University of Alberta

Reading, Writing, Remembering: Gunpowder Plot Literature in Early Modern England, 1605-1688

by

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For Warren

Abstract

If, as New Historicism posits, literary texts are shaped by their historical contexts, then what is the relationship between religio-political events and literary history? Selecting the 1605 Gunpowder Plot as a case study, I begin by examining the genres—sermons, liturgies, and prose narratives—in which the Jacobean government represented this event, creating a myth of deliverance that would both establish James I as Elizabeth's rightful successor and distinguish him as the founder of a restored Great Britain. Engaging methodologies including reception studies, memory theory, and the history of the public sphere, subsequent chapters examine responses to this narrative by poets, preachers, and dramatists during the remainder of the century.

In Chapter Three I argue that the translation and publication of Anglo-Latin Gunpowder poems by Francis Herring and Phineas Fletcher began transforming English epic into a radically Protestant and middle-class genre, with John Milton's *In Quintum Novembris* representing a crucial step in this process. The next chapter focuses on anniversary sermons by John Donne (1622), Henry Burton (1636), Matthew Newcomen (1642), and Seth Ward (1661), demonstrating how these annual sermons, both as pulpit performances and printed texts, taught listeners and readers the skills necessary to participate in a wider range of religious and political discourse. Finally, turning to the complexities of stage representation, I trace the ways in which three early plays—John Day's *Isle*

of Gulls, Ben Jonson's *Volpone*, and Thomas Dekker's *Whore of Babylon*—engage with each other and with questions raised by the staging of the plotters' trials in early 1606. An examination of Jonson's later *Catiline, his conspiracy* concludes that the play's probing of the contested relationship between religion and ambition reappeared in a series of ghost poems at the time of the alleged Popish Plot.

By reading both generically over time and across genres, I demonstrate that the Gunpowder Plot helped both to create new kinds and to reorient existing ones, suggesting that we need to study further how not only individual texts but also literary history may be shaped by political events and their official representations.

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Figure 1 "The Double Deliverance 1588 1605." Etching "invented" by Samuel Ward of Ipswich and printed at Amsterdam, 1621. © Trustees of the British Museum. Reproduced with the kind permission of the British Museum. 274

1. Introduction: Reading the Gunpowder Plot

1.1 Preface

Regarded objectively, the Gunpowder Plot may not seem to merit the attention it has been accorded over the past four hundred years. The English Houses of Parliament were not destroyed by an explosion of gunpowder on 5 November 1605, and loss of life was confined to thirteen alleged conspirators, a few accomplices in the Midlands, and two Jesuit priests, most either killed resisting capture or executed by the English crown.[1] Despite protestations to the contrary, however, discussions of this event have seldom been characterized by objectivity. Annual commemoration, both voluntary and enforced, ensured it a deep and lasting place in the collective memory and historical consciousness of the English people. Nevertheless, its meaning has never been stable, shifting with the winds of political, religious, and social change. This dissertation explores how the literature that celebrated, chronicled, and critiqued the plot and its discovery from 1605 to 1688 both participated in and reflected these changes. In doing so, it queries both the role of literature in public events and the role of public events in literary history, exploring the boundaries between imagination and memory, literature and history, fiction and reality.

From the beginning, accounts of the plot have been shaped by both the desire to create a coherent narrative out of fragmentary, and frequently conflicting, evidence and by polemical imperatives. The narrative provided by

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[1] The exceptions were Francis Tresham, a conspirator who died in the Tower while awaiting trial, and Nicholas Owen, a carpenter who had constructed priest holes in numerous Catholic homes,

official contemporary sources, and still current in many popular histories, tells of a conspiracy by a small group of Catholic gentlemen, impoverished by the Elizabethan penal laws, further embittered by their new king's failure to rescind them, and seduced by Jesuit doctrine and the personal magnetism of their leader, Robert Catesby.[2] After rejecting the idea of a simple attempt on the king's life, Catesby and his followers determined on the bold scheme of blowing up the House of Lords on the opening day of James I's second parliament with most of the royal family, as well as the lords spiritual and temporal, in attendance.[3] A solid wall impeded their efforts to tunnel beneath the building, but they soon discovered an adjacent cellar that was available for rent. Here they piled barrels of gunpowder, covering them with kindling, iron bars, and coal, both to conceal their stores and to maximize the damage of the projected explosion. While waiting out delays to the opening, they recruited a few wealthier Catholics to provide cash and horses, and considered how to govern the country once the ruling elite had been destroyed.[4] Uncertainty about which of the royal children would attend the opening hampered their planning, but they seem to have settled on kidnapping the young princess Elizabeth and crowning her as figurehead under a Catholic regent.

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[2] I discuss some of these accounts, the details of which vary, below. The greatest discrepancies, of course, are between Catholic and Protestant accounts. What follows relies largely on official Protestant sources; Catholic accounts, particularly the influential one written by John Gerard, are discussed in Chapter 2.

[3] The original plotters included Catesby, Thomas Winter, and John Wright. Fawkes, who was apparently recruited for his knowledge of mining, and Thomas Percy seem to have entered the conspiracy at the same time. Subsequently, John Grant, Robert Keyes, Robert Winter, and Christopher Wright were brought in, along with Catesby's servant, Thomas Bate, sworn into the conspiracy when he guessed that something was afoot.

[4] Plotters admitted late to the conspiracy included Sir Everard Digby, Ambrose Rookwood, and Francis Tresham.

At least one conspirator, however, apparently spent some of his time worrying about the ethics of killing the Catholic lords who would be in attendance.

On the night of 26 October 1605, a cryptic letter was delivered in the street by an unidentified messenger to a servant of the Catholic noble William Parker, Lord Monteagle,[5] warning him not to attend the opening, where a "terrible blowe" was to be struck. Wary of being compromised by the activities of his hotter headed co-religionists, Monteagle took the letter immediately to Somerset House, where several members of the Privy Council happened to be meeting. Robert Cecil, Lord Salisbury, claiming to be mystified by the enigmatic construction of its contents, determined to wait until the king returned from hunting on 30 October to initiate any investigation. Reading the letter several days after his return, James immediately suspected gunpowder and ordered the cellars searched. While the first search revealed nothing suspicious, a second one on the night of 4 November, upon the pretext of locating some missing articles, uncovered the gunpowder along with the man known to history as Guy Fawkes, although he gave his name as John Johnson. Despite initially claiming sole responsibility, Fawkes began naming his fellow conspirators after facing either torture or the threat of torture during his early days in the Tower. By this time, however, most of the others had been either captured or killed attempting to raise a rebellion in the Midlands. In the following weeks and months, the last conspirators were hunted down, along with Father Henry Garnett, the Jesuit superior in England,

[5] Monteagle's title is sometimes given as Mounteagle. Throughout the dissertation I have followed the *ODNB*'s preferred spelling of names and titles when two or more forms are in general usage.

and another priest, Edward Oldcorne, both suspected of complicity in the plot. By early May, all of the alleged conspirators were dead.

But almost every detail of this account has been repeatedly challenged over the past four hundred years. Perhaps the most enduring subject of speculation has been the authorship of the mysterious warning sent to Lord Monteagle. Francis Tresham has long been a favourite suspect, particularly given his death in the Tower before he could be tried, but none of the conspirators ever confessed to penning the letter. And was it really the letter that alerted the authorities, or had they been following the plotters' movements and awaiting the most dramatic moment to capture them? Equally contentious is the role of the priests, particularly Henry Garnett. The Jesuit superior eventually admitted to some knowledge of the plot, but claimed he had been privy to it only under the inviolable seal of confession. While Catholic authors have frequently defended Garnett's actions, Protestant ones have generally been less forgiving.[6] The third, and perhaps greatest, puzzle has remained why Salisbury, with the Monteagle letter in hand, waited until the last minute to take action against the plotters. Critics have accused Salisbury of complicity ranging from inventing the plot for his own purposes to simply allowing it to mature in order to serve those interests. Daring contemporaries observed that the Secretary of State benefitted from the plot in two ways—it solidified his position with his new monarch and it allowed him to eliminate his closest political rival, Henry Percy, ninth Earl of Northumberland, compromised by his cousin Thomas's participation in the

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[6] The only full-length biography of Garnett (Philip Caraman, *Henry Garnet, 1555-1606, and the Gunpowder Plot* [London: Longmans, 1964]) is a sympathetic account by a Catholic author.

conspiracy. Those who credited Salisbury with Essex's fall were quick to see a repetition of a successful strategy for disposing of a competitor.[7] Almost from the beginning, Cecil's detractors contested the official version, not only querying the earl's handling of the letter, but offering more fundamental obstacles to the credibility of authorized accounts. Sceptics continue to ask questions: Was there any evidence of a tunnel? What happened to the gunpowder? How much powder was there, was it really "decayed," and how much damage could it have done?

While such speculations have frequently engaged popular writers and partisans, academic historians have displayed little interest in, and occasional contempt for, the subject. Jenny Wormald proposes that the "sustained attempt by the ruling elites of both England and Scotland to make men celebrate the Plot thenceforward rather than shiver at it has ensured that even historians do not take it particularly seriously" (142). Although I believe one of the intentions of the celebration was precisely to make people shiver at their close brush with death, and consequently to thank God for their preservation, Wormald is correct that the academy has largely neglected the plot. But this may be less surprising than it seems. Hans Robert Jauss suggests that "historical meaning" consists in "the conceptual difference between beginning and end" ("Communicative" 41). Once the conspirators had been tried and executed, the plot left few material traces.[8]

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[7] For accusations that Cecil had engineered the fall of Essex, see Alastair Bellany and Andrew McRae, *Early Stuart Libels* (www.earlystuartlibels.net) section D.

[8] Conversely, Hayden White proposes that the test of whether or not an event merits treatment by historians is whether we can imagine "at least two different versions of the same set of events" (*The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987], 20). The Gunpowder Plot, of course, passes this test, since it can be interpreted as either a government plot or a Catholic conspiracy, each account making use of different evidence and emphasizing different aspects of the story. Since modern historians

The most significant of these was the Oath of Allegiance, drafted in early 1606 even while the plotters were being tried. Historians have debated both the oath's intentions and its effects upon English Catholics, but its role in touching off an international paper war has long been acknowledged.[9] The second outcome of the plot, the institution of an annual memorial, may have seemed less politically significant at the time, but perhaps had more lasting consequences than the oath. This legislated memorialization ensured that England would remember its status as a Protestant nation providentially delivered from Catholicism. The truth of this assertion is less important than the fact that it was believed. As Jonathan Scott has demonstrated in *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context,* public memory played a crucial role in shaping British history during the seventeenth century. The plot became a touchstone for evoking the anti-Catholic sentiments that fuelled the civil wars and the 1688 revolution. Thus, although the plot exists primarily in the domain of representation, as Frances E. Dolan has shrewdly pointed out (*Whores* 45), these images have had important historical and, as I will argue, literary consequences.

In the 1630s, those who feared that increasing ceremonialism in the church presaged a return to Catholicism revived memories of the plot. Later in the century, the most extreme poles of plot interpretation—Catholic conspiracy and

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generally discount the government conspiracy theory, however, it is possible that they see only one tenable version and thus dismiss the event's historical importance.

[9] On the oath and its repercussions, see especially Michael Questier, "Loyalty, Religion and State Power in Early Modern England: English Romanism and the Jacobean Oath of Allegiance," *Historical Journal* 40.2 (1997), 311-29; a rebuttal by Johann Sommerville, "Papalist Political Thought and the Controversy over the Jacobean Oath of Allegiance" in *Catholics and the 'Protestant Nation': Religious Politics and Identity in Early Modern England*, ed. Ethan Shagan (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2005), 162-84; and Questier's reply, "Catholic Loyalism in Early Stuart England," *English Historical Review* 123.504 (2008), 1132-65.

government conspiracy—collided in response to the alleged popish plots of the late 1670s. From a literary perspective, commemoration helped to create a popular audience for Protestant epic, influenced the development of the occasional political sermon, and fostered the late-seventeenth-century ghost poem genre. Both historians and students of literature, then, may have reasons to re-examine the plot's cultural repercussions. A broad view of the literary reception of this event can tell us more about the complex relationships between collective memory, historical narrative, and the making of publics in early modern England.

We should take the plot seriously because seventeenth-century writers and readers did. References to this event intrude themselves into texts as diverse and apparently unrelated as John Taylor's 1614 miscellaneous collection of verse, *The Nipping and Snipping of Abvses*, and James Howell's 1645 *Familiar Letters*.[10] In the past, these texts have been treated in several ways, none entirely satisfactory. The prose narratives, sermons, and English poetry have frequently been read as historical documents rather than as literary texts, neglecting the generic conventions that shaped them and the dialogues with other texts into which they entered. The Latin poetry, with the occasional exception of Milton's *In Quintum Novembris*, has attracted attention mainly from neo-Latin scholars whose focus upon identifying the poems' classical sources and relationships with other Latin texts has left their historical contexts and debts to vernacular texts unexplored.[11]

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[10] Taylor's poem is a short panegyric directed to King James, praising God for the deliverance from the plot (D4[v]) Howell's poem is quoted on p. 18 below.

[11] For example, Estelle Haan, the most dedicated critic of the Latin poems, has produced a meticulous comparison of Milton's poem with those of Wallace and Herring, without taking into account that these poems were written twenty years apart and in very different political climates

Studies of the dramatic literature have usually focused on individual plays, treating them as isolated texts rather than as cultural performances that participated in dialogues with each other and their audiences. By reading both generically and across generic boundaries, we can begin to see connections, for example, between the representation of the plot as a British founding myth in the Anglo-Latin epics and Shakespeare's depiction of a divided island in *King Lear*. Since the number of artifacts precludes analysis of every work related to the plot, I have chosen to examine a few texts that represent the range of this material and its literary and historical influence in the seventeenth century, contextualizing these texts as broadly as possible. The approach in each chapter is largely chronological, tracing changes to individual texts, their receptions, and the genres in which they participate over time. This method resolves one of the dilemmas posed by New Historicism—that, as David Quint observes, "attention to synchronous historical relationships can cause the text's participation in a diachronic *literary* history to be overlooked" (*Epic* 15). One of the risks this approach runs, however, is the perception of creating a narrative that appears more complete and coherent than it is.

The theoretical perspectives from which I approach these texts include reception studies, theories of memory and narrative, and histories of the public sphere. Reception study, a cluster of related methodologies first delineated by Jauss, attempts to uncover how works were understood by contemporary readers

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See: "Milton's *In Quintum Novembris* and the Anglo-Latin Gunpowder Epic," *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 41 (1992), 221-47 and Figs. 1-3 (248-50).

and listeners as well as by later ones.[12] Although these methodologies can create studies of particular readers privileged only because they left traces of their interpretive activities, such studies may help us to understand contexts of reading more effectively than historical contextualization alone. In order to understand how narratives fed and even created memories of the plot, I turn to theorists of individual and collective memory including Paul Ricoeur, Maurice Halbwachs, and Paul Connerton.[13] Questions about the role of narrative in historical study posed by Ricoeur and by Hayden White in particular revolve around the necessity for narrative and how it affects our historical understanding.[14] In this study, I consider both the ways in which writers shaped their narratives according to generic conventions and how genres were in turn reshaped by the plot narrative. The retelling of the story in multiple ways supposes an audience, indicating the existence, as Rebecca Lemon suggests, of some type of "public sphere" providing political participation to those beyond the circle of the ruling elite (19).

1.2 Writing Conspiracy: The Plot as News

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[12] See Jauss's original statement of his program in "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory" in *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti, Theory and History of Literature, v. 2 (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1982), 3-45. Robert C. Holub provides a useful introduction and critique of these theories in *Reception Theory: A Critical Introduction* (London: Methuen, 1984), although Robert Hume provides the most incisive critique of Jauss's seven theses in *Reconstructing Contexts: The Aims and Principles of Archaeo-historicism* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), 20-25.

[13] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2004); Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992); Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989).

[14] Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*; Hayden White, *The Content of the Form* and "The Historical Text as Literary Artifact," *CLIO* 3 (1974), 277-303.

Responses to the plot provide a case study for examining the circulation of news and opinions in oral, print, and manuscript forms during the seventeenth century. Building upon Jürgen Habermas's *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, historians and literary scholars over the past several decades have explored the development of a culture of discussion and debate in England, what Habermas calls a public sphere, seeking its origins in a variety of venues and media that predate the periodical press and the coffee house. In particular, the work of Peter Lake, in collaborations with Steve Pincus and Michael Questier, has traced its beginnings to the arrival of the Jesuit mission in England.[15] This research has led to increased interest in the transmission of news and views through such previously neglected media as pamphlets and sermons. One of the features that increasingly distinguishes both popular and official responses to the attempted rebellions and assassinations of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is the use of print to disseminate multiple interpretations of these events. While there were doubtless competing, and even conflicting, understandings of earlier incidents, the increasing availability of print opened up new avenues for discussion. Censorship at times may have restricted the printing of more extreme views, but Annabel Patterson has pointed out that a significant degree of critique was usually permitted, provided that authors avoided open sedition.[16] For more

[15] See the collection of essays edited by Peter Lake and Steve Pincus, *The Politics of the Public Sphere* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2007); Lake and Pincus, "Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England," *Journal of British Studies* 45.2 (2006), 270-92; Lake and Michael Questier, "Puritans, Papists, and the 'Public Sphere': The Edmund Campion Affair in Context," *Journal of Modern History* 72 (2000), 587-627; Lake with Questier, *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England*, (New Haven: Yale, 2002).
[16] See *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1984), 10-11.

dangerous works, there remained the options of oral or manuscript transmission, although a letter might fall into the wrong hands or a libel writer be identified.

Early in Elizabeth's reign, printed responses to acts of treason generally consisted of official proclamations, accounts of executions that had been scripted by the state, and popular ballads. Those with court connections or hopes of preferment might also offer literary texts praising Elizabeth and extolling the preservation of the Protestant state, as Thomas Churchyard did after the Northern Rebellion.[17] Even in such texts, however, and particularly in official ones, the primary function served by chronicling conspiracies and rebellions was admonitory and consequently focused on occasions of punishment. Witnessing public acts such as executions and participating in occasional ceremonies of thanksgiving involving homilies and special liturgies warned subjects of the consequences of treasonous behaviour. Such media discouraged, although they could not prevent, individual interpretation. The government's awareness of the need to control interpretive acts may be seen in K. J. Kesselring's description of how the queen and William Cecil drafted a defence of Elizabeth's reign immediately after the Northern revolt. The document, however, "ended with a note that as the bulk of her good subjects were unable to read, the text was to be read aloud in all parish churches" (433). Whether or not the defence was disseminated in this way, Kesselring has found no surviving print copies nor any evidence that it was ever published. This incident underlines the monologic nature

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[17] *Come bring in Maye with me, my Maye is fresh and greene: (a Subiectes harte, an humble mind) to serue a mayden Queene. A discourse of Rebellion, Drawne forth for to warne the wanton witte how to kepe their heads on their shoulders*, London, 1570 (STC 5224).

of the discourse surrounding treason, since the setting of the parish church would have discouraged dissonant responses.

Nevertheless, the drafting of this document suggests a subtle change in official responses to threats against the state. Despite continuing to produce accounts of conspiracies and executions, the government seems to have shifted its emphasis from displays of authority to attempts at persuasion. In 1583 Burghley penned a defence of Edmund Campion's execution, and four years later a pamphlet, appearing anonymously but generally known to have been authored by his son Robert, justified the beheading of Mary Stewart.[18] Produced explicitly in response to rumours and libels, such accounts acknowledged the possibility of alternative interpretations and expressed the government's commitment to convincing readers of the truth of official versions.[19] Between 1569 and 1583, then, the government seems both to have recognized an increasing level of popular print literacy and to have developed a strategy for using printed texts both to preempt and to respond to discordant voices. But the materiality of these texts and their ongoing availability to all subjects who could read or hear them read offered possibilities of discussion and dialogue not only at the time but for years to come. Consequently, it became increasingly necessary for writers to establish the truth of their narratives against competing versions.

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[18] *The Execution of Iustice in England for Maintenaunce of Publique and Christian Peace* (London, 1583, STC 4902); *Defence of the Honorable Sentence and Execution of the Queene of Scots* (London, 1587, STC 17566.3).

[19] The intended readers of such documents probably included Catholics abroad as well as those at home.

As sermons gained importance in Reformation culture, the pulpit offered an apparent solution to the problem of establishing truth claims. Official accounts of events delivered by clergymen could align political with divine authority, but this process too was fraught with uncertainties. Sermons had the advantage of reaching both the literate and illiterate, but they required the cooperation of preachers, who quickly realized that political sermons allowed them to question the official versions of events, or even to reject them altogether. As servants of God as well as the monarch, these men also needed to be convinced that the story they were telling was true. After Essex's execution the Elizabethan authorities struggled to find a preacher willing to endorse the crown's version of the rebellion at Paul's Cross, and William Barlow, who reluctantly accepted the assignment, suffered derision for his pains, while some of James VI's Scottish preachers stubbornly refused to publicize his narrative of the Gowrie conspiracy.[20] The pulpit thus remained a necessary but not entirely reliable instrument of official communication, and sermons joined pamphlets in providing a range of interpretations of political events to an increasingly sophisticated audience of hearers and readers.

Lake and Questier identify three characteristics necessary for the development of a "public sphere": messages sent through a variety of media; an assumption of general public interest; and a belief in the public's interest in and

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[20]On these difficulties, see "To the Reader" in Barlow's *Sermon Preached at Paules Crosse, on the first Sunday in Lent* (London, 1601) A2^{r}-A8^{v}; and, Arnold Hunt, "Tuning the Pulpits: The Religious Context of the Essex Revolt" in *The English Sermon Revised:Religion, Literature and History 1600-1750*, ed. Lori Anne Ferrell and Peter McCullough (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000), 86-114.

ability to consider questions regarding public events ("Puritans" 590). They suggest that the commencement of the English Jesuit mission facilitated the creation of these conditions, particularly the third. Examining the interactions between the Elizabethan government and the first missionaries, Edmund Campion and Robert Persons, the authors conclude that "in Elizabethan England the creation of something like a rudimentary public sphere was not a product of Puritan opposition to the establishment or state but rather a product of the regime's own efforts to perpetuate and protect itself from a popish threat variously conceived" ("Puritans" 625). In a more recent collaboration, Lake and Pincus develop the complementary idea that a public sphere emerged gradually from traditions of giving counsel, and that threats of conspiracies and rebellions extended opportunities for exercising this right. The occasional openings and closings of the public sphere permitted by these exceptional events gradually normalized public participation in political affairs ("Rethinking" 289-90). Thus, attempts to warn people about the threat of militant Catholicism were increasingly countered with advice to the king regarding his religious policies.

Since the Gunpowder Plot represented a significant threat from a religious group disadvantaged in England but powerful on the continent, it required a narrative that would inform the English public of what had taken place, warn others against similar attempts, and justify the traitors' punishments to both national and international audiences. Like his predecessor, James used pamphlets, liturgies, and sermons to achieve these objectives. The sermon at Paul's Cross, again by the unlucky Barlow, the official narrative (probably penned by James),

and the account of the trials and executions compiled by the Earl of Northampton all offered a reasonably homogeneous narrative, although, as we shall see, subsequent writers discovered discrepancies among them.[21] The new king, however, attempted to control interpretation more assertively than Elizabeth ever had by instituting annual commemorations that would sustain a powerful collective memory of the event.

1.3 Remembering Conspiracy: The Plot as Cultural Memory

James had first experimented with the creation of an anniversary in Scotland after his alleged escape from the Gowries on 5 August 1600. Although commemoration remained contentious there, he took steps to extend the practice to his new kingdom almost immediately upon his accession to the English throne. Clerics south of the Tweed, however, were little more enthusiastic than their northern counterparts had been, and the anniversary was tacitly dropped upon his death. The only English precedent for such anniversaries was Elizabeth's accession day, which began to be marked in the 1580s, but this celebration appears to have arisen spontaneously from below and was only formalized later with an official liturgy. Clergy did not uniformly adopt the practice and the official ceremony lapsed at Elizabeth's death, although David Cressy demonstrates that subjects revived the occasion periodically during the century to

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[21] This time Barlow was already scheduled to preach at the Cross and his sermon relied heavily upon the king's 9 November speech to parliament: *The Sermon Preached at Paules Crosse, the tenth day of Nouember being the next Sunday after the discouerie of this late horrible treason*, (London, 1606), STC 1455. See also: *His Maiesties speech in this last session of Parliament .... Together with a discourse of the maner of the discouery of this late intended Treason* (London, 1605), STC 14393; *A True and Perfect Relation of the Whole Proceedings against the late most barbarous traitors, Garnet a Iesuite, and his confederats* (London, 1606), STC 1350.

condemn Catholicism and critique the current regime.[22] Despite his imposition of the Gowrie anniversary, however, James made no apparent efforts to memorialize the Bye or Main plots of 1603. Why, then, were the king and his ministers so determined to make the Gunpowder Plot part of the nation's cultural memory?

A. W. R. E. Okines challenges the assumption that the plot benefitted James's administration, a presupposition of government conspiracy theories, arguing that the plot jeopardized the establishment of peace, and hence trade, with Spain. In Okines's view, James downplayed the religio-political aspect of the plot, insisting that most Catholics were loyal and, more importantly, that it implicated no foreign powers.[23] If the plot was unwelcome, however, James may nevertheless have seen in its timing an opportunity to promote the project that was to have dominated the parliamentary session disrupted by its discovery—the political union of England and Scotland. Connerton emphasizes the importance of calendar change in the founding of new orders, and although James wanted his reign to be seen in some ways as a continuation of Elizabeth's, he also wanted to emphasize that he was creating a new Britain.[24] By instituting Tuesday court sermons in recognition of having been delivered from both the Gowrie and Gunpowder plots on that day of the week, and by requiring similar memorial services for each occasion, he created a persistent link between the two plots that

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[22] See *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), Ch. 4; Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), Ch. 4.

[23] See "Why was there so little government reaction to the gunpowder plot?" *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 55 (2004), 275-292.

[24] Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 65-66. For James's attempts to represent his reign as a continuation of Elizabeth's, especially after the plot, see John Watkins, *Representing Elizabeth in Stuart England: Literature, History, Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), 9-35.

he may have hoped would establish a British identity through his own person, miraculously preserved in both countries. The Gunpowder Plot was thus to become the founding event for both his new dynasty and a new Protestant nation.

This attempt to impose a unified identity through collective memory, however, encountered several obstacles. Remembrance needed to begin on the personal level, and individuals were constantly exhorted to remember their deliverance from this threat.[25] As Ricoeur reminds us, the "duty of memory consists essentially in a duty not to forget" (30). Writers frequently warned that individual forgetfulness could have dire consequences for the state—if England's people forgot God's blessings, then God would forget England. One of the difficulties of memory, however, is its tendency to become confused with imagination. This problem became acute when presented with the task of remembering an event that left few physical traces. To impress people with the magnitude of the deliverance, speakers and writers needed to describe the extent of the proposed destruction, which could only be accomplished through the use of imagination.[26] In his sermon at Paul's Cross on 10 November 1605, Barlow created a vivid picture of London after an explosion. In this *"fierie massacre"* (C3[r]), "(beside the place it selfe at the which hee aymed) the H*all of Iudgement,*

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[25] Both Ricoeur and Halbwachs stress that memory is individual: *Memory, History, Forgetting*, Part I, Ch. 3; *On Collective Memory*, Ch. 3.

[26] Paul Wake argues that "In emphasising what might have happened, recast as 'what could not have happened' contemporary accounts of the Gunpowder Plot ... effect an appropriation of the subversive plotting of those who sought to destroy James and his government" (306). He connects the use of popular metaphors such as the destruction of Troy in the early plot literature to anxieties about imagining the death of the king, citing the king's speech and the official trial narrative. While he is correct that some writers refused to imagine a successful plot, others were quite willing to speculate. See: "Plotting as Subversion: Narrative and the Gunpowder Plot," *Journal of Narrative Theory* 38.3 (2008), 295-316, esp. 302-06.

the Courtes of Recordes, the Collegiate Church, the Citie of Westminster, yea, *White*-*Hall* the Kinges house, had beene trushed and ouerthrowne" (C3^r^). The explosion would have been followed by a "D*eluge of Bloode*" (C3^v^), in which people would have been torn "parcell meale" (C3^r^) as if by beasts. This word picture was repeated with variations in numerous sermons and pamphlets during the remainder of the century, so that even the royalist James Howell felt compelled to satirize it in his letter to the "knowing reader" at the beginning of his *Epistolae Ho-Elianae.*[27] Expanding on the capabilities of letters, he reminds his readers that "Had not the Eagle's *Letter* brought to Light / That subterranean horrid Work of Night":

> Witness that fiery *Pile*, which would have blown
> Up to the Clouds, Prince, People, Peers and Town,
> Tribunals, Church, and Chapel; and had dry'd
> The *Thames*, tho' swelling in her highest Pride,
> And parboil'd the poor Fish, which from her Sands
> Had been toss'd up to the adjoining Lands.
> Lawyers, as *Vultures*, had soar'd up and down;
> Prelates, like *Magpies*, in the Air had flown.

Repetition made such pictures part of collective memory even though the event had not occurred. Imagination, however, provides both the possibility of multiple, even competing, memories and a basis for literature.

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[27] The germ of Barlow's description doubtless came from James's speech to Parliament on 9 November, in which he enumerated the individuals and institutions that would have been destroyed and described the death from fire as the cruellest one possible (*His Maiesties speech*, B3^r^).

For Halbwachs, individual memory is never independent of the social groups in which one lives, and individuals always remember events within a framework that includes their social identity. Thus, each person recalls a public event differently. Halbwachs and other memory theorists have also suggested that individuals identify more closely with smaller, more tightly knit social groups than with the more abstract notion of the state.[28] In the years after the plot's discovery, preachers occasionally reminded elite congregations that had the plot been successful their lives would have been lost. Members of the lower social orders, however, likely remembered the threat of economic and political chaos rather than that of immediate death. Those outside London may have considered themselves even less personally affected by the plot, particularly since the danger had been averted before most received the news, and they had to rely on second-hand accounts of the trials and executions witnessed by Londoners. Walter Yonge, living in Devonshire, recorded the discovery of the plot in his diary with interest but no apparent fear. His observation that the Midlands rising comprised only "sixty or eighty horse" (2) suggests that he did not exaggerate the threat.[29] In these cases, social cohesion within the smaller group did not preclude identification with the Protestant nation.

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[28] Jeremiah Lewis appears to have recognized this problem in his sermon on 5 November 1618, reminding his auditors: "Thou art a member of a commonwealth, of a Towne, of a family, what deliuerance comes to that, comes thee" and that therefore all should praise God for their share in the deliverance (*The Doctrine of thankfvlnesse: or, Israels trivmph, occasioned by the destruction of Pharaoh and his hoste, in the Red-Sea. A Sermon preached in the parish church of All-Saints in Northampton. November 5. 1618* [London, 1619], STC 15557), 5.

