disobedience at every opportunity. The play dissects the crude mechanics by which seditious preachers encourage mass agitation. The Cardinal of Guise’s description of the Curate’s service to the Holy League’s cause echoes the perversion of God’s word found in the portrait of Shimei in *Absalom and Achitophel*: ‘all his Prayers are Curses on the Government; / And all his Sermons Libels on the King’ (I. i. 100-1).

The play reminds the audience of the actions of opposition leaders in soliciting metropolitan support for the Duke of Monmouth’s succession. The Protestant duke’s

carefully orchestrated public appearances were designed to arouse mass hysteria in the capital. Normally his appearances would draw extensive crowds who celebrate by drinking toasts and lighting bonfires.¹⁵² In act three, the Duke of Guise decides to attend the king for the publicity value it entails ('Therefore I will see him, / And so report my danger to the People'; III. i. 396-7), which reminds the play's audience of Monmouth's return to the City in November 1679 despite Charles' expressed wishes. The political expedience of stage appearances by Whig leaders in London spaces is dramatised in Mayenne's self-reflexive counsel to Guise on the exercise of popular sovereignty: he 'who heads a Popular Cause, / Must prosecute that Cause by Popular Ways' (IV. iv. 142-43). Guise's pride in the overweening adulation of the crowds is reminiscent of the language used to describe Absalom-Monmouth – 'But, Sir, you seek it with your Smiles and Bows, / This Side and that Side congeing to the Crowd' (I. ii. 132-33). So, too, are the mock-biblical epithets assigned to Guise by Bussy and Marmoutier in act one. He is styled 'the New *David*, Second *Moses*' (I. ii. 134) as well as 'the *Moses*, *Gideon*, *David*, / The Saviour of the Nation' (I. i. 2-3). Dryden's contributions to the play shared a common lexicon with *Absalom and Achitophel*. In particular, the scriptural rhetoric of the play recalls the polemical arguments of 1681 as well as 1682.

The direct parallel between the Parisian crowd's role in the French crisis and the role attributed to London's dissenting radicals in the Exclusion Crisis by Tory polemicists is incredibly prominent in the play. In act four the king cries, 'O *Paris*, *Paris*, once my Seat of Triumph; / But now the Scene of all thy King's misfortunes' (IV. i. 90-91), while Grillon declares in the final act that '*Paris* is a damn'd, unwieldy Bulk, and when the Preachers draw against the King, a Parson in a Pulpit is a devilish Forehorse' (V. i. 20-22). In the closing

¹⁵² Knights, *Politics and Opinion in Crisis*, pp. 136-7, 71.

stages of the play, Dryden's rhetoric has more in common with the caustic censure of the capital in *The Medall* than the appeal to political moderation in *Absalom and Achitophel*. Through its implicit parallels between the uncontrollable religious fanaticism of the capitals, the play contributes to the ongoing Tory offensive against the City's toxic effect on public affairs. Like *The Medall*, Dryden and Lee's play is haunted by the spectre of the impending shrieval elections. Henry III fails to use the judicial system as a bulwark against the creeping tyranny of the mob-sponsored Guise by imposing capital punishment in front of the unruly Parisians. During the summer months of 1682, when City radicals pursued extra-legal means of resisting the imposition of the royal prerogative, the loyalist Lord Mayor was dictating the terms of the elections to the shrievalty (and with it the right to choose Tory jurors for treason trials).¹⁵³ The declaration of Tory sheriffs on September 1682 signalled the impending triumph of loyalist magistrates within the City Corporation and the growing likelihood of the forfeiture of the charter. *The Duke of Guise* proved to be Dryden's final word on London's role in the Restoration crisis of government before the symbolic triumph over the unruly forces of civic opposition that had plagued the Stuart monarchy for half a century.

London's Second Restoration in *Albion and Albanus*

London Whiggism fell victim to the growing Tory reaction after the summer of 1683. Anglican loyalists sensed a 'second Restoration' in church and state that marked a new covenant between city, crown and nation. Luttrell claimed in September 1683 that 'the pulpits...have been busied with nothing but discourses against the dissenters' in the preceding months.¹⁵⁴ Eventually, the City was to surrender its charter in the expectation of it being

¹⁵³ J. Suzanne Farmer records the desperation of City radicals in organising violent resistance to the election process; 'Ryot Upon Ryot': Seditious During the London Shrieval Election of 1682', *The London Journal* 42 (2017), 1-16.

¹⁵⁴ Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*, i 278.

regranted with the requisite amendments by the crown. Although Whig-dissenting communities in the certain environs of London were far from eradicated, the institutions and offices of the City Corporation were firmly in the grasp of Anglican loyalists. Evelyn described the cowed state of the City of London after the submission of their charter. The Lord Mayor and Aldermen delivered the petition kneeling and departed meekly. After the Lord Mayor and sheriffs came to hold their positions at the king's pleasure, 'the pompe & grandure of the most august Cittie in the World chang'd face in a moment, & gave much occasion of discourse, & thoughts of heart, what all this would end in, & prudent men were for the old foundations.'¹⁵⁵

Unlike the 1659-60 Restoration, the 'second Restoration' established the crown's supremacy over the charter and electoral rights of the Corporation. But Anglican loyalists – in verse and prose pamphlets – celebrated the event as a liberation from the tyranny of London's unmanageable citizens.¹⁵⁶ Dryden joined the chorus of support for this new political settlement unlike any other writer. *Albion and Albanus* was originally written in collaboration with Louis Grabu at the request of Charles II. Although it was rehearsed during the winter of 1683-84 in the Duchess of Portsmouth's apartments in Whitehall, the opera did not enter production at the Queen's Theatre in Dorset Garden until five months had elapsed after the death of Charles on 6 February 1685.¹⁵⁷ The libretto returns the triumphalism of the Restoration panegyrics. The '4 *Triumphal Arches erected at his Majesties Coronation*' (I. i. 247-48) heralds the return of Astraea. Like Ogilby's triumphal arches, the frontispiece and the stage directions for the first act function as a kind of 'masque in architecture', in which

¹⁵⁵ Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, iv 342-43.

¹⁵⁶ Coincidentally, *POAS* affords more space to the struggle for the London charter than any other event during the Restoration crisis of government.

¹⁵⁷ *Works* suggests Dryden and Grabu amended and added scenes to reflect the passing of the king (xv 342).

order is restored from the misrule of recent history.¹⁵⁸ The ‘*envious devouring Harpyes*’ (xv 17) are banished in the face of the returning king. Alongside the iconographical design of Charles’ coronation, *Albion and Albanus* borrows the vocabulary of civic pageantry. Lord Mayor’s shows, shorn of their full musical and visual accompaniments, were celebrated with loyalist songs at the livery company feasts. In particular, the 1682 *Lord Mayor’s Show* heralded the forfeiture of the charter as a second restoration (‘Then welcome Great Monarch, welcome again...This day shall shew how great you reign / In spite of Faction’s busie Arts’).¹⁵⁹ Similarly, *The Triumphs of London*, sung at the inauguration of Sir Henry Tulse in 1683, laid the blame for the recent discontents at the City’s door: ‘Talking of Treason without any reason, / Hath lost the poor City’s bountiful Charter.’¹⁶⁰ What is unmistakeable from reading the mayoral celebrations is the extent to which the seditious actions of the exclusionists were nurtured and spread by the City of London.

Dryden’s historical allegory plays out the symbolic triumph of the Stuart monarchy over Augusta (a masque-like personification of the City of London).¹⁶¹ As the curtain rises, a frontispiece is seen in which the craven figure of the City of London leans ‘*her Head on her Hand in a dejected Posture (shewing her Sorrow and Penitence for her Offences)*’ (xv 17). Elaborate stage decorations enact topographically the renewed supremacy of the crown. ‘*The Scene*’ in ‘Front of the Royal Exchange’ (xv 19) is in the heart of the City of London, but the crown assuredly now has a presence there (there is ‘*a Statue on Horse-back...of the late King [Charles I], at Charing-Cross*’ and a ‘*Figure of his present Majesty...at Windsor*’ (xv 19)).

¹⁵⁸ The phrase comes from Kevin Sharpe, *Rebranding Rule: The Restoration and Revolution Monarchy, 1660-1714* (Yale: New Haven University Press, 2013), p. 158.

¹⁵⁹ *The Lord Mayor’s Show: Being a Description of the Solemnity at the Inauguration Of the truly Loyal and Right Honourable Sir William Prichard* (London: Printed for T. Burnel, 1682), p. 4.

¹⁶⁰ Thomas Jordan, *The Triumphs of London...For the Entertainment of the Right Honourable, and truly Noble Pattern of Prudence and Loyalty, Sir Henry Tulse* (London: Printed for John and Henry Playford, 1683), p. 5.