[29] Yonge's synopsis may be compared with John Chamberlain's letter to Dudley Carleton on 7 November 1605 (*The Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. Norman Egbert McClure [Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939], 1.212-15), which, as Mark Nicholls observes, describes the mood of fear and uncertainty in the city as events unfolded ("Discovering Gunpowder Plot: The King's Book and the Dissemination of News," *Recusant History* 28.3 [2007], 397-415).

For others, however, conflicted loyalties arose. This was particularly true for Catholics, expressly denied full participation in a Protestant state.[30] Recent research has shown that the post-Reformation Catholic community in England formed a close and supportive network,[31] yet many Catholics, including Ben Jonson, considered themselves both Catholics and loyal Englishmen. James seems to have recognized this dilemma, insisting from the beginning that Catholics could be loyal subjects without changing their religion, provided they repudiated the pope's power of deposition. Many writers nevertheless saw all Catholics as potential if not actual traitors, forcing them to choose between their religious and political allegiances. For many, a less explicit conflict centred on James's unpopular project of Anglo-Scottish union. Undercurrents of anti-Scots feelings, expressed in post-plot drama and perhaps even in Anglo-Latin epic, indicate that many were unwilling to subsume their English identity within a British one.[32] Thus, imposing a unifying collective memory was from the beginning fraught with difficulties.

As James apparently recognized, however, these challenges had to be overcome. Recent scholarship on post-Reformation England has offered new

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[30] I use the terms "Catholic" and "Protestant" within this study recognizing their slipperiness in seventeenth-century England. Religious identities, as recent studies have suggested, were fluid and complex in this period (See, for example, Michael C. Questier, *Conversion, Politics, and Religion in England, 1580-1625* [Cambridge Cambridge UP, 1996]) In dealing with an incident such as the Gunpowder Plot it is all too easy to resort to the binaries fostered by the literature

[31] For an informative case study of these relationships, see Margaret Sena, "William Blundell and the Networks of Catholic Dissent in Post-Reformation England" in *Community in Early Modern England Networks, Place, Rhetoric*, ed Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington (Manchester· Manchester UP, 2000), 54-75

[32] The most obvious example is John Day's *Isle of Gulls*, suppressed in all likelihood for its anti-Scots sentiments (See Ch 5) For the possibility that the plot itself was fuelled partly by hatred of the Scots, see Wormald, "Gunpowder, Treason, and Scots," 141-68

perspectives on how religious change disrupted medieval sites of memory.[33] Scholars such as Peter Marshall and Stephen Greenblatt argue that the transition to Protestantism initiated a crisis of memory as the sermon replaced the Mass, prayers for the dead were abolished, and the old calendar of saints' days was radically pruned. The institution of political anniversaries helped to smooth this transition by offering new rituals and myths to replace the old ones.[34] Accepting Connerton's distinction between two types of remembrance—incorporation and inscription—we may see the early seventeenth century at a crossroads between the two. Incorporation involves such ritual acts as participating in liturgy, while inscription occurs through the creation of myths. Although Connerton admits that the boundary between the two may be porous, he argues that the "transition from an oral culture to a literate culture is a transition from incorporating practices to inscribing practices" (75). In the seventeenth century, commemoration included both such incorporating rituals as attending church, participating in the liturgy, and ringing church bells and such inscribing practices as attending sermons and plays, and reading and writing a variety of print and manuscript texts. While the two types of commemoration frequently reinforced each other, they could also open up differences of interpretation. As Connerton points out, ritual may be more conservative than myth, since the "*reservoir of meanings*" in a myth may be reshaped for different purposes, while "the structure of ritual has significantly less

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[33] The phrase "sites of memory" (lieux de mémoire) was coined by Pierre Nora See "Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*," *Representations* 26 (1989), 7-24.

[34] *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England* (Oxford Oxford UP, 2002) For the literary consequences of these shifts, see Stephen Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001) On the replacement of Catholic festivals such as saints' days with political anniversaries, see Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells*

potential for *variance*" (56, 57). Henry Burton's ability to stir his hearers in 1636 by accusing Archbishop Laud of meddling with the 5 November liturgy, although the plot had been frequently reinterpreted in other types of literature, affirms ritual's conservatism. While Cressy's study of the "vocabulary" of celebration demonstrates that practices such as bell ringing could express changing meanings over time, they could not accommodate the full range of interpretations that texts could.[35]

1.4 Recording Conspiracy: The Plot as Narrative

Public memorials formed a foundation for national memory, then, but literature was crucial to its perpetuation, particularly as the immediacy of the event faded. According to Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney, once the witnesses to events have died, cultural memories can only be sustained when cultivated by means of texts, material objects, and rituals (112). Memories of the Gunpowder Plot survived not only through annual commemorative rituals, but also through texts accessible throughout the year in print or manuscript. Erll and Rigney propose that literature plays three roles in the production of cultural memory, acting as a medium of remembrance, an object of remembrance, and a medium for the production of cultural memory. Although these roles may overlap, literary texts first "help produce collective memories in the form of narratives" (112). Ricoeur and Connerton also insist upon the role of narrative in memory, Connerton arguing that remembering requires creating "meaningful narrative

[35] "The Protestant Calendar and the Vocabulary of Celebration in Early Modern England," *Journal of British Studies* 29.1 (1990): 31-52.

sequences" (26), while Ricoeur proposes that narrative incorporates memories into our identities, individual and collective (84-85).[36]

The narrative imperative arose first from the need to counteract rumours that began circulating immediately after the event. These were polarized primarily on confessional lines, although political rivalries also played their parts so that, to a large extent, official accounts were driven by the need to squelch powerful counter-narratives from disaffected individuals and communities. From the beginning plot literature separated into two distinct but overlapping strands, both involving the project of creating identity through shared memory, but approaching this task in distinct ways, one through commemoration and the other through historical representation. As Ricoeur points out, commemoration is grounded upon the requirement of fidelity to the original narrative rather than the need to establish historical truth (497), and therefore testimony forms the link between memory and history (21). By polishing and publishing the confessions of Guy Fawkes and Thomas Winter, the English government recognized the need for first-person narratives that could substantiate its truth claims. Later, by publishing an account of the plotters' trials, the authorities sought to validate the earlier narrative. By including Northampton's history of Catholic interference beginning with the bull against Elizabeth, however, they began the process of emplotting the event within a larger narrative history.

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[36] Hayden White, in contrast, believes narrative to be imposed by the writers of history rather than intrinsic to our experiences. In his view, it is possible to write history without narrative, as the French Annales school demonstrated (*The Content of the Form*, Ch. 2). In "The Historical Text as Literary Artifact," he argues that historians match their narratives to existing plot structures such as epic or tragedy. David Carr disagrees, asserting "that the events addressed by historiography are already narrative in character" (*Time, Narrative, and History* [Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986], 46).

For Renaissance authors, writing about the recent past posed a theoretical challenge that continues to trouble both historians and literary critics. Aristotle's *Poetics*, echoed by Sidney's *Defence of Poetry*, created a clear boundary between poetry and history, classifying poetry as general, plot-driven, and dealing with the possible, while history is particular, episodic, and deals with the actual (MacPhail 2-3). Aristotle does not prevent poets from representing historical subjects; however, Sidney favours imagined events, claiming that the historian has fewer opportunities to encourage virtuous action because he is tied to narrating actual events from which appropriate morals may not necessarily be drawn.[37] Historical narratives, he fears, may actually promote vicious rather than virtuous action. According to Eric MacPhail, Aristotle developed the idea of plot or *mythos* "as a distinctly poetic form of rationality and coherence absent from history" (1), but Renaissance theorists transferred the idea of plot from poetry to history. In the reversal that he posits, "humanist historiography sought to portray the pattern and the logic of historical events while Renaissance literary criticism undertook to reevaluate the historicity of fiction" (9).

The relationship of narrative to literary form in historical representation remains contentious. Hayden White proposed that all narrative histories are "verbal fictions" shaped according to literary conventions ("Historical" 278). Jauss similarly argues that narrative history perpetrates three fictions: 1) the illusion of a clear beginning and end, since these are selected from a range of

[37] Aristotle, "Poetics" 9 (1451a37-1451b26 p. 2322) in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Bollingen Series LXXI-2, v. 2; Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (London: Nelson, 1965), 29-39.

possibilities; 2) the illusion of completeness even when events are obviously incomplete; and 3) the illusion of objectivity.[38] According to White, the selection of beginning and end are determined by the literary form that the author chooses to impose upon the events. As Ricoeur points out, however, White's equation of historical and fictional narratives neglects a fundamental difference between the two. While fictional narratives require only a sign and a signifier, historical narratives also need a referent to legitimate their truth claims, although such claims may be compromised by the selectivity of both archive and researcher.

In the case of plot narratives, certain literary forms were suited to specific polemical stances as well as to various audiences. One of the most popular forms was the chronicle, which promised objectivity, since most readers were unlikely to have reflected upon the absence of incidents that had been silently elided from the narrative.[39] This form, according to White, "aspires to narrativity, but typically fails to achieve it" since closure remains problematic (*Content* 5). Nevertheless, the chronicle proved singularly appropriate to a series of incidents that could not be closed until the papal Antichrist was finally defeated at the apocalypse. The rudimentary narrative frequently began with the Elizabethan Settlement, making the Gunpowder Plot the finale in a series of increasingly daring Catholic attempts to subvert both English and continental Protestantism.

One of the earliest prose chronicles to include the Gunpowder Plot, Thomas Mason's 1615 *Christs victorie ouer Sathans tyrannie,* a continuation of

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[38] "The Communicative Role of the Fictive," 30-40.

[39] The choice of incidents often reflected a decision about whether all Catholics were to be blamed or only Jesuits. Non-Jesuit conspiracies were sometimes removed from the narrative by authors who wished to concentrate their venom on the Jesuits.

Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, places the conspiracy within a lengthy list of English rebellions, assassination attempts, the thwarted Spanish invasion of 1588, and the Gowrie Conspiracy.[40] Contextualizing the plot within a narrative of Protestant martyrdom both emphasizes its place in providential history and openly contests Catholic claims that Garnett and Oldcorne died as martyrs.[41] Such texts became particularly popular in the 1620s amid fears that a new generation would forget the plot, but displayed a widening interpretive gap between conformist and radical Protestant publications. Bishop George Carleton's providential history, *A Thankfull Remembrance of God's Mercy* (1624), exhorted England to remember her deliverances, implicitly warning that forgetfulness could have dire consequences for the nation. Like Mason, Carleton placed the plot within a detailed list of attacks on English Protestantism, attributing the conspiracy to the Jesuits without entirely dismissing the possibility of diabolical agency. Dedicating his pamphlet to the prince, to whom he was chaplain, Carleton concluded by listing among other mercies God's preservation of England from the continental wars of religion in which Charles was then attempting to embroil his country. Carleton's isolationism contrasts with the repeated injunctions of a puritan printer, Michael Sparke, to pray for German Protestants and particularly for the dispossessed Elector Palatine and his wife, Princess Elizabeth, in his immensely

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[40] Mason's inclusion of the Gowrie plot is significant, since it suggests that James's strategy of linking the Scottish and English attempts on his life had acquired a measure of success.

[41] In 1632, the 1606 "Discourse of the maner of the discouery of this late intended treason" that had been published with James I's 9 November 1605 speech to parliament was typeset into blackletter as part of an anonymous publication, *A Continvation of the histories of forreine martyrs* (London, STC 11228) that chronicled Protestant martyrdoms in Europe from the 1550s as well as the Armada and the Gunpowder Plot. When it was reprinted in 1641, prefatory materials asserted that this work was intended to encourage godly English Protestants who might be called to martyrdom in the current conflict (London, Wing C5965).

popular *Crumms of Comfort*, a collection of prayers and thanksgivings reprinted in numerous editions from the mid-1620s into the eighteenth century. Despite their conflicting attitudes to the war on the continent, both authors consciously sought to instil memories of former deliverances in the next generation, providing fold-out illustrations of the Armada and the Gunpowder Plot to be used for instructing children in the stories of these events.[42]

This form continued to serve radical Protestants until mid-century by contextualizing the civil wars as part of the Counter-Reformation. The anonymous *Papa Patens or the Pope in his Colours* (1652) promised on its title page an "Exact account" of the Armada, the Gunpowder Plot, the Massacre at Paris, the murders of Henri III and IV, and the Irish rebellion.[43] No longer was the plot simply an attack on an individual monarch, or even a nation, but now it was part of an international conspiracy against Protestantism directed from Rome itself. The nation's enemies, in their efforts to restore Catholicism, begin "by striving to make our selves hate our own Religion, and leave that God which brought us out of the Land of *Ægypt*" (4), but if this fails they resort to "poyson, murder, and force of Arms" (4). The underlying polemical thrust of the pamphlet is that people err in hating puritans more than papists when puritan behaviour is in fact much

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[42] A number of publications are specifically directed to children or families: *A Song or Story, for the Lasting Remembrance of Diuers Famous Works, which God hath done in our time With an addition of certaine other Verses (both Latine and English) to the same purpose* (London, 1626) offers a verse narrative of the Gunpowder Plot as well as a song of thanksgiving for the defeat of the Armada, following an introduction that concludes "*Let this poore song thy little ones direct*" (A4^v), Samuel Clarke later advertised in the full title of his *Englands Remembrancer* that his narratives of the Armada, the Gunpowder Plot, and the Blackfriars collapse had been "Collected for the information and benefit of each Family" (London, 1657, Wing C4510), t p.

[43] This development supports Jonathan Scott's contention that we need to understand seventeenth-century English anti-Catholicism in an international context (*England's Troubles*, 29-31)

more moderate and less dangerous to the state. Thus, Catholics can be blamed even for the dissensions among Protestants that have caused the civil wars. Rather curiously, a brief recital of the earlier Watson plot, about the veracity of which the writer seems dubious, follows the account of the Gunpowder Plot.[44] Possibly the author thought that placing the events in chronological order would undermine the truth claims that he makes for the Gunpowder Plot, condemning those who either consider it the work of "a few male-contents" (5) or "an invention of him whom in reverence I forbeare to name" (5). For the first time in this text, however, narrative struggles against the chronicle form. While this structure had proved remarkably flexible for a variety of polemical purposes, religious fragmentation ultimately undermined its apocalyptic and providentialist framework.

These prose texts represented themselves as histories, but the chronicle form could also be adapted to commemorative texts, which were more self-consciously literary and made use of fictional devices, including supernatural characters. Two early poems intended for relatively uneducated audiences, I.H.'s *Divell of the Vault or the Unmasking of Murder* (1606) and John Rhodes's *A Briefe Summe of the Treason intended against the King* (1606), both situated the plot within English and European history. Although the authors narrated events chronologically, they selected and shaped their material to explain the plot as part of a pan-European Catholic conspiracy and possibly a demonic one. In these texts, the individual participants and actions were less important than the cosmic struggle of Protestantism against its demonic counterpart. In other words, while

[44] This is the first text I have found that subverts chronology in this way.

chronicle histories focused on horizontal relations among men and nations, these commemorative texts were concerned more with the vertical relationship between man and God.

The other dominant narrative structure for commemorative texts was Virgilian epic, which committed writers such as Francis Herring and Michael Wallace to beginning *in medias res* with the plot itself in order to establish the incident as a significant founding moment in British history and to court royal favour. These texts wrenched the incident from its context within the development of the Elizabethan penal laws and previous conspiracies, describing it as a unique event rather than part of a series. Early epics ended with thanksgiving for the preservation of king and parliament; however, the larger context of Christian history ultimately made such closure illusory. As long as Catholics remained in England, the Protestant nation remained frozen within its founding moment; as long as the Catholic Antichrist remained undefeated, the apocalypse was deferred.

Because the historical narrative was also being rewritten at this moment to celebrate James as the founder of a reunited Britain, epic conventions found their way into historical accounts that supported this project. John Speed in 1614 situated the plot's origins in hell, calling it "A stratageme inuented by him that blowes the bellowes of destruction, fashioned in the forge of the bottomlesse pitte, put in practise in a vault of darknesse, and forwarded by him that is the father of darknesse" (889). Revising Fawkes's recollection of encountering the solid wall "about Christmas" (*His Maiesties speech* H2^{v}) to describe the plotters finishing their mine on Christmas Eve, he creates a powerful image of the birth of treachery

attempting to overcome that of salvation. Like the epic writers, he shows little interest in the human agents responsible for the plot. He praises James, but clearly disapproves of his leniency towards Catholics, exemplified in his pardoning the Earl of Tyrone in Ireland. The glory of the discovery is God's rather than the king's, Speed attributing James's interpretation of the Monteagle letter to simple common sense—not having witnessed any signs of open insurrection, the king naturally assumed that it must refer to something less obvious such as gunpowder. Later authors cited this account as an unbiased source despite its providentialist themes. In contrast to the overtly religious orientation of chronicles like Mason's, Speed's account was situated within a political and chorographic narrative that flattered James for restoring ancient British glory.

Epic traditions continued to support royalist narratives until the Restoration, when J.H. published *A True and Perfect Relation* of the plot, which he claimed he had "Collected out of the Best and most Authentique Writers" (t.p.). Indeed, the author seems to have drawn eclectically from a variety of sources, but primarily the epics and those influenced by them. He follows the author of *Papa Patens* in giving Fawkes three matches and having the plotters encounter the wall about Candlemas.[45] From Francis Herring's epic, probably by way of John Vicars, comes the image of the rebels' support melting away like a snowball in spring, suggesting an attempt to reappropriate the epic tradition that radical Protestants like Vicars had claimed before the civil wars. Writing at the commencement of another Stuart reign, he celebrates the dynasty, beginning the

[45] According to Fawkes's confession, the plotters were about halfway through the wall by Candlemas (*His maiesties speech*, H2^{v}).

story with James's accession and the Watson and Ralegh conspiracies and concluding with the executions of the Gunpowder traitors. Thomas Howard, the Lord Chamberlain, takes precedence over Salisbury in the plot's discovery, possibly because the Howard line had continued to support the Stuarts.[46] This royalist text warns readers that their ingratitude caused Charles I's execution, thus linking Catholicism and separatism at the same time that 30 January joined 5 November on the calendar, one celebrating the deliverance of a Stuart monarch from a Catholic plot and the other commemorating his son's betrayal by puritans.

Although most writers felt compelled to claim impartiality, through the Interregnum their projects remained primarily commemorative rather than historical, but as the traditional narrative evoked increasing scepticism, authors began seeking evidence that would support their truth claims.[47] For early writers the only available documentary evidence consisted of the testimonies of Fawkes and Winter, the Monteagle letter, and the trial itself, all mediated through official accounts that were actively contested by Catholic writers.[48] In his 1658 *Englands warning peece or the history of the gun-powder treason*, Thomas Spencer cites Speed and Carleton rather than more radical sources as proof of his neutrality, and supplements the conspirators' testimonies with that of the Littletons' cook, who

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[46] While conducting an inspection at Westminster on 4 November 1605 in preparation for the opening of parliament on the following day, Howard noticed a pile of kindling. Suspicious, James ordered a more intensive search by Thomas Knyvett that exposed the barrels of gunpowder (Pauline Croft, "Howard, Thomas, first earl of Suffolk (1561–1626)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman [Oxford: OUP, 2 Sept. 2010]).
[47] See for example Samuel Clarke's *Englands Remembrancer* (1657).
[48] This is not to suggest that all Protestants were convinced by the official narratives, but clearly Catholics had the most interest in disputing the official versions. See in particular Father John Gerard's narrative in *The Condition of Catholics under James I. Father Gerard's Narrative of the Gunpowder Plot*, ed. John Morris (London: Longmans, Green, 1871). Catholic narratives tended to circulate orally or in manuscript, making them more difficult to trace.

becomes suspicious when his master orders more food than he could possibly eat himself. Although this anecdote is unsubstantiated, it offers readers the immediacy of a first-person narrative.

Authors also turned to Catholic sources to support their claims. Edward Stephens' *Discourse Concerning the Original of the Powder-Plot* (1674) tackles the twin problems of Catholicism and separatism, warning that the laxity of preferment-seeking clergy is driving godly clerics away from the Church of England, thus increasing the country's vulnerability to Catholicism. Although he extends the plotting of the conspiracy to the highest ranks of the Roman church, including the papacy, his primary targets are the Jesuits, and he exploits Catholic anti-Jesuitism by citing anti-Jesuit Catholics, such as Thuanus, who acknowledge the Society's role in the conspiracy. An English edition of Thuanus appeared the same year.[49]

As the urgency to validate the traditional narrative escalated, the original account of the discovery was reprinted in 1679 for the first time since 1606 with a new preface signed by T. L. and generally ascribed to Thomas Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln. Barlow begins by insisting that the story is "no lying Legend, no vain Romance, no spurious or unlicenc'd-seditious Pamphlet, but an Authentique History" (1). His intention is to quell rumours that no plot existed or that one was invented by Cecil. Again, he relies upon Catholic authors to show that even their co-religionists do not approve of the Jesuits, although he succeeds in blaming the

[49] *A true narration of that horrible conspiracy against King James and the whole Parliament of England, commonly called the gun-powder* ***treason****, written in Latine by Jacobus Augustus Thuanus ... ; faithfully rendred into English* (London, 1674), Wing B833.

puritans as well, asserting that they "had set a foot a scandalous report of the King, *THAT HE MEANT TO GRANT A TOLERATION TO POPERY*" (57). Barlow's main contribution to the plot's historiography, however, was the publication of some letters by Everard Digby, which had been found upon the death of his son, Sir Kenelm Digby. Although they provide little insight into the event, these constituted the first additions to the documentary evidence since the confessions of Fawkes and Winter and the Monteagle letter.[50]

While at times such authors' engagements with previous texts seem eclectic or merely pragmatic, they frequently serve the function of turning their works into "object[s] of remembrance," making intertextuality part of collective memory. Erll and Rigney argue that "recollecting texts composed or written in earlier periods is an integral part of cultural remembrance" (112). By 1636, Henry Burton had been able to intensify his attacks on Archbishop Laud and Charles I by choosing a sermon text that Lancelot Andrewes had used to flatter James in 1614. The series of alleged popish plots and counterplots that began in the late 1670s, however, accelerated the development of meaningful relations among Gunpowder texts. In this period, the rewriting, reprinting, and recontextualizing of these texts enabled either implicit or explicit parallels between the two crises to be exploited on the side of either Catholic conspiracy or government conspiracy.

The earlier chronicles had relied upon the method of example, which, according to Jauss, "extracts a clearly formulated moral lesson from some earlier

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[50] The Monteagle letter was routinely printed as part of such texts. An oath supposedly taken by the conspirators was also frequently included, but although Thomas Winter had confessed that an oath of secrecy had been taken, there is no documentary evidence for the actual text of the oath (*His maiesties speech*, I3^{v}).

deed in order to guide future actions" ("Communicative" 46). Since human nature was regarded as constant, understanding the past could become a means of explaining the present and preparing for the future. Thus, on the journey from Reformation to apocalypse, Catholics and Spaniards could always be counted upon to attack or undermine Protestant England, but they would do so in a variety of ways. The parallel, as Achsah Guibbory explains, was aligned with a more cyclical view of history than the chronicle, for it suggested that certain patterns repeated themselves, although with varying degrees of exactness (9).[51] In 1678 John Williams, Bishop of Chichester, followed Stephens's formula in his *History of the Gunpowder-Treason* to insist that the plotters were highly placed Jesuits, that even some Catholics condemned the plot, and that the evidence of Garnett's complicity had conveniently perished with Catesby. Williams also makes an impassioned plea for the continuing celebration of the plot lest it, like the Armada, be forgotten and England continue to be victimized by Jesuit treachery. Responding to his critics, in 1681 he published a "vindication" of the earlier text, adding to it "A PARALLEL betwixt That and the Present Popish Plot" (t.p.), reiterating his previous assertions that the plot was formulated in the highest councils of the Jesuits, but using the strategy of the parallel to demonstrate that if the Gunpowder Plot was genuine, then the Popish Plot must also have been. He elaborates on the similarities between the two—both were perpetrated by Jesuits,

[51] Some scholars have questioned why the Armada was paired with the Gunpowder Plot when they were in fact very different events. I think this stems from confusion about the nature of the relationship being posited. The Armada was an example of Spanish Catholic treachery but the events were not viewed as parallels in the way that the Gunpowder Plot and the popish plot were. John Watkins, misleadingly I think, uses the word "parallels" in his discussion of the relationship between the Armada and Gunpowder Plot (*Representing Elizabeth in Stuart England*, 30).

were intended to return England to Catholicism, and were planned and discovered in comparable ways. The argument is logically weak, but in the highly charged atmosphere of the time, its rhetoric may have been compelling. Williams's pamphlets were reprinted with Gilbert Burnet's 1684 Gunpowder sermon and various items related to the Popish Plot in *A Collection of Several Tracts and Dsicourses* [sic] in 1685. Burnet's sermon, which he published to vindicate himself of charges of popery, was also controversial and used a strategy similar to Williams's in choosing as his text Psalm 22.31 in which David pleads for God's assistance on the strength of a former deliverance.[52] The subsequent discovery that the Popish Plot had been fabricated, however, seems to have reintroduced an element of scepticism regarding traditional plot narratives from which they have never fully recovered.

1.5 Rewriting Conspiracy: 1688 and Beyond

William III's arrival in England on 5 November 1688 may have been fortuitous, but it also permitted him to lay claim to the Stuart founding myth of the British Protestant state. For a number of years afterwards, the plot anniversary became a celebration of the final triumph of Protestantism over Catholicism, the two events being linked even in the Anglican prayer book. Yet the case of Henry Sacheverell demonstrated that the anniversary could still arouse animosities, this

[52] In his *History of His Own Time*, Burnet explained that he had been required to preach on this occasion, despite his request to be excused. He claims that he had not considered in his choice of texts that the lion and the unicorn were supporters of the king's escutcheon. Although the king, who had already interfered in Burnet's candidacy for a London parish, could not find any crime in the sermon itself, the choice of text condemned the preacher, and after being deprived of his clerical responsibilities he felt he had no other recourse than to leave the country (ed. Martin Joseph Routh [Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1969], 2.450-52).

time among Protestants, when his 1709 sermon before the mayor and subsequent trial incited Tories to attack Dissenters and their places of worship. How one Anglican understood the relationship between the plot and these more recent events may be seen in the "Sheares Bible" (BL Add. MS 62708), an illustrated verse paraphrase of the English Bible created by Abraham Sheares between 1701 and 1731. Sheares interrupts the biblical sequence in the middle of 1 Kings to insert a series of political verses with accompanying illustrations, beginning with the providential defeat and destruction of the Armada, followed by the Gunpowder Plot, emphasizing in his verse how

> neare this Bloudy PLOT was Brought
> the mach bornt neare his End
> the Powder all Redye to take
> but GOD appeard our frend
> Many more sich Corsed Acts
> the papist Acted in
> to take our Gospel light away
> and bring the man of sin. (290[r])

The accompanying illustration, dated 23 January 1714/15, shows Fawkes approaching Parliament bearing a huge dark lantern. The beam of God's eye falls directly upon the lantern, as if to cancel out the false light with the true. Sheares skips discreetly over the embarrassing episode of the Popish Plot, progressing directly to 1687, when "a Popish Prince did rule this Land" (290[r]). A double spread over the next two facing pages illustrates the arrival of Prince William on

the left as James II, his queen carrying a baby labelled "Pretend," and a priest flee to the right (290^{v}-291^{r}). Queen Anne then enjoyed a peaceful reign until 5 November 1710, when Sacheverell "did Remoue ye Powder PLOT / upon that uery day" (291^{r}).[53] Rather than praising God for the deliverance, "of his text he made an Ax / to spleet ye Church in two" (291^{v}). Sheares equates Sacheverell directly with the Gunpowder plotters, calling him Haman's younger brother: "His tongue was like a borning mach / with brimstone soat on fier" (291^{v}). He illustrates this verse with a drawing of the Sacheverell rioters destroying a church and a reproduction of the title page of an anti-Sacheverell pamphlet. The sequence concludes with an illustration of the devil seizing a pope, a monk, a cardinal, and a friar. Clearly, for Sheares, Catholicism and faction within the church remained equivalent enemies of Anglicanism. This fascinating artifact illustrates the extent to which this version of history had achieved a status of truth that allowed it to be included in a Bible. England and Israel had effectively become one.

The Sacheverell incident, however, introduced a subtle change in Gunpowder Plot narratives. As Protestant chronicle, British founding myth, and Popish Plot parallel ceased to be viable means of understanding the plot, the narrative coherence and verisimilitude of the original narrative increasingly demanded attention. Plot literature was becoming less about the plot itself than about earlier representations of it. In other words, plot literature was becoming "a medium for the production of cultural memory" (Erll and Rigney 112), a means of attempting to understand "how memory works for individuals and groups"

[53] Sheares dates the sermon incorrectly. In fact it was preached on 5 November 1709.

(113). What was being debated was not so much what had happened as what had been stored in the nation's memory and why.

As the desire for increased religious tolerance combined with renewed distaste for the Stuart dynasty and the Scots who wanted to restore it, writers began to see themselves as victims of attempts to impose unhealthy and even false memories upon them. In response to a parliamentary sermon preached at Dublin on 5 November 1761, in which the preacher had suggested that all Catholics were guilty of the conspiracy, an anonymous author published *An Essay towards a new History of the Gun-Powder Treason* in 1765. The author of the introduction (who is not the author of the text) suspects the use of the pulpit, which he calls "the most effectual Means *ever yet* devised" (vi) to sow divisions among people. The advertisement that follows, explaining the absence of documentary proofs as evidence of Cecil's complicity, concludes that "the Evidence that can reasonably be expected in such a Case, is what arises from internal Marks of Fiction and Falshood, which this Conspiracy abundantly affords" (xxiii). For this author, then, the fictive qualities of the narrative itself, along with the lack of documentation, offer evidence that the story was fabricated.

Some early nineteenth century writers downplayed the question of truth in the interest of promoting religious toleration. Addressing "Fellow Protestants" (t.p.) in an 1829 pamphlet, the Reverend P. P. Jones wants the plot historicized so that nineteenth-century Catholics are no longer charged with the sins of their seventeenth-century counterparts, reminding his readers "that finally, we must judge of the Gunpowder Plot as an historical event, which has had *many parallels*,

and ought now to be considered only with reference to the times when it occurred" (2). R. T., in an afterword to Jones's address, insists that knowledge will eliminate anti-Catholicism and banish John Foxe "of infamous memory" (8), now seen as the perpetrator of a dangerous Protestant mythology that should be forgotten. This theme was taken up in an anonymous tract, *The Fifth of November Plot*, the author of which abhors the custom of celebrating 5 November, a practice "instituted by the wisdom of your ancestors to keep the rising generation out of mischief, by teaching them from their earliest youth to revile the Pope, and all that belong to his creed; and so to render it exceedingly improbable that they should ever inquire into the merits of those who destroyed his power in England" (3).[54] After centuries of being admonished to remember the plot, Englishpersons were finally being called upon to forget it.