¹⁶¹ The masque elements of the opera are studied in Eugene M. Waith, ‘Spectacles of State’, *Studies in English Literature* 13 (1973), 317-30; Paul Hammond, ‘Dryden’s *Albion and Albanus*: The Apotheosis of Charles II’, in *The Court Masque*, ed. David Lindley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 169-83.

Charles' statue in Charing Cross had been a bone of contention and poetic satire in 1675-76; here he sits in triumph over the faded emblems of City governance: '*Scarlet Gown, and Gold Chaine, a Cap of Maintenance...the City Arms, a Mace with an old useless Charter*' (xv 20).¹⁶² Charing Cross, where the Eleanor cross originally rested, had been the place of execution for a number of regicides at the Restoration, including Colonel Thomas Harrison. Relocated to the commercial and newsgathering hub of the City of London, the Stuart monarchy renews the decaying vestiges of the old London – with its '*painted Towers falling*' (xv 19) – into a '*glorious Fabrick*' more august. In *Albion and Albanius*, the complexities of London politics are eschewed in favour of a powerful mythology of apotheosis. Charles' second Restoration is a union of nation, crown and city that transcends the internecine conflicts on London's streets and civic institutions.

¹⁶² For the poetic satires, see *POAS* i 266-83.

Cities in Translation

Charles' tumultuous experience of urban politics during the Restoration Crisis of government taught him the importance of managing civic affairs. Between October 1683 and October 1688, the City was governed by Royal Commission in the absence of a legal charter – the officials were appointed and dismissed at the king's pleasure, allowing the Corporation, livery companies and electorate to be purged of Whig dissent. It seemed to contemporaries that the dissenting minority in the capital had finally been cowed; political and religious opponents were diminished in number, spirit, and the capacity to resist royal and magisterial authority. However, the settlement between crown and City that existed in the final years of Charles II's reign steadily deteriorated in the face of his headstrong younger brother's impolitic actions. James' abdication lies in no small part on his failure to maintain the total submission of the metropolis. The seeming resolution of crown-City affairs that had been reached after the *quo warranto* proceedings turned out to be nothing of the sort. The events of 1688-9 proved the prevalent notion amongst contemporaries, recorded by one visiting Scottish Presbyterian minister, that the 'only thing in the world that can conquer London is division intestine'; 'London is so powerful in men, money, arms and ammunition (sic) that

were it not there being divided into factions, it were impossible for any foreign or interested enemy to prevail against it'.¹

Crowd politics re-emerged in the capital and provincial towns as James' catholicising policies progressively alienated Anglican loyalists and moderate dissenters who had remained loyal at the close of his brother's reign. As during the Exclusion Crisis, the theatre of the street had no franchisal limitations on the right to participate and became a barometer of public opinion. Mass protest at Jacobite policies first became apparent when seven Anglican bishops were sent to the Tower for protesting James' toleration of Catholics and dissenters. Huge crowds lined the Thames in support. 'Wonderfull was the concerne of the people for them', enthused Evelyn on 8 June, 'infinite crowds of people on their knees, begging their blessing & praying for them as they passed out of the Barge; along the Tower wharfe &c'.² When the bishops were acquitted a few days later, London crowds came out in force in celebration. The London mob had reawakened from a period of quiescence.³ The royal and magisterial authority Charles II had established over the City Corporation and electorate was eroded in the summer and autumn of 1688. London became once more the fulcrum of national politics, as the French ambassador Barillon remarked in late November: 'the most important thing in the present circumstances is the City of London' [*La ville de Londres est ce qu'il y a de plus important dans la conjuncture présente*].⁴

¹ Robert Kirk, 'London in 1689-90', *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society* 6 (1930), 322-42, at pp. 335, 337.

² Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, iv 586-88.

³ Anti-Catholic mob violence during James II's reign is studied in: William Sachse, 'The Mob and the Revolution of 1688', *Journal of British Studies* 4 (1964), 23-40; John Miller, 'The Militia and the Army in the Reign of James II', *Historical Journal* 16 (1973), 659-79; Robert Beddard, 'Anti-Popery and the London Mob of 1688', *History Today* 38 (1988), 36-9.

⁴ Letter from Barillon to Colbert to Croissy (25 November 1688), quoted by Charles-Edouard Levillain, 'London Besieged? The City's Vulnerability during the Glorious Revolution', in *Fear, Exclusion and Revolution: Roger Morrice and Britain in the 1680s*, ed. Jason McElligott (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 91-107, at p. 92

As Tim Harris has demonstrated, the Anglican clergy took on a leading role in encouraging popular agitation against Catholic worship and worshippers during the revolutionary months.⁵ Violent unrest began in earnest on 30 September 1688 at the Catholic chapel in Lime Street, when Charles Petre (a Jesuit priest and brother of James' Jesuit privy councillor) denounced the Authorised Version of the Bible in a sermon. A large crowd gathered to remove Petre from the pulpit and smash the altar; they were only prevented from razing the chapel through the intervention of the Lord Mayor.⁶ The prospect of an Anglo-Dutch invasion led many in the Trained Bands to refuse to act on behalf of the king and civic magistracy.⁷ Despite the restoration of the City charter in October 1688 (a somewhat desperate measure), James was unable to regain the goodwill of London's citizens. Whigs and Tories alike refused to take up the office of Lord Mayor due to its perceived illegitimacy in the current crisis. Lord Chancellor Jeffreys bemoaned the fact that 'the City remains now without any seeming magistracy, which is not fit long to remain in this posture'.⁸

Throughout the autumn, anti-papist propagandists maliciously stirred up rumours of the impending massacre of English Protestants by marauding Irish Catholics. The forged 'Third Declaration of William Duke of Orange' of 28 October 1688 fomented fears of Protestant persecution and enslavement. It argued that 'great numbers of armed papists have of late resorted to London and Westminster and parts adjacent, where they remain'; there was 'reason to suspect of a wicked and barbarous design to make some desperate attempt upon

⁵ Tim Harris, 'London Crowds and the Revolution of 1688', in *By Force or By Default? The Revolution of 1688-1689*, ed. Eveline Cruickshanks (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1989), pp. 44-64.

⁶ Luttrell, *Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*, i 465.

⁷ Although discipline and legal enforcement were more robust than during the Exclusion Crisis, the loyalty of constables and the City militia slowly ebbed away as royal authority collapsed in late November and early December.

⁸ Quoted in Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 231.

the said cities by fire or a sudden massacre, or both'.⁹ According to Roger Morrice, London became 'possessed' with 'invisible feares' of sieges by papist and Dutch forces.¹⁰

In fact, the only crowd agitation in the 'Irish nights' of 11 to 15 December 1688 was from anti-Catholic mobs. The king's flight from the capital on 10 December exacerbated the sense of political vacuum. Amidst the heightened state of tension, fear and anxiety, revolutionary violence erupted on the evening of 11 December. Chapels, embassies, and private residences in which the Catholic mass was suspected to be said or priests lodged, hitherto shielded from the worst excesses of mob violence by royal and municipal authority, were the target of collective rage. For example, the Franciscans' new establishment near Lincoln's Inn Fields was smashed and set ablaze by a huge crowd. There were threats to pull down all papists' houses in the City, several of which were ransacked and destroyed.¹¹ Contemporaries exaggeratingly described a mob of more than twenty thousand turning its fury on Wild House, the home of the Spanish ambassador, which was believed to house the valuables of many prominent Catholics who supported James' regime. They burnt the ornaments within the chapel before plundering the ambassador's chambers of plate, jewels, and money. The night of 11 December was the height of the lawlessness and destruction in the City. Edmund Bohun recalled 'the rabble of London' were in 'such a ferment as has scarce been seen'.¹² Much of the vitriol was directed at Protestant officials deemed instruments of Jacobite absolutism (that is, secular politicians responsible for inaugurating and defending James' centralised and bureaucratic state), including Lord Chancellor Jeffreys and Roger L'Estrange who were forced into prison by the authorities as a protective measure

⁹ 'A Declaration by Willem Henry Prince of Orange, 1688', in *State Tracts: Being a Collection of Several Treatises relating to the Government. Privately Printed in the Reign of K. Charles II*, 2 vols. (London: s.n., 1693), ii 427.

¹⁰ Morrice, *The Entring Book*, iv 391.

¹¹ *London Mercury or Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 1 (15 December 1688).

¹² Edmund Bohun, *History of the Desertion* (London: Richard Chiswell, 1689), p. 98.

rather than for judicial purposes.¹³ Amidst such a Hobbesian state of violent confusion, Jacobites remained in peril in such a revolutionary city.