The acrimony surrounding the re-establishment of a Catholic hierarchy in England in the middle of the nineteenth century, however, ensured that the incident was not forgotten. Instead, as the role of narrative in commemoration diminished, the focus shifted to historical representation, with both amateur and professional historians reading and re-evaluating accounts of the plot, testing their credibility as well as their polemical utility.[55] Attempting to disentangle fact from fiction, these writers sought to establish a narrative that both fit the documentary evidence and was internally coherent. Published in 1857, David Jardine's *Narrative of the Gunpowder Plot* tried to offer a balanced and historically

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[54] The title page of the pamphlet provides no author or date, but an epigraph from *Nicholas Nickleby* dates the publication after 1838 when the novel first began appearing serially.
[55] In 1859, the 5 November service was removed from the prayer book and Anglican clergy were no longer required to preach on the occasion.

accurate account by comparing the documents in the Public Record Office, which had recently come to light, with the official contemporary pamphlets. He discounted the "Discourse," which he believed to have been written by Bacon, on the grounds of its narrative coherence, as an attempt "to surround fictions by undoubted truths with such apparent simplicity and carelessness, but in fact with such consummate art and depth of design, that the reader is beguiled into an unsuspecting belief in the whole narration" (viii). But Jardine, as his title indicates, did not reject the idea of narrative. Instead he created a more balanced one that recognized Catholic grievances but did not exonerate the plotters from responsibility for their actions, conceding that laws against Catholics were severe but claiming that James was forced to increase fines in order to reward his Scottish retainers. Moreover, he showed a grudging respect for Fawkes, whose "language and conduct after the discovery of the Plot are characteristic of a resolute fanatic, acting upon perverted notions of right and wrong, but by no means destitute of piety or humanity" (38). Despite the admission that a Catholic might be pious, however, Jardine still saw the conspirators in thrall to superstition. Although the question of Garnett's legal guilt does not seem to have particularly challenged him, he clearly found a determination of moral guilt more difficult. The priest was probably more involved in the plot than he admitted, but was unfairly charged with all the crimes committed by the Jesuits during the previous twelve years. Digby, who was treated with respect at his trial, Jardine dismissed as a "weak and bigoted young man" (63), completely under the Jesuits' spell. He argued that Tresham had written the Monteagle letter, but saw the letter as a ruse

to conceal the government's real source of information. Nevertheless, he emphatically denied that Cecil had fabricated the plot and concluded that justice was done in the plotters' executions, regardless of any mitigating factors. Dismissing the familiar parallel of the Catilinarian conspiracy, he emphasized that this one was *not* enacted by desperate men, but by men of wealth and position who had chosen to act against the state. Jardine's use of documents initiated archival research into the plot and made his study the most authoritative plot history until Samuel Gardiner published his *History of England* (v. 1) in 1883.

Although Gardiner too relied upon documentary evidence, for him the coherence of the traditional narrative supported its truth claims. Accepting the traditional story in which Tresham's warning letter to Monteagle betrayed the plot, he concludes that "The whole story of the plot, as far as it relates to the lay conspirators, rests upon indisputable evidence" (1.269), while he finds the evidence against Garnett mainly circumstantial. Gardiner's history initiated a heated exchange with Father John Gerard that smouldered for the remainder of the century. Confessional differences seem to have been exacerbated by Gerard's resentment of Gardiner's status as a professional historian, but some of their disagreement centred on the problem of narrative. Attempting to emulate Gardiner's use of documentary evidence, in his *What was Gunpowder Plot?* Gerard shrewdly compared the versions of the story given by Cecil to the foreign ambassadors, the 7 November "minute" for the Privy Council, and the "King's Book," concluding that discrepancies between their stories pointed to manipulation of the official version.

Responding with *What Gunpowder Plot Was* (1897), Gardiner focused on confessional differences, pointing to the stake that the Catholic Gerard had in discrediting the traditional story. Presuming that the original account is substantially true, he refutes Gerard's arguments step by step in the manner of seventeenth-century religious disputation. He also complained, however, that his opponent had no believable narrative to substitute for the traditional Protestant one that he was intent upon demolishing, and Joseph Levine observes that notwithstanding Gardiner's reliance on documentary evidence, his project also required him to "imagine the conspirators at every step of their failed plot" (194). Gardiner's conclusions, mostly endorsed by the leading twentieth-century plot historian, Mark Nicholls, are thus based upon both documentary evidence and narrative coherence.

Jardine's recovery of the original documents in the Public Record Office and the conflict between Gardiner and Gerard stimulated interest in the plot's historiography, but impartiality remained elusive. Philip Sidney's *A History of the Gunpowder Plot* (1904), which went through several editions, promises objectivity, but is clearly both anti-Stuart and anti-Catholic. Like Jardine, Sidney reserves his true contempt for Sir Everard Digby, whom he regards as a "a mere silly puppet in the hands of Fathers John Gerard and Henry Garnet" (140), and he reprints the Digby papers published by Thomas Barlow to show that history has been too kind to Digby. This eagerness to expose Digby, a minor figure in the traditional story, demonstrates the long-lasting influence of the official trial

account, in which Sir Everard, as the highest ranking plotter, attained almost heroic proportions.[56]

In the same period, several writers attempted to verify the plot narrative by identifying the writer of the Monteagle letter. The first of these is Henry Hawkes Spink whose *Gunpowder Plot and Lord Mounteagle's Letter* was published in 1902. Like the late seventeenth-century writers, Spink asserts that he is an unbiased "historical philosopher" (196), not a partisan, but his interpretation is shaped by his Yorkshire background and consequent emphasis upon the plotters' connections with that county. Like Gardiner, he asserts that there was a conspiracy and that it was not plotted by Cecil or any other government agent. His thesis that Christopher Wright revealed the plot, aided by Monteagle's servant Thomas Ward and the priest Edward Oldcorne, is, as he admits, based largely on circumstantial evidence and is discredited by Nicholls (*Investigating* 235).

Similarly, in a handsomely produced and privately printed two-volume work published in 1931, George Blacker Morgan declared that his interest in the plot was "purely secular and historical" (1.6). Identifying William Vavasour, a clerk sometimes employed by Francis Tresham, as the writer of the warning letter, Morgan hypothesizes that the plotters failed to outline a plan for governing the country because they assumed that those grateful to them for ridding the country of Scotsmen would take over. The plotters wanted not only to restore Catholicism, but also to introduce various social reforms including changes to wardships and

[56] The controversy over Digby had already goaded one of his descendents into attempting, if not a defence of his ancestor's conduct, then at least a request that his memory be treated more charitably (Thomas Longueville, *The Life of a Conspirator: Being a Biography of Sir Everard Digby by one of his descendants* [London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1895]).

death duties. He offers a "modern" scientific perspective by accounting for Catesby's apparently irresistible attractiveness to the other plotters as a possible family predisposition to paranoia or delusional insanity (1.125). Tresham and Monteagle contrived the letter scheme to raise money, "having previously stipulated that in divulging the Plot to Lord Salisbury, full opportunity of escape should be given to the conspirators" (1.229). Despite numerous inconsistencies in Morgan's narrative, the inclusion of illustrations and facsimiles of historical documents as fold-out pages offers the illusion of historical validity. The works of Morgan and Spink indicate the extent to which debating the truth of the plot narrative had by this time become the province of amateur historical detectives, leading Joel Hurstfield to remark famously that "the question of the authenticity of Gunpowder Plot is no longer a rewarding subject of historical research .... Trying to prove that it was a fabrication has become a game, like dating Shakespeare's sonnets: a pleasant way to pass a wet afternoon but hardly a challenging occupation for adult men and women" ("Gunpowder" 110).

Nevertheless, throughout the twentieth century, popular historians continued to respond to the original narrative and to construct new ones. Hugh Ross Williamson and Francis Edwards insist that the Jacobean government fabricated the plot.[57] Alan Haynes concludes there was a plot but that Cecil contrived the Monteagle letter in an unsuccessful attempt to avert a crisis by

[57] Hugh Ross Williamson, *The Gunpowder Plot* (Long Prairie, MN: Neumann Press, 1996); Francis Edwards, *"The Gunpowder Plot": A Lecture delivered on 10th November, 1972* (Royal Stuart Society, 1972); Edwards, *The Enigma of Gunpowder Plot, 1605: The Third Solution* (Dublin: Four Courts P, 2008).

frightening the plotters into relinquishing their plans.[58] Antonia Fraser accepts that there was a plot but questions details such as whether there was a tunnel. Both Fraser and Alice Hogge cite the sufferings of Catholics as mitigating circumstances in the plotters' actions.[59] Although the government conspiracy theory remains most actively promoted by Catholic sympathizers, increasing distrust of both secular and religious authorities has given such narratives additional popularity and credibility.

Academic historians, generally unconvinced by the conspiracy theories, continue for the most part to maintain their distance from the subject, leaving Wormald to lament in 1984 that

> after almost 400 years, we still lack a coherent historical explanation of how it was that thirteen Catholic conspirators sought to destroy the political structure of society within two years of the admittedly tortured birth of Great Britain. We still need answers to the two most basic questions, Why was there a Gunpowder Plot, and what did the Plotters really want? (145)[60]

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[58]Alan Haynes, *The Gunpowder Plot: Faith in Rebellion* (London: Grange, 1994).

[59] Antonia Fraser, *The Gunpowder Plot: Terror and Faith in 1605* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1996); Alice Hogge, *God's Secret Agents: Queen Elizabeth's Forbidden Priests and the Hatching of the Gunpowder Plot* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005).

[60] The academic community's inability to answer these questions has allowed fiction writers much speculative leeway. While rejected by serious historians, the conspiracy theory continues to flourish in popular fiction. See, for example, Martin Stephen's mystery novel *The Desperate Remedy: Henry Gresham and the Gunpowder Plot* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002) and Christie Dickason's romance *The Firemaster's Mistress* (New York: Harper, 2006). Probably the most interesting treatment of the plot in recent literature has been Alan Moore's *V for Vendetta*, originally a comic book series, turned into a graphic novel, and finally a successful film. Moore's comic strip, begun in the 1980s, chronicles a dystopian Britain in which a man wearing a smiling Guy Fawkes mask wreaks revenge upon the powers of church and nation. The series capitalizes on the plotters' apparent failure to make plans for the governing of the state by linking the strip's anarchist character with Fawkes. The complexities of this treatment are exacerbated by the fact

The only historian to pay close attention to the anti-Scots feelings surrounding the plot, she concludes that its origins lie in the late Elizabethan period with the plotters' distaste for a Scottish succession, rather than with any actions or promises made by James. Wormald cautions, however, that the plot "was a complex brew of international intrigue and national passion, and much work remains to be done before it can be fully understood" (162). Okines argues that there was no "systematic persecution of Catholics" (286) in the aftermath because it did not represent a sustained threat and James wanted to maintain economic ties with Catholic nations. The plot was thus, in contrast to Hurstfield's earlier contention, unwelcome to the government, which sought to minimize the damage to international relations.

The most sustained historical attention to the plot has been provided by Mark Nicholls. In his most extensive study, *Investigating Gunpowder Plot*, Nicholls rejects the temptation to which most other historians have succumbed, that of a chronological narrative of the plot, beginning instead with the government's response to the discovery. He supports his hypothesis "that the plot came as a genuine surprise to the authorities" (3) by demonstrating that their actions are consistent with the sudden discovery of an attempted treason. Although hampered by the destruction of the Privy Council records for this period in a 1619 Whitehall fire, he finds no evidence of prior knowledge or fabrication by the government. In a subsequent article on the composition and dissemination

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that the character wears a mask. He is not Fawkes, but only pretending to be Fawkes. Nevertheless, this seems to be the ultimate outcome of a trend, begun in the nineteenth century, to romanticize Fawkes as a popular hero.

of the "King's Book," he once again insists that documentary evidence shows that in the days following the discovery "ignorance, embarrassment, even panic ran through the highest counsels in the land" ("Discovering" 397).[61] Nicholls has thus affirmed the traditional narrative although stripped of its polemical trappings.[62]

While Nicholls's work has done much to rehabilitate the history of the plot as a political event, cultural historians have also begun paying attention to the ways in which the plot has been celebrated over the centuries. David Cressy's extensive documentation of commemorative rituals has helped us to understand the ways in which the celebration both united and fragmented the English population, particularly during the seventeenth century.[63] The four hundredth anniversary in 2005 saw the publication of James Sharpe's more popular study, *Remember, Remember: A Cultural History of Guy Fawkes Day*, which is particularly helpful for understanding twentieth-century developments in attitudes towards commemoration. This turn towards the plot's cultural importance, however, has emphasized what Connerton describes as practices of incorporation, rather than those of inscription.[64] In this dissertation, I focus upon plot literature rather than upon other commemorative practices in order to consider the specific

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[61] Nicholls's other contributions to scholarship on the plot include "Strategy and motivation in the Gunpowder Plot," *Historical Journal* 50.4 (2007), 787-807; and, "The 'Wizard Earl' in Star Chamber: The Trial of the Earl of Northumberland, June 1606," *Historical Journal* 30.1 (1987), 173-89.

[62] Joseph Levine observes that Nicholls's work responds to that of the Catholic Francis Edwards in much the same way as Gardiner's responded to Gerard's ("Intellectual History as History," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 66.2 [2005], 194-95, n. 10).

[63] I believe that by basing his study primarily upon commemorative rituals Cressy has somewhat overstated the plot's success in unifying the English people during the early seventeenth century. A closer examination of the literature, which follows in the next chapters, suggests that cracks in the consensus were opening up earlier.

[64] While Cressy refers to numerous literary works, he reads them as historical documents rather than literary texts.

role of literature in the development of cultural memory. Erll and Rigney assert that as a "'mimesis of cultural memory'" literature "engages in a dialogue with historians and sociologists regarding the interpretation of the past and the forms appropriate to it" (113). The Gunpowder Plot offers a case study in the complex and reciprocal relationships between texts and events that both historians and literary scholars of the seventeenth century seek to understand. This "explosion which never took place" (Hurstfield 100) became a symbol of the religious and political strife that tore England apart, foregrounding questions of how to understand the national past, how to cope with religious diversity, and how to forge an identity within post-Reformation Europe that were addressed in several literary genres.

In Chapter One I argue that between 1569 and 1605 the English church and state developed and disseminated a providential account of the country's Protestant history through occasional liturgies, sermons, and prose narratives celebrating the monarch's deliverances from Catholic threats, both domestic and international. Having followed a similar prescription in Scotland after his alleged kidnapping by the Gowrie brothers, James I seized the opportunity of the Gunpowder Plot early in his English reign to establish a founding myth for both a Stuart dynasty and a British nation by ordering annual thanksgiving services and modelling the liturgies for these occasions on the one for Elizabeth's accession day. His insistence upon perpetual memorialization, however, paradoxically both strengthened his position and opened him and his heirs to critique. Although he was able to perpetuate the myth that all the plots against both himself and

Elizabeth were, like Samson's foxes, joined at their tails, he had provided an occasion that could be regularly exploited for critique as well as praise.[65]

In the following chapter I explore how the inclusion of such critiques in a series of Latin Gunpowder poems written to solicit patronage from members of the court found its way into English print culture, and so helped transform epic from a royalist to a puritan genre in the mid-seventeenth century. Early epics such as those by Michael Wallace and Francis Herring congratulated the king on his deliverance, but also reminded him of the dangers of allowing Catholics to remain in the country, particularly at court. Beginning with Herring's 1609 sequel describing the Midlands rebellion, the epics grew more militantly Protestant as publication and translation moved them down the social and economic ladder. Later writers such as Phineas Fletcher attempted to combine panegyric praise with apocalyptic warning, representing more forcefully the relationship between Satan and the Catholic church through tropes of monstrosity and demonic councils. Although participating in an academic rather than a courtly tradition, Milton's *In Quintum Novembris* demonstrates the same diminishing faith in the ability, and perhaps the will, of a godly monarch to preserve the Protestant nation. John Vicars's increasing emphasis upon the Midlands revolt and the characters of the plotters in his "dilations" of Herring's poem completed the transformation of this

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[65] Coke, in his speech at the trial of the lay plotters, referred twice to the story of Samson's foxes, first claiming that priests and Jesuits "are all ioyned in the tailes like *Sampsons* Foxes" (I3^{r}), and later adding the plots of Watson, Raleigh, and Clarke to his list of incidents that "all were ioyned in the endes, like *Sampsons* Foxes in the tayles, howsoeur seuered in their heads" (K^{v}). The allusion is to Judges 15.4-5, in which Samson sets loose three hundred foxes, tied tail to tail with burning torches, to destroy the Philistines' standing crops.

genre from court panegyric into godly propaganda, raising puritan struggles into an epic subject and creating an audience for a new kind of heroic poetry.

In Chapter Four, I consider annual Gunpowder sermons preached between 1605 and 1688 as well as, where possible, their reception by various audiences both in performance and print. These sermons provided ordinary individuals, even those who could not read, with the skills they needed to understand and participate in religious, political, and ultimately literary, discourse by teaching them to negotiate among messages to multiple audiences. Both a means for the ruler to display his power and authority to his subjects, and at the same time the minister's opportunity to offer counsel to his governors, sermons participated in the often contentious process of defining the English church in its relations both to the state and to its rivals, Catholicism and puritanism.

Since the number of surviving sermons does not permit analysis of each one and generalizing from a body of texts produced over such a long and tumultuous period is dangerous at best, I have selected four sermons for in-depth textual and contextual analysis.[66] John Donne, preaching at Paul's Cross in 1622, responded to both James's recent *Directions to Preachers* and Samuel Ward's controversial "Double Deliverance" cartoon by offering a methodology of listening and reading that balances obedience to royal authority with the subject's freedom to interpret. Wolfgang Iser's theory of "blanks" and "negations" may be usefully employed to examine how Donne creates spaces for interpretation

[66] This reflects Mary Morrissey's reminder that we need to study sermons not only as texts but as events ("Interdisciplinarity and the Study of Early Modern Sermons," *Historical Journal* 42.4 [1999]: 1112).

through the structure of his sermon, particularly in the later published version. Three printed responses to the 1636 sermons for which Henry Burton lost his ears (those of Archbishop Laud, Peter Heylyn, and Christopher Dow) demonstrate the Laudian administration's uneasiness with the close reading and interpretation that Burton advocates, particularly when performed by the godly. Matthew Newcomen's 1642 sermon to parliament continues the tradition of counselling governors. Responding to the prospect of a negotiated peace settlement with Charles I that he felt would threaten further ecclesiastical reform, he justifies continuing the war against the king for religious reasons. The preservation of sermon notes taken on this occasion by Walter Yonge (son of the diarist) offers us an opportunity to consider the ways in which Newcomen may have adapted his sermon for performance and print audiences. Preaching before the restored Charles II at Whitehall on 5 November 1661, Seth Ward viewed his audience not as competent interpreters, but as potential subversives to be coerced into submission. Nervous about any kind of interpretation, Ward clarifies relations between church and state by articulating the duties of both monarchs and subjects. His sermon was reprinted during the controversy over Henry Sacheverell's best-selling, and highly inflammatory, Gunpowder sermon of 1709, but the message of passive obedience had lost its effectiveness.

The final chapter demonstrates how the authorities' failure to create a univocal narrative at the plotters' trials and executions opened the door to theatrical representations that engaged with questions about ambition, religion, and rhetoric. Exploring the possibility of a dialogic relationship among three early

plays—Day's *Isle of Gulls*, Jonson's *Volpone*, and Dekker's *Whore of Babylon*—I suggest that they challenge their audiences to re-examine the events that had recently taken place on the public stage of London, and particularly the role that Robert Cecil had played in those events. Jonson's later *Catiline, his Conspiracy* reprises these questions, offering a sweeping indictment of institutional rather than merely individual corruption and its lengthy afterlife. Memory plays a crucial role in this play, beginning with the appearance of Sylla's ghost in Catiline's study. This unusual ghost, which functions differently than other stage spectres in the period, reappears in the Restoration to raise once again the problem of the relationship between religion and ambition that had not been safely buried with the plotters. The apparition highlights another absent presence in plot narratives—the women who cared for and protected the plotters, especially the priests. These women were erased from the plot narratives until scholars in the late twentieth century began to reinstate them.[67] The female characters in *Catiline* have suffered from a similar neglect through most of the play's history, despite the significance of their actions and the liberties Jonson took with his classical sources in their representation. Why did the women, particularly Anne Vaux, who had sheltered Garnett, drop out of the narrative so quickly and completely?

This dissertation cannot answer all such questions, but it probes these kinds of relationships between literary and religio-political history. In a dedication

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[67] Frances E. Dolan, *Whores of Babylon: Catholicism, Gender, and Seventeenth-Century Print Culture* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame UP, 1999); Arthur F. Marotti, *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy: Catholic and Anti-Catholic Discourses in Early Modern England* (Notre Dame.: U of Notre Dame P, 2005), Ch. 2. The popular histories of Antonia Fraser (*The Gunpowder Plot*) and Alice Hogge (*God's Secret Agents*) also draw attention to the role of women in maintaining Catholic traditions and hiding priests.

to Viscount Halifax prefacing his *Gunpowder Plot and Lord Mounteagle's Letter*, Spink seeks to justify ongoing interest in the plot. Observing the classical distinction between poetry and history, he adds,

> But the History of the Gunpowder Treason Plot rises to a higher unity. Because for a man to have read and mastered an impartial record of that deliberate and appalling scheme of 'sacreligious murder,' which happily Destiny first frustrated, and afterwards, through nemesis, her unerring executioner, signally avenged in the sight of all men, is to have witnessed, with the eye of historic imagination, a drama that is a poem in action. (viii-ix)

He asserts that "one of the greatest recorded Tragedies in the world is the History of the Gunpowder Treason Plot, regard being had to the intellectual and moral ends effected by that history's recital" (ix). Reading about this incident, like viewing tragedy, offers a kind of catharsis. Spink thus claims for the history of the plot the capacity, in the words of Sidney, to produce virtuous action in the reader. In the succeeding chapters, we shall investigate how such a claim became possible as the frustrated plot became integral to the cultural fabric and national identity of Britain.

2. "like *Sampsons* Foxes": Creating a Jacobean Myth of Deliverance

Early seventeenth-century readers did not perceive the Gunpowder Plot as an isolated incident.[68] Instead, they understood it as the climax in a series of Catholic assaults upon England and her church dating back at least as far as the Northern Rising and the papal bull against Queen Elizabeth.[69] Examining the genesis of this interpretation in the earliest official responses to the plot, I argue that between 1569 and 1605 the English church and state developed a providential account of English Protestant history through liturgies, sermons, and prose narratives celebrating deliverances from a succession of Catholic threats, and that James I seized the opportunities of the Gowrie conspiracy and the Gunpowder Plot to expand this English narrative into a British one. Upon his accession to the English throne, one of the king's challenges was to identify his reign as an extension of Elizabeth's while making it clear that he was founding a new Stuart

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[68] On this point, I differ with Robert Zaller, who argues that the Long Parliament reinterpreted the Gunpowder Plot "not as a singular act of deliverance but as the beginning of a series of trials whose crisis had only just come and whose hero was not the king but Parliament." While I agree that the civil wars shifted the focus from the king to parliament, the plot was always seen within a context of other plots and deliverances ("Breaking the Vessels: The Desacralization of Monarchy in Early Modern England," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 29.3 [1998], 765).

[69] At Henry Garnett's trial, Sir Edward Coke attributes the development of recusancy to the bull against Elizabeth. From that, he argues, followed the arrival of the Jesuits and a lengthy list of attempts upon Elizabeth's life as well as the Spanish Armada. George Carleton's *A Thankfull remembrance of Gods mercy* (1625) also begins the list of English deliverances with the bull that introduced the problem of recusancy. Detailed studies of the representations of these individual events include the following: for the Northern Rising, see Daniela Busse, "Anti-Catholic Polemical Writing on the 'Rising in the North' (1569) and the Catholic Reaction," *Recusant History* 27.1 (2004), 11-30, James K. Lowers, *Mirrors for Rebels: A Study of Polemical Literature Relating to the Northern Rebellion, 1569* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1953), and K.J. Kesselring, "'A Cold Pye for the Papistes'"; on the Gowrie conspiracy, see Gustavo Secchi Turner, "The Matter of Fact: 'The Tragedy of Gowrie' (1604) and its Contexts," (Diss. Harvard U, 2006); for the Essex revolt see Maureen King ("'Essex, that could vary himself into all shapes for a time': The Second Earl of Essex in Jacobean England," Diss. U of Alberta, 2000), esp. chs. 2 and 3.

dynasty and a British nation.[70] By inserting the Gowrie conspiracy into a series of English deliverances, James hoped to make a cultural connection between the two countries through his own person, miraculously preserved in both places.[71] As we shall see in subsequent chapters, however, overcoming resistance to political union was even more difficult than convincing his subjects to accept his narrative of the Gowrie incident.

In using the phrase "myth of deliverance" to describe this phenomenon, I rely upon Connerton's distinction between "myth" as verbal act and "ritual" as performance.[72] The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a myth as a "traditional story, typically involving supernatural beings or forces, which embodies and provides an explanation, aetiology, or justification for something such as the early history of a society, a religious belief or ritual, or a natural phenomenon" (*OED* noun, 1.a).[73] While more recent usage sometimes denigrates myth by associating

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[70] Much has been written about the representation of Elizabeth during the Jacobean period Two studies that support my own conclusions are D R Woolf, "Two Elizabeths? James I and the Late Queen's Famous Memory" (*Canadian Journal of History*, 20 [1985], 167-91) and John Watkins, *Representing Elizabeth in Stuart England*, Ch 1 Woolf argues that James and his advisors deliberately invoked Elizabeth's memory when it was politically expedient Watkins notes the way in which Stuart panegyrists and preachers linked the Armada and the Gunpowder Plot as royal deliverances but does not suggest that James encouraged such identification or observe the king's insistence upon maintaining the memory of Gowrie

[71] The most thorough study of providentialism in England during this period is Alexandra Walsham's *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999) Walsham discusses the providential interpretation of the plot on pages 245-66. Lake and Questier support Walsham's work but question her depiction of a seamless transition from medieval piety to Protestant providentialism (*Antichrist's Lewd Hat*, 320-25).

[72] I do not claim originality in the use of this phrase ("myth of deliverance"), since others have used similar phrases, however, I may be using it more self-consciously than some writers

[73] I use the word here in its ordinary dictionary sense, rather than in the more specialized sense used by archetypal critics Richard Hardin's attempt to see in the early Gunpowder poetry the creation of a particular type of myth in which Fawkes becomes the traditional scapegoat falters, I believe, because he attempts to force the story into too narrow a mould ("The Early Poetry of the Gunpowder Plot: Myth in the Making," *English Literary Renaissance* 22 [1992]: 62-79). While Frank Kermode muddies Connerton's distinction between myth and ritual, he makes a useful differentiation between myth and fiction, suggesting that myth "presupposes total and adequate

it with exaggeration or lies, these connotations are not inherent in the word. "Deliverance" had a more specialized meaning in the seventeenth century than it has today. Blair Worden explains that deliverances were considered "pleasant providences" or "mercies." These "were not random or arbitrary displays of God's sovereignty. They formed a pattern, a 'chain' or 'series', visible to the true believer" ("Providence" 63). Thus, "Providence was the thread of divine purpose which drew together the seemingly disparate events of history" (63). The story of the Gunpowder Plot, retold annually, acquired mythic status as a link in the chain of deliverances from the papal Antichrist that demonstrated God's approval of English Protestantism. As interpreter of the cryptic Monteagle letter, James could claim an instrumental role in this divine work that justified both his reign and the ongoing persecution of Catholics.

To remind his subjects continually of the providential status of his reign, James introduced a new focus upon perpetual memorialization that was paradoxically to offer later writers opportunities to critique his and his son's actions. Even in 1605, however, not all readers and listeners accepted the official version of the plot. While dissenting narratives frequently had to rely upon manuscript or oral transmission, they troubled the government enough to force it to publish its own interpretations. This evidence complicates the prevailing view, expressed by David Cressy, that the plot initially fostered a consensus that did not fragment until the 1630s. Instead, I suggest that such a consensus was illusory

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explanations of things as they are and were," while "Fictions are for finding things out, and they change as the needs of sense-making change" (*The Sense of an Ending: Studies in The Theory of Fiction with a New Epilogue* [Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000], 39). James set out to create a myth, but the plot has perhaps functioned more as a fiction.

from the beginning.[74] Thus, the Protestant narrative of the Gunpowder Plot was not simply imposed by the state and accepted by a passive populace, but developed through dialogue and debate among competing accounts.

2.1 Sermons: Obedience and Deliverance

James I's success in establishing annual commemorative sermons in England on the Gowrie and Gunpowder anniversaries has largely been taken for granted. Nevertheless, he was participating in a renegotiation of the sermon's role in the political life of the nation that had begun after the Reformation.[75] Although preaching obedience to Elizabeth and thanksgiving for her preservation were justified as religious duties in the "Homily against disobedience and wilful rebellion," as well as the sermons preached on her accession day, not all subjects recognized the church as an appropriate forum for such messages. As James's experience in Scotland after the Gowrie conspiracy and that of the Elizabethan authorities in the aftermath of the Essex revolt illustrate, preachers were sometimes uneasy about becoming commentators in political crises. Elizabeth's achievement was to create a providential interpretation of English Protestant history that justified celebrating the monarch from the pulpit, while James's was

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[74] Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells*, 152. My interpretation is supported, although indirectly, by Lori Anne Ferrell's thesis in *Government by Polemic: James I, the King's Preachers, and the Rhetorics of Conformity, 1603-1625* that many of the Gunpowder anniversary sermons include a strong anti-puritan element (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998), Ch. 3. This suggests that even among Protestants there was evidence of dissension about the holiday. See below for Catholic efforts to widen the cracks in the Jacobean consensus, particularly in John Gerard's account of the plot.

[75] For examples of public preaching on political themes in Tudor England, see W. J. Torrance Kirby, "The Public Sermon: Paul's Cross and the Culture of Persuasion in England, 1534-1570," *Renaissance and Reformation* 31.1 (2008), 3-29, and Millar MacLure, *The Paul's Cross Sermons, 1534-1642* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1958).

to secure his own place in that history through annual sermons commemorating his deliverances.