Looking back on the tempestuous days between 13 and 18 December 1688, Charles Davenant described a nation that was ‘then a blank apt to receive any Kind of Impression’.¹⁴ Public order slowly began to be restored after 12 December, when the peers who had constituted themselves as an emergency administrative committee issued a proclamation prohibiting further rioting and assaults on private property. The sheriffs of London, Middlesex, and Surrey, along with justices of the peace and other civic magistrates were ordered to mobilise the Trained Bands to suppress the *mobile vulgus*. After the extraconstitutional events of 1688-9 settled down, there was an attempted internal revolution in the City Corporation.¹⁵ The programme for the extension of civic democracy, including direct election of the Lord Mayor and both sheriffs by members of Common Hall, alarmed leaders in the House of Commons. Whig Aldermen drafted a new constitution, but this was rejected by a Tory parliament in the spring of 1690 as members did not want any radical changes that could upset the fragile consensus around the Revolution settlement. The political militancy of nonconformist radicals was defused by post-revolutionary legislation and many of the senior civic rebels of the 1680s were folded into the Williamite regime. After the crisis in national politics in 1688-90, the ‘once-radical and anti-royalist Whig oligarchy was now happy to keep the franchise narrow and concentrate on supporting the Crown of William and Mary in return for lucrative financial deals and war contracts.’¹⁶ It must be noted, however,

¹³ Jeffreys was seized by the mob trying to escape disguised in seaman’s clothing in Hope and Anchor Alley in Wapping; he was escorted by the crowds to the Lord Mayor in Cheapside.

¹⁴ Charles Davenant, *An Essay upon Public Virtue*, in British Library, Harleian MS 1223, fol. 22.

¹⁵ See Gary De Krey, ‘Political Radicalism in London after the Glorious Revolution’, *Journal of Modern History* 55 (1983), 591-600; De Krey, *A Fractured Society: The Politics of London in the First Age of Party 1688-1715*, pp. 49-55.

¹⁶ Bucholz and Ward, *London: A Social and Cultural History, 1550-1750*, p. 303.

that the City Corporation itself had a far smaller role in the Revolution of 1688 than in the national convulsions earlier in the seventeenth century; popular agitation rampant during the autumn and winter of 1688-9 never acquired the institutional support that was so crucial during 1641-2 and 1679-83. Metropolitan and national politics would never be so indissoluble again.¹⁷

Juvenal and Persius

The street violence of November and December struck close to Dryden's own social circles. A riot occurred at St. John's Clerkenwell on the evening of 11 November, whose preacher was Dryden's associate Father Corker.¹⁸ Since the accession of a Catholic prince, Dryden had spent three years following the liturgical cycle of feast days, communion and confession.¹⁹ In literary terms, he had nailed his colours to the mast with celebratory verses on the birth of a Catholic heir (June 1688), and a translation of Bouhours' *Life of St. Francis Xavier* (July 1688). But when James II left the kingdom for the last time on 23 December, the ruling family that Dryden had praised and defended for the majority of his literary career was gone. He became a vulnerable target at the mercy of literary and religious adversaries.²⁰ Furthermore, a warrant was issued on 9 March 1689 for the appointment of Thomas Shadwell to the laureateship – nothing short of a public humiliation for the poet. Although Dryden's patron the Earl of Dorset softened the blow through 'a most bountiful Present' (as he describes in the 'Discourse concerning the Original and Progress of Satire' (iv 23)), he must

¹⁷ Partly this is a consequence of demographic change. Due to the rebuilding process after the Great Fire and London's increasingly sprawling conurbation, a majority of Londoners lived outside the Corporation's jurisdiction by the end of the seventeenth century.

¹⁸ Luttrell, *Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs*, i 474.

¹⁹ John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, 1570-1850* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1975), pp. 110-21.

²⁰ The threat of physical violence was very real: Dryden had already been beaten in 1679 for supposedly writing insulting verses.

have been in an impecunious position: the last payment of his salary from his official posts as Historiographer Royal and Poet Laureate came in July 1688.²¹ But financial insecurity was the least of Dryden's concerns as many of his co-religionists had been imprisoned or assaulted. Dryden's literary career stalled during the first ten months of 1689, when he published no new work. The decisiveness of the Revolution required a dramatic re-orientation in Dryden's engagement with politics and the public sphere. His interest in translation, fostered through commercial partnership with Jacob Tonson, took on a new importance after 1688. But much of Dryden's literary career was preoccupied in one kind of translation or another; nowhere is this more observable than the translation of lived experience of London into the ahistorical, mythical and archetypal. As we will see by examining the translations of Virgil, Juvenal and Persius, Restoration London can be found refracted through simulacra of classical cities.

However, before I look at the translations themselves it might be prudent to consider Dryden's theory and practice of translation.²² Dryden's writings on translation never amount to a coherent 'theory of translation' but are a 'constantly-evolving set of programmatic statements and reflections, often developing from the work of predecessors, composed over the course of two decades as a working translator, and deriving their authority as much from the poet's practice as from their cogency in the abstract'.²³ His thoughts – normally in the form of prefaces and dedications to his published translations – bear the marks of their

²¹ Winn, *John Dryden and His World*, p. 435

²² Dryden's line-by-line translation practice, especially the way in which he incorporates the language and ideas of scholarly editions and literary precursors, is studied in: J. M. Bottkol, 'Dryden's Latin Scholarship', *Modern Philology* 40 (1943), 241-54; Helene M. Hooker, 'Dryden's *Georgics* and English Predecessors', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 9 (1946), 273-310; Arvid Lønsnes, 'Dryden's *Aeneis* and the Delphin *Virgil*', in Maren-Sophie Røstvig et al., *The Hidden Sense and Other Essays* (Oslo: Humanities Press, 1963), pp. 113-57; Harold Brooks, 'The Imitation in English Poetry', *Review of English Studies* 25 (1949), 124-40; Arthur Sherbo, 'Dryden's Translation of Virgil's *Eclogues* and the Tradition', *Studies in Bibliography* 39 (1985), 262-76.

²³ David Hopkins, *Conversing with Antiquity: English Poets and the Classics, from Shakespeare to Pope* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 113.

occasional provenance. In the Preface to *Ovid's Epistles* (1680), Dryden famously formulated a tripartite division of translation into three modes: 'metaphrase', of 'turning an Authour word by word and Line by Line, from one Language into another'; 'paraphrase', that is, 'Translation with Latitude, where the Authour is kept in view by the Translator, so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly follow'd as his sense, and that too is admitted to be amplified, but not alter'd'; and, finally, 'imitation', 'where the Translator (if he has not lost that Name) assumes the liberty not only to vary from the words and sence, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion: and taking only some general hints from the Original, to run division on the ground-work, as he pleases' (i 114-15). These methods and principles of translation are modified according to the needs of individual translations. Although in his earlier writings on translation Dryden champions paraphrase as a *via media* between the pedantry of scholastic metaphrase and the licence of imitation, growing experience of literary translation necessitated moving freely between the three modes within individual translations or passages. The tripartite division into metaphrase, paraphrase and imitation proved to be a rhetorical oversimplification.

The translations of Juvenal and Persius (published in 1692, but dated 1693), demonstrate how Dryden modulated his translation practice according to the demands of the 'urban art' of satire.²⁴ Although it was a collaborative work, Dryden contributed the capacious 'Discourse concerning the Original and Progress of Satire', five satires of Juvenal, and the complete Persius. To Juvenal and Persius, Rome is both the subject and setting of their invectives since cities offer countless opportunities for satire.²⁵ The first poetic works

²⁴ A. Kernan, *The Cankared Muse: Satire of the English Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), p. 7. See also Susanna Braund, 'City and Country in Roman Satire', in *Satire and Society in Ancient Rome*, ed. Susanna Braund (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 1989), pp. 23-47.

²⁵ I have found the following modern critical works to be the most helpful in understanding Roman satire of the 'silver age': Susanna Braund, *Roman Verse Satire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Kirk Freudenberg, *Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001);

Dryden had undertaken after his ignominious fall from court circles, Umbricius' fall from favour in Juvenal's third must have had autobiographical meaning to Dryden as he describes his exile into the country: 'conducted on my way by none: / Like a dead Member from the Body rent; / Maim'd and unuseful to the Government' (ll. 88-90). Dryden's translation permits an identification between the speaker Umbricius and the impoverished former laureate ('Since Noble Arts in Rome have no support, / And ragged Virtue not a Friend at Court, / No Profit rises from th' ungrateful Stage, / My Poverty increasing with my Age'; ll. 39-42). Unlike the more studiously literal translation of Barten Holyday (*Decimus Junius Juvenalis... Translated and Illustrated* (composed c.1618-46, printed 1673) or Thomas Wood's free imitation *Juvenalis Redivivus: or, the First Satyr of Juvenal Taught to Speak Plain English* (1683), Dryden's translation of the third satire of Juvenal sits in a semantic field that is not entirely Rome or London.²⁶ The most important predecessor is John Oldham, whose style of modernised translation influenced Dryden's own methods.²⁷ Oldham's delightful imitation convinced Dryden of the necessity of greater liberty in rendering the elusive topical references and circumstantial detail of imperial Rome. Alongside his collaborators, he chose 'a kind of Paraphrase; or somewhat which is yet more loose, betwixt a Paraphrase and Imitation', in which the translator has recourse to the 'Customs and Manners of our Native Country, rather than Rome' (iv 89) in order to make the Roman poets intelligible in Restoration England.²⁸ Dryden and his fellow translators have the freedom to introduce modern referents for Roman customs:

Maria Plaza (ed.), *Persius and Juvenal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Kenneth Reckford, *Recognising Persius* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

²⁶ Barten Holyday, *Decimus Junius Juvenalis, and Aulus Persius Flaccus Translated and Illustrated* (Oxford: Printed by W. Downing, 1673); [Thomas Wood], *Juvenalis Redivivus. Or The First Satyr of Juvenal taught to speak plain English* (London: s.n., 1683).