In response to the Northern Rising of 1569, the Elizabethan government assigned Matthew Parker and his chaplains the task of composing "A Homily against disobedience and wilful rebellion," which was issued separately in 1571 and 1573 before being added to the *Second Book of Homilies* in 1574. In the introduction to his critical edition of the *Homilies*, Ronald Bond calls this series "one of the most formidable pieces of verbal artillery rushed to guard an old front" (40). The six parts, to be preached on a regular schedule that ensured each would be read annually, progess from a general discussion of universal order to a condemnation of the papacy's threat to civil order. As Daniela Busse points out, the use of the "Homily" enforced obedience upon the clergy, denying them the opportunity to express sympathy for the rebels in their sermons, even as they preached obedience to the laity (14). The "Homily" addressed the specific context of the rebellion from a religious rather than a political perspective, using biblical texts to demonstrate that even tyrannical rulers must be obeyed and anti-papal rhetoric to juxtapose the ignorance and disobedience fostered by Catholicism with the enlightenment and order of Elizabeth's reign. Whereas the rebels have trampled God's word underfoot, the queen provides her subjects access to the Word. The "Homily"'s location of resistance in the Catholic church, although both Catholics and godly Protestants could be accused of favouring this doctrine,

helped to forge an association between treason and Catholicism that proved remarkably persistent, even when it required the manipulation of evidence.[76]

The annual celebration of the queen's accession day, begun shortly after the Northern Rising, provided an opportunity to link the theme of obedience with Elizabeth's deliverance of the nation from Catholicism.[77] Preaching on Titus 3 at Paul's Cross on 17 November 1583, John Whitgift emphasized the importance of obedience to secular authority, warning against the disobedience of Catholics and Anabaptists. He reminds his listeners and readers that Elizabeth

> hath not onlie deliuered vs from the crueltie and tyranny of the Bishop of Rome, but also opened vnto vs the dore of his Gospell, and as yet keepeth it open, and hath further giuen vnto vs that peace, tranquillitie and aboundance of all thinges, that of all people in the worlde wee are thought to bee the most happie, and as it were an astonishment to our enemies. (B7[v])

Similarly, for Thomas Holland in 1599, Elizabeth's accession was

> A day wherein our Nation received a new light after a fearfull and bloudy Eclipse and al countries subiect to the English Scepter. A day wherein God gaue a rare Phœnixe to rule this land. A day shining graciously to

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[76] According to John N. Wall and Terry Bunce Burgin, use of the *Homilies* declined in the early seventeenth century and the book was not reprinted between 1595 and 1623, when James's *Directions to Preachers* seems to have created a new demand for it ("'This Sermon...upon the Gun-powder day': The Book of Homilies of 1547 and Donne's Sermon in Commemoration of Guy Fawkes' Day, 1622," *South Atlantic Review* 49.2 [1984], 25).

[77] According to David Cressy, the celebration of 17 November began about the time of Pius V's bull against Elizabeth, placing its inception in the same period as that of the "Homily." This concurs with Thomas Holland's dating of the first celebrations to approximately twelve years after the queen's accession. For the celebration of this holiday see Cressy *Bonfires and Bells* (Ch. 4) and Roy Strong *Cult of Elizabeth* (Ch. 4).

> many poore prisoners who long had been wearied in cold and heavy yrons, and had beene bound in the shadow of death, vnto whome shee came as welcome as the sweet shower cometh to the thirsty land. (K2[r])

While obedience is due to any monarch, Elizabeth's subjects should willingly thank God for providing them with a godly sovereign.

Not all subjects, however, agreed with celebrating the queen in church, and even in the final years of Elizabeth's reign preachers had to defend the special service. Whitgift reproves

> those fantasticall spirits...which dissalow and mislike this manner of yerelie celebrating this day, (to giue God thankes for the great and wonderfull benefits, which we enioy thorough his goodnes by the ministerie of her Maiestie, whome it pleased him this day fiue and twentie yeares to place in the Throne of this Kingdome, and to praie vnto him for her long life and prosperitie) as though we did it superstitiouslie, or dedicated the day vnto her, as to some Sainct, whereas in deede wee doe but our duetie, and that which is most lawfull for vs to doe. (B7[r])

Although his original remarks were directed primarily towards Catholic critics, his letter "To the Christian Reader," added when the sermon was published in 1589, resituates them within increasing criticism from inside the English church. Catholic critics were also the primary audience for Thomas Holland's defence, published with his 1599 sermon, which argues for the celebration as "an office in it selfe sacred, religious, no waies repugnaunt to Gods holy worde" (H[r]). Holland describes the 17 November office as consisting of

> an exposition of Scripture chosẽ by the Minister that day as such is fitte to perswade the auditory to due obedience to her Maiesty, and to be thankfull to God for her Maiesties happy and flourishing Regiment these 43. yeeres; and to excite them to prayer vnto God long to continue her Grace amongst vs (if it be his blessed will) & to deliver her Highnesse from all malice of her enemies. (I2[v])

John Howson preached another defence in 1602 at St. Mary's Oxford in which he used examples from both the Old Testament and the early Christian church to demonstrate that civil authorities may add festivals to the ecclesiastical calendar.[78] While Howson also directs his justification mainly towards Catholics, he deplores the puritan elevation of the sermon over prayer and criticizes those who "gad" about to hear sermons.

Preaching the necessity of both thanksgiving and obedience to their auditors, these clerics also recognized their own pivotal role in this process. Whitgift tells his audience of his injunction to obedience: "you must be content to heare it, It is our dutie to preache it" (B4[v]). Nevertheless, Holland's final line of defence is that the observation

> hath not been imposed vpõ the church of England by any Ecclesiasticall decree, neyther prescribed by any Canon of the Church: but hath bin meere voluntarily continued by the religious and dutifull subiects of this

[78] The most popular of these justifications throughout this period seems to have been the institution of Purim by the secular authorities in the Book of Esther. Lancelot Andrewes preached on Esther 9.31 on 5 November 1618, and George Hakewill's pamphlet, *A Comparison betweene the Dayes of Purim and that of the Powder Plot*, was published in 1626 (Oxford, 1626, STC 12615). There are also numerous references to this institution in sermons.

> Realme in their thankfulnesse to God, and in their perfit zeale, tendring her Maiesties preservation in desiring the cōtinuance therof to Gods glory, & the good of the church and common wealth of England. (N4^{r})

In contrast to the later Gunpowder sermons, participation by both clergy and laity remained a matter of individual choice.

Although clergy may have been prepared to preach obedience to secular authority and to celebrate the triumph of Protestantism, two incidents, one in Scotland and the other in England, demonstrate that some were uneasy about preaching occasional sermons during political crises. For secular authorities, however, sermons offered an advantage over the *Homilies*. Arnold Hunt argues that sermons are essentially dialogic, preacher and audience sharing in their creation, and were therefore channels of communication rather than a means of imposing uniformity (107). Thus they could be more effective in situations, such as the aftermaths of the Gowrie conspiracy and the Essex revolt, where the authorities wished subjects to participate actively in constructing an interpretation of an event. When James VI commanded his preachers to celebrate his escape from the Gowries in their churches on 6 August 1600, they offered to thank God for the king's safety, but refused to declare the Ruthvens traitors. Beginning with David Lindsay and Patrick Galloway, the ministers were gradually won over, and eventually all but Robert Bruce were bullied into submission. In James's confrontations with the ministers, Gustavo Secchi Turner suggests that

> What really was at stake…was not what had happened between the Ruthvens and the king's party, but two much larger (and related) issues

> having to do with the royal prerogative: the right of the monarch to declare people traitors without a public trial, and the privileged position of the king as a special kind of narrator, one whose stories are always true in a religious sense, even if some particulars seem absurd or contradictory. (90)

Also under negotiation was how far the political might intrude on the pulpit.

Clerical obedience was similarly problematic in London following the Essex rising of 8 February 1601.[79] The church attempted to secure the services of preachers who had previously supported Essex, believing that their condemnation would most effectively communicate the church's repudiation of his treason, but the ministers were reluctant to accept directions, and disputes arose between religious and secular authorities.[80] William Barlow was finally persuaded to preach at Paul's Cross on the Sunday following the earl's execution after Abdias Ashton, one of the other ministers who had attended him, refused the commission. Nevertheless, Barlow admitted in his introduction to the printed sermon that he had hesitated to preach on an occasion that seemed more a matter of state than of divinity. His reluctance was clearly warranted, for he complains that he has been reviled on both secular and religious grounds. He has been accused of profiting from his Cadiz sermon, of violating canon law on this occasion by publishing a confession, and of having been imprisoned. Ironically, he rather than Essex has

[79] Arnold Hunt records an interesting connection between the two situations. Robert Bruce, the most stubborn of the Scottish preachers, had discussions with a number of the English clergy in the spring of 1601 regarding their reluctance to conform to the wishes of the authorities. Anthony Wotton and Edward Philips were, like Bruce, unwilling to declare a man a traitor from the pulpit without proof of his guilt. See "Tuning the Pulpits," 98-99.

[80] In a different context, Lake and Questier also warn against assuming unanimity among various branches of authority ("Agency, Approriation and Rhetoric under the Gallows," 64-68).

been the victim of unjust rumours. But Barlow concludes shrewdly: "I am not the principall thou aymest at, but according to the prouerbe *Faber cadit cum ferias fulonem*, it is the state thou greeuest at, not my sermon" (A8^{r-v}). This was, of course, the problem. Where was the boundary between the state and the sermon?[81]

Barlow's duties as an agent of the crown were to publicize the manner of Essex's death, since the execution had been conducted privately, and to defend the necessity of it; his duty as a preacher was to construct a religious interpretation from these facts.[82] The first part of Barlow's sermon on Matthew 21.27 focuses on obedience and sacral kingship. Even a tyrant is God's minister, and anyone who wants to kill a king or remove him from his place is guilty of both irreligion and treason. Skirting the question of whether Essex's leanings were Catholic or puritan, Barlow warns that "hee which denieth his dutie to the visible God, his prince and Soueraign, cannot performe his dutie to the God inuisible. Certainely, *a mind inclined to rebellion, was neuer well possessed of religion*" (B3^{r}). Essex, then, merely used religion as a screen for his ambition, since a truly religious person would never rebel against a lawful monarch. Before moving into the occasional part of the sermon, Barlow once again confronts his critics, making himself, like Whitgift, an *exemplum* of the duty of obedience.

In the remainder of the sermon he creates a Christian narrative of fall and redemption that justifies the earl's execution but allows his followers to hope that

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[81] Mary Morrissey argues that earlier scholars exaggerated government control of the Paul's Cross pulpit. Since most preachers spoke from notes, the authorities could not ensure that sermons would conform to their expectations. Not until Laud became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633 were ministers required to provide advance copies of their sermons ("Interdisciplinarity," 1117-18).

[82] On the rhetorical structure of political sermons at Paul's Cross, see Morrissey, "Rhetoric, Religion, and Politics in the St. Paul's Cross Sermons 1603-1625" (Diss. Cambridge U, 1998), 14-26.

his soul has been saved. While imagining the queen's death is treason, the preacher does so with impunity, demonstrating the necessity of Essex's punishment by imagining for his readers and listeners the spectacle of Elizabeth at the mercy of armed Catholics. He then describes Essex's miraculous overnight transformation from defiance to penitence. While gallows confessions could become sites of contested religious interpretation, excerpting the confession in the sermon allows Barlow to control its meaning.[83] He carefully renders the scene of execution, allowing his listeners not only to hear Essex's words but even to visualize his appearance and hear his prayers, which reinforce both his guilt and his penitence.[84] Although the sermon was not a popular success, Barlow neatly combined the themes of obedience to secular authority and the monarch's providential deliverance. His narrative of Essex's fall and redemption served a homiletic purpose while his defence of obedience satisfied the authorities. [85]

Only a few years later, Barlow was once again thrust into the spotlight on a political occasion, but this time it was by chance. When he published his 1605 Paul's Cross Gunpowder sermon, Barlow, doubtless recalling the negative reactions to his Essex sermon, inserted a preface supposed to have been written by a friend, rather than his own apology. Those who heard it, the writer says, can best tell how the audience received the 10 November sermon, while only the censorious reader can judge the written version. His immediate concern is to insist

[83] On the subject of gallows confessions, see Lake and Questier, *Antichrist's Lewd Hat*, Ch. 7.
[84] In this way, the sermon could act as a substitute for public access to the execution, enabling readers to view this event not with their own eyes but with the eyes of the state.
[85] For more detailed analyses of this sermon, see: Hunt, "Tuning the Pulpits," 100-03; Thomas S. Nowak, "Propaganda and the Pulpit: Robert Cecil, William Barlow and the Essex and Gunpowder Plots," in *The Witness of Times: Manifestations of Ideology in Seventeenth Century England*, ed. Katherine Z. Keller and Gerald Schiffhorst (Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1993), 34-52.

that Barlow was already scheduled to preach that day, and that circumstances forced him to alter both text and sermon at the last moment. While he had received detailed instructions for the Essex sermon, in this case "*the late receiuing of the* Instructions *which in that short space could not bee many*" (A3^{v}-A4^{r}) meant that he had relied chiefly on the king's speech and information received from Salisbury.[86] Thus, rather than establishing an adversarial relationship with his readers, as he had done in the Essex sermon, Barlow himself, or his friend, solicits sympathy for his discomfort on this occasion.

While many ministers took the opportunity of publication to insert what the hourglass had required them to omit in oral delivery, Barlow chose not to do so.[87] Consequently, the defence of sacral kingship, which dominated the first part of his Essex sermon, is less developed here. In opening his text, Psalm 18.50, Barlow catalogues both the number and magnitude of David's deliverances and the honours he received from God. While aid from other states always comes with conditions, God delivers assistance freely. Barlow concludes this part of the sermon by insisting, as Lancelot Andrewes was to assert in many subsequent Gunpowder sermons, that "All these of *Dauids* were great indeed, but compared to this of our *gracious King*: (the last, I trust, for a worse there cannot be) is but as

[86] Lori Anne Ferrell notes "the preface's subtle acknowledgment of the fact that the eminent personages mentioned had exercised control over his sermon by providing him with a goodly portion of the actual prose—a script for speaking to the situation at hand" (*Government by Polemic*, 76). Nowak also argues for Barlow having received detailed instructions ("Propaganda and the Pulpit" 48, 52). Nevertheless, we should keep in mind Morrissey's caution that individual preachers were responsible for determining how to fit the explication of a scriptural text to its application in a given situation.

[87] Ferrell also observes Barlow's decision not to improve upon the sermon prior to publication, noting of its introduction that "Ostentatiously excusing its hasty construction, breathless delivery, and precipitate printing, it sets up the expectation of a thrillingly immediate and raggedly emotional performance" (*Government* 75). Mark Nicholls observes the same desire for immediacy in the style of the "King's Book" ("Discovering Gunpowder Plot" 404).

a *minium* to a *large*, whether we consider therein, eyther the *Plot it selfe*, or the *Con-comitance* with it, or the *Consequences* of it" (C2^{v}).[88]

In the application, Barlow faces the task of creating a narrative of the conspiracy. Whereas it was relatively easy for him to shape the Essex material into an archetypal Christian plot, this incident is less tractable. There are no adequate classical parallels, not only for the cruelty of the design but also for the status of the perpetrators. While Pharaoh and Herod were kings and tyrants, Fawkes was merely "*vermine* of the basest sorte" working underground like a mole (D^{r}). His low social status and impenitence prevent him from being tragic and so force Barlow to make him demonic. Fawkes is worse than Satan, "for this Diuill, with his traine would at once haue pulled downe all the glorious *Starres*, both fixed, and erraticall (those that are fastened to the Court, and those which come and goe as they are called and dismissed) yea euen the Sunne & the Moone themselues, not from heauen to earth, but to the bottomlesse pit, as much as in him lay" (C4^{r}).[89] After reading Fawkes's confession, Barlow reiterates, in a dazzling display of accumulatio, his astonishment that

> this *darkenes*, this *blindenes*, this *prophanes*, this *superstition*, this *weakenes*, this *lawles fury*, had with this blowing vp bin blown in & ouer this whole nation, a thing which neither the greatest Potentate of the world, with his strongest inuasion, nor the most dangerous rebel, though

[88] Possibly the most extreme example of this desire to overgo biblical examples comes in a 5 November sermon preached by John Rawlinson at St. Mary's Oxford in 1610 in which, taking as his text Luke 22.48, the preacher claims that the Gunpowder Plot was a worse treason than Judas's betrayal of Christ. His inspiration may have been the day's gospel reading from Matthew 27 (*The Romish Judas* [London, 1611], STC 20775).

[89] Northampton repeated the analogy in the expanded version of his speech at Garnett's trial (*A True and Perfect Relation*, Bb2^{v}).

> most popular & powerfull, coulde haue brought to passe after many repulses, & in many years, namely, to take away at once, *the hope of succession*, the *Oracles* of *wisedome*, the *Chariots of* Israel, the *Beau-peeres* of *Learning*, the *buttresses* of *strength*, the *guardians* of *iustice*, the *glory of the Nobilitie*, and in one word, the *Flower* of the whole *Kingdome*. (D2^{r})

Neither an Essex nor an Armada could have accomplished the destruction that a man of inferior birth has almost effected simply by acquiring a supply of gunpowder and threatening to set a match to it.[90] The only secular genre that can account for Fawkes's low social status and for the plot's failure is tragicomedy; the only way to fit the plot into a religious narrative is to use the language of apocalypse. Once again, Barlow has the privilege of imagining the ruler's death, but this time he creates a spectacle not of individual fear and death but of national collapse—a kingless nation open to foreign invasion or a domestic usurper.

Since the main theme of the sermon is the magnitude of the deliverance, however, Barlow must describe the horror of the plot. Taking his cues from James's parliamentary speech, he emphasizes the providential nature of the discovery, the personal role of the king, and the benefits of having a royal family. James's interpretation of the Monteagle letter, which Barlow reads, is the first

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[90] For a history of late medieval and early modern attitudes towards gunpowder, see J.R. Hale, "Gunpowder and the Renaissance: An Essay in the History of Ideas" in *From the Renaissance to the Counter-Reformation: Essays in Honor of Garrett Mattingly*, ed. Charles H. Carter (New York: Random House, 1965), 113-44. A literary perspective is offered by Jack Craze, who focuses on the implications of the discovery of gunpowder by the rebel angels in *Paradise Lost* ("Balls of Missive Ruin: Milton and the Gunpowder Revolution," *Cambridge Quarterly* 26 [1997], 325-43). Milton also wrote an epigram "In Inventorem Bombardae" ("On the Inventor of Gunpowder"), possibly at the same time as *In Quintum Novembris*.

evidence of God's providential care. The second is that Fawkes did not leave the cellar after the first search "but when the Priuie watch came in the night, he was the first man that appeared at the dore, as if God himselfe had presented him vnto their handes, and also vpon the rest of the Cõspirators" (E^r). The king's personal escape represents that of the entire nation, but the royal family and many other people were also delivered. Calling a kingdom with a childless king pitiable verges on disrespect to the late queen, but Barlow obviously wants to emphasize the benefits of a stable succession. He also makes a specific connection between James's English and Scottish deliverances. After almost being killed before birth in Scotland, he was "dismissed from those parts with a dreadfull farewell of a *desperate Treacherie* and entertained among vs with a Conspiracie vnnatural &as dangerous" (D4^v).[91] In these two sermons, then, Barlow seems to have developed a strategy for preaching on political occasions that allows him to fit these events into both religious and secular narrative structures and so both to practice clerical obedience and to defend civil obedience.

Although this model for celebrating royal deliverances and enjoining obedience from the pulpit had largely been constructed in the Elizabethan period, the annual memorial sermon was James's creation.[92] The commemorative institution of Gowrie in Scotland might be explained by the king's desire to exact compliance from the presbyterians, but this rationale fails adequately to account

[91] Barlow is referring to the Main and Bye plots, which were discovered even before James's coronation.

[92] There was no annual memorial for the defeat of the Armada. The queen's accession day sermons indirectly celebrated Elizabeth's deliverances, but the dates of these events were not memorialized. The only sermon I have found to date that celebrates a specific deliverance was preached by John Rainolds at Oxford on the discovery of the Parry plot (*A Sermon vpon part of the eighteenth Psalm*, 1586, STC 20621.5).

for his insistence upon transferring the celebration to England.[93] Gowrie sermons continued to be preached annually at court, at important pulpits such as Paul's Cross, and in parishes with educated clergy for the remainder of James's lifetime. After the Gunpowder Plot, he introduced regular Tuesday sermons at court in recognition of his deliverances from two conspiracies on the same day of the week, as well as adding 5 November to the public preaching calendar.

Lori Anne Ferrell suggests that the Gunpowder Plot had a "rejuvenating but obliterating effect" (88) on the Gowrie sermons as the English event predominated over the Scottish one that the sermons were intended to commemorate.[94] While she sees this as an unintended consequence of the greater

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[93] See below for an account of how quickly James initiated an English commemorative service for the Gowrie conspiracy. Peter McCullough notes that the "Privy Council had rationalized the annual English observance of the Scottish deliverance in terms of England's partaking the fruits of it in the person of their new king" (*Sermons at Court: Politics and Religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean Preaching* [Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998], 118) and quotes a passage from Cardwell's *Documentary Annals* in which the Council declared that as a result of James's succession, "we are now made partakers of the same blessings, and of the benefit thereof preceeding equally with his subjects of the Scottish nation" (2.59). This theme appears in a number of the sermons discussed in Ch. 4.

[94] In the following analysis of Gowrie sermons, all of the standard caveats regarding sermon evidence apply. As Godfrey Davies pointed out many years ago, only a small percentage of the sermons preached survive, and those that were printed are probably not a representative sample ("English Political Sermons, 1603-1640," *HLQ* 1 [1939], 1-22). In addition, we seldom know the relationship between preached and printed sermon, since preachers usually wrote out their sermons in full only when they decided to publish (John Sparrow, "John Donne and Contemporary Preachers: Their Preparation of Sermons for Delivery and for Publication," *Essays and Studies* 16 [1930], 145-78). Since the king was frequently hunting at this time of year, sermons were preached before him in a variety of venues. Surviving examples include: seven recorded as preached to the king by Lancelot Andrewes (1606, 1607, 1608, 1610, 1614, 1615, 1616 and 1622) as well as one prepared for but not preached to the king (1623), and an undated one by John Hacket. (For problems with determining which of Andrewes's sermons were actually preached before the king, see McCullough: *Sermons at Court*, 152-53; "Making Dead Men Speak: Laudianism, Print, and the Works of Lancelot Andrewes, 1626-1642," *The Historical Journal* 41 [1998], 401-24.) Other printed sermons include: four preached at Paul's Cross, *Jacob's Great Day of Trouble* (John Milward, 1607), *The Kings Towre* (Samuel Purchas, 1622), *The Temple* (Thomas Adams, 1624), *A Sermon Preached at Pauls Cross* (Barten Holyday, 1625); three at St. Mary's Oxford, one by John Randal (1624) and two undated sermons by Isaac Singleton (*The Downfall of Shebna*); two preached at Croyden by Daniel Featley ("Traitor's Guerdon" 1618 and "The Lord Protector of Princes" 1620 [*Clavis Mystica*, 1636]); and three preached elsewhere, *The Barren Trees Doome* (Bartholomew Parsons, undated), *The Lot or Portion of the Righteous* (Richard

appeal exerted by the Gunpowder Plot, it may also result from James's deliberate linking of these occasions. As Ferrell observes, the post-1605 court sermons on 5 August make frequent references to Gunpowder Plot, sometimes obscuring the distinctions between the two events.[95] Morrissey, however, suggests that court preachers offered Gowrie less attention because there was no need to describe the events of the plot to the king and his immediate circle, while Paul's Cross preachers enjoyed exploiting the inherent drama of the incident for their less informed audiences ("Presenting" 118-19). Nevertheless, since sermons preached in parish churches offer much shorter applications than those delivered at Paul's Cross, and concentrate on deliverance and thanksgiving rather than describing the conspiracy, Ferrell seems to be correct that preachers were uncomfortable with the Gowrie narrative. One can, in fact, sense an almost palpable relief on the part of some ministers when they pass from their obligatory references to the Scottish conspiracy to the relatively safer ground of the English one.[96] What I am suggesting, however, is that by drawing parallels between them in his 9 November speech to Parliament, by initiating Tuesday court sermons to commemorate them, and by emphasizing the coincidence that both had taken

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Web, 1615), and, *Gowries Conspiracy* (John Prideaux, undated). As in the case of the Gunpowder sermons, additional sermons may exist in manuscript and in printed collections.

[95] Commentators on Andrewes's sermons invariably conflate the two sets of sermons. See: McCullough, *Sermons at Court*, 116-25; Debora Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics, and the Dominant Culture* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1990), 141-50; Nicholas Lossky, *Lancelot Andrewes the Preacher (1555-1626)* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 292-325; Maurice F. Reidy, *Bishop Lancelot Andrewes, Jacobean Court Preacher: A Study in Early Seventeenth-Century Religious Thought* (Chicago: Loyola UP, 1955), Ch. 8; Paul A. Welsby, *Lancelot Andrewes, 1555-1626* (London: SPCK, 1964), Ch. 5. Although references to Gowrie are less common in Gunpowder sermons, they appear with some regularity.

[96] Daniel Featley seems to be an exception. Preaching before a select audience, including Bishop John King in 1618, he seems to have enjoyed recounting the details of the plot in both of his surviving sermons.

place on the fifth day of a month, James had deliberately blurred the lines between the two events and had done so to link his own deliverances with Elizabeth's.[97]

The extent to which the two occasions came to be understood as part of the same sequence of attacks on Protestant England can be seen in a number of the Gowrie sermons. In his 1615 sermon at St. Mary's Oxford, Isaac Singleton links the Gowrie conspiracy to the later Gunpowder Plot, then turns back to Parry's plot against Elizabeth to demonstrate that traitors always have great confidence in their plots, thus integrating James's deliverances with Elizabeth's. Preaching at Paul's Cross in 1622, Samuel Purchas also emphasizes continuity between Elizabeth and James. Elizabeth was the sun that never set, since James immediately appeared. The king almost persuaded Gowrie to become a Christian, just as he acted "beyond all reason, and humane capacitie, aboue, yea, againste Arte, to construe those words in the Letter, to bring to light the abstrusest worke of Darknesse, the Masterpiece of Treason, and Monster-prize of Sathanicall Stratagems" (63), the Gunpowder Plot. Here Purchas virtually conflates the two plots.[98] Later in the sermon he reviews James's earlier deliverances as a foetus and a child, and praises once again his ability to decipher the "mysticall *writing*" (74) of the Monteagle letter. August is notable both for this deliverance of James from the Gowries and the deliverance of England from the invasion of the Armada, while November is famous for the deliverance from the Gunpowder Plot

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[97] McCullough notes that James may have originally intended his deliverance to be celebrated publicly every Tuesday, but the Privy Council only approved an annual celebration. Nevertheless, McCullough provides several examples demonstrating that preachers on other Tuesdays alluded to the plot (*Sermons at Court*, 117).

[98] The source for Purchas's assertion that James virtually converted Gowrie is unknown to me. It does not appear in the official account or in any of the other sermons I have read. Gowrie is generally represented as a crypto-Catholic rather than an atheist.

and Elizabeth's accession. The annual calendar of deliverances thus obscures the chronological distinctions between the two reigns.[99]

The integration of the Gowrie conspiracy into this sequence required recasting Gowrie as a crypto-Catholic. In an undated sermon preached at St. Mary's Oxford, John Prideaux reiterates that the papists have not been quiet in the reigns of either Elizabeth or James, and "It is therefore onely *Gods* extraordinary *protection*, that hath hitherto freed him [James] from such apparant and remedilesse dangers. The *Gowries* had dispatched him; *Watson* and his complices had surprised him, the *Powderplot* had blowne vp him and all his, if this mercy of God onely had not preuented the *diuels malice*" (12-13). In the application of his 1615 sermon, Isaac Singleton suggests that while Gowrie conferred secretly with Jesuits and was popular with the people, his chief counsellor was the devil. The continuity between the plots against Elizabeth and James could also be used to offer advice to the king. Preaching at Paul's Cross in 1607, John Milward urges James to banish priests and Jesuits and the magistrates to help preserve the king and the state by ridding the country of "these snakes" (G2^r).[100] He concludes by reminding James that God preserved Elizabeth from many treasonous plots only because she maintained true religion. These assaults on the nation have continued since Elizabeth's death, "But aboue all, from that same Salt-*Peter* Treason, or

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[99] Connerton's observation that revolutions almost invariably involve changes to the calendar is of interest here. While one could certainly not call the transition from the Tudors to the Stuarts a revolution, James's insistence on adding annual events to the calendar at the beginning of his reign suggests an attempt to emphasize change along with continuity (*How Societies Remember*, 6).

[100] The equation between Catholics and snakes is a prominent feature of literature on the Gunpowder Plot, again emphasizing the connection between the two plots.

Peters salt Treason of Rome" (K3^{v}). God will not continue to protect England unless James uses harsh measures against Catholics.[101]

But some preachers also observe that the Gowries' failure to kill James has preserved England as a Protestant nation. Singleton concludes that had James not survived to become king of England, Catholics could have conquered the country and deprived the people of the spiritual food of the gospel. Similarly, John Randal concludes his 1624 sermon at St. Mary's Oxford by reminding his listeners and readers that if the Gowrie conspiracy had succeeded, not only England, but also Scotland, Ireland, and Germany would have suffered. Daniel Featley opens his 1618 sermon at Croyden by observing that 5 August marks the birth of King Oswald, who first united the crowns of England and Scotland, as well as James's second birth. Despite his initial difficulties with the Scottish preachers, then, in England James succeeded in weaving together the strands of Elizabethan history with his own history in Scotland to create a personal unification of the countries even when political union eluded him.[102]

Lancelot Andrewes's court sermons on the occasion perhaps best demonstrate the yoking of the themes of obedience and deliverance in the thanksgiving sermons. Critics have frequently accused Andrewes of flattering the king excessively on the anniversaries of both Gowrie and Gunpowder plots by

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[101] This is a frequent theme in post-plot literature, which I will discuss in the context of Anglo-Latin epic in the next chapter. It recurs also in Gunpowder sermons, most notably John King's sermon at court on 5 November 1608 (*A Sermon Preached at Whitehall the 5. Day of November. Ann. 1608*). For commentary on this sermon, see Ferrell, *Government by Polemic*, 97-104.
[102] This is not to assert that James exercised direct control over these sermons. Clearly at times, such as the sermons against the Spanish and French matches, preachers acted in defiance of royal policies. I am suggesting instead that these preachers had accepted the Gowrie plot as part of English history.

endorsing divine right political theory.[103] Nicholas Lossky offers a divergent opinion on this subject, arguing that the events themselves "only serve as a pretext for the preacher to call his congregation to an ever greater awareness of God" (292). Andrewes, according to Lossky, sees these events as symbols of the eternal deliverance available through Christ's resurrection, an idea most clearly expressed in his 5 November 1617 sermon on the *Benedictus*. Thus, Lossky concludes that the understanding of kingship in these sermons is not so much political as religious, containing "perhaps, elements of a theology of man" in which "he who fulfils on earth the real function of king must be the perfect example in order to receive the eternal crown, which he will share with all those who have been entrusted to him and for whom he will have to answer before the supreme Judge" (325). Debora Shuger proposes a synthesis of these views, suggesting that Andrewes is concerned not with political theory but with political theology. For her, the Gowrie and Gunpowder sermons not only "reiterate the basic arguments of absolutist theory, they entwine this with an extraordinary and persistent concern over the location of 'sacredness' in history and social structure" (142). This issue can be seen throughout these sermons most clearly in the focus on the king's anointing. Andrewes "thus treats the Gowrie Conspiracy and Gunpowder

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[103] This is the opinion of Reidy, who argues that in his later works Andrewes "taught a fairly consistent theory of divine-right monarchy. Kingship was established by God; kings rule therefore by divine right; their persons are sacred; they may not be resisted; to them by that same divine right subjects owe allegiance and obedience; over kings God exercises a special protection" (*Bishop Lancelot Andrewes*, 188). Welsby, like Reidy, argues that in his earlier works Andrewes saw monarchy as a post-lapsarian necessity rather than the perfect will of God but notes that "by the time he became a bishop he had accepted wholeheartedly the full doctrine of divine right" and that this attitude is expressed in his Gowrie and Gunpowder sermons (*Lancelot Andrewes 1555-1626*, 203). McCullough focuses on the court context of the sermons, particularly Andrewes's rejection of sermon-centred piety and complaints that the occasions were celebrated with revelry rather than prayer. He also notes that the Gunpowder sermons particularly served as an index of anti-Catholic sentiment at court (*Sermons at Court*, 116-25).