²⁷ My quotations of John Oldham's 'A Satyr, In Imitation of the Third of Juvenal' are from *The Poems of John Oldham*; line numbers are given parenthetically in the body of the text.

²⁸ Although dealing specifically with the tenth satire, David Hopkins, 'Dryden and the Tenth Satire of Juvenal', *Translation and Literature* 4 (1995), 31-60 has many stimulating suggestions about the methodology of Dryden's Juvenal.

[We] have endeavour'd to make him speak that kind of *English*, which he wou'd have spoken had he liv'd in *England*, and had written to this Age. If sometimes any of us...make him express the Customs and Manners of our Native Country, rather than of *Rome*; 'tis, either when there was some kind of Analogy, betwixt their Customes and ours; or when, to make him more easy to Vulgar understandings, we gave him those Manners which are familiar to us. (iv 89)

Furthermore, Dryden pursues an archaeologising tactic through the explanatory notes which highlight points of cultural and social difference. As we can see by comparing Dryden's translation to the original Latin and Oldham's imitation, the contemporaneity of the language leaves the setting and subject open to the reader's interpretation. First the Latin:

*Quamvis digressu veteris confuses amici,
Laudo tamen vacuis quod sedem figere Cumis
Destinet, atque unum civem donare Sibyllae.
Janua Baiarum est, & gratum littus amoeni
Secessus. Ego vel Prochytam praepono Suburrae.
Nam quid tam miserum, & tam solum vidimus, ut non
Deterius credas horrere incendia, lapsus
Tectorum assiduus, ac mille pericula saevae
Urbis, & Augusto recitantes mense Poetas?*²⁹ (ll. 1-9)

Oldham's imitation:

Tho much concern'd to leave my dear old Friend,
I must however his Design commend
Of fixing in the Country: for were I
As free to choose my Residence, as he;
The *Peake*, the *Fens*, the *Hundreds*, or *Lands-end*,
I would prefer to *Fleetstreet*, or the *Strand*.
What place so desart, and so wild is there,
Whose Inconveniencies one would not bear,
Rather than the Alarms of midnight Fire,

²⁹ Modern and seventeenth-century editions of Juvenal and Persius are almost identical in their readings. As *Poems* suggests, the likely editions Dryden consulted for the two satirists are Isaac Casaubon's edition of Persius (1605), Cornelius Schrevelius' variorum edition of Juvenal and Persius (second edition 1684), as well as the 'Delphin' edition of both poets by Ludovicus Prateus (1684; headnote to the 'Discourse concerning Satire', pp. 306-7). Fortunately, *Works* prints Prateus' edition parallel to the text; it is from this Latin text that I quote.

The falls of Houses, Knavery of Cities,
 The Plots of Factions, and the noise of Wits,
 And thousand other Plagues, which up and down
 Each day and hour infest the cursed Town? (ll. 1-13)

And finally Dryden's translation:

Griev'd tho I am, an Ancient Friend to lose,
 I like the Solitary Seat he chose:
 In quiet *Cumae* fixing his Repose:
 Where, far from Noisy *Rome* secure he Lives,
 And one more Citizen to Sybil gives.
 The Road to *Bajae*, and that soft Recess
 Which all the Gods with all their Bounty bless.
 Tho I in *Prochyta* with greater ease
 Cou'd live, than in a Street of Palaces.
 What Scene so Desart, or so full of Fright,
 As tow'ring Houses stumbling in the Night,
 And *Rome* on Fire beheld by its own Blazing Light?
 But worse than all the clatt'ring Tiles; and worse
 Than thousand Padders, is the Poet's Curse:
 Rogues that in Dog-days cannot Rhime forbear;
 But without Mercy read, and make you hear. (ll. 1-16)

Juvenal's invective against the moral corruption of the city is transposed to a determinedly modern setting in Oldham's imitation.³⁰ The topographical and idiomatic details expunge any direct link to the classical world; by contrast, Dryden maintains the proper nouns of the original. However, the phrasing situates the opening in a linguistic and conceptual space familiar to Restoration Londoners. Juvenal's *Suburrae* – a busy Roman street populated by shops and brothels – made 'the *Strand*' in Oldham is only implicit in Dryden's translation as 'a Street of Palaces'. Dryden, like Oldham before him, was surely aware of Holyday's explanatory note that to Juvenal the 'Suburra was the *Cheapside* of Rome...perhaps not the Number only but the Quality of its Inhabitants, offended the good man: For a Multitude of

³⁰ The technique of Oldham's imitation is studied in Paul Hammond, *Oldham and the Renewal of Classical Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 167-81.

Whores lived there'.³¹ Likewise, Dryden elaborates on the *ac mille pericula saevae Urbis* ['thousand other dangers of the savage city'] to include contemporary problems ('the thousand Padders' and 'Poet's Curse'). Padders or footpads belong to a specifically English urban vocabulary (the earliest citation in the *OED* is 1610). The specificity of Oldham's third in naming urban spaces or phenomena is broadened by Dryden; he offers two interpretative handles by which the reader can grasp Juvenal's satire: it can either be Roman London or modern Rome. This textual ambiguity can also be found in the depiction of Rome's social mores:

At Rome 'tis worse: where House-rent by the Year,
And Servants Bellies cost so Dev'llish dear;
And Tavern Bills run high for hungry Chear.
To drink or eat in Earthen Ware we scorn,
Which cheaply Country Cupboards does adorn:
And coarse blew Hoods on Holydays are worn. (ll. 277-82)

And he continues

Their Habits (undistinguish'd, by degree)
Are plain, alike; the same Simplicity,
Both on the Stage, and in the Pit, you see.
In his white Cloak the Magistrate appears;
The Country Bumpkin the same Liv'ry wears. (ll. 291-95)

The opening gesture to Rome conceals the fact that there are no other explicit references to ancient culture in this passage, and the vocabulary fits that of Restoration London (phrases such as 'Dev'llish dear' are a remarkably contemporary English idiom). 'Holydays' is a word appropriate for Christian religious observance not for the rustic life of rural *festorum* (l. 172). Juvenal's association of the country life with decency and urban

³¹ Holyday, *Decimus Junius Juvenalis*, p. 47.

modernity with moral corruption is heightened by additions to the Latin text: the rural *otium* is without competitive social display, '(undistinguish'd, by degree)' has no basis in the original). Here, as elsewhere in Dryden's poem, the customs are English not Roman: the stage and pit are not the *pulpita* (l. 174; that is, the wooden stage constructed for rural festival performances). The Rome/provinces distinction in the original is especially pronounced in Dryden's reference to the 'Liv'ry' of the country bumpkin. The term 'livery' would immediately conjure up the 'distinctive dress worn by the liverymen of a Guild or City of London livery company' (*OED* 2a), which was strictly hierarchical and organised according to an order of precedence.³² As we read his account of those citizens liable to flourish in the metropolis, the reader is struck by the incongruity between the Roman names and English culture:

But, cou'd you be content to bid adieu
To the dear Play-house, and the Players too,
Sweet Country Seats are purchas'd ev'ry where,
With Lands and Gardens, at less price, than here (ll. 163-66)

The language here is that of Dryden's stage orations not the gladiatorial games that the exiled Roman might miss: *avelli Circensibus* [l. 223; 'tear yourself from the races']. Similarly, Oldham's modern equivalent of the Circus Maximus is the Restoration playhouse: 'Could you but be advis'd to leave the Town, / And from dear Plays, and drinking Friends be drawn' (ll. 345-46). But Dryden adds the detail about the sexual availability of the actors. There is the same London referent in the sixth satire, in which Dryden refers to Hippia's leaving her husband for a 'Brother of the Sword': 'But, stranger yet, and harder to conceive, / She cou'd the Play-house, and the Players leave' (ll. 123-4).

³² See David Palfreyman, *London Livery Companies: History, Law and Customs* (London: Oracle, 2010).

Whereas Dryden's satires during the Restoration crisis of government overtly attacked the political conduct of citizens, this was no longer possible in the post-revolutionary period. But he did not abandon oppositional politics, as numerous critics have pointed out.³³ He does not name the crooked mob-orator or rebellious civic institutions (as Johnson would do of the Duke of Buckingham in his imitation of Juvenal's third, *London* (l. 86; published 1738)).³⁴ Instead, the kinds of fractious behaviour, as devastating to the Stuart monarchy in 1688 as it had been earlier in the decade, are the object of satire. In this Dryden follows Juvenal's example who refuses to name contemporaries, rather targeting the 'Living-Villains' in the 'Persons of the Dead' as he remarks in the close to the first satire (ll. 257-58). Unlearned in the 'Town Virtues' (the translation's interpolation), Dryden's Umbricius lacks the political arts to flourish at the Williamite court:

What's *Rome* to me, what bus'ness have I there,
I who can neither Lye nor falsly Swear;
Nor Praise my Patron's undeserving Rhimes,
Nor yet comply with him, nor with his Times? (ll. 75-78)

As Dryden follows Juvenal's *quid Romae faciam?* (l. 41) passage to list the things Umbricius cannot or will not do for advancement, the studied ambiguity permits an autobiographical reading but avoids anything particular or explicit that would treat Nero as William. The analogy of political conduct between Juvenal's Rome and his own London is evident in the description of Sejanus' fate:

Sejanus with a Rope, is drag'd along;
The Sport and Laughter of the giddy Throng!

³³ James Anderson Winn, "'Complying with the Times": Dryden's *Satires of Juvenal and Persius* (1693)', *Eighteenth-Century Life* 12 (1988), 76-87; Kirk Combe, 'Clandestine Protest against William III in Dryden's Translations of Juvenal and Persius', *Modern Philology* 87 (1989), 36-50; Rachel Miller, 'Physic for the Great: Dryden's Satiric Translations of Juvenal, Persius, and Boccaccio', *Philological Quarterly* 68 (1989), 53-75.

³⁴ Samuel Johnson, *London: A Poem in Imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal*, in *Poems*, ed. E.L. McAdam and George Milne (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 52.

...He's Guilty; and the Question's out of Door.
 How goes the Mob, (for that's a Mighty thing?)
 When the King's Trump, the Mob are for the King:
 They follow Fortune, and the Common Cry
 Is still against the Rogue Condemn'd to Dye. (ll. 100-02, 111-15)

This passage shares a lexical framework with the Tory propaganda of the Exclusion Crisis, along with the threat of the Trojan mob in the *Aeneid* translation. Aside from Sejanus, there is nothing here to suggest antiquity; the references to kingship have no referent in the original and do not appear in any of the editorial glosses or annotations Dryden may have seen in Prateus' or Schrevelius' Juvenal.³⁵ The phrase 'out of Door' has a special topicality as it was used during the Exclusion Crisis to denote the fickleness of braying crowds (it refers to which way the wind is blowing at any given political moment). Dryden's translation of *quid / Turba Remi?* ['What about the Roman crowd'] as 'How goes the Mob, (for that's a Mighty thing?) / When the King's Trump, the Mob are for the King' adds a layer which is both sinister and sardonic. The city's rabble, that murders Sejanus or deposes divinely-appointed rulers, is the same in different historical and social circumstances. Likewise, the burning of London/Rome in the third satire is a conspiracy promulgated by dissident crowds for their own material gain ('Suspected for Accomplice to the Fire, / That burnt his Palace but to build it higher' (ll. 361-2) for *merito iam / Suspectus, tamquam ipse suas incenderit aedes* (ll. 221-22); Dryden's readers will have been startled by the splendour of the rebuilt London after the Great Fire). Throughout Dryden's translations – and Juvenal, in particular – urban modes of behaviour are governed according to transhistorical principles.

The Persius translation offers a markedly different kind of displaced representation of Restoration London. His '*first and truest Taste of Persius*' was, as Dryden observes in the

³⁵ See *Works*, iv 640-41.

‘Argument of the Fifth Satyr’, under the supervision of Dr. Busby at Westminster School in the 1640s, during which he would have undertaken the composition of an English verse translation of the Latin original (iv 323). Persius’ programmatic statements about verse satire and rigid Stoic philosophy posed a problem for Dryden, who found many ‘Absurdities in Stoic doctrine, and some perhaps Impieties’ (iv 56) in the ‘Discourse concerning Satire’.³⁶ Although Dryden’s sceptical way of thinking runs counter to Persius’ dogmatism, he grapples with the possibilities of the first satire’s invective against hack writers and popular taste.³⁷ Whereas Juvenal’s Umbricius abandons the capital for its luxury and moral decay, Persius dogmatically advocates an extreme retreat from the popular values of the town in the first satire:

*non, si quid turbida Roma
Elevet, accedes: examenve improbum in illa
Castiges trutina* (ll. 5-7)

which Dryden translates as

They damn themselves; nor will my Muse descend
To clap with such, who Fools and Knaves commend:
Their Smiles and Censures are to me the same:
I care not what they praise, or what they blame.
In full Assemblies let the Crowd prevail:
I weigh no Merit by the common Scale. (ll. 9-14)

One can discern a substantial amplification and interpretation of Persius’ sense. The obscurity of the original is extrapolated into ridicule of those reliant on mass audiences, ‘this vast

³⁶ Stoic self-sufficiency or self-rule is mocked in the dedication to *Don Sebastian* (1690) too: ‘’Tis a miserable Presumption of that knowledge which humane Nature is too narrow to contain. And the ruggedness of a Stoick is only a silly affectation of being a God: To wind himself up by Pulleys, to an insensibility of suffering; and at the same time to give the lye to his own Experience, by saying he suffers not what he knows he feels’ (xv 62).

³⁷ William Frost is the only critic look at the Persius translation in any depth: ‘English Persius: The Golden Age’, *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 2 (1968), 77-101.

universal Fool, the Town' (l. 7; no equivalent in the source text). Literary judgement is not something for the ignorant crowds on whom Dryden has depended for so much of his professional career. Likewise, the attack on '*Noblemen and their abominable Poetry, who in the Luxury of their Fortune, set up for Wits, and Judges*' (iv 257) can hardly be read as anything but a criticism of the enforced deference of such gentlemanly amateurs. However, the Persius translation is more careful to preserve ancient settings and customs in a manner unthinkable in the other translations more congenial to Dryden's poetic temperament. The absence of oblique commentary on urban culture is one of the causes of the Persius translation's neglect.

Virgil

The *Aeneid* posed markedly different problems for Dryden on account of the linguistic and figurative compression of his Virgil's Latin (Virgil 'crowd[s] his sense into as narrow a compass as possibly he cou'd; for which reason he is so very Figurative, that he requires...a Grammar apart to construe him', as he writes in the preface to *Sylvæ*; iii 6). Because Virgil is so sparing in his language, the translator must make the source-text culturally and linguistically intelligible (that is, 'if he were living, and an *Englishman*, they are such, as he wou'd probably have written'; iii 4). When Dryden agreed to take 'the weight of a whole Author on [his] shoulders' (v 325-6) by the end of 1693, he had to justify his translation practice again.³⁸ In the lengthy dedication to the *Aeneis*, he is clear in his explanation for the additions to the original:

³⁸ The contract was formally signed on 15 June 1694 with Congreve acting as one of the witnesses (the contract has survived in British Library Add. MS. 36933 and Add. Charter 8429). Dryden and Tonson's subscription arrangements for *The Works of Virgil in English* have been studied in detail by John Barnard, 'Dryden, Tonson, and the Patrons of *The Works of Virgil* (1697)', in *John Dryden: Tercentenary Essays*, pp. 174-239.

Some things too I have omitted, and sometimes have added of my own. Yet the omissions I hope, are but of Circumstances, and such as wou'd have no grace in *English*; and the Additions, I also hope, are easily deduc'd from *Virgil's* Sense. They will seem...not stuck into him, but growing out of him. (v 329)

The additions and deviations from Charles de la Rue's edition – the text from which Dryden is known to have translated – are notably conspicuous when Virgil's epic describe cities whether historical or mythological.³⁹ Whereas the earliest Renaissance translations of Virgil in English were concerned with accurately rendering the words of the original text, seventeenth-century translations and imitations were more responsive to the political conditions in which they were composed.⁴⁰ Dryden's Virgil is the last in a long line of seventeenth-century royal Virgils.⁴¹ Many disgruntled royalists leaned on the literary authority of the Latin pre-text for consolation to those supporting lost political causes. The prefatory note to Sir John Denham's *Destruction of Troy: An Essay on the Second Book of Virgil's Aeneis* (1656) signals to royalist exiles that his translation speaks to their current malaise: 'if Virgil must needs speak English, it were fit he should speak not only as a man of

³⁹ I quote from *P. Virgilio Maronis Opera, interpretatione et notis illustravit Carolus Ruaeus* (Paris: Printed for Simon Benard, 1682). Charles de la Rue's edition was identified by J.M. Bottkol as the likely text from which Dryden worked; 'Dryden's Latin Scholarship', pp. 244-45. Unless there is a discrepancy between the seventeenth century and modern texts, the prose translations of the Latin are those of Virgil, *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid*, edited by H. Rushton Fairclough, revised by G. P. Goold, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999-2000).