Plot not as part of the ideological and political struggle between the papacy and the Crown but as part of a cosmic battle between good and evil, with God taking an active role on the English side" (146).[104]

What has perhaps been neglected in these discussions is the context in which Andrewes was working out the boundaries between secular and sacred, politics and theology. As we have seen from the sermons preached on previous occasions, the political sermon was both an injunction to obedience and an act of obedience on the part of the preacher, who provided an example for his listeners. Juxtaposed with those of other preachers on similar occasions Andrewes's representations of sacral kingship appear less extreme. Many other preachers also pointed to the anointing of the king as evidence that he was God's representative. Although obedience even to a tyrant could be successfully defended on scriptural grounds, representing the monarch as God's instrument in maintaining English Protestantism helped the preacher to justify the need for obedience. The king's deliverances provided irrefutable evidence of God's providential care both for him and the nation. James's undeniable achievement was to ensure that on two occasions each year throughout the kingdom, and on every Tuesday at court, his subjects were reminded of their duty to obey a monarch who had been preserved by God to continue the work that Elizabeth had begun.

2.2 Liturgies: Thanksgiving and Vengeance

[104] For a more general discussion of absolutist theory in relation to preaching in this period, see Shuger's essay "Donne's Absolutism" in *The Oxford Handbook of John Donne* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011), 690-703.

While many parishes lacked trained ministers who could preach occasional sermons, almost everyone in England participated in the liturgies of the church.[105] During the Elizabethan period, the practice of ordering special prayers on political occasions became increasingly common, although the only annual celebration was the queen's accession day. As a political instrument, liturgy offered the advantages of both inclusiveness and active participation. In her studies of the English prayer book, Ramie Targoff argues that church authorities justified communal prayer by insisting upon the reliability of external signs in mirroring inward devotion. At the same time, "mainstream Renaissance Protestants frequently imagined performative behavior to have a causal as well as reflective relation to the internal self: according to such accounts, the individual's assumption of external gestures prompted the corresponding internal conditions" ("Performance" 60). Therefore, "Behind the church's emphasis on external conformity lies its commitment to the transformative power of practice" (60). While Targoff is mainly concerned with individual devotion, Connerton argues that the shared and repeated speech acts and gestures of liturgy also reinforce

[105] For the availability of the Book of Common Prayer, see Judith Maltby, *Prayer Book and People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), esp. 24-30. Although Maltby focuses on a period later than this chapter, her work suggests that the book was fairly widely available to individuals as well as churches. Individuals who failed to attend services conducted according to the Prayer Book faced recusancy fines until 1689 except during the Interregnum. The expedient of occasional conformity makes it difficult to determine how widespread recusancy was, but John Coffey claims that it increased during James's reign due to laxer enforcement of the penal laws, citing statistics for the village of Egton (*Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* [Harlow: Pearson, 2000], 119). Wealthier families could shelter themselves from prosecution by having the husband attend church while the wife stayed home and raised the children in the Catholic faith.

communal identity and that such rituals resist change over time.[106] Despite Connerton's emphasis upon liturgy as performance, however, liturgy also participates in the creation of myth through its use of language. As special liturgies of deliverance developed, a narrative emerged in which James became successor not only to Elizabeth but to the Old Testament kings of Israel.

For rulers, prayer was a double-edged sword. In *The True Law of Free Monarchies*, James identifies prayer as the subject's only legitimate means of resisting an evil or tyrannical ruler. Conversely, by insisting that his subjects routinely pray for him, the monarch could encourage the development, as well as the demonstration, of obedience and loyalty. The first special service of prayers for Elizabeth was published in 1578 for use on the anniversary of her accession, and occasional liturgies were drawn up in 1585 and 1594 to offer thanksgiving for her deliverances from Parry and Lopez's plots.[107] While participation in these liturgies was not legislated, the "Admonition to the Reader" in 1594 concludes with the hint of a threat: the "duetie of praying and thankesgiuing there is no doubt, but euery true hearted *English* man and faithfull *Subiect* will both priuately and publickely from the bottome of his heart performe" (A4[v]).

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[106] Connerton argues that the use of collective pronouns plays a major role in this process (*How Societies Remember*, 58-59). Ramie Targoff observes that while the 1549 prayer book used both "I" and "we," the 1552 text increased the use of the plural. She suggests that the "shift in pronouns that we find in the 1552 text reflects a more pervasive revision: prayers once read by the priest alone are now presented as congregational utterances" (*Common Prayer: The Language of Public Devotion in Early Modern England* [Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2001], 29). Timothy Rosendale argues that Targoff and Richard Helgerson (*Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* [Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992], Ch. 6) overemphasize the coercive potential of liturgy, which by its nature promotes order and uniformity (*Liturgy and Literature in the Making of Protestant England*, [Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007], 34-69).

[107] The 1594 service was reissued with revisions in 1598. I have been unable to obtain a copy of this version.

These services reinforced the connection between treason and false religion established in the *Homilies* and sermons, while insisting upon the providential preservation of the queen's person as the means by which her subjects retained access to the gospel. The directions for the use of the 1585 service, which was to be read in the diocese of Winchester on the occasion of Elizabeth's deliverance from Parry's plot, ordered that the minister preach a sermon declaring "the authoritie and Maiestie of Princes," and "how streight dutie of obedience is required of all good and Christian subiects, and what a greeuous and heynous thing it is both before God and man traiterouslie to seeke their destruction, and the shedding of their blood" (A^{v}). The service was distinctive in providing for the reading of an extract from Parry's confession. When juxtaposed with the full confession as it appears in the official pamphlet detailing the conspiracy, this excerpt appears to have been chosen to emphasize the Jesuits' role and to omit Parry's insistence that he would have preferred to improve the lot of Catholics in England by non-violent means.[108] Although ambition was the ultimate source of his fall, the idea of killing the queen only occurred to him after his conversion to Rome, and he did not proceed until both a papal ambassador and a Jesuit had assured him that he could meritoriously commit the deed. The prayer asks that "y cruel spirits of Antichrist that seeke the subuersion of the Gospel, maie by the hand of thy iustice, feele what it is to set to sale for money the

[108] For the official account, see *A True and Plaine Declaration of the Horrible Treasons, practised by William Parry the traitor, against the Queenes Maiestie* (London, 1585, STC 19342a). There is also a shorter and much more virulently anti-Catholic account by Phillip Stubbes, *The Intended Treason of Doctor Parrie: and his complices, against the Queenes most excellent Maiestie* (London, 1585, STC 23396). See discussion below.

innocent bloud of thine annointed Princes, which thou hast prepared and set vp, to be the nurses and protectors of thy truth." (A4^{v})[109] The service extrapolates from a single example to make the entire Catholic church complicit in the attempt to subvert the English Protestant state.

The 1594 service is unusual first in addressing a general rather than a specifically clerical audience in its "Admonition to the Reader." This introduction emphasizes the providential protection God provides to kings and kingdoms. The English owe special thanks to God for placing Elizabeth over them, preserving her realm from both internal and external threats, and protecting her person from traitors and conspirators. In contrast to the 1585 service, this one does not even name the individual conspirators, since they are now regarded merely as pawns of Spain and the Catholic church. All these treasons "haue they beene continually proiected, caried forwarde, and managed by idolatrous *Priestes* and *Iesuites* his creatures, the very loathsome *Locusts* that crawle out of the bottomlesse pitte" (A4^{r}).[110] The priests and Jesuits are aided by kings who use Catholicism to mask their own ambitions, and the list of conspiracies that follows reinterprets history to demonstrate this principle. In the Northern Rebellion, the pope sent the priest, Morton, to stir the earls up to rebellion, while Cardinal Allan has boasted that he

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[109] For the identification of the Pope with Antichrist, see Peter Lake, "The Significance of the Elizabethan Identification of the Pope as Antichrist" (*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 31 [1980], 161-78) and Anthony Milton *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), Ch. 2.

[110] The 1594 plots included that of Lopez and his Portuguese conspirators and one by two Englishmen, Edmund York and Richard Williams, who were recruited by William Stanley and other exiles at Brussels. A Jesuit named Holt was accused of encouraging these men to commit treason and administering the sacrament to them. For an account of these events, see William Cecil's *A True Report of Sundry horrible conspiracies* (London, 1594, STC 7603), published anonymously. The depiction of the Jesuits as locusts becomes common in Gunpowder Plot texts, the most notable example being Phineas Fletcher's Latin poem *Locustae*.

and other Catholics incited the king of Spain to send the Armada. Spain and Rome are acting in concert to re-Catholicize England, but only the "wilfully malicious" (A4^{r}) can fail to see that God protects Protestantism.

In the service itself, three prayers for the queen's preservation follow a series of Psalms proceeding from invocation to assurance. The first prayer asserts that God preserves kings from "the malice of Satan & his wicked ympes" (C3^{r}), making an implicit connection between Satan and the Catholic church. The prayer once again charges Elizabeth with the preservation of Protestantism, asking: "O Lorde, dissipate and confound all practises, conspiracies, and treasons against her, against this realme of England, and against the trueth of thine holy word here taught and professed" (C3$^{r\text{-}v}$). This prayer, however, progresses beyond earlier ones in the pursuit of vengeance, imploring:

> Smite our enemies (good Lorde) vpon the cheeke-bone, breake the teeth of the vngodly, frustrate their counsels, and bring to nought all their deuises. Let them fall into the pit, that they haue prepared for vs: Let a sudden destruction come vpon them vnawares: and the net that they haue laide for others priuily, let it catch themselues, that they may fal into their owne mischiefe. (C3^{v})

The second prayer asks God to make the Queen's enemies either repent or perish. These services, then, promoted a providential Protestant reading of Elizabeth's deliverances in which the Jesuits, acting in concert with Spain, became Satan's instruments.

In addition to the annual accession day prayers, these occasional services provided James with precedents for establishing services of prayer and thanksgiving. What is perhaps most surprising about the creation of an English Gowrie service, however, is the priority that James accorded it. On 12 July1603, the Privy Council instructed Archbishop Whitgift to devise a form of thanksgiving according to his own "Judgment and Wisdom" (Strype 562). He requested assistance from his subordinate bishops on the following day, but suggested that

> in the meantime, and for the speedier Dispatch of your Letters, I think it fit, that some Order be observed in this Action as was used upon the 17th of *November* in our late Sovereign's Time; with special Charge, that in every particular Church there be a Sermon and Service, with a Declaration of the great Blessing of God for his Majesties Deliverance from that Danger, with hearty Prayer to God for the Continuance of his Goodnes towards him and us; and to the like effect. (562)

Perhaps the greatest advantage of using the 17 November service as a model was its emphasis upon continuity. The three kings presented as parallels with Elizabeth all followed their father David's example in religion, as Elizabeth followed Henry VIII by re-establishing the Protestant church. The narratives of these kings emphasize that correct worship preserves the monarch, the state, and true religion. Jehosophat was able to keep peace in the land because neighbouring kings feared his God; Hezekiah saved himself from death and Israel from the Assyrians through his prayers. Both Hezekiah and Josiah purged the country of idols, and Josiah sent away the priests of Baal, as Elizabeth had ordered priests

and Jesuits to leave England. Nevertheless, Josiah's story also warns of God's punishment for disobedience to the laws. Similarly, the Psalms chosen—21, 85, and 124—emphasize God's favour to his chosen nation, but 85 also sounds a warning against angering God. The service thus insists that the fates of the monarch and the nation are interwoven and that divine favour is conditional upon the people's obedience. The second lesson is Romans 13, which reinforces the requirement for obedience to secular authority.[111] If the church wishes to identify James as Elizabeth's rightful successor, there can be little better way than by inserting him into this sequence of devout monarchs. In addition, the use of a familiar order of service associated with a popular predecessor may itself have offered some degree of continutiy and authority.[112]

By later that year, a new service had been drafted and published. While it incorporated the Psalms from the 17 November liturgy, as well as retaining the Romans 13 reading, the prayers added some features that distinguished James from Elizabeth. The service is notable first for its emphasis upon the royal family, demonstrating that while James wished to be identified with Elizabeth, he also sought to emphasize the stability of the new monarchy through his provision of heirs. The first prayer for the king makes the association between James and Jacob that was cemented in the Gowrie narrative's description of his wrestling

[111] There are numerous discussions of the importance of Romans 13 in Renaissance injunctions to secular obedience. See the sources cited by Glen Bowman in "Elizabethan Catholics and Romans 13: A Chapter in the History of Political Polemic," *Journal of Church and State* 47.3 (2005), 531-32 (notes 3-5).

[112] Roy Strong points out that Edmund Bunny produced an alternate service of prayers for the queen entitled *Certaine prayers and other godly exercises for the seventeenth of November*. This service used the same readings but inserted commentaries designed to promote celebration in the north (*Cult of Elizabeth*, 122).

with Alexander Ruthven (D2^{v}).[113] Like the biblical Jacob, James wanted to be seen as a patriarch, not only of a family, but of a nation. The second prayer for the king was evidently based upon that for Elizabeth in the 1594 service, but whereas the earlier prayer is inclusive, identifying Elizabeth's enemies with those of her people, this one emphasizes the king's personal deliverance. The second of the alternate prayers again savours of vengeance, thanking God that

> in thy iustice diddest thou returne vpon the heads and hearts of those deuilish and disloyall conspirators, the due reuenge of such treasonable attempts, spilling their blood like water vpon the earth, who thought to spill the blood of thine annoynted, and leauing their slaughtered carkesses a worthy spectacle of thy dreadfull iudgements, and their most impious designes. (G2^{v})

Although preachers frequently made Gowrie a crypto-Catholic, the liturgy was more cautious, locating the conspiracy within a general discourse of obedience.

This service provided the outline for the Gunpowder liturgy, contributing to the conflation of these two events through the reading of the same lessons, gospel, and epistle; however, the selection of Psalms, all of which plead for God to destroy the psalmist's enemies, strengthens the theme of vengeance. Psalms 35 and 68 ask for evildoers to be scattered like dust or smoke, while 69 implores: "Let them bee wiped out of the booke of the liuing: and not be written among the

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[113] At least one anonymous writer exploited this parallel in the wake of the Gunpowder Plot. The author of the pamphlet *Lucta Iacobi* (1607) parallels James's wrestling with Alexander Ruthven with Jacob's wrestling with God in Genesis. The parallel is rather strained at times, but evidently intended as a compliment to the king followed by a sting in the tail as the author warns James against being too clement to Catholics. See Ch. 3 for further discussion of this pamphlet.

righteous" (B3^{v}). As in the Elizabethan service, the readings equate the monarch's preservation with those of the church and the gospel. While religious issues were necessarily submerged in the Gowrie liturgy, the circumstances of the Gunpowder Plot encouraged an outburst of rhetoric against "Popish treacherie" (D2^{r}). The first prayer thanking God for the deliverance asks him to "infatuate their counsels, and roote out that Babylonish and Anti-christian Sect, which say of Jerusalem, Downe with it, downe with it, euen to the ground" (D2^{v}). But this time God is to be assisted by the secular authorities, who are urged "with iudgement & iustice to cut off these workers of iniquitie, (whose Religion is Rebellion, whose faith is faction, whose practise is murthering of soules and bodies) and to root them out of the confines and limits of this kingdome" (D2^{v}). While Catholics are to vanish like dust, the deliverance is "worthy to be written in a pillar of Marble, that wee may euer remember to praise thee for the same, as the fact is worthy a lasting monument, that all posteritie may learne to detest it" (D2^{r}). Since associating forgetfulness with ingratitude to God might not have been sufficient incentive for all subjects to participate in prayers on 5 November, attendance was legislated and the Act of Parliament read each year.

The liturgical tradition into which James inserted the Gunpowder thanksgiving, then, had already developed through the practice of annual celebrations of Protestant monarchy and occasional thanksgivings for Elizabeth's deliverances from danger. Increasingly these services identified the enemies of the English church as the pope and the Jesuits, and the liturgies offered more insistent calls for vengeance. Using the Elizabethan liturgies as models for the Gowrie

service allowed James to graft thanksgiving for his reign onto the tradition of praising Elizabeth. By basing the Gunpowder memorial on the Gowrie service, the Jacobean church again succeeded in associating the two events in the minds of English Protestant subjects. But the real innovation introduced by James was making his deliverances, both English and Scottish, annual celebrations of British Protestantism. Like the sermons, these liturgies became part of the fabric of Jacobean life, contributing to the developing narrative in which James's reign looked back to the Old Testament and ahead to the apocalypse.

2.3 Protestant Narratives: Romance, Tragedy, and Tragicomedy

While sermons and liturgies offered some scope for creating narratives, the most enduring stories of the plot arose from the pamphlet accounts authorized by the state. When read in isolation, these pamphlets seem to reflect the imposition of a uniform interpretation upon the plot's discovery and the plotters' trials, but we should remember that they participated in ongoing dialogues with dissenting accounts, frequently transmitted orally or in manuscript. The myth of the Gunpowder Plot was thus created not by the state alone but through negotiations between groups within the state and in other nations.

Once again, James and his counsellors sought continuity with the past by modelling their texts upon accounts of earlier events, including the Gowrie conspiracy. At the same time, they were faced with an incident that did not readily accommodate itself to existing narrative structures. The complexity of their own investigations also resulted in an unprecedented time lapse between the discovery

of the plot and the trials and executions of the perpetrators.[114] These two factors resulted in a narrative that was generically fractured, creating discontinuities that their opponents could, and did, exploit.

In his study of the "King's Book" containing James I's 9 November 1605 speech to Parliament and the anonymous "Discourse of the Maner of the Discouery of this Late Intended Treason," Mark Nicholls suggests that "as investigations into Essex's revolt informed and guided the subsequent exploration of the Gunpowder Plot, so Bacon's *Declaration* set the pattern in 1605" ("Discovering" 400). Nicholls is undoubtedly correct that the official account of the Essex rebellion informed the narrative of the Gunpowder Plot, but I believe that both Bacon and the author of the "Discourse" (probably James I) were working within an established genre that dated back at least to Dr. Parry's conspiracy against Elizabeth.[115] Examples of this genre include both numerous English ones and the Scottish one, also known as the "King's Book," that described the Gowrie conspiracy. While dissimilar in many ways, the Gowrie plot and the Essex revolt shared some significant characteristics, particularly the difficulty of understanding not only the actions of the two men, but also their motivations. Equally importantly, both earls were popular with the common

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[114] For comparative purposes, Essex was arrested on the evening of 8 February, tried on 19 February, and executed 25 February 1606. Guy Fawkes was arrested during the night of 4/5 November 1605, and the lay plotters were tried on 27 January and executed on 30 and 31 January 1606; Father Garnett was captured on 23 January, tried on 28 March, and executed 3 May 1606. At Garnett's trial, Coke justified the delay on the basis of the king's clemency in insisting upon a fair trial and the court's care in compiling its case (*The True and Perfect Relation,* O4^{r-v}).

[115] Dana F. Sutton proposes the Parry narrative as the model for the official Gunpowder narrative ("Milton's *In Quintum Novembris, anno aetatis 17* (1626): Choices and Intentions," in *Qui Miscvit vtile Dvlcu: Festschrift Essays for Paul Lachlan MacKendrick,* ed. Gareth Schmeling and Jon D. Mikalson [Waconda: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1998], 357).

people, who were therefore loath to believe them guilty of treason. In both cases, then, there were pressing needs to justify their deaths. When compared with the pamphlets produced on earlier occasions such as the Parry and Lopez conspiracies, what is most striking about these productions is their increasingly sophisticated use of narrative structures associated with literary genres.

The anonymous pamphlet published by the queen's printer describing Parry's treason (*A True and Plaine Declaration of the Horrible Treasons, practised by William Parry the traitor, against the Queenes Maiestie*), like the later Gunpowder pamphlet, presents a collection of documents, including Parry's confession, preceded by a short narrative account. Like Bacon's account of Essex's revolt, it focuses on the sin of pride, which drove Parry to leave London after attempting to murder Hugh Hare. On the continent, he was reconciled to the Roman church and conferred with Jesuits before returning to England intent on killing the queen. Providentially his accomplice, Edmund Neville, disclosed the plan. Although initially defiant, Parry ultimately confessed, expressed penitence, and requested mercy. The documentary evidence, however, sometimes fails to support the theme of the main text. Parry's religious and political motives are mixed, and his penitence is marred by his final letter to the Lord Treasurer and the Earl of Leicester in which he insists upon the singularity of his case: "*a naturall subiect solemnely to vowe the death of his naturall Queene (so borne, so knowen, and so taken by all men) for the reliefe of the afflicted Catholiques, and restitution*

of religion" (21). The pamphlet remains, then, more a collection of documents than a unified narrative.[116]

In contrast, the official pamphlet on the Lopez treason written by William Cecil in 1594 is primarily narrative, although it concludes with a selection of confessions and letters.[117] Cecil's pamphlet is dedicated to revealing the King of Spain's complicity in all plots against Elizabeth, and his avowed intention is to give alert readers the facts so that they can judge the truth of relations between the two sovereigns. The three Portuguese

> who were apprehended and openlie charged, and vppon their owne confessions condemned, & for the same openly at the places of execution, with signes of hartie repentance did aske forgiuenes of Almighty God, and did constantly affirme it to the end, exclaiming against the king of Spaine and his ministers, by whom they had beene set on worke: and in the ende sealed their confessions with their blood to be true. (6)

Cecil accepts the veracity of the gallows confessions, but insists there are many other proofs of Spanish guilt. Thus, he tells a story of Spanish treachery embodied in the current conspirators but extending beyond them. Although the story is more unified than that of the Parry pamphlet, Cecil does not use the conventions of a particular literary genre.

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[116] The counterpart to this text is the shorter and much more sensational *Intended Treason of Doctor Parrie* by Phillip Stubbes (STC 23396). As might be expected, Stubbes's pamphlet is virulently anti-Catholic and uses the example of Parry to argue that all papists are traitors at heart.

[117] Burghley and his son Robert specialized in these pamphlets. Burghley helped the Queen draft a defence of her reign after the Northern Rebellion and subsequently wrote *The Execution of Iustice in England for Maintenaunce of Publique and Christian Peace* (London, 1583) defending Edmund Campion's death. Contemporaries acknowledged his son as the author of the anonymous *Defence of the Honorable Sentence and Execution of the Queene of Scots* (London, 1587).

In contrast, James VI seems to have shaped his narrative of the Gowrie conspiracy with a sharper literary consciousness. The urgency for James to provide an account of this affair sprang first from the inconvenient fact that he was the only surviving witness to the most crucial events of the day.[118] Furthermore, his initial reports had been greeted with considerable scepticism by the presbyterian ministers who had refused to preach sermons declaring the Gowries traitors.[119] With limited access to the nation's pulpits, James was forced to look to print.[120] An anonymous account appeared in Scotland by the end of August, and Valentine Simmes printed an edition in London later that year.[121] Calling *Gowries Conspiracy* "an extremely peculiar textual artifact" (102),

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[118] W F Arbuckle notes that the king was the only surviving witness to his dialogue with Ruthven at the hunt and to the events in the locked room at Gowrie House, both vital to the event's interpretation ("The 'Gowrie Conspiracy,'" *Scottish Historical Review* 36 [1957], 10-11)

[119] David Calderwood, clearly sceptical about the king's narrative, provides a concise account of James's difficulties with the ministers. When, on 6 August, the king's council instructed them to praise God for James's deliverance from a treasonous plot, the preachers agreed only to say that the king had been rescued from a great danger David Lindsay, who had heard the story directly from James, went with the Council to the Market Cross in Edinburgh where he related the story and the people praised God, celebrating with bonfires, bell ringing, and the discharging of cannons Upon James's return from Falklands, he went to the Kirk, where Lindsay exhorted him to exercise justice in the matter, and then to the Market Cross, where his chaplain, Patrick Galloway, preached a sermon "to perswade the people, that *Gourie* and his Brother had verily conspired the Kings death, and were slaine in their execution of the enterprise" (444) Since Galloway was known as a "flattering preacher," however, his sermon was not given great credence The other ministers were charged to appear before the king on 12 August, and when they refused to give in James deprived them of their preaching responsibilites Eventually all but Robert Bruce conceded Calderwood reports that when Bruce went into exile a great light shone on his boat, enabling him to read although it was almost midnight. See *The True History of the Church of Scotland from the beginning of the Reformation unto the end of the Reign of King James VI* s l , 1680, 443-46

[120] It seems likely that James intended some kind of printed account from the beginning Arbuckle reports that the king wrote an account for his Privy Council on the night of 5 August, noting that "The letter, which reached the Secretary in Edinburgh by nine the next morning, has unfortunately not survived, but its contents were communicated orally by the Secretary to Nicolson, the English envoy, who wrote the same day to Cecil reporting the story" (11) The letter to Cecil, according to Arbuckle, "contained all the essential elements of the version from which James never afterwards departed" (12). Galloway's 11 August sermon introduced details that he claimed he had received directly from the mysterious Andrew Henderson

[121] Turner finds it significant "that more cautious printers had stayed clear of *Gowries Conspiracy*, a curious little book about treason, hidden treasures and sorcery, sponsored by a superstitious king with dangerous pretensions to the Elizabeth's [sic] crown" (140).

Gustavo Secchi Turner describes its style as "a cross between a legal document and a romance" (103). As we have seen, the presence of confessions and documentary evidence was typical of the genre. In this case, however, the romance structure provides a narrative framework that serves to emphasize event over cause. The text begins without preamble, launching immediately into a description of the hunt and Ruthven's conference with the king, reporting details of their conversation that could only have been known to James and the dead man. Throughout the pamphlet, the narrator, omniscient as well as anonymous, takes care to represent James's thoughts and actions in the most favourable light possible. He displays no personal desire for the treasure, but only becomes interested when he begins to suspect that it may be part of a seditious Catholic plot set in motion by priests. James's apparent negligence of his personal safety arises from generosity rather than naivety. When Ruthven encourages him to send his companions back, James recognizes danger, "yet his maiestie could neuer suspect any harme to bee intended against his Highnesse by that young Gentleman, with whome his Maiestie had beene so well acquainted, as he had, not long before, beene in suit to be one of the Gentlemen of his Chamber" (B^{r-v}). Even when James became suspicious, he could still "resolue vpon no certaine thing, but rode further on his iourney, betwixt trust and distrust, being ashamed to seem to suspect, in respect of the cleanesse of his Maiesties owne conscience, except hee had found some greater ground" ($B2^{r}$). The later part of the narrative relies upon the contrast between James and his few unarmed men and the earl's three or four score retainers, all well armed, in order to demonstrate that only God could have

protected the king. By depicting James as a sort of medieval knight defeating forces of evil, the text avoids having to offer a more plausible motive than long-delayed revenge for the Ruthvens' attempt on his life.[122] The narrative also emphasizes James's sense of being spared by providence for a greater work. While this work is unspecified, anti-Catholic intrusions into the text suggest that James had seen an opportunity to strengthen his claim to the English throne.[123]

The second part of the pamphlet consists of depositions by those "who were either actors, and eye witnesses, or immediate hearers" (C3^{r-v}). The author neatly casts the blame for any discrepancies on the guilty by announcing: "wherein, if the Reader shall finde any thing differing from this narration, either in substance or circumstance, he may vnderstand the same to be vttered by the deponer in his own behoofe, for obtaining of his Maiesties princely grace and fauour" (C3^{r-v}). The first two deponents, Amos Weimis and William Rinde, both testify to Gowie's reliance upon charms and his unorthodox philosophy. Turner cites the emphasis placed upon the charms as evidence that the narrative "veers towards the end into one of James's preferred discourses—the language of demonology, damning not only Gowrie but the entire Ruthven family" (117). Curiously, however, English preachers used this incident primarily to assert that

[122] It is this lack of motive that Arbuckle finds the most serious bar to accepting the printed narrative, since most of the other discrepancies can be accounted for. He concludes that the story was not a complete fabrication, suggesting either that there was a Gowrie conspiracy to seize, if not to kill, the king, or that Gowrie and Ruthven were killed accidentally in some sort of skirmish and the story was fictionalized to account for their deaths without discrediting James ("Gowrie Conspiracy," 106-10). More recently, Maurice Lee, Jr. has argued that the only logical explanation is that Gowrie, with support from the English government, lured the king to Gowrie House with the promise of a message regarding the English succession, hoping to restrain him from interfering in English politics at a critical time by kidnapping him (*The 'Inevitable' Union and Other Essays on Early Modern Scotland* [East Linton: Tuckwell P, 2003], 109-10).

[123] Turner also suggests that James saw the narrative as significant in his quest for the English throne ("Matter of Fact," 136).

Gowrie, rather than sympathizing with the presbyterians, was actually a crypto-Catholic. The detail, offered by Rinde, that Gowrie had obtained these charms in Italy was not lost upon at least one English preacher.[124] In Scotland, the text helped to secure the eventual cooperation of the ministers, except Bruce, who were expected to adhere to the narrative as printed in preparing their sermons. Thus, Turner concludes that "After November the little book printed by Charteris in Edinburgh was univocally equal to the matter of Gowrie. In other words, *Gowrie's Conspiracy* was identical to Gowrie's Conspiracy" (154). Having obtained at least outward adherence to the official narrative in Scotland, James turned to an English audience.

The haste with which an account of the events of 5 August was relayed to England suggests that James was concerned from the beginning with the international, and particularly the English, reception of the news.[125] Unfortunately for the king, Scottish incredulity was mirrored elsewhere. Arbuckle notes that "Elizabeth did not conceal her scepticism, and the envoy she sent to Scotland to obtain further information admitted in private that he did not himself believe the report he had brought back; while in France the story was greeted with ridicule, especially by those who had known Gowrie there" (89). Nevertheless, James persisted in disseminating his version of the story. A Latin edition of *Gowries Conspiracy* was published in 1601 for an international audience, and translations

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[124] In his 1624 Gowrie sermon at St. Mary's, Oxford, John Randal observes that Gowrie had been raised in Italy "where the most King-killing doctrine is taught to be the true meaning of the Gospell" (29). His mention of Padua is particularly suggestive, since the Jesuits had a college there.

[125] For a full account of the transmission of the news from Scotland to England, see Arbuckle, "Gowrie Conspiracy," 11-18.

into European vernacular languages followed.[126] Simmes issued another edition of the text in 1603, no doubt capitalizing on James's accession to the English throne. The question we must ask, then, is why James was so insistent upon a story that was clearly subject to widespread disbelief.[127] One of the answers seems to be that he wanted his deliverance to be understood within the context of providential British history. As the liturgy and sermons discussed above demonstrate, James wanted to show that he had been preserved from his enemies, as Elizabeth had been from hers, in order to perpetuate Protestant rule in Britain. The romance features of *Gowrie's Conspiracy* represented James as a questing knight who could drive out the forces of evil and keep his kingdom safe.