⁴⁰ On Virgil's reception in the seventeenth century: Angus Ross, 'Virgil and the Augustans', in *Virgil and his Influence*, ed. Charles Martindale (Bristol: British Classical Press, 1984), pp. 141-68; Craig Kallendorf, *The Other Virgil: 'Pessimistic' Readings of the Aeneid in Early Modern Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Tanya Caldwell, *Virgil Made English: The Decline of Classical Authority* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Henry Power, 'The *Aeneid* in the Age of Milton', in *A Companion to Virgil's Aeneid and its Tradition*, ed. Joseph Farrell and Michael Putnam (Oxford: Blackwell, 2010), pp. 186-203; David Scott Wilson-Okamura, *Virgil in the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), esp. 141-93.

⁴¹ A complete list of the known translations of Virgil in the Restoration is included in Stuart Gillespie, 'A Checklist of Restoration English Translations and Adaptations of Classical Greek and Latin Poetry, 1660-1700', *Translation and Literature* 1 (1992), 52-68. Gillespie has subsequently supplemented this checklist with an edition of previously unpublished fragments of Virgil's poems in manuscript: Stuart Gillespie (ed.), *Newly Recovered English Translations 1600-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

this nation, but as a man of this age'.⁴² Virgil's prophetic vision of national renewal appealed to resistant voices who were politically marginalised.⁴³

Alongside the well-studied tradition of Augustan Virgilian translation that includes Ogilby, Denham, Godolphin and Waller is the Restoration literary culture of parodies, burlesques and travesties inspired by Paul Scarron's *Le Virgile Travesti* (1648-52).⁴⁴ While Boileau's *Le Lutrin* (1674-83) influenced English mock-heroic verse, a vernacular literary tradition of Virgilian parodies began with Charles Cotton's *Scarronides: Or, Le Virgile Travesty* (1664-5). The increasingly irreverent attitude towards the classics in some English literary circles is evinced as early as 1655 in the prefatory note from 'The Stationer to the Ingenious Reader' in *Musarum Deliciae: or The Muses Recreation: Containing several select Pieces of sportive Wit*. 'H. H.' [Henry Herringman] declares that 'Latin poetry is now disesteem'd, it must be Drollery or it will not please'. The singular purpose of the collection, Herringman remarks, is 'to regal the curious Pallats of these Times'.⁴⁵ Although there were relatively few complete translations of Virgil in the later seventeenth century (existing normally in fragments of translations – published alone or in miscellanies – and imitations), parodies and burlesques of the *Aeneid* proliferated, especially in the first decade of the Restoration. This genre of poems (commonly known as travesties) are parodies in the ancient sense: they constitute separate poems alongside the originals on which they are based, challenging the venerated literary traditions in the 'production of something new' from the

⁴² Sir John Denham, 'The Preface' to *The Destruction of Troy*, in *Early Augustan Virgil: Translations by Denham, Godolphin and Waller*, ed. Robin Sowerby (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2010), p. 132.

⁴³ See L. Proudfoot, *Dryden's Aeneid and its Seventeenth Century Predecessors* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1960), pp. 99-183.

⁴⁴ The seventeenth-century tradition of Virgilian parodies and burlesques is studied in Philip Hardie, *The Last Trojan Hero: A Cultural History of Virgil's Aeneid* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), pp. 173-89.

⁴⁵ [Henry Herringman], 'The Stationer to the Ingenious Reader', in *Musarum Deliciae: or The Muses Recreation: Containing several select Pieces of sportive Wit* (London: Printed by J.G. for Henry Herringman, 1655), pp. 4-5.

source text.⁴⁶ They emerge from a carnivalesque attitude towards the sacrosanct authority of the epic genre – a literary mode that seemed to some readers to have scant relevance to their national and social concerns. As a result, the demand for parodies, travesties and mock-heroic verse was especially strong during the 1660s and 1690s.⁴⁷

Scarron's earliest and most prominent English disciple, Charles Cotton, moves between imitating large sections of the Virgilian pre-text to close parodies of particular lines or passages. One prevalent technique is the comic diminution of places, such as the chastening reduction of Troy to a mere 'Town' and 'Village', or the anachronism of Cotton's likening of the temple at Carthage to St. Pancras Church ('a pretty building... / No Church i'th' Country near so large is').⁴⁸ Cotton exploits the human foibles of Virgil's characters, demystifying the Trojans as Aeneas' 'much recruited men; / Rogues, whores, with Bastards at their backs'⁴⁹. Cotton's Trojans are not the founders of a future empire but are fugitives who failed to defend their city as true patriots should. By intermittently comparing Troy to Restoration London, Cotton naturalises linguistically and conceptually Virgil's poem in an English landscape.

Due the success of Cotton's first book of the *Scarronides* (it went through eight editions before 1708), a host of followers displaced the classical source text with a world more immediately recognisable to a London readership. Cotton's mode of Virgilian parody was taken much further by his own imitators, who more frequently replaced Troy and Rome

⁴⁶ Margaret Rose, *Parody: Ancient, Modern and Post-modern* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 7-8.

⁴⁷ See Brean Hammond, *Professional Imaginative Writing in England, 1670-1740* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 105-145.

⁴⁸ Charles Cotton, *Scarronides: Or, Le Virgile Travesty. A Mock-Poem. Being the First Book of Virgil's Aeneis in English, Burlesque* (London: Printed by E. Cotes for Henry Brome, 1664), p. 65.

⁴⁹ Cotton, *Scarronides: Or, Le Virgile Travesty*, p. 11.

with English settings and persons. Because Aeneas escapes the burning ruins of Troy with his household gods (the *penates*) and an army of followers, he is often described as a traitor in some interpretations of the story. The parodies habitually pick up on the possibility of internecine betrayal in Rome's foundational myth. John Phillips' *Maronides, or Virgil Travestie: Being a new Paraphrase upon the Fifth Book of Virgils Æneids in Burlesque Verse* (1672) lays bare the mythological and implausible elements of Virgil's epic, stripping away neoclassical reverence as a misrepresentation of the past. The Trojans are a brutish mob, 'yauling and bawling' figures who are 'Free-Men of the City'.⁵⁰ Troy's betrayal comes at the hands of the 'zealous Godly in / A Conventicle' who open the 'City gates'.⁵¹ In the post-Reformation period, it had become a common fear that London – 'Troy untrue' – would be betrayed by its own disloyal citizens, an enemy within.⁵² In Phillips' dismissal of otherworldly figures and situations, Troy's fall is couched in the language of civic disobedience and religious nonconformity.

Another major parody of this period transforms the Virgilian theme of cultural *translatio*. *The Conspiracy of Aeneas and Antenor against the State of Troy: A Poem* (1682) has more in common with Exclusion Crisis polemic than literary translation. The heroic language of the Latin text is exploded by the low political conduct of the titular characters. Virgil's pious prince – dutiful to family, city and nation – is as much of a traitor to Troy as the Whig grandees are to London. Likewise, Antenor is a Shaftesbury or Achitophel-like figure who 'The spacious Name of Patriot...assumes / And Mutiny with Liberty perfumes', all in the name of 'Change of Government' or 'making less unequal Laws' (similar to *Absalom and Achitophel* (ll. 968, 973), 'Patriot' holds the following meaning 'derogatory or

⁵⁰ John Phillips, *Maronides, or Virgil Travestie: Being a new Paraphrase upon the Fifth Book of Virgils Æneids in Burlesque Verse* (London: Printed by Nathaniel Brooks, 1672), p. 37.

⁵¹ Phillips, *Maronides, or Virgil Travestie*, p. 38.

⁵² Brigden, *London and the Reformation*, p. 520.

ironic. A person who claims to be disinterestedly or self-sacrificingly devoted to his or her country, but whose actions or intentions are considered to be detrimental or hypocritical; a false or feigned patriot' (OED 1b)).⁵³ Aeneas' betrayal to the Greeks brings about Priam's and Troy's fall for his promised destiny of 'absolute Empire, and a Spiritual *Rome*'.⁵⁴ Virgil's prophetic cause is reduced to the self-interested politicking of Machiavels exploiting popular politics to achieve their own personal ambition: 'Long time had Troy through various Tumults past; / And War laid all her Habitations wast, / A Holy War! For the pretended cause / Was, as 'tis still; Religion and the Laws'.⁵⁵ There is no great prophetic cause, but the naked ambition and righteous claims of civic Whigs recalls their mid-century precursors. Whilst evincing a growing scepticism about the characters and values of classic texts, the parodies demonstrate the easy transference of such settings to contemporary life. Such naturalisation of the rhetorical and conceptual language of Restoration London is important when we turn to Dryden's Virgil.