Since James had ensured that the story of Gowrie's conspiracy was known in England, the English authorities were likely aware of its official narrative by the time they needed to provide a public account of a purported attempt on Elizabeth's life the following year. Francis Bacon's *Declaration of the practises and treasons attempted and committed by Robert late Earle of Essex and his complices*, published anonymously, follows the familiar pattern in which a series of confessions follows a narrative account. In this case, however, a third part inserted between these two, detailing the evidence against Essex and Southampton at their trials, emphasizes the legal aspect of this case. Bacon begins by establishing two reasons for his publication. First is the need to refute false

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[126] Again, this does not seem to have been uncommon. Cecil's pamphlet on the Lopez conspiracy also exists in a French translation (STC 7580).
[127] This discussion has focused on representations of the event rather than facts. The most useful reconstruction of the Gowrie incident itself is W. F. Arbuckle's "The Gowrie Conspiracy," (*Scottish Historical Review* 36 [1957], 1-24, 91-110). See also Turner "Matter of Fact" for an extensive discussion of representations of this event.

accounts circulating in libels, which demonstrate that the "leprosie" of treason is indeed contagious. Secondly, Bacon suggests that his readers should understand "*the præcedent practises and inducements to the Treasons*" (A3^{v}), insisting upon the distinction between the evidence required for a public trial and the necessity to explain the event in print.[128] Whereas in a trial the only evidence required is that the action took place, in narrative actions require contexts. Thus, Bacon admits there is no legal need to know the details of Essex's intrigue with Tyrone, but truth demands an investigation. If the Gowrie pamphlet narrates a romance, describing actions without causes, Bacon's offers the interpretive structure of tragedy, with its focus upon motivation.

The first act of Bacon's drama takes place in Ireland, although Essex may have been plotting treason even before that time. By representing Ireland as a corrupting influence upon the earl, the narrator allows him to remain heroic until then, thereby hoping to satisfy his supporters while justifying his execution. In Ireland, "*Essex* drawing now towards the *Catastrophe*, or last part of that Tragedy, for which he came vpon the Stage in *Ireland*, his Treasons grew to a further ripenesse" (C^{r}), and he made a secret bargain with the rebel leader. Blunt and Southampton have attested to dissuading Essex from returning to England with an army, "So as nowe the worlde may see how long since my Lord put off his vizard, and disclosed the secrets of his heart to two of his most confident friends, falling vpon that vnnaturall and detestable treason, whereunto all his former Actions in his gouernement in *Ireland*, (and God knowes howe long

[128] As Turner suggests, in the case of the Gowrie conspiracy the pamphlet actually took the place of the king's deposition at a public trial ("Matter of Fact," 153).

before) were but Introductions" (C4^{r-v}). Thereupon he planned "the second act of this Tragedy … which was, that my Lord should present himselfe to her Maiestie as prostrating himselfe at her [Elizabeth's] feete, and desire the remoue of such persons, as he called his enemies, from about her" (E^{v}). The earl's alleged plans for distributing his men about the palace read like a set of stage directions, enabling the reader easily to visualize the action intended, and perhaps to forget that it never actually occurred. The tragedy's third act occurs at Essex House on Sunday 8 February. This day's events are situated carefully in both space and time, observing the unity of time since the action begins with Essex's mustering of his friends at 8 a.m. and concludes with his surrender at 10 p.m. While most of the action takes place at Essex House, the real stage for this act of the drama is London, around which Essex processes in a parody of a royal progress or coronation procession as he attempts to win followers. Both speeches and dialogue abound as the Lord Keeper delivers the queen's message, Essex is eventually proclaimed traitor in the streets, and the earl negotiates the conditions of his surrender.

This account characterizes Essex as a tragic hero whose flaw is ambition. God "often punisheth ingratitude by ambition, and ambition by treason, and treason by finall ruine" (A4^{v}) begins the text. Concentrating upon ambition enables Bacon to avoid producing specific religious or political motives. Essex and Henry Cuffe "had soone set downe betweene them the ancient principle of Traitors and Conspirators, which was: *To prepare many and to acquaint few*; and after the maner of Mynes, to make ready their powder, and place it, and then giue

fire but in the instant" (D3^{r}). The insistence that few knew the details of the plot explains the absence of substantive confessions, a strategy that had also served James well in the Gowrie narrative.[129]

As in the Gowrie pamphlet, there is a strong emphasis upon the providential nature of the events. God directed the queen's actions so that "When this man was come ouer, his heart thus fraughted with Treasons, and presented himselfe to her Maiestie: it pleased God, in his singular prouidence ouer her Maiestie, to guide and hem in her proceeding towards him, in a narrow way of safetie betweene two perils" (D^{r}) and she resolved to place him under house arrest. Similarly, although the queen's sending for Essex on 7 February may have seemed sudden to men, God "had in his diuine prouidence long agoe cursed this action, with the Curse that the Psalme speaketh of, *That it should be like the vntimely fruit of a woman, brought foorth before it came to perfection* (E3$^{r\text{-}v}$), and so foiled the earl's plans.[130] During the actual revolt, "it pleased God, that her Maiesties directions at Court, though in a case so strange and sudden, were iudiciall and sound" (F3^{v}). Even after the revolt ended and Essex had been executed, his schemings in Ireland came to light providentially when Blunt confessed to them "most naturally and most voluntarily" (C4^{r}) after his arraignment. Finally, providence turns Essex into "an example of disloyaltie"

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[129] In his second examination, Rinde stated that Gowrie had expressed the opinion that when one makes great plans he should keep them confidential, conveniently accounting for the inability to obtain a confession of complicity from the tutor even under torture.
[130] The comparison of unsuccessful treason to the birth of a stillborn child continues in the Gunpowder literature. In 1616 Lancelot Andrewes preached at court on 5 November on Isaiah 37.3: "The children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth."

(F3^v^). The providential framework thus moves the story into the genre of *de casibus* tragedy.

Part II describes the trials of Essex and Southampton on 19 February before twenty-five peers, including some who had supported the earl. The pamphlet presents the trial as a dialogue in which the judges refute each defence by the accused, thus offering evidence of a fair trial. The final section consists of a series of "voluntary Confessions," reported "*word for word*" (K4^r^). Although they were taken later, the confessions relating to the Irish background are placed first to show that the plot had its roots there, and Blunt's speech at his execution again emphasizes that the troubles began when Essex was in Ireland. The second set of confessions relating to the rebels' intentions on the final Sunday is clearly designed to show that Essex's first goal was to secure the court.[131] Thus, the latter part of the pamphlet, rather than merely presenting supporting documentation, reinforces the narrative shape of the first by continuing to insist upon the plot's Irish genesis even when this requires manipulating the investigation's chronology.

In some ways, the English and Scottish authorities were dealing with similar situations in the Essex and Gowrie incidents, and both chose to provide prose justifications for their actions against popular rebels. Whereas James represented himself as the romantic hero of the Gowrie affair, however, the queen was mostly absent from the Essex pamphlet although it displayed the royal arms

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[131] Although the actual events of the Essex incident are clearer than those of the Gowrie conspiracy, Essex's intentions are not. In a recent article Paul E. Hammer concludes that Essex wanted a peaceful discussion with the Queen but was forced into open rebellion by his enemies. See "Shakespeare's *Richard II*, the Play of 7 February 1601, and the Essex Rising," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 59.1 (2008), 1-35.

prominently. In contrast, Ruthven himself remained in the background of the Gowrie narrative, allowing James to take centre stage, while Essex played the tragic hero in his story. Both represented the deliverances of their monarchs as providential and insisted upon proving the traitors both legally and morally guilty. Essex, whose religious affiliation was questionable, and Gowrie, whose inclinations were presbyterian, were both turned into crypto-Catholics. James's use of the romance genre presented him to readers as a successful hero, whereas by allowing Essex heroic stature the English authorities offered readers the cathartic experience of pitying the fallen favourite while recognizing the dangers of incurring the Queen's displeasure.

The Gunpowder Plot narratives once again illustrated God's protection of the monarch, but genre became more problematic. The official Gunpowder Plot publications, *His Maiesties speech in the last session of Parliament...Together with a discourse of the maner of the discouery of this late intended Treason* and *A True and Perfect Relation of the Whole Proceedings against the late most barbarous traitors, Garnet a Iesuite, and his confederats*, both continue earlier traditions and depart significantly from them. Juxtaposed, the two authorized texts provide a curious contrast, for they describe the same plot engineered by two separate sets of plotters. Mark Nicholls argues that the "King's Book" represents a preliminary effort to provide credible information to a frightened and confused populace and to stifle anti-Catholic rumours. Two examples of these sorts of rumours appear in John Chamberlain's letter of 7 November to Dudley Carleton: first that Johnson (Fawkes) is thought to be a priest, and secondly that Sir Edward

Bainham is being sought and "some five or sixe Jesuites and priests taken in a privie search" (1.213).[132] The pamphlet presents two texts, the king's 9 November speech to Parliament, and an anonymous narrative of the plot containing the confessions of Fawkes and Winter. The origins of the "Discourse" remain mysterious, although contemporaries believed it to have been written by James himself. In the printer's letter, "To the Reader," Robert Barker claims that he was about to print the speech when he received the "Discourse," so he simply put the two together. The author identifies himself only as a member of the court, telling his readers:

> My threefold zeale to those blessings, whereof they would haue so violently made vs all widowes, hath made mee resolue to set downe here the true Narration of that monstrous and vnnaturall intended Tragedy, hauing better occasion by the meanes of my seruice and continuall attendance in Court to know the trueth thereof, then others that peraduenture haue it only by relatiõ at the third or fourth hand. (E4[r-v])

He thus establishes his own authority, buttressed by that of the government printer, without divulging his identity.[133] As Nicholls notes, however, the

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[132] Despite Nicholls's depiction of terror and panic in London, Chamberlain's letter seems curiously calm. His first concern is how the plot will affect Carleton's career given his association with the Percy family. His tone is that of one with sensational news to impart but no serious concerns for the nation's safety. Having quickly exhausted what he has heard about the plot, Chamberlain concludes the letter with his usual catalogue of births, marriages, deaths, and miscellaneous court gossip. The rumour of Fawkes's clerical profession was also incorporated into Francis Herring's Latin epic, *Pietas Pontificia* (Estelle Haan, "Milton's *In Quintum Novembris* and the Anglo-Latin Gunpowder Epic," *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 41 [1992] 259).

[133] Nicholls notes that David Jardine (*Criminal Trials*, 1847) proposed Bacon as the author. He considers this possible but argues for caution in attributing authorship ("Discovering" 404). John Gerard suspected the king of being the author and Thomas Bayly Howell, in his *Complete Collection of State Trials* (1809-1828), also identifies the "Discourse," which he reprints from James Montagu's collection of James's works, as the king's work (2.195).

"Discourse" also "offers the reader a vivid, exciting account, and both excitement and clarity are enhanced by the deliberate decision to tell the story in the first person" ("Discovering" 404). This use of the first person, even in the confessions, marks the pamphlet's first departure from accounts of earlier conspiracies.

Although the pamphlet appears disjointed structurally, it is unified by the themes of memory, paternity, and providence. The "Discourse" most clearly illustrates God's providence in the fate of the rebels after Fawkes's capture. Burned by their own gunpowder, "they presently (see the wonderfull power of Gods Iustice vpon the guiltie consciences) did all fall downe vpon their knees, praying GOD to pardon them for their bloody enterprize" (M3[r]). Furthermore, rather than being accorded any special treatment, they were taken by the ordinary sheriff and placed in the common jail, "Seruing so for a fearefull and publike spectacle of Gods fierce wrath and iust indignation" (M4[r]). Although these experiences do not engender true repentance, Winter admits that he has learned the will of providence and now sees that "such courses are not pleasing to Almighty God" (I[r]). The king's speech, however, highlights not the direct workings of God but his own instrumentality in the divine plan.

As in the Essex pamphlet, in which the queen's sound judgment helped to prevent the revolt, so in this one James claims that his personal qualities have been the instrument of deliverance. In his speech to Parliament, he caps the plot's extraordinary characteristics with his own discovery of it, which was miraculous because, although not ordinarily suspicious, he immediately suspected gunpowder. His observation that he considers suspicion the mark of a tyrant

actually makes a virtue of his credulity in the Gowrie narrative, although he does not make this connection explicit. James insists that his divinely inspired interpretation of the words of the Monteagle letter, "contrary to the ordinary Grammer construction of them" (B4[r]), and as no lawyer or minister would have interpreted them, was the only one that would have saved them. The author of the "Discourse" also stresses the king's close reading of the letter, demonstrating that only James had the skills to save the country (F3[v]-G[r]). England, then, needs not only the office of kingship, but also the skills of this particular king.

In his speech, however, James focuses not upon the nation's deliverance, but upon his own, making an explicit link between Gowrie and Gunpowder Plot. Both occurred on Tuesdays and on the fifth of a month, "thereby to teach me, That as it was the same deuill that still persecuted mee: So it was one and the same GOD that still mightily deliuered me" (D4[v]). This observation enables him to conclude by emphasizing again the personal and providential nature of the deliverance. The connection between the two plots had already been made by others, for on 7 November Chamberlain had reported to Carleton that "Curious folkes observe that this deliveraunce hapned to the King the fift of November aunswerable to the fift of August, both Tewsdayes, and this plot to be executed by Johnson as that at Johnstowne" (1. 213). James's speech, however, connects his person and his office through the theme of paternity, which is taken up by the "Discourse" in its characterization of the plot as an attempted parricide.

The speech continues James's first address to Parliament on 19 March 1603/04, responding to issues that emerged during that session as well as to the

plot. In opening his first parliament, James had emphasized paternity by alluding to his direct descent from Henry VII and by promising a stable succession through his own sons. Parliamentarians, however, were disturbed by James's assertion, during the session, that parliament's rights were not immemorial but a gift from the king. Fearful that James wanted to reduce their powers, some members drew up an *Apology of the Commons*, expressing their frustrations over parliamentary disunity. While Conrad Russell notes that the document was never passed and did not necessarily represent the views of the entire body, he concludes that "Perhaps the most significant thing about this laborious self-justification is that it was drawn up at all" (*Crisis* 270). In his 9 November 1605 speech, James remains committed to limiting parliamentary influence, informing the members that parliament "is nothing else but the Kings great Councell, which the King doeth assemble either vpon occasion of interpreting, or abrogating old Lawes, or making of new, according as ill maners shall deserue, or for the publike punishment of notorious euill doers, or the praise and reward of the vertuous and well deseruers" (D^{v}). In order to locate his views within the context of his earlier discourse on kingship, he returns to images of fatherhood and the human body, proposing that parliament is the body, but the king the head. Whereas in the first speech he had emphasized his natural fatherhood, here he focuses on his metaphoric paternity. The images of the king as father and as head of the body are familiar from James's earlier writings. In *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*, he argues that "By the law of nature, the king becomes a natural father to all his lieges at his coronation" (57), using this similitude to demonstrate the evils of rebellion, since

it is unnatural for a son to kill his father. A diseased limb may have to be amputated, but a body cannot endure if the head is severed. He represents the king as God's Lieutenant and the head of the civic body represented by parliament, thus establishing the monarch as the crucial link between God and the people.

The "Discourse" echoes James's description of a successful plot as both a "Parricide" (C4^{r}) and a beheading of the body politic, twice equating such violence with the loss of national memory. The author describes the plot primarily as a national apocalypse, a return to Chaos, listing all the groups of people who would have been killed, followed by all the buildings and records that would have been destroyed, so that "not onely we, but the memory of vs and ours, should haue beene thus extinguished in an instant" (E4^{r}). The plot's threat to both past and future makes it unique, and the author of the "Discourse," like Barlow, struggles to place the incident within a genre.

Describing the plot finally as a "Tragedie to the Traytors, but tragicomedie to the King and all his true Subiects" (M4^{r}), the narrative begins in the comic mode. Whereas the Gowrie pamphlet provides no context for that conspiracy, this one takes place "While this Land and whole Monarchie flourished in a most happie and plentifull PEACE, as well at home as abroad, sustained and conducted by these two maine Pillars of all good Gouernement, PIETIE and IVSTICE, no forreine grudge, nor inward whispering of discontent any way appearing" (E4^{v}). So secure in the peace of the kingdom was the king that he had gone hunting. Tragedy threatens, but the foiling of the plot and the executions of the conspirators provide the appropriate comic ending. While representing the plot as

a tragicomedy accounts not only for its failure but also for the low social status of the plotters, it seems unsatisfactory given the magnitude of the conspiracy, and the writer soon begins to appropriate Barlow's apocalyptic mode.[134] Ultimately, this generic confusion splits the narrative into two parts. Following Winter's confession, the narrator intrudes: "Bvt here let vs leaue *Fawkes* in a lodging fit for such a guest, and taking time to aduise vpon his conscience; and turne our selues to that part of the History, which concernes the fortune of the rest of his partakers in that abominable Treason" (L^{r}). The placement of the confessions thus allows the author to make a sharp break between the powder plot, in which Fawkes is the chief villain, and the subsequent rebellion in which Digby assumes that role. Whereas Fawkes is the devil of destruction, Digby is the gentleman rebel. Although the pamphlet represents religion as the primary cause of the powder plot, Digby's attempted armed rebellion is reported as merely "pretending the quarrell of Religion" (L2^{r}). Sir Everard, the highest ranking plotter, is characterized as Nimrod, described in Genesis 10.9 as "a mighty hũter before the Lord" but identified in the margin of the Geneva bible as "a cruel oppressor & tyrant." By casting Digby in the role of would-be tyrant, James can appear more effectively as the model of a virtuous king; James hunts with a clear conscience, whereas Digby conceals the true purpose of his gathering by pretending to hunt.

Representing Digby as motivated by ambition while the others act out of religious zeal, however, undermines the unity of the narrative by offering him a

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[134] The social status of the plotters continued to trouble the authorities. Convinced that a nobleman must be involved in such a horrendous scheme, they imprisoned Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, in the tower until 1621. Those who made Cecil responsible for the plot often saw Northumberland's incarceration as the plot's sole purpose.

quasi-heroic status denied to the other plotters. Thus, the "Discourse" moves uneasily between the poles of comedy, tragedy, romance, and apocalypse. The author finally concludes that the plot is a "horrible attempt (lacking due epithetes)" (M4[r]). As Connerton suggests, naming something categorizes it, and the plot at this point resists classification, for it is both an assassination attempt and an attempted rebellion, sparked by a mixture of misguided religious zeal and excessive ambition (27). The story's resistance to generic classification also defamiliarizes it despite the use of the standard pamphlet format. Pointing to the confusion of the later parts of the pamphlet and to variations among surviving editions, Nicholls concludes that "There is yet some scope to discuss whether the apparent candour and rough edges in the 'Discourse' arise from honesty and haste at one extreme, or from sophisticated propaganda techniques at the other" ("Discovering" 413). This question of intention may not in fact be as important as it might seem, however, since the pamphlet bears the marks of this generic confusion, even if the compilers acted unconsciously.

The second official document, *A True and Perfect Relation of the Whole Proceedings against the late most barbarous traitors*, is a detailed account of the trials of the surviving conspirators and the Jesuit superior, indicted as an accomplice.[135] I discuss this pamphlet and its representation of the trials and

[135] The scale of this publication and the reporting of every detail and speech of the trial is unprecedented in popular print. Joad Raymond points out that pamphlets were generally under 96 pages in length, while "Books of more than a hundred pages aspired to a more elevated status" (*Pamphlets and Pamphleteering*, 82). Of this 416-page text, barely one fifth is accorded to the lay plotters (B-N3), with the remainder (O-Fff3) devoted to Garnett's trial and execution. Although the pamphlet was published anonymously, Northampton was responsible for compiling the manuscript for the king. He in turn, according to Linda Levy Peck, relied upon Robert Cotton to edit the manuscript. Peck, however, argues that Cotton, in addition to helping with the historical

executions as theatre in more detail in Chapter 5; here, however, we should note that the pamphlet illustrates again the authorities' difficulties in presenting the plot as a cohesive narrative within an existing literary genre, especially when faced with the additional problem of revising the narrative presented in the earlier "Discourse." In his letter to the reader, Barker admits that, justice having been done, some might deny the need for another book, but insists that

> *it is necessary, and wil be very profitable to publish somewhat concerning the same, Aswell for that there do passe from hand to hand diuerse vncertaine, vntrue, and incoherent reports, and relations of such Euidence, as was publiquely giuen vpon the said seuerall Arraignments; As also for that it is necessary for men to vnderstand the birth & growth of the said abominable and detestable Conspiracy, and who were the principal Authors and Actors in the same.* (A2^{v})

Whether Barker intended the double meaning on "profitable" or not, the authorities were obviously anxious about the circulation of unofficial information in manuscript and oral forms. In addition, they clearly wished to shift responsibility for the plot to the priests. Whereas the "Discourse" had made no mention of clerical involvement, the *True and Perfect Relation*, as its full title indicates, represented the Jesuits as the primary conspirators.

This project, however, required that the lay plotters' social status be elevated somewhat to make them worthy victims of the ambitious Jesuits. Whereas Barlow had stressed the plotters' lowly stations, here Coke takes pains to

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details, "may have influenced the central argument ... that the church had to justify its authority by its history" (112). See *Northampton: Patronage and Policy at the Court of James I*, 111-13.

assert that they are "Gentlemen of good houses, of excellent parts, howsoeuer most pernitiously seduced, abused, corrupted, and Iesuited, of very competent fortunes and States" (E4^{v}), concluding "that the principall offendors are the seducing Iesuites" (F^{r}). By representing the Jesuits as agents of corruption he not only attacks Catholicism but also represents the lay plotters as "gentlemen," if not great men, who succumbed to evil influences through misguided religious zeal. The pamphlet consequently highlighted the case of Everard Digby, the only plotter whose social status permitted his fall to be represented in the terms of *de casibus* tragedy. Nevertheless, the status of the other plotters and the failure of their conspiracy kept the story closest to the mixed genre of tragicomedy.

If the trial of the lay plotters sits, somewhat uneasily, within this genre, that of Father Garnett becomes effectively a polemical discourse. Garnett was effectively silenced, both literally by being interrupted when he attempted to speak and textually by having his speech reported in the third person, while the Earl of Northampton, in a speech expanded for publication, provided a lengthy history of international Catholicism and its attempts to subvert English Protestantism that represented the Jesuits as the servants of Antichrist. The juxtaposition of this apocalyptic discourse with the earlier tragicomic one results once again in a fractured text.

These prose narratives illustrate the perceived need to persuade readers to accept authoritative interpretations of plots and conspiracies. This perception arose from the very real dangers of dissenting accounts, often circulated in oral or

manuscript form as letters, libels, or rumours.[136] Typically, official accounts emphasized both the monarch's providential deliverance and divine judgement upon the traitors. Over time, however, writers seem to have increasingly recognized the rhetorical advantages of adapting their narratives to specific literary genres, which acted as shared codes to facilitate common understanding.[137] The magnitude of the Gunpowder Plot, particularly its plans for both assassination and rebellion, and the late decision to change the locus of blame from the lay plotters to the Jesuits, however, resulted in some confusion. Although the intention of both pamphlets may have been to create an official narrative of the plot, the internal inconsistencies of each as well as their uneasy relationship facilitated the development of the dissenting narratives that they had been designed to silence.

2.4 Catholic Narratives: Miracles and Martyrdom

As we have seen above, it was not always easy for the authorities to persuade subjects to accept official interpretations of events. Along with recalcitrant preachers, governments had to counteract oppositional narratives in

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[136] Dennis Flynn quotes a letter from Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain dated 13 November 1605 (TNA, SP 14/16/69) that suggests that even Protestants closer to the centres of power had doubts about the official version of the plot ("Donne's Travels and Earliest Publications" in *The Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, ed. Jeanne Shami, Dennis Flynn, and M. Thomas Hester [Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011], 506-22).

[137] Alastair Fowler suggests that genres function not as codes but as "fields of association" that provide both their authors and readers with contexts for understanding. He observes that since the 1980s we have come to see genres less as fixed categories used by writers and more as the means of creating shared understandings between authors and audiences ("The Formation of Genres in the Renaissance and After," *New Literary History* 34.2 [2003], 190).

oral, manuscript, and even print forms.[138] Despite attempts to regulate the print marketplace, books could still be printed in England on illegal presses, as the Martin Marprelate tracts and some Jesuit pamphlets were, or smuggled into the country from overseas.[139] The trial of the lay Gunpowder plotters clearly illustrates the government's failure to contain unwelcome print.[140] In his speech, Coke describes the legacy of the Jesuit mission as a trail of seditious books, virtually admitting the government's inability to control the circulation of such texts.[141] Even more difficult to eliminate were the rumours and libels that passed relatively freely about the country.[142]

Father John Gerard's narrative of the Gunpowder Plot, apparently circulated in manuscript, offers one Catholic response to the official Gunpowder narratives contained in the "King's Book" and *A True and Perfect Relation*.[143]

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[138] As Lake and Questier have pointed out, we should also be wary of assuming unanimity among the authorities, particularly secular and ecclesiastic ("Agency, Appropriation and Rhetoric under the Gallows," 76). In the case of the Gunpowder Plot, criticism of Robert Cecil doubtless came from enemies at court as well as from outsiders.

[139] Some of the Catholic polemical texts illegally printed in England shortly after the plot include *A Iust and Moderate Answer, to a most Iniurious, and Slaunderous pamphlet*, [Richard Broughton] in 1606, and *The First Part of Protestant proofes, for Catholikes Religion and Recusancy*, by the same author in 1607.

[140] A similar issue arises in Dr. Parry's 1593 trial, in which Parry is considered to have been corrupted by reading William Allen's treatise on the succession.

[141] Coke mentions Tresham's book, *De Officio Principis Christiani* (F3-G), and expounds at more length on Garnett's *Treatise of Equivocation* (I-I3) although he seemed unaware of the book's authorship. At Garnett's trial, Coke produces more examples—the book *Philopater* associated with Cullen's treason and Parsons's book on the succession with that of Williams and York.

[142] Discourses that focus on power have tended to minimize the importance of such dissenting narratives, but scholars are now attempting to reclaim these texts to gain a fuller perspective on beliefs in this period. In particular, we need to recognize that the government's actions were frequently as much defensive as offensive.

[143] John Morris provides the history of this manuscript in his "Life of Father John Gerard," ccl-cclii. While Gerard speaks of himself in the third person throughout the text, his indignation at the accusations against himself strongly indicates that he is the author. Morris suggests that the narrative was written in late 1606, although it is possible that it was begun before Gerard escaped to the continent in May of that year, since early parts of the text suggest that he is still in England, while he refers later to pamphlets published in the spring of 1606. A number of studies have provided valuable information regarding the importance and extent of manuscript transmission

Gerard, in fact, refers to both official and unofficial sources in his text, which demonstrates the way in which these narratives could be reinterpreted by those who did not choose to believe them.[144] He introduces his text as a shared creation of author and reader, "desiring only this of the pious reader, that as I will perform my part in truth and fidelity in the whole narration, so he will not be wanting of his part to perform the rules of equity and charity both towards me and the matter I write of" (13). While he states that he was asked to write the narrative for friends abroad, it seems that Gerard also hopes to gain loyal English Catholic readers, and perhaps even some sympathetic Protestant ones. In order to win over a moderate audience, he must exonerate the priests without condoning the plot, a feat he accomplishes by exploiting the gaps between the two official publications.

Recognizing that the priests' absence from the "King's Book" allows him to assert their innocence, Gerard accepts the confessions of Fawkes and Winter, taking their silence on the subject of clerical involvement as proof that no priests were plotters. He insists that he has examined all the confessions, including those not printed, and that they concur that no one else was involved in the plot. Gerard emphasizes his need to rely on Winter's confession for his description of the early plotting because the conspirators guarded their secret so carefully. Thus, the trope of secrecy used effectively by the authorities in the Gowrie and Essex affairs now aids a Catholic narrator, for the plotters' insistence upon secrecy exonerates the

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among Catholic recusants. See for example: Arthur F. Marotti, *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy*, especially Ch. 3 on martyrdom accounts; Margaret Sena, "William Blundell and the Networks of Catholic Dissent in Post-Reformation England."

[144] There is a second, incomplete, Catholic account apparently written by Father Tesimond. It agrees with Gerard's interpretation for the most part but comes closer to approving the plot itself (*The Gunpowder Plot: The Narrative of Oswald Tesimond alias Greenway*, ed. Francis Edwards [London: Folio Society, 1973]).

priests. James's 7 November proclamation distinguished the plotters from loyal Catholics, a distinction the king attempted to maintain in his 9 November speech. A second proclamation, however, made the priests the principal plotters, even though none of the lay conspirators had implicated them in their confessions, including those that were published. Even some Protestants were suspicious, "But this was no impediment to the forcible authority of the proclamation, which went out under the King's name" (149).[145] The reason for this abrupt change of policy, according to Gerard, is puritan influence upon the king.

Gerard concludes from James's speech that "the Puritans had laboured and in some sort prevailed with His Majesty to make him believe, that it is holden by the doctrine of Catholics lawful to kill and murder Princes, &c." (119). They have used two books to do this, *The Popish Positions* and *The Late Commotion in Herefordshire*.[146] Gerard instead commends to his readers the example of Garnett's answer to Catesby, which demonstrates that Catholics do not in fact consider the murder of innocents lawful. On the other hand, puritans like George Buchanan and John Knox teach that subjects have the right to resist tyrants,

> And surely His Majesty was not ignorant of the mind and doctrine and manner of proceeding of the Puritans in this point; but out of his wisdom,

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[145] I have been unable to trace the proclamation to which Gerard is referring. On 5 November a proclamation went out for the capture of Percy (STC 8379.5) and on 7 November one listing seven other suspected conspirators as well as Percy (Robert Catesby, Ambrose Rookwood, Thomas Winter, Edward Grant, John Wright, Christopher Wright, and Robert Ashfield) (STC 8382). On 8 November a reward was offered for Percy (STC 8383) and on 18 November a proclamation was issued for Robert Winter and Stephen Littleton (STC 8384).

[146] The books Gerard refers to are Thomas Morton's *Exact discouerie of Romish doctrine in the case of conspiracie and rebellion* (STC 18184), (registered 5 December 1605), and Thomas Hamond's *The late commotion of certaine papists in Herefordshire* (STC 25232), which equated recusancy with civil disorder.

> he thought it best rather to please them for the time in seeming to believe that they had written of us than to rehearse their own doctrine, whereof he had tasted too much, knowing right well that their patience was not able to bear to be rubbed upon the back, which indeed was much galled in that kind of doctrine about government. So that herein we may think it pleased His Highness to practise that in this his grave and princely speech in the Parliament House, which sometimes before he had used to say in mirth, when he would show the difference between the Papists and Puritans, in matter of patient sufferance. (123)

By suggesting that the king is courting puritan favour, Gerard puts his finger on the weak spot in the Jacobean consensus, introducing a third term into the Catholic/Protestant binary that Northampton had set up in his speech.