Throughout Dryden's translations and historical writing is an underlying belief in natural law: 'Mankind being the same in all ages, agitated by the same passions, and mov'd to action by the same interests, nothing can come to pass, but some President of the like nature has already been produc'd, so that having the causes before our eyes, we cannot easily be deceiv'd in the effects, if we have Judgment enough but to draw the parallel' (*The Life of Plutarch*; xvii 271). In his cyclical view of historical change, cities and citizens acted according to a set of common principles or behaviour. In translating Virgil's epic, Dryden could not fail measure his own experience of urban reformation against the succession of cities – Troy, Carthage and Rome – the Latin source-text places before the reader. No longer

⁵³ *The Conspiracy of Aeneas and Antenor against the State of Troy: A Poem* (London: Printed for John Spicer, 1682), p. 14.

⁵⁴ *The Conspiracy of Aeneas and Antenor*, p. 12.

⁵⁵ *The Conspiracy of Aeneas and Antenor*, p. 13.

could Dryden participate in the polemical warfare of the 1680s. Instead, Dryden's *Aeneis* became an imaginative milieu through which he had the freedom to reflect on the foundation of cities, their political legitimacy, and on the characteristics of their inhabitants. Much of the voluminous criticism of Dryden's *Aeneis* is devoted to political parallels and correspondences between the figures in Virgil's poem and contemporary persons and events.⁵⁶ But equivalences are more often raised by allusion and not pursued through extended analogy. It is more helpful to think of Dryden's enterprise as 'inviting us to recognise both similarity and difference, and to weigh discontinuous correspondences rather than seeking a totalising allegory'.⁵⁷ We can hear the contemporary political and social resonances in Dryden's handling of crowd politics, civic betrayal, and city-building throughout the translation.

I want to show the bearing that Dryden's earlier writing on the city has on the lexical framework of his *Aeneis*. Aeneas' account of the siege and destruction of Troy shares the same semantic field as the poetic satires of the Exclusion Crisis.⁵⁸ Not only is there a steady shading of the translation towards contemporaneity at points in Virgil's poem, but Dryden draws the reader's attention to the rhetorical language employed in earlier verse. The gargantuan horse brought into the Trojan citadel – the 'monster Fabrique', or 'hollow Fabrick' (II, ll. 45, 58; in this context meaning 'frame' (*OED* 3b)) – echoes the application of the term to the vestiges of the incinerated St. Paul's (*Annus Mirabilis*, l. 1097) and the decayed form of Augusta's Barbican (*Mac Flecknoe*, l. 66). In both poems, the fabric of the buildings had been despoiled by the disloyal practices of a political or religious community;

⁵⁶ See especially, Steven Zwicker, *Politics and Language in Dryden's Poetry: The Arts of Disguise* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 177-205; Howard Erskine-Hill, *Poetry and the Realm of Politics: Shakespeare to Dryden* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 171-215; Richard Thomas, *Virgil and the Augustan Reception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 122-53.

⁵⁷ Hammond, *Dryden and the Traces of Classical Rome*, p. 225.

⁵⁸ Paul Davis examines the paradox of liberty in Dryden's in *Translation and the Poet's Life: The Aesthetics of Translating in English Culture, 1646-1726* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 128-234.

it becomes a ‘fatal Fabrick’ (II, l. 311) that brings about the destruction of Troy. When the Trojan citizens debate whether or not to accept the Greeks’ gift, ‘The giddy Vulgar, as their Fancies guide, / With Noise say nothing, and in parts divide’ (II, ll. 50-51) – an echo of *Astraea Redux* (l. 33). Virgil’s *scinditur incertum studia in contraria vulgus* (II, l. 39) [‘the wavering crowd is torn into opposing factions’] is broadened into a comment on the fickleness and vacuity of the urban mob. Sinon’s speech to the assembled crowds is that of a political agitator, a scheming demagogue who blames the Greek princes for their discontent. His honeyed words are those of a politician seeking popular applause: ‘Ulysses, with fallacious Arts, / Had made Impression in the Peoples Hearts; / And forg’d a Treason in my Patron’s Name’ (II, ll. 116-18). The language of popular politics imposes itself on the realm of elite politics; ‘the Counsels of the Court’ (II, ll. 112) are infected by anachronistic crimes against the state (‘Ambiguous Rumors through the Camp he spread, / And sought, by Treason, my devoted Head’ (II, ll. 131-32); the Latin makes no reference to the weapons wielded by Ulysses). Sinon manipulates the ignorance of the Trojan rabble in a manner unmistakably evocative of the portraits of Shaftesbury in *Absalom and Achitophel* and *The Medall*.

The language of civil disobedience is woven into the description of Troy’s destruction, for ‘False Tears and fawning Words the City won’ (II, l. 263). In describing the Trojan crowds as ‘mad with Zeal’ (II, l. 320) where Virgil has *caecique furore* (II, l. 244) [‘blind with rage’] Dryden is using a word, ‘Zeal’, which for him has undesirable connotations of extreme Protestant enthusiasm.⁵⁹ A recalcitrant community within Troy/London leaves ‘A spacious Breach’ (II, l. 387) in the city. Throughout the fiery siege of

⁵⁹ Cf. *Religio Laici* (ll. 416-18): ‘Occasioned by great Zeal, and little Thought, / While Crowds unlearned, with rude devotion warm / About the sacred viands buzz and swarm’.

Troy, Dryden's systematically renders the Trojan ranks – whether martial or civilian – as crowds or mobs. In addition, Troy is a 'regal Town' (II, l. 692) or 'ancient and imperial City' (II, l. 490) rather than only *urbs antiqua* (II, l. 363) ['the ancient city']. Without any textual basis in the Virgilian text, the translation emphasises modes of government that are only implicit in the source text.⁶⁰ Since Aeneas and his companions are 'by Force expell'd' (I, l. 517; no basis in the Latin text), there is sufficient ambiguity to recall recent metropolitan history. But for all of Dryden's suggestive phrasing about popular protest, which may prompt memories of the exiled James II fleeing the capital, the allusions are entirely fleeting and unsustainable. What we have instead is a city milieu which is not entirely Troy or London; the issues of demagoguery, fickle crowds and treachery found in Virgil's poem are made obliquely political.

Later books extend the motif of ruler's governing in the face of popular politics. In book seven, the Latin prince's diplomatic entreaties are compromised by the 'Shrieks, Clamours, Murmurs' that 'fill the frighted Town' (VII, l. 794). Turnus, along with the citizens of Latium, lobby the royal court: 'With Fates averse, the Rout in Arms resort, / To Force their Monarch, and insult the Court' (VII, ll. 807-8). Dryden adds the term 'Rout' to describe the fractious retinue who blindly follow the martial prince. The Latin – *Certatim regis circumstant tecta Latini* ['They swarm round Latinus' palace'] – is modified to become an urban mob insulting the stoic ruler ('So stood the Pious Prince unmov'd: and long / Sustain'd the madness of the noisie Throng'; VII, ll. 813-14). (In fact, Dryden makes the association between the throngs and London street politics explicit in *The Cock and the Fox*: 'Jack Straw at London-stone with all his Rout / Struck not the City with so loud a Shout' (II,

⁶⁰ Paul Hammond, 'Dryden's Virgilian Kings', *The Seventeenth Century* 29 (2014), 153-71 describes the ambiguous and indeterminate introduction of contemporary political vocabulary into the poem.

742-43)) Latinus, reconciled to that fact that the storm-tossed ship of state might succumb to the Trojans, laments his submission to the popular clamour to break the treaty with the enemy forces. He recognises the weakness of his own godly rule and the irresistible force of untrammelled popular sovereignty: ‘Nor with the rising Storm wou’d vainly strive, / But left the Helm, and let the Vessel drive’ (VII, ll. 831-32) for Virgil’s *rerumque reliquit habenas* [‘let drop the reins of rule’; VII, l. 600]. Here, early readers might recall the portrait of Achitophel as headstrong powerbroker leading the nation to a stormy ruin in *Absalom and Achitophel*: ‘A daring pilot in extremity; / Pleas’d with the Danger, when the Waves went high / He sought the Storms; but for a Calm unfit, / Would Steer too nigh the Sands, to boast his wit’ (ll. 159-62). Dryden’s colouring of Virgil’s description of the unruly and irrational masses overwhelming Latium’s pious prince – ‘The helpless King is hurry’d in the Throng; / And what e’re Tide prevails, is born along’ (XII, ll. 859-60) – has immediately recognisable contemporary relevance. The urban modes of political participation that almost swept away Charles II in 1679-81, and were decisive in his younger brother’s flight in 1688, are an unchanging feature of political discourse in Dryden’s translation.