Whereas the "Discourse" places the genesis of the plot within a peaceful and contented kingdom, Gerard describes an England divided by confessional strife. Catholics, he claims, face increasing persecution.[147] For them, the continuity between the reigns of Elizabeth and James that the king depicts as a benefit is instead a prolongation of suffering. Gerard begins his narrative by describing the persecution of the faithful from Genesis until James's accession.[148]

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[147] There is little agreement on whether penalties really were becoming harsher. Although James had offered temporary relief upon his accession, he had reinstated the fines before the Gunpowder Plot, likely because they were a steady source of revenue. On the disagreements about the nature and effects of the 1606 Oath of Allegiance, see the references cited in n. 9 above.

[148] Gerard's choice of this beginning is significant given contemporary debates over the age of the English church. Catholics represented English Protestantism as a new religion, while English theologians insisted that their church was the original Catholic church purged of accreted errors and that the post-Tridentine Roman church was in fact an innovation. Whereas Protestant chronologies (including Northampton's) begin with the introduction of Protestantism in England, Gerard claims a much lengthier history.

If international readers query his representation of the English situation, Gerard has the ready answer that "It hath ever been one point of policy in the Government of England, since the beginning of persecution there, to hide the same from the knowledge of the world, and from being judged to be such by other kingdoms round about them, as much as could be possible" (315). Even though "the politics ever with printed books endeavour to prove that all was but the execution of justice against traitors and persons disobedient to the State" (316), Catholics are actually being executed for heresy.[149] Gerard concludes with a short history of the legal persecution of Catholics in England since Elizabeth's accession. James not only confirmed the Elizabethan laws in his first parliament, but also increased recusancy fines and applied them to women, children, and servants.[150] His new canons require ministers to preach against papal jurisdiction at least four times per year, and James has packed his second parliament with puritans in order to enact even more stringent anti-Catholic laws.[151] By progressing from Elizabeth's measures to James's, Gerard shows that James has

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[149] The question of whether Catholics were executed for their religious beliefs or for their political actions was hotly contested. Lake and Questier suggest that early in the Jesuit mission Campion and Persons deliberately chose to foreground the boundary between religion and politics by choosing recusancy as a "wedge" issue ("Puritans, Papists, and the 'Public Sphere' in Early Modern England: The Edmund Campion Affair in Context," *Journal of Modern History* 72.3 [2000]: 609-25).

[150] James did increase recusancy fines in 1604, but historians have noticed that enforcement remained lax, so that the amount collected did not actually increase (Okines, "Why was there so little government reaction to Gunpowder Plot?" 283-85). Frances Dolan notes that Everard Digby expressed the persistent Catholic fear that fines would be extended to women as justification for his participation in the Gunpowder Plot. As Dolan explains, however, women were effectively exempt from most fines because they lacked property (*Whores* 62-63).

[151] The 1604 canons required ministers to affirm the king's supremacy in the English church and to repudiate all foreign authority at least four times per year. They did not specifically mention the pope, but Gerard is correct about the intent of the law (Church of England, *Constitutio[ns] and canons ecclesiasticall treated vpon by the Bishop of London, president of the conuocation for the prouince of Canterbury, and the rest of the bishops and clergie of the said prouince* [London, 1604, STC 10070.5], D^{v}).

proven himself to Catholics as Elizabeth's rightful successor, but more dangerous because he has Protestant sons to succeed him.[152] While Gerard is careful not to implicate the king directly, he suggests that James has entered into an alliance with puritans to persecute Catholics.

Gerard adamantly refuses to accept a providential interpretation of the event as a deliverance, since this would be to admit that God favours a Protestant England. He demonstrates his scepticism of the circumstances surrounding the Monteagle letter as depicted in the "Discourse," grudgingly admitting:

> Thus far the book of the discovery of this treason discourseth of the manner how the same did come to light. And because the same was set forth by authority, with desire that men all should conceive this to be the manner how it came to light, it may be thought that so it was. Yet there want not many others of great judgment, that think His Majesty and divers of those Councillors also, who had the scanning of the letter, to be well able in shorter time and with fewer doubts to decipher a darker riddle and find out a greater secret than that matter was, after so plain a letter was delivered, importing in so plain terms an intended punishment both by God and man, and so terrible a blow to be given at that very time and yet the actors invisible. (100)

Some think "that this letter was but framed and sent of purpose to give another show of casual discovery both to hide the true means and to make the especial preservation of the King and State to be better discerned to come from God

[152] Once again Gerard has taken up what James represents as a benefit, a stable succession, and repositioned it as a threat to his own community.

Himself" (101). He enumerates the reasons why some have refused to believe in the letter, but concedes that " although many were of opinion that this was not the first means of this discovery, yet none that ever I could hear of, was able to give a certain judgment, which way indeed it was discovered" (101-02). Gerard's attempt to discredit the letter shows that he recognized how important James's interpretation of it was to a providential interpretation and to the king's insistence upon his personal contribution to preventing the plot. This is not to suggest that he doubts the existence of providence, however, for later in the pamphlet he appropriates it to his own church.

In his account of the trial, for which he turns to the text of *A True and Perfect Relation*, comparing it with notes taken by those present at the trial, he tries to show that Garnett is being tried for heresy rather than treason. The indictment at the first trial listed not only the known priests, but also "and others," permitting the government to add accusations later. In addition,

> to make the matter good against them, here they were accused in this indictment, where none of them were present to answer for themselves; and were joined with the conspirators who were sure to be convicted and condemned of the fact, that the Jesuits might also seem to stand convicted and proved guilty with them; and this not only as partners, but, as I have said, as principal counsellors and causers of the whole treason. (194)

The point of the first trial, then, was less to convict the lay plotters than to lay a foundation for prosecuting the priests. He downplays not only his own alleged role in the plot, but its entire religious foundation, claiming that the plotters'

printed confessions offer no evidence that he administered the sacrament to them and heard their confessions. Neither Salisbury nor Northampton accused Gerard,

> But we must pardon Mr. Attorney this overlashing in this his discourse, which seemed rather to be intended against the Jesuits, than to prove the prisoners guilty that were there present before him; for it appeared by his words in divers places, that the chief mark he shot at was, like another Aman, to root out the whole Order of them, not out of England only, but out of the world, if he could. (201)[153]

The trial is thus not about the treasonous behaviour of an individual priest, but another example of prosecution for heresy under the guise of treason.

Finally, Gerard contests the Protestant depiction of the conspirators' deaths. Here he must be careful to show that the lay plotters were good but misguided Catholics, not martyrs, while the innocent priests were martyrs. Since the official account provided minimal details of the earlier executions, Gerard turns to an even more stridently Protestant account, arguing that the conspirators'

> state of mind and manner of carriage may in part be discerned by that printed pamphlet, which was presently set forth, entitled *A true report of the Imprisonment, Arraignment, and Death of the late Traitors*, wherein although all their particular words and actions were of set purpose left out, which might sound to their commendation, and many words of contumely and disgrace heaped upon them and their religion also in the most odious manner that could be devised; yet even that which is there set down of

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[153] Cecil attempts to refute this accusation in his *Answere to Certaine Scandalous Papers, scattered abroad vnder the colour of a Catholicke Admonition*, London, 1606 (STC 4895), B3.

> them did confirm very many in opinion that they thought themselves clear from offence to God in the matter, and that they were thereby made the more willing to suffer for the same cause. (192)[154]

Similarly, in response to the Winters' testimony he says: "It is not amiss to see what is said of them both by that pamphlet which was then by some base person published of their arraignment and execution; for that being written in as disgraceful manner of them as could be devised, it is the surer witness of anything that may be well interpreted of their mind" (203). The use of the sensational pamphlet allows Gerard to provide a dissenting account without contradicting the official narrative. Whereas Protestant sources refer to the Catholics as defiant before the trial, Gerard describes them as resolute. He takes particular exception to the comment that Digby seemed afraid to die and offers his own more favourable gloss, claiming that Digby impressed many spectators with his courage and faith. His face had the same composed expression after death, even though he had still been alive when butchered. Gerard reports the other executions in less detail, but insists that the plotters all died as good Catholics, except Bate, whose participation was motivated by personal loyalty to Catesby rather than religious

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[154] The pamphlet to which Gerard refers was one by an anonymous writer, T.W., who offered a more sensational account of the trial and execution of the lay plotters. Athough he claimed to write as a loyal subject intending to warn other idolators against committing similar crimes, his registration of the pamphlet on 4 February, only a few days after the first executions, suggests that the author was anxious to make a profit by being the first to get the news into print. This pamphlet was published in two variants with slightly different titles (STC 24916 and STC 24916.3). For comparative purposes, it is interesting to look at a similar pamphlet narrating the executions of the Babington plotters by George Whetstone, *The Censure of a loyall subiect* (STC 25334a). Whetstone structures his pamphlet as a drama in which a fictional spectator at the executions relates the event to two friends, whereas T. W. tells his story more simply and soberly. The relationship between the pamphlets describing trials and executions for domestic murders studied by Lake and Questier in *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat* and those relating to political crimes needs to be examined. Ballads also appeared comparatively quickly. Unfortunately, none of these survive, doubtless attesting to their popularity (see n. 194 below).

zeal and who had betrayed the priests. T.W., in contrast, observed that Bate was the only one who seemed penitent.

By relating the various miracles associated with the priests' deaths, particularly Garnett's, Gerard appropriates providence to the Catholic side.[155] In addition to the more famous miracle of Garnett's straw, Gerard recounts two miracles attesting to Oldcorne's saintliness: first, the fire into which his bowels were thrown burned for sixteen or seventeen days afterwards (the same number as the years of his ministry); and, secondly, a crown of differently coloured grass grew up in the courtyard at Henlip where the priests were taken. While in previous cases accusations of treason had evidently been manufactured, this time there was clearly evidence of a plot, and "Therefore in this case Almighty God did think it more needful in His divine providence to give testimony of His servant's innocency than in former times, when the cause itself was so plain, that it could not be contradicted" (301). God, then, has shown favour to the Catholic cause rather than the Protestant.

Gerard's text demonstrates the possibility of constructing a dissenting narrative from the very fabric of the official accounts.[156] He never contests the main facts of the government's case—that there was a plot and that Garnett learned about it under the seal of confession. It is difficult to know how well

[155] Alexandra Walsham, in *Providence in Early Modern England* (241-43), emphasizes that although Protestants made providentialism a centrepiece in their view of the world, Catholics also frequently relied upon providential explanations of events.

[156] Catholic references to the plot seldom occur outside of these polemical contexts, for, as Alison Shell reminds us, "viewed from the Catholic perspective, the defeat of the Armada in 1588, or the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605, cease to be landmarks and become embarrassments: sometimes written about from motives of dissociation, mostly ignored" (*Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination, 1558-1660* [Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999], 115).

known Gerard's text was, but subsequent complaints that some consider the plot as the work of "a few unfortunate gentlemen" suggest that many of the ideas expressed here were readily available.[157] Although Gerard has his own reasons for insisting that not even all Protestants support the authorized interpretation, he may have some justification for his assertions. By early 1606, Robert Cecil had been goaded into responding to a series of Catholic libels, but we can be fairly certain that criticism was coming from other quarters as well.[158] In his defence, printed by the king's printer, he complains that he has been "calumniated, with many contumelious Papers and Pasquils, dispersed abroad in diuers parts of the Citie, without any Author, and yet so continually comming vpon" (B^{r}) him that he did not know whom to answer. At last, "hauing also heard from Forraine parts, how farre ...[his] Name was there proscribed for a man of blood" (B^{v}), he has felt compelled to respond. As evidence of his persecution, he prints one of the libels, in which he is accused of attempting "*to roote out all memory of* Catholicke *Religion, either by sudden banishment, Massacre, imprisonment, or some such vnsupportable vexations, and pressures; and perhaps by decreeing in this next Parliament, some more cruell and horrible Lawes against Catholicks, then already are made*" (B3^{r}). The letter threatens that five Catholics have vowed to kill him and sealed their vows with the sacrament, none of the five knowing the identities of the other four. They claim this is the only avenue open to them, since

[157] In the "Epistle Dedicatory" to his 1610 sermon at St. Mary's Oxford, John Rawlinson notes that the Jesuits say that the plot was a rash attempt by a few Catholics rather than a considered plan to return the country to Catholicism (*The Romish Iudas*, A3^{v}-A4^{r}).
[158] Chapter 5 describes in more detail the wave of anti-Cecil writings that followed the Gunpowder Plot.

Salisbury is acting as a match giving fire to the king (B4^v), making him the instrument of a reverse Gunpowder Plot directed against Catholics.

Salisbury responds by assuring his readers that not only are Catholics not being prosecuted for heresy, but that the current regime is more moderate than the previous one. The rumour that James intends to enact harsher laws against Catholics has been started to justify Catholic resistance, since Elizabeth shed less blood than Mary, and James has not retaliated, even after the plot. If Catholics believe they are prosecuted as heretics it is not the fault of the English government but of their ignorant obedience to a church "whereof the faith is lapped vp in such ignorant & implicite obedience; and so much the rather, because it hath fallen out so often, that the scruples of Conscience and seeds of Treason, haue growen vp as close together, as the huske and Corne in one eare" (D3^v). Like the writer of the "Discourse," Salisbury describes England's peaceful state before the plot, with "a iust & gracious King, when euery man reioyced vnder his Vine and vnder his figge Tree" (E3^r). Through the biblical reference, Salisbury insists upon God's particular favour towards England, which promises prosperity to Catholics as well as Protestants, so long as they remain loyal to the crown. His readers' duty is to "make it appeare vnto the world, by the difference of our constant measure of thankefulnesse, that we esteeme not this an ordinary acte of Gods prouidence, nor a thing to be imputed to any fault or fayling in their plots or proiects, but a miraculous effect of the transcendent power, farre beyond the course and compasse of all his ordinary proceedings" (E3^v). Salisbury here introduces the importance of memorialization alluded to in the "Discourse" and

enforced in the sermons and liturgy. Forgetfulness not only shows disrespect to God, but also encourages the church and nation's enemies to believe that England can be attacked with impunity. The duty of memory thus ensures God's care by discouraging both foreign invasion and domestic conspiracy.

2.5 Conclusion

As the foregoing analysis demonstrates, the Elizabethan authorities gradually developed a strategy for informing both English subjects and foreigners of national crises, offering authoritative interpretations through sermons, liturgies, and prose narratives. Before his accession to the English throne, James I had not only practiced this strategy in his response to the Gowrie conspiracy, but had built upon it by instituting an annual commemoration of the event. Having inserted this memorial into the English calendar early in his reign, he used the occasion of the Gunpowder Plot to perpetuate the myth that all the plots against both himself and Elizabeth were, like Samson's foxes, joined at their tails.Through this "myth of deliverance," the new monarch sought to portray himself as a worthy successor to Elizabeth and the inheritor of God's providential care, but also to distinguish himself from his predecessor by emphasizing his paternal care for his subjects and his provision of sons to succeed him. More importantly, by linking the English and Scottish conspiracies, he strove to create a cultural connection between the two countries to promote his project of political union.

While rituals such as bonfires and bell-ringing were important to the creation of this myth, it developed primarily through narrative. Liturgy offered a

univocal account of the deliverance, but sermons and prose pamphlets participated in a more dialogic working out of the story. From the beginning, orators and authors sought to accommodate their narratives, with varying degrees of success, to existing literary genres, both anticipating and responding to competing versions. Although memories of the Gunpowder Plot may have been intended to unify the population, it is less certain that they actually accomplished that goal. The next chapter describes how attempts to create a British founding myth in a series of Anglo-Latin epics and their English translations ultimately offered yet more opportunities for dissent.

3. "In marble records fit to be inrold": Epic Monuments for a Protestant Nation

3.1 Redefining the Nation: Praise and Blame in the Anglo-Latin Gunpowder Epic

In the previous chapter, I considered the ways in which James I used the Gunpowder Plot to create a "myth of deliverance," employing several of the instruments that Elizabeth had developed to justify the suppression of Catholic threats to English Protestantism, including sermons, liturgies, and prose tracts. I turn now to one of the ways aspiring Englishmen reflected this myth back to their sovereign. Epic is the literary form most closely associated with the perpetuation of founding myths in Western society, and a number of Jacobean hopefuls, not surprisingly, chose this genre to praise James as the founder of a new Protestant Britain, just as Virgil had glorified Augustus as the father of Rome in the *Aeneid.* Virgil's work was also a singularly appropriate model for these writers because it emphasized three of the themes already present in James's own narratives of the plot—providence, paternity, and memory.

Although several Elizabethan writers had memorialized the queen's deliverances in Latin poetry, the Jacobean poets were distinctive first in the explicitly Virgilian overtones of their works, and secondly in their employment of the full potential of the genre's epideictic traditions to offer blame as well as praise, counselling James to take harsher measures against Catholics, particularly at court. These poems constructed the Jacobean state against a Catholic "other"

through tropes of monstrosity and demonic motivation, developing a template that could be used later in the century to demonize any religious or political opponent. In *Literature and Revolution in England 1640-1660*, Nigel Smith observes that the "parliamentarian and puritan appropriation of epic theory and intentions is one of the most exciting literary events of the century, largely because it seems so very daring" (212). I propose, however, that the mid-century transformation of English epic from a celebration of imperial heroism modelled on Virgil to a representation of interiorized and individual republican fortitude modelled on Lucan may be illuminated by attending to the histories of a largely neglected group of poems written to commemorate the Gunpowder Plot. I begin by demonstrating the uneasy construction of a founding myth through the early Latin Gunpowder epics, as poets seeking court patronage balanced praising the new king with advising him to banish Catholics from his court. By the second decade of the reign, as disillusionment set in, poets increasingly attacked Catholicism by infusing satire into their works, representing Catholics as monsters and demons. A gradual infiltration of romance elements, particularly increasing individuation of the plotters and depictions of their aimless wanderings in the Midlands, subverted the genre later in the century when the increasing tensions within Protestantism made the simple dichotomies of the early seventeenth century, and Virgilian epic, inadequate for the emerging state. As authors lost faith in the godly monarch, they increasingly made ordinary Protestants, rather than the king, responsible for safeguarding the country from Catholicism. By 1641, English translations and print publication had brought these poems to readers unfamiliar with epic

conventions, training individuals to become the "fit audience" that Milton would later seek for his narrative of the fall of mankind.

Because James failed to achieve a political union of England and Scotland, it is easy to underestimate the importance of this project at the beginning of his reign, culturally as well as politically.[159] Beginning in 1604, parliamentary resistance to James's attempts at legislating union forced the king to focus upon symbols of unity such as flags and coinage, and those who sought to flatter him recognized the value of appealing to this project.[160] While "orators and clerics," finding "in the Old Testament a divinely sanctioned, auspicious precedent for regal union ... likened James to David, the heroic king who commanded the loyalty of both Israel and Judah" (Kerrigan 13), poets revived Geoffrey of Monmouth's legend of Brutus, Aeneas's grandson and mythic founder of Britain, to celebrate not so much the Jacobean founding of a united kingdom as its re-establishment. The pageants staged for James's entry into London dramatized this myth, and it continued to inform court masques into the 1630s (Kerrigan 13). But it had begun to reassert itself long before James's accession—as early as the 1530s in Scotland.

South of the border, however, references to Britain seldom included the northern kingdom.[161] When Henry VII "cast his accession as the fulfilment of the

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[159] Neil Cuddy argues that a court rather than a parliamentary perspective allows us to see the project of union "not as a unique, inconsequential and purely legislative failure, but as a central political preoccupation throughout the reign" ("Anglo-Scottish Union and the Court of James I, 1603-1625," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 39, [1989], 108).

[160] John Kerrigan, *Archipelagic English: Literature, History, and Politics, 1603-1707* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), 13.

[161] For the complexities of what "Britain" meant to early moderns, see Alan MacColl, "The Meaning of 'Britain' in Medieval and Early Modern England," *Journal of British Studies* 45

old prophecies, promising a renewal of ancient empire and ancient unity," he was emphasizing his Welsh descent from Cadwallader; and when his younger son assumed an Arthurian style of kingship upon taking his dead brother's place in the succession, he was also capitalizing on that heritage (Scott-Warren 164). Jason Scott-Warren observes that the epic genealogies of *The Fairie Queene* trace lineages to Brutus and that the female warrior who prefigures Elizabeth is named Britomart, concluding that "Taking Arthur as its hero, Spenser's poem is throughout British rather than English in its frame of reference" (165). But Alan MacColl cautions that Spenser's Britain does not include Scotland. Although at mid-century both John Bale (*Scriptorum Illustrium maioris Brytanniæ ... Catalogus*, 1548 and 1557) and John Foxe (*Ecclesiastical History*, 1570) imagined a Britain that comprised the entire island, the alleged plotting and subsequent execution of Mary Queen of Scots in 1587 turned England against her northern neighbour in the last quarter of the century.[162] MacColl reminds us that the only Scot in *The Fairie Queene* is the treacherous Duessa: "Scotland is thus presented exclusively in terms of the Catholic threat to England, one of the chief obstacles that the latter has had to overcome before she can emerge triumphant as (in Milton's phrase) 'this nation chosen before any other'" ("Construction" 604-05). Spenser's intention was not to extend Britain to include Scotland, but "to

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(2006), 248-69. MacColl argues that most medieval and early modern historians used the term "Britain" to mean England alone, but that another tradition referred to the whole island as "England" without including Scotland. In the fifteenth century, some Scots began referring to the entire island as "Britannia maior."

[162] According to MacColl, by the late sixteenth century, the English feared that Scotland was vulnerable to invasion by Catholic Spain, which could use the country as a landing stage for an assault on England ("The Meaning of 'Britain,'" 268).

provide an English rival to the Trojan heritage claimed by imperial Spain" ("Construction" 605).

Hostility towards the Scots increased in the new reign and may even have fuelled the Gunpowder Plot. As Jenny Wormald reminds us, "A Scottish king and his Scottish entourage, as well as his English parliament, were the target of the Gunpowder Plotters" (161). George Blacker Morgan even hypothesizes, although without evidence, that the conspirators made no arrangements for governing the country because they anticipated a takeover by those grateful to have the foreigners "blown...back to Scotland."[163] As we shall see in Chapter 5, these anti-Scots sentiments occasionally surfaced in post-plot drama.

In Scotland, however, many Protestants saw union with England as a security measure that could protect them against continental Catholicism, and Jason C. White argues that in England, too, some of the godly hoped that a truly united kingdom could defy the papal Antichrist. MacColl also suggests that "the fundamental Protestant principle of a return to an original purity of doctrine and practice found ready analogies and parallels in the old idea of the nation's ancient British origin" ("Construction" 583), while White points to numerous references to Britain in English poems and polemical treatises calling for reprisals against foreign Catholics after the Gunpowder Plot.[164] Nevertheless, what kind of union

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[163] Fawkes used this phrase in his first examination by the king on 5 November (qtd. in Wormald, 161). Morgan's presentation is impressive, but much of his argument is based on conjecture (*The Great English Treason for Religion known as Gunpowder Plot*, 19).

[164] "Militant Protestants: British Identity in the Jacobean Period, 1603-1625," *History* 94.314 (2009), 165-67. On Scottish Protestants' desire for a united island, see also Arthur H. Williamson, "Scotland, Antichrist and the Invention of Great Britain," in *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland*, ed. John Dwyer, Roger A. Mason, and Alexander Murdoch (Edinburgh: John Donald, n.d.), 34-59.

these writers wanted remains difficult to ascertain. Whereas the Scots envisioned the two nations as equal partners in a "Great Britain," England was willing to offer Scotland only a subordinate place, if any, in its empire.

To complicate matters, antiquarian researches by William Camden and others had confirmed the fictionality of Geoffrey's history of the Britons, contested by Polydore Vergil as early as 1534. As John E. Curran observes, the discovery that the Britons had been a primitive and barbaric people rather than worthy antagonists of the Roman invaders forced Englishmen "to accept truth over self-flattery, and solidified the distinction between history and poetry" ("Spenser" 276). In 1607, James dissolved the Society of Antiquaries, a move Derek Hirst attributes to his determination to effect cultural union even when political union eluded him.[165] If this is so, then James took seriously the need to maintain the myth of a British past for political purposes.

For his English subjects, the arrival of Mary Stewart's son, with his retinue of "barbaric" Scots and his imperial aspirations, created conflicts between their desire for patronage and their reluctance to support union with the northern kingdom. While English assumptions of cultural superiority created some resistance to union, Neil Cuddy also suggests that "opposition to the Union served the more politically sophisticated as a means of 'coded' attack on the king's Scottish entourage" (113). Unwilling to risk a direct attack on the powerful Scots

[165] "The English Republic and the Meaning of Britain," *Journal of Modern History* 66.3 (1994): 471, n. 94. Others, however, attribute James's actions to the debate about whether monarchy or parliament was the older tradition. See for example Pauline Croft, "Sir John Doddridge, King James I, and the Antiquity of Parliament," *Parliament, Estates and Representation* 12.2 (1992): 95-107.

of the Bedchamber, politicians like the Earl of Southampton and Edwin Sandys subverted the prospects of political union. Those seeking preferment, however, saw a chance to flatter their new monarch by celebrating in Virgilian epic the foundation of his restored Britain.[166]

Epic was not only the pinnacle of Renaissance genres, but it was also the most political. As David Quint asserts: "Virgil's epic is tied to a specific national history, to the idea of world domination, to a monarchical system, even to a particular dynasty" (*Epic* 8). In addition to these features, this model offered poets seeking to praise the king in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot the opportunity to expand on ideas that James had introduced in his own plot narratives—his providential deliverances, his literal and metaphoric fatherhood, and the workings of national memory. One of the most vivid images of the *Aeneid* is the hero fleeing burning Troy carrying his father and leading his young son by the hand. In the "Discourse" accompanying his 9 November speech to Parliament, James had called the plot a parricide, describing himself as both the head and the father of his country.[167] In addition, accounts of the plot almost invariably presented James literally as a father, reminding subjects that the country could now anticipate a

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[166] Despite complaints about James's importation of Scots retainers, the new king was also generous with his English subjects, creating almost half as many knights on the day of his coronation alone as Elizabeth had in her entire reign (Linda Levy Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England* [Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990], 32).

[167] James's Scottish frame of reference may have inspired his use of the paternal analogy. Wormald observes that in Scotland killing the king was "parricide" rather than "treason" ("Gunpowder, Treason and Scots," 164). Both of James's other analogies for his relationship to his country, marriage and the body politic, were potentially problematic. Since England and Scotland remained joined in an "imperfect union" in which each retained its own laws and institutions, the countries were effectively two wives with one husband or two bodies with one head. On James's marriage metaphors, see Anne McLaren, "Monogomy, Polygamy and the True State: James I's Rhetoric of Empire," *History of Political Thought* 25.3 (2004): 446-80.

stable succession. For Renaissance readers, the preservation of Aeneas's household gods, carried by Anchises in the flight from Troy, represented the hero's devotion to religion, but his dominant characteristic of *pietas* meant considerably more. M. Owen Lee notes that by Virgil's time the adjective *pius* "had come to mean three-fold devotion to family, country, and gods" (18). To be pious is to put duty to these higher goods above one's own concerns, as Aeneas does when he leaves Dido at Carthage.[168] James claimed this kind of piety in his 9 November speech when he told Parliament that had he been killed in the explosion, he would have died in the most appropriate place for a king, while fulfilling his regal responsibilities.[169] Just as Aeneas had ultimately accepted his destiny to found a new Troy, so James has recognized in his history of miraculous deliverances his providential responsibility to restore Britain.

As the *Aeneid* suggests, however, creating a new nation entails looking backward as well as forward. Quint observes that the Trojans must relinquish their legacy of failure not by forgetting it but by rewriting it as success, demonstrating the ways in which the Trojans' battles with the Latins reverse their former defeats in the war against the Greeks. The poem thus responds to the question: how does a nation stop reliving its past failures and move on to fulfil its destiny?[170] England's deliverances (and James's) were signs of providential favour, but they

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[168] Not all critics agree that *pietas* entails a suppression of personal emotions. See, for example, Colin Burrow, who argues that it requires "emotions, such as gratitude and affection" as well as justice (*Epic Romance: Homer to Milton* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1993], 40). In contrast, Robin Sowerby argues that "As the chosen instrument of the gods and of the fates that lead inexorably to the foundation of Rome, he [Aeneas] finds that he is required to subdue his personal inclinations at every stage" (*The Classical Legacy in Renaissance Poetry* [London: Longmans, 1994], 34).
[169] James actually began his speech by recognizing piety and justice as the pillars of government.
[170] *Epic and Empire*, 63-83.

were also symptomatic of inability to overcome decisively the threat of Catholicism. England had faced a destruction equivalent to Troy's—loss of the nation's records, buildings, and monuments that would have effectively erased it from history. James's accession, the new peace with Spain, and the thwarting of the Gunpowder Plot offered the promise of a new beginning that would also end the series of Catholic plots that had begun in Elizabeth's reign. Poets thus envisioned their works as monuments to a Protestant England. But some, in their advice to the king, also recognized the practical difficulties to be overcome, and some came to believe that ultimate victory could only be achieved with the apocalypse. As we shall see, this led to an increasing emphasis upon romance elements and the deferral of closure in later Gunpowder poetry.

Leicester Bradner observes that epic models began to be used by Latin poets during the Elizabethan period, particularly in panegyrics to the queen.[171] While the conventions that developed in these poems informed the demonic councils in the Gunpowder epics, they did not evoke the traditions of Virgilian epic as those addressed later to James did. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that although most modern critics refer to these poems as epics, their writers did not identify them as such. Francis Herring called his poem "a brief poetical outline" (Haan 255), while Michael Wallace described his as "A poem of joy" (Haan 369).[172] Neither Phineas Fletcher nor John Milton offered any generic clues to

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[171] *Musae Anglicanae: A History of Anglo-Latin Poetry, 1500-1925* (New York: MLA, 1940).
[172] All references to these poems are to Estelle Haan's editions. References to the English translations are cited by page numbers; references to the Latin are cited by line numbers ("Milton's *In Quintum Novembris* and the Anglo-Latin Gunpowder Epic," *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 41 [1992], 221-295 and 42 [1993], 368-93).

their works; however, Dana F. Sutton and Robert Appelbaum have argued that the form of Milton's poem is Alexandrian epyllion, a "mini-epic style [that] was especially serviceable for sixteenth- and seventeenth-century poets who were working on recent history, concerned with post-Reformation political and religious struggle" (Appelbaum 471). In Britain, this genre "had even adopted a characteristic story: a story of violence plotted, expressed, and thwarted, with victory redounding to the side of true religion, which begins with a conspiracy against the cause of true religion instigated by Satan" (471).[173] Although the formal aspects of these poems varied, this imperative to celebrate the establishment of true religion characterizes them all.

The Elizabethan Latin poems include a selection on the Parry plot—two by William Gager, one attributed to George Peele, and another by an unidentified H. D.—one on the Babington plot by Gager, and the first book of an epic by William Alabaster describing Princess Elizabeth's imprisonment by Queen Mary. The defeat of the Armada, surely a fitting subject for epic, inspired Thomas Campion's *Ad Thamesin* and a poem by William Watson. A brief glance at some of these poems suggests the ways in which the Gunpowder poems both emulated these examples and diverged from them.