In Virgil’s poem, the importance of cities is to have a ‘sense of fixity, of depth to the foundations’; it is the impulse of the wandering Aeneas to ‘fix himself, to be rooted, to be based solidly on some particular portion of the earth’.⁶¹ His search for the city becomes the controlling metaphor in the poem. Aeneas tells of ‘An Empire from its old Foundations rent’ and ‘A Peopl’d City made a Desart Place’ at the beginning of the second book (II, ll. 5, 7). When Aeneas surveys the rising city of the Carthaginians in book one, he sees a model of civic identity and social contract: Dido’s citizens are a ‘united Force’ and a ‘laborious Hive’

⁶¹ Richard Jenkyns, *Virgil’s Experience - Nature and History: Times, Names, and Places* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 60.

(I, ll. 606, 607). Equally, Dryden's additions to the fourth georgic accentuate the royalist iconography of the loyal hive; the 'waxen Cities' (IV, l. 6) are built 'to fill the Regal Seat' (IV, l. 294). As I have shown in relation to the 'loyal Bees' of *Annus Mirabilis* (l. 574), the city-hive implies a particular ideal of social organisation. These bees are not an impersonal, collectivist society or servile oriental drones, but a consenting citizenry ('Some Laws ordain, and some attend the Choice / Of holy Senates, and elect by Voice'; I, ll. 592-93). Dryden's translation of this passage is punctuated by the additional refrain of 'Some...' (I, ll. 588, 590, 592, 602, 604) to suggest the internal concord of Dido's city. Aeneas cannot help but look upon the Carthaginian's polity without longing before he passes into Juno's temple to see the ruin of his own city painted on the walls.

Throughout Dryden's *Aeneis* monarchical government provides the political legitimacy for the foundations of cities. The regicide in book two is causally linked to the destruction of Troy: 'Thus Priam fell: and shar'd one common Fate / With Troy in Ashes, and his ruin'd State' (II, ll. 758-59) for *haec finis Priami fatorum; hic exitus illum / sorte tulit* (II, ll. 554-55). Pyrrus kills one of Priam's sons before his sight, and then seizes the 'Royal Victim' (II, l. 752; Dryden's addition). When Aeneas contemplates the fall of Troy:

*"Tum vero omne mihi visum considerare in ignis
Ilium et ex imo verti Neptunia Troia;
ac veluti summis antiquam in montibus ornum
cum ferro accisam credbisque bipennibus instant
eruerere agricolae certatim; illa usque minatur
et tremefacta comam concusso vertice nutat,
vulneribus donec paulatim evicta supremum
congemuit traxitque iugis avulsa ruinam."* (II, ll. 624-31)

[“Then, indeed, it seemed to me that all Ilium was sinking into the flames and that Neptune's Troy was being overturned from her base – even when as on mountaintops woodmen emulously strain to overturn an ancient ash tree, which has been hacked with many a blow of axe and iron; it ever threatens to fall, and nods with trembling leafage and rocking crest, till, little by little,

overcome with wounds, it gives one loud last groan and, upturn from the ridges, comes crashing down.”]

And Dryden renders this passage as:

Troy sunk in Flames I saw, nor could prevent;
 And *Ilium* from its old Foundations rent:
 Rent like a Mountain Ash, which dar'd the Winds;
 And stood the sturdy Stroaks of lab'ring Hinds:
 About the Roots the cruel Ax resounds,
 The Stumps are pierc'd, with oft repeated Wounds.
 The War is felt on high, the nodding Crown
 Now threatens a Fall, and throws the leafy Honours down.
 To their united Force, it yields, though late;
 And mourns with mortal Groans th' approaching Fate:
 The Roots no more their upper load sustain;
 But down she falls, and spreads a ruin thro' the Plain. (II, ll. 844-55)

Subtle changes in emphasis allow Dryden to interrogate the relationship between monarchical government and cities. Suggestive details point to a collocation between king, nation and city. Although Dryden accepts the Virgilian simile of the falling ash as an emblem for the ruin of Troy, the additional ‘nodding Crown’ implies the fate of Stuart kingship. The crown suffers the same fate as the ‘old Foundations’ (a familiar Drydenian collocation, which echoes the ‘new Foundations’ (l. 1179) prophesied of London at the end of *Annus Mirabilis*). One cannot help but think, in Dryden’s mind, the fall of one leads to the fall of the other.

Conclusion

If we use his surviving letters as a yardstick by which we can measure his activity, Dryden seems to have spent more time in the countryside in his later years than at any point in his life. His frequent trips to Chesterton, Oundle, Cotterstock and Titchmarsh offered the tranquillity of mind found in *The Second Book of the Georgics*, ‘Unvex’d with Quarrels, undisturb’d with Noise’; ‘easie Quiet, a secure Retreat’ (ll. 659, 655). Beset with ‘many fitts of Sickness’, the ‘old decrepid Man’ withdrew from the cares of the city.⁶² The yearning for an idyllic pastoral *otium* must have been a strong impulse for a longstanding urbanite such as Dryden.⁶³ According to Røstvig, verses constructed compensatory myths for disconsolate exiles and frustrated careerists; the peak for the publication of poems on the merits of contented obscurity was reached between 1645 and 1655.⁶⁴

‘To my Honour’d Kinsman, John Driden of Chesterton in the County of Huntingdon, Esquire’ (first printed in *Fables Ancient and Modern* (1700)), to use its full title, shares much in common with the tradition of Horace’s *Beatus ille*.⁶⁵ The country life of his kinsman is that of quiet contentment: ‘How blessed is he who leads a Country Life / Unvex’d with anxious

⁶² *Letters*, pp. 114, 101.

⁶³ In the mid-century, the countryside had become a refuge for those retreating from political defeat. Royalist gentry during the 1650s extolled the virtues of necessity in praising rural contentment; Izaak Walton’s *Compleat Angler* enjoyed special favour amongst a generation of royalists in political exile.

⁶⁴ Maren-Sofie Røstvig, *The Happy Man: Studies in the Metamorphoses of a Classical Ideal*, 2 vols. (Oslo: Norwegian Universities Press, 1962), i 174.

⁶⁵ Jay Arnold Levine examines Dryden’s borrowings from retirement poems in ‘John Dryden’s Epistle to John Driden’, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 63 (1964), 450-74.

Cares and void of Strife!’ (ll. 1-2). John Driden, as both Justice of the Peace and Member of Parliament, reconciles fractious parties and restores peace (‘Promoting Concord, and composing Strife’; l. 17). In the poem’s town-country dichotomy, the objection to urban life stems not so much from London’s physical condition as to its political and moral chaos. In contemporary thought and literary convention, country-dwellers were both happier and more virtuous beings. The luxury, avarice and dissimulation of residents of the metropolis corroded civic virtue. By contrast, the virtues of the countryside were conceptualised as negative value: freedom from urban vices and affectation, freedom from civil discord and endless change. Cousin Driden’s estate is not only an escape from the deleterious modes of living in the capital, it bestows prestige and common good, ‘You hoard not Health for your own private Use, / But on the public spend the rich Produce’ (ll. 117-18). Dryden’s kinsman walks in an Edenic state distant from the postlapsarian town.

For the Town-resident Dryden, it must have been a joy to praise the aesthetic and spiritual pleasures of the countryside as he had done fifteen years ago in Horace’s second epode, published in *Sylvæ*.⁶⁶ However, in the earlier poem, the Happy Man of the ‘quiet Country life! / Discharg’d of Business, void of Strife’ (ll. 4-5) struggles with uncertainty and ambiguity. The poem’s speaker – Morecraft – is a moneylender admiring the values of simple rusticity without changing his living habits or moral character. This fundamental problem has a particular charge for Dryden, who writes in the encomiastic mode to the pastoral without departing the Town. But this was no longer an option for the professional poet, dependent on the patronage of new audiences in the capital – a notion Dryden obliquely hints at in a letter to Mrs Steward composed after the publication of the *Fables*. ‘The Town encourages them

⁶⁶ Dryden’s methods of translating Horace are studied in H. A. Mason, ‘Dryden’s Dream of Happiness’, *Cambridge Quarterly* 8 (1978), 11-55 and 9 (1980), 218-71.

[my new Poems] with more Applause than any thing of mine deserves; And particularly My Cousin Driden accepted One from me so very Indulgently, that it makes me more & more in Love with him.’⁶⁷ With the growing literary marketplace fostered by urban culture, it is inconceivable that Dryden could have ever moved away from the capital given its centrality to the new modes of professional authorship.

As we have seen, London was simultaneously a persistent and core subject of Dryden’s literary endeavours and the site of its production. The various divisions within London society – social, political and literary – are mythologised and elided to escape the contingencies of the present. Rather than a realistic portrait of metropolitan life, Dryden either exemplifies an ideal or catalogues the abuses of urban dwellers. His career, emblematic in so many aspects of Restoration literary culture, shows the changing nature of authorship. Despite the cankerous influence of London politics on the body politic, to do without the literary and social networks of the metropolis was an impossibility. Consequently, it would not be overstatement to say Dryden had as pivotal a role in the development and self-representation of London literary culture during his lifetime.

⁶⁷ *Letters*, p. 134.

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