Like the later Gunpowder Plot, Parry's attempt to assassinate Elizabeth challenged epic writers because Parry's social status prevented his representation

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[173] Appelbaum identifies *Pareus* and James's poem on the Battle of Lepanto as additional examples of this genre. See "Milton, the Gunpowder Plot, and the Mythography of Terror," *Modern Language Quarterly* 68.4 (2007), 471; Dana F. Sutton, "John Milton's *In Quintum Novembris* (1626): A Hypertext Critical Edition," Philological Museum, University of California, Irvine, rev. 2006, www.philological.bham.ac.uk/milton/www.philological.bham.ac.uk/milton/intro.html.

as a heroic antagonist. Gager resolved this dilemma by penning three Horatian odes rather than attempting an epic.[174] The first poem ("PRODIRORE*m* IN ~~Coniuratorem~~ SERENISSIMÆ REGINÆ ELISABETÆ CÆDEM MACHINATURU*m* ODE. 1585"), is directed against Parry and execrates him for plotting against his monarch, while the second, addressed to the queen ("IN SERENISSIMA*m* REGINA*m* ELIZABETA*m* AB IMMINENTE CÆDIS PERICULO SERUATA*m* ODE"), offers a thanksgiving for her escape. In Poem III, "AD SERENISSIMA*m* REGINAM ELISABETA*m* VT BONU*m* ANIMU*m* HABEAT, & TIMERE TANDE*m* DESINAT, ODE," the writer advises the queen to banish fear and rejoice "both in God's power and in the dear affection of your faithful people and peers" (168). The poem does not specify its occasion, but the queen's life has apparently been endangered. The focus of these poems is clearly panegyric and, in accordance with their genre, they are non-narrative.

Pareus, the poem that Tucker Brooke attributes to George Peele, is more relevant to the present discussion, since it shares a number of characteristics with the later Gunpowder epics, particularly the plot's demonic origins, possibly another means of circumventing the problem of Parry's unheroic status. Patronage was clearly the poet's motive, since he concludes with the hope that when Elizabeth and other European rulers destroy Rome he may "Perhaps be famed in future as your bard" (48). Like the post-Gunpowder Plot polemic that Jason C. White examines, the poem advocates a pan-European war upon Catholicism, but

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[174] These poems, which appear in a manuscript collection of Gager's poetry (BL Add. MS 22583), have been edited and translated by Tucker Brooke. I quote from his edition ("William Gager to Queen Elizabeth," *Studies in Philology* 29.2 [1932], 160-75).

although the opening lines evoke the *Aeneid*'s prefatory inscription, Elizabeth is to conduct this war not as an English Aeneas but as a new Boadicia, yoking three lions to her war chariot and advancing with her Britons to expell the Roman foxes [Tuque o magnanimûm virgo sata sanguine regum, / Europæq*u*e decus, quam fata ad tanta reseruant / Munera, trigeminos curru subiunge leones: / Sublimisque incede tuis stipata Britannis, / Et tandem inuictum cœlo caput effer aperto] (67). Sutton argues that *Pareus* offered a model to later poets since "it could readily be adapted to fit a variety of historical situations" ("Milton's" 359).

In contrast to Peele's combination of realism and allegory, Campion's *Ad Thamesin* is a mythologized treatment of the Armada crisis, in which Dis provokes Spain to attack England by arousing his envy with a vision of the country's prosperity. The English victory is achieved by both the defensive action of the river and the offensive actions of the English sailors, but Campion does not narrate the naval engagement, perhaps again because this would involve the actions of those well below heroic status, or because it would emphasize human over divine agency. The poet ends by praising Elizabeth and praying that she may continue to protect England for many more years.

This poem makes a more sustained use of the British History, as Oceanus informs Dis: "These are the English, they are Britons from the Trojan race, who cherish peace and worship the spirit and frequent temples" (367). In contrast to the heroic and warlike Britons evoked by Gager, this is a pious and peace-loving race. The poet reiterates their piety when he concludes the story of Spain's defeat with: "So let perish whoever, soon to weep, will set sail against your shores, heirs

of Brutus, long friends of the gods, sacred name, Britain" (377). The name is used in this poem to evoke a mythology, not to identify a geo-political entity.

Like these earlier texts, the Latin poems produced after the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot participated in the culture of patronage, some surviving only in presentation manuscripts, while others, although dedicated to members of the court, were printed for wider circulation. These poems, however, are more narrative and more explicitly Virgilian, seeking to establish monuments to James's new Protestant nation.[175] Michael Wallace asserts in his *In Serenissimi Regis Iacobi* that 5 November "should be inscribed forever upon snow-white stone" (389), while William Gager makes his poem itself a monument. Gager's non-narrative *Pyramis* exists in a single presentation manuscript (BL MS Royal 12 A LIX) dedicated to James in 1608. The poet begins by addressing James as "Magnæ Britanniæ Regem" (254), despite parliament's 1604 rejection of James's proposed name change.[176] This gesture appears to be mere lip service, however, since throughout the poem he emphasizes England's deliverance, and at one point

[175] My discussion of the Virgilian overtones of these poems is restricted to a thematic one. For the linguistic echoes of various classical sources in the poems, see the following: Estelle Haan, "Milton's *In Quintum Novembris*"; Estelle Haan (ed.), *Phineas Fletcher: Locustae Vel Pietas Iesuitica*, Louvain: Leuven UP, 1996; Thomas Campion, *De Puluerea Coniuratione (On the Gunpowder Plot) Sidney Sussex MS 59*, ed. David Lindley with translation and additional notes by Robin Sowerby, Leeds Texts and Monographs, New Series 10 (Leeds: Leeds Studies in English, 1987). Haan's work is particularly useful for comparing the use of specific incidents and motifs in Milton's poem with those of Wallace, Herring, and Fletcher.

[176] Bruce Galloway (*The Union of England and Scotland 1603-1608* [Edinburgh: John Donald, 1986]) asserts that in the pamphlet literature of 1604 "there was much more discussion of the name of Great Britain than of any other single proposal for union" (35). Parliament rejected the name change, fearing that it would affect England's common law, but in October 1604 James used his own authority to change his title to "King of Great Britain." According to Conrad Russell, the English generally ignored this proclamation, seeing it as an attempt to usurp divine authority, but the "question of the change of name to Great Britain had opened up some very big questions about the nature of authority in the English state" ("James VI and I and Rule over Two Kingdoms: An English View," *Historical Research* 76.192 [2003],161).

he makes a tactless example of "a poor outcast in the remotest bounds of Scotland" who might be unaware of the plot.[177] Nevertheless, he includes 5 August, along with 17 November and 25 October (the Battle of Agincourt), as a date for his monument to memorialize. Having identified London as "Troynovant," he represents the plot as a reversal of Troy's destruction, as the ruler of these new Trojans protects his subjects by revealing the men and powder concealed underground.

Despite the royal dedication, however, Gager seems to have a rather unclear sense of his audience, addressing the executed Father Garnett, whose belief in the papal power of deposition he deplores, through much of the poem. Gager contests Garnett's claims to piety by invoking the sanctity of the confessional as well as his political theology. Instead, he contends, "Piety demands that one proclaim the destruction prepared for one's country" (283). James, the rightful "Parent" (295) of his people, demonstrates this correct kind of piety, which requires avoiding both the Scylla of Rome and the Charbydis of Geneva. *Pietas* for Gager, then, is the Virgilian blend of devotion to religion and country for which all of these poets praise James.

The debt to Virgil in the narrative poems, too, extends beyond verbal echoes to a fundamental conception of the relationship between writer and reader that insists upon the role of literature in promoting virtuous action. Brian Vickers emphasizes that in the Renaissance "the most significant topic for literature,

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[177] The English translation "of Scotland" is Brooke's, but the Latin word used is actually "Pictorum" and so identifies the individual not as a subject of a kingdom but as a member of a race considered backward and barbaric (270-71).

especially the epic, was the realm of human virtue and vice" (502). For Sidney, heroic poetry was "the best and most accomplished kind" (119) because it could move individuals towards virtuous action more effectively than moral philosophy. Aeneas was a model for monarchs, since he represented all the virtues needed in a king. While praising their own king as the modern inheritor of these virtues, the Latin Gunpowder poets also saw it as their duty to point out his deficiencies and thus to inspire him to even nobler action.

In offering advice to their monarch, these writers drew upon two models of free speech described by David Colclough—a humanist one outlined in contemporary rhetorical handbooks and a religious one modelled upon the Old Testament prophets.[178] None of these men held a court appointment; they dedicated their poems to the king or members of the royal households in quest of such favours.[179] Advising superiors, however, was a civic duty not only for those with formal conciliar responsibilities, but for all educated men, who hoped both to aid their country and to advance their own careers by demonstrating their potential usefulness as counsellors able to administer correction with discretion. Moreover, believing that a godly nation required a godly ruler, Calvinists claimed a responsibility to chastise magistrates when their actions jeopardized God's

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[178] See *Freedom of Speech in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005), Chs. 1 and 2 as well as Richard Cust, "The 'Public Man' in Late Tudor and Early Stuart England," in *Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, ed. Peter Lake and Steven Pincus (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2007), 116-43.

[179] On patronage, see Linda Levy Peck, "'For a king not to be bountiful were a fault': Perspectives on Court Patronage in Early Stuart England," *Journal of British Studies* 25.1 (1986): 31-61. On the politics of dedicating printed books and manuscripts to royal patrons, see John A. Buchtel, "'To the Most High and Excellent Prince': Dedicating Books to Henry, Prince of Wales," in *Prince Henry Revived: Image and Exemplarity in Early Modern England*, ed. Timothy Wilks (London: Southampton Solent University in association with Paul Holberton Publishing, 2007), 104-133, esp. 104-06.

continued favour towards England. According to Simon Adams, this aspect of Protestantism began to change political behaviour fundamentally as early as Edward VI's reign, when "there emerged a novel pressure group of Protestant divines and evangelical laymen more than willing to give kings and magistrates advice" (35). At this early stage in the new reign, when many perceived James as more accessible and receptive to counsel than his predecessor, the Gunpowder anniversary provided an opportunity to solicit personal favour while tendering advice to him on religio-political issues.[180]

The most crucial issue raised by the discovery of the gunpowder was the effectiveness of the king's policies towards English Catholics. Whereas most Catholics attributed the plot to the severity of the penal laws, and James's failure to rescind them, Protestants generally feared that the king was too lenient. Many were particularly anxious about the presence of Catholics and crypto-Catholics at court, both politicians such as Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, and members of the royal household, especially the queen. In a 1607 pamphlet entitled *Lucta Iacobi*, the author, who took the precaution of signing himself simply "Univoce-catholicus," flattered James by comparing him with the patriarch Jacob, while describing the plotters as Esaus. Although he accepted the king's caveat that not all Catholics were disloyal, he advocated banishing them all, declaring: "Away then (Sir) with too much of your olde clemencie: Clemencie, the most dangerous

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[180] James's accessibility is disputed. Kevin Sharpe claims that James, in contrast to his son, was "accessible, open to influence" ("Faction at the Early Stuart Court," *History Today* 33.10 [1983], 41); however, Neil Cuddy cautions that the king's accessibility was illusory ("Anglo-Scottish Union and the Court of James I," 111). On the importance of personal access to the monarch, see also the review article by Robert Shephard, "Court Factions in Early Modern England," *Journal of Modern History* 64.4 [1992], 723.

companion that euer your Maiesty caried about with you, howsoeuer a part desiderated in many Princes" (32). But the biblical analogy enabled the author to broach Queen Anne's Catholicism directly: "We see also in *Iacob* a constant & couragious zeale to reforme both [Court & Country], without exception of persons; yea, he suffered not so much as his own *Rahel* to keepe the stollen gods of her father *Laban*: what lesse can we look for of your Maiesty?" (38). Cleverly, he quotes James's own words in *Basilicon Doron*, admonishing him as the king had advised his son, to "*begin your reformation euen at your elbow*" (38). The author claims to address the king fearlessly, since James, unlike the pope, is a Christian king, not a tyrant. If James then objects to this criticism, he brands himself a tyrant. The writer's careful rhetorical strategies, his anonymity, and the publisher's caution in displaying "*Seene and allowed*" prominently on the title page demonstrate that James was already less amenable to direct criticism; however, the author's willingness to incur these risks indicates the importance some Protestants attached to anti-Catholicism as the mark of a godly kingdom.

In the immediate aftermath of the plot, however, Protestant authors like Wallace warned James openly against favouring Catholics while praising his deliverance. Wallace, professor of philosophy at the University of Glasgow since 1601, was one of the first to dedicate a Latin poem on the plot to James, publishing his *In serenissimi Regis Iacobi* in 1606.[181] He not only congratulates the king on his escape, but also compliments him on unifying the kingdoms in a

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[181] Since we know very little about Wallace, it is difficult to know what his motives may have been. (The scanty information about him is summarized by Estelle Haan in *Phineas Fletcher*, xxxix, n. 110.) The royal dedication, however, suggests that he hoped for patronage of some kind.

poem that blends fact and fiction into a dramatic narrative. For a Scot, acknowledging James as "a king to whom are subject in a united kingdom Britain, France and Ireland" (371) was perhaps easier than for an Englishman. In the demonic council at which Satan, envying England's peace and piety, proposes the plot, he also admits to authoring the Gowrie conspiracy and the Bye plot, linking English and Scottish history through James.[182] Like a number of the other epics, this one focuses on the nation's deliverance, but Wallace heightens the suspense by having the royal family actually processing towards parliament when "the omnipotent father to whose eyes from on high all things mortal are evident, who in his eternity governs the progress of life and of death, ruling the world with perpetual reason, looked out from Heaven upon the secret plot" (385, 387).[183] The depiction of God as father aligns him with James, whose productive fatherhood contrasts with that of the Jesuits, evil parents whose "fatherly advice" (379) to Fawkes brings only the threat of destruction and chaos. Providence clearly favours James, for he has survived the Ruthvens' conspiracy, near shipwreck on the way to Denmark to claim his bride, and the Main plot, in which Ralegh was implicated, shortly after his arrival in England. Even Satan acknowledges the king's *pietas* (ll. 41-42) and fears that it is spreading to the whole island.

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[182] The Bye plot was a conspiracy instigated by the secular priest William Watson to capture the king at Greenwich on midsummer eve of 1603 and extract a promise of toleration from him.
[183] This seems to be the first reference to the Eye of God, which was to become a standard feature of plot iconography in the 1620s, popularized particularly in Samuel Ward's "Double Deliverance" engraving, withdrawn upon the complaint of the Spanish ambassador (see Ch.4). Wallace's fictionalization seems to conform to Sidney's dictum that the poet may change the past in order to make it more instructive. Wallace seems to have wanted to make clear how close England had come to disaster.

But Wallace set a precedent for later writers by addressing a stern warning to his king:

> And so that impiety may shudder the more at the crime and mad venture, extirpate from your kingdom the abominable race (410) of the threefold monster which, infected by deadly poisons, rushes into crime and wrongdoing at the impulse of blind fury, despiser of heaven and a universal Erinnys upon earth, which dares to lay its hand upon kings and hallowed crowns with the intention of removing the clear light (415) and enveloping the wretched world in filthy darkness. (391)

Although Satan dresses as a Jesuit to inspire Fawkes to commit treason, Wallace advises the king to banish all Catholics, not just members of the Society. Like many of the early writers, he identifies the continental exiles, including Fawkes, as an ongoing source of Catholic intrigue that is beyond the monarch's control, but reminds the king of his responsibility to act where he does have authority.

In warning James against all Catholics, including those overseas, Wallace's poem is more characteristic of the English responses to the plot than the Latin ones. Although less English poetry seems to have been produced in the immediate aftermath of the plot than might be expected, the surviving examples demonstrate concerns significantly different from those of the Latin ones. The lengthiest of the English poems is Richard Williams's "Acclamatio Patriae," which survives in BL MS Arundel 418, a collection of three poems, apparently in

his own hand, that he presented to the king.[184] The poem is undated, but seems to have been written some time before the collection was made, since Williams stated in his introduction that he had given Prince Henry a copy when the royal household was in progress through Nottinghamshire, but had received no word of its reception.[185] He also claims to have had a copy licensed for the press, but was unable to afford the cost of printing.[186] Thus, like the Latin poets who printed their works, Williams seems to have hoped both for royal patronage and the benefits of print publication. Since the other two poems in the collection are on the Babington plot and Essex's execution respectively, he may have recognized the king's desire to see his deliverance as a sequel to Elizabeth's. Williams signs himself as the king's "poore Distressed Subiecte," leading to speculation that he may have been a deprived clergyman attempting to regain favour, but nothing more is known of him.

For Williams, the pursuit of favour seems to preclude criticizing the king. Although he makes an oblique reference to Northumberland that indicates his awareness of suspected Catholics at court, he minimizes the role of religion in the plot and offers instead conventional warnings about the dangers of rebellion by focusing upon the plot's potential to have harmed ordinary people and brought about "generall ruyne" (113), particularly a suppression of "godlie lawes" (348). With the exception of Fawkes, all of the traitors act from motives of ambition

[184] The description of the manuscript in the British Library's catalogue indicates that it appears to be holographic. I quote by line reference from the copy printed by F. J. Furnivall in *Ballads from Manuscripts* (New York: AMS Press, 1968), 2.30-59.
[185] I have been unable to date this progress. According to Williams, the king was staying with Sir John Byron at his home (Newstead Abbey) in the forest of Mansfield. Since the king frequently hunted in Nottinghamshire, it may not be possible to identify the particular occasion.
[186] No record of the poem appears in the Stationers' Register.

rather than religion. Thus, addressing the plotters directly, he reminds them of their duty to obey even a bad king. Catholics have been taught to preach treason, and now their pulpit has become the gallows, "A pulpitt where manye haue preached before, / that haue bene traytors agaynst kinge and state" (442-43).[187] But the guilty include not only those who have been executed, for:

> tis thought there bee some of greater states
> that haue bene agents and Dealers therein:
> Tis pittie that ever by suche base mates
> they shoulde bee counselde to suche deadlie synne,
> Or that anye peere shoulde bee sene therein,
> To ecklipse the glorye of Honored fame,
> And bee scandalizde w*i*th touche of the same. (512-18)

The plot, in which commoners have counselled a peer, represents an inversion of the proper social order.[188] Satan was the first traitor, "By polecye turninge darknes to light" (564) and since then, "aspiringe myndes" (607) have never been contented, even when ruled by a king as merciful as James. The poem thus warns would-be traitors to accept their stations and avoid dealings with rebels. Williams ends by rehearsing the qualities for which the king should be praised, particularly his desire to maintain peace abroad and his care for the poor at home.

Two English poems intended for wider audiences, however, emphasize the religious aspect of the treason and focus upon the threat of international

[187] The reference to the gallows as a pulpit suggests that the poem was written after Father Garnett's trial, where his prisoner's box had been compared to a pulpit.
[188] Northumberland had first come under suspicion early in James's reign for advocating toleration. After that he had been suspected of having connections to the Main and Bye plots.

Catholicism. The more literary of the two is I.H.'s *Divell of the Vault or the Unmasking of Murder*, which begins with an invocation to Melpomene.[189] As we shall see in the later case of John Vicars, situating the plot as a tragedy seems to have been linked with the desire to see it as part of an ongoing Protestant struggle in which ultimate victory remained uncertain rather than as a unique founding moment. Blaming the Jesuits for having corrupted the Catholic laity, the author reminds his readers of earlier Catholic atrocities, both domestic and foreign, including the Paris massacre, the Marian persecutions, and the murder of Henri III, as well as a plot in Germany involving gunpowder.[190] Placing the plot in an international context, I. H. suggests that the Protestant church, rather than the English state, was the target when "The *Papists* through large *Europe* ranged, / the *Protestants* to sley" (B4^{v}). Yet England does hold a special position in God's sight, for had the plot been successful,

> Then *Britons* Angel-garded gates,
>
> had opened to their hand:
>
> And entrance made for forraigne powers,
>
> to ruinate the land. (C4^{v})[191]

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[189] In his introduction, the author claims that he could have produced a more polished piece of work had he been permitted more time, but that he had only three hours in which to write the poem, although he gives no reason for this limitation. The sprinkling of Latin phrases in the introduction seems intended to represent him as an educated author. He also promises a sequel after the plotters' trial, but this does not seem to have been printed.

[190] The German story is also mentioned by Walter Yonge, who describes it more specifically as an attempt to blow up the Princes Electors at Minden in Westphalia in his account of the plot (*Diary of Walter Yonge, esq., justice of the peace, and M.P. for Honiton, written at Colyton and Axminster, co. Devon, from 1604-1628*, ed. George Roberts [London: Camden Society, 1848], 4). I have been unable to trace this event so far.

[191] While Jason C. White is correct to notice the references to Britons and Britain scattered through these poems, as I have suggested above it is not always easy to determine to what extent the authors are consciously including Scotland in these terms.

Ambiguously England is both an insular Eden, protected by God's messengers from foreign invasion, and part of a Protestant Europe. Not content with placing England under foreign domination, the plotters would then have

> Brought *Gospellers* and *Protestants*,
>
> to vndeserued shame:
>
> Diuulging by their forg'd declaimes,
>
> that they had wrought the same. (C4^{v})

The rumour that the plotters would have blamed the puritans for their crime seems to have been fairly widespread in the immediate aftermath of the discovery, but occurs in none of the Latin texts except Herring's, where the plotters intend to implicate only the puritan bishops. I.H. appeals to both king and commoners to stand fast against Rome, thus making a godly kingdom the responsibility of both the ruler and ordinary individuals. In this poem, however, the principal threat remains outside the state and the poet directs no specific advice to the king.

Also published in 1606, John Rhodes's doggerell poem, *A Briefe Summe of the Treason intended against the King*, which offers news to a semi-literate audience, similarly insists upon Jesuit complicity and claims that the plotters had prepared a proclamation alleging puritan responsibility.[192] Rhodes, a minister at Enborne, seems to have possessed a ready-made hatred of Jesuits, which may

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[192] In his letter to the reader (unconventionally placed following the text), Rhodes claims that his book is intended "*for the instruction of the ignorant, and the recreation of others, and not otherwise*" (D^{v}), affirming Alexandra Walsham's observation that individuals might read works for amusement that were apparently intended for less literate audiences (*Providence in Early Modern England*, 37-38). Those unable to read might become familiar with such texts by hearing them read. Although the idea that the puritans were to be blamed for the explosion seems to have been fairly widespread, this seems to be the only appearance of this particular version of the story in print. It is interesting that while most of these stories rely upon the circulation of oral rumours, Rhodes suggests that the Catholic plotters intended to use print to create an anti-puritan backlash.

account for his haste in vilifying them.[193] Like I.H., he emphasizes that the plotters planned on subjecting England to foreign domination. Although he acknowledges that the traitors were English, he claims that the treason began "beyond Sea" (A2^v) and implicates both Hugh Owen and William Stanley, evoking the familiar suspicion of the British exiles on the continent. The conspirators are both human and demonic, for "Prince of darkenes, and hels blacknes, / was their leader: / *Piercy* Papist, masked *Atheist*" (A2^v) while Fawkes is "Sathans Sonne" (A4^v). Rhodes does briefly narrate the story of the Midlands revolt, in which the traitors, driven by madness and "like Wilde-men" (A4^v), attempt resistance and are burned by their own gunpowder before being killed or captured. Rather than advocating the banishment of English Catholics, he suggests that they should become as loyal as puritans, which can only happen if Protestants remember their deliverances from the Armada, the Gowrie Conspiracy, and the Gunpowder Plot, and teach them to their children. Individuals can also contribute to the well-being of the country by praying for the royal family. Both of these poems seem to have been written to offer sensational versions of the story to the poorer classes and to stir up anti-Catholicism by repeating the rumour that the plotters planned to blame the puritans for the crime. At the same time, they reflect back the conventional messages about loyalty and religious conformity that commoners received through the *Homilies* and sermons

[193] In 1602 he had published *An Answere to a Romish Rime lately printed*, a series of Protestant responses to Catholic criticisms in simple verse. In this pamphlet's opening letter, "To the indifferent Readers, be they Protestants, Papists, or neyther," he speculates that numerous pamphlets similar to the one he is answering may be being sold by women and pedlars around the country, possibly priests and Jesuits in disguise (*An Answere to a Romish Rime lately printed, and entituled, A proper new ballad wherein are contayned Catholicke questions to the Protestant...* London, 1602, STC 20959) A2^r.

as well as in other popular media such as ballads.[194] Directed to popular, and largely puritan, audiences, they emphasize the individual's role in safeguarding England from the threat not of ambitious nobles who could become tyrants, but of foreigners and English Catholic exiles anxious to reimpose Catholicism.[195]

In contrast, the Latin poets who sought court favour through their works express more anxieties about Catholics at court than about those across the channel. Like Wallace, other early poets complimented the king on both his deliverance from the plot and his unification of the kingdoms, although Englishmen were more reluctant to endorse union, and they too offered discreet advice. Francis Herring, a physician who had first courted royal favour by publishing a congratulatory Latin poem dedicated to "Rex Britonûm" upon James's accession followed this performance in 1606 with a Latin Gunpowder epic entitled *Pietas Pontificia*, addressed again to his sovereign. Like Wallace, Herring dedicated his poem to James as "King of Great Britain, France and Ireland," but his title page also recognized the deliverance of "Her Majesty,

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[194] Surprisingly few broadside Gunpowder ballads have been discovered, although this probably indicates a low survival rate of a popular genre rather than a failure to produce such articles. For example, John J. McAleer found that twenty-seven ballads on the Armada victory were registered between 29 June and 27 November 1588, but only four of these survive ("Ballads on the Spanish Armada," *TSSL* 4 [1962]: 608). Hyder Rollins's index to ballad entries in the Stationers' Registers identifies four ballads clearly about the Gunpowder Plot, and another two that may be related. All were licensed between 31 January and 5 May 1606, and the titles indicate that most narrate the arraignments and executions of the plotters (*An Analytical Index of the Ballad-Entries (1557-1709) in the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London* [Hatboro, PA: Tradition P, 1967]). Entries 516, 800, 945, 2411 are clearly related to the plot, while 2149 and 2694 may be. Unlike the Armada ballads, however, ones on the plot continued to be produced or reprinted long after the event. One such ballad, "Gun-powder Plot: or, A Brief Account of that bloudy and Subtle Design laid against the King, his Lords and Commons in Parliament, and of a Happy deliverance by Divine Power," was clearly printed after 1625, since it refers to James as the late king (reproduced in *Broadside Ballads: Songs from the streets, taverns, theatres and countryside of 17th-century England. Selected and edited by Lucie Skeaping* [Harlow, England: Faber Music, 2005], 64-65).

[195] Although the priests of the Jesuit mission were English, they belonged to a foreign organization and thus could be described as neither English nor foreign. This ambiguous status made them particularly suspect.

Prince Henry and the whole Royal Family and also all the ranks of the kingdom assembled for the supreme meeting of parliament on the fifth of November 1605" (255). After invoking his muse, the poet echoes the first line of the *Aeneid*, but he proposes to sing not of arms and a man but of a monster, Catholicism, later referred to as the "monster of Latium"(267), thus associating it with the enemies of Aeneas's imperial designs rather than more conventionally with Rome. D. R. Woolf claims that "There was a space in the English mind for two Romes, both the corrupt popish Babylon of Foxe's martyrology, a Jezebel to be feared rather than studied, and the great ancient city, whose mighty past and ruinous fall inspired awe" (*Idea* 171-72), allowing Englishmen to revere and imitate Latin literature while deprecating Catholicism. Curran, however, argues that "For many, the Roman Beast was one organism. Classical historiography, the Romans who invaded and occupied Britain, and the Catholics who posed such an immediate threat to England could all be aligned as the enemy of the nation" (*Roman* 18). He proposes instead that reverence for classical learning acknowledged Rome's importance while the Galfridian tradition insisted "that Rome, the most glorious of nations, had met its match with Britain. The British History positioned Britain directly beside Rome as its eternal foil" (19). In attempting to claim the Virgilian tradition, then, authors faced the problem of establishing England's founding as analogous to Rome's but ultimately superior to it.

Herring's text, despite complimenting James as "King of Great Britain," illustrates the difficulties of identifying an attitude towards union in these poems. That he uses the terms "England" and "Britain" carefully is suggested by his

reference to "The Lords of England and counsellors of Britain" [Angli satrapae consultoresque Britanni / concilium] (ll. 169-70) meeting in parliament. London is the "seat of kings and of British dominion" (269). Although not elaborated, this distinction reinforces the administrative differences between England and the remainder of the island, offering Scotland subordinate status in an English empire. While it is the British race that annoys Satan and the name of Britain that he attempts to extirpate, it is "all the Christians of England" [omnes / Anglo-Christicolas] (ll. 226-27) and England itself [Anglia] (l. 222) that would have perished.[196] It seems, then, that Herring may use the terms "Britain" and "British" to appeal to the king without committing himself to James's vision of union.

Nevertheless, Herring participates in writing the Gunpowder Plot as a founding event by focusing on the themes of providence, paternity, and memory. His account is strongly providential, crediting God, who "illuminates the king's mind with amazing shrewdness whereby he can instantly and easily, like a second Oedipus, solve the riddle [of the Monteagle letter], ambiguous in its obscure points of difficulty" (273), with the deliverance. After complimenting the entire royal family, Herring singles out Prince Henry for praise in a speech by Fawkes, who argues that if the conspirators simply assassinate James, they will have to contend with the warlike Henry's inevitable revenge. Although a child now, "This small boy compels us to remember the powerful Henry VIII, who was the first to

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[196] Translators have not always been sensitive to the nuances of these terms (although Haan generally is), so I quote both Latin and English where these distinctions are important. That Herring uses Britain to indicate the entire island is suggested by his description of Fawkes approaching "the Britons who are divorced from the whole world" (259).

inflict lethal wounds upon the holy pope" (265).[197] James's son is thus both a reminder of the origins of Protestantism in England and a promise of future glory for a nation that maintains its devotion to reformation.

This outcome, however, depends upon the king's willingness to control his Catholic subjects. James's ability to decipher the warning letter has restrained the Catholic monster, but Herring warns that it cannot be vanquished without policy changes. Instead of expressing gratitude when James suspended the penal laws early in his reign, Catholics "began to rear their crests and be puffed up all about with ungovernable pride, to devise new turmoil and noise their loathsome voices abroad among the populace" (261). Herring's strategy for discreetly advising the king is to blame Catholic pride rather than royal clemency, but the result is the same. He then extends his advice to all of his highly placed readers, warning that at least one of the conspirators had walked unimpeded through the court itself.[198] "Lords of the world," he cautions, "you are fostering dreaded Vipers in your bosoms, you who admit papists inside your dwelling" (261). Herring's allusion to the story of the serpent that stings the kind person who has warmed it places the blame upon the snake, yet the credulous individual suffers. Alert readers might see a possible allusion to the queen's Catholicism, but Herring diffuses his critique by addressing it to the court in general.[199]

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[197] Herring's version of Protestant history here is decidedly Anglocentric, ignoring Luther and Calvin.

[198] The rumour that Fawkes had been at court seems to have been fairly widespread, occurring in several poems.

[199] Herring does not ignore the problem of the English Catholic exiles, "monsters of men, who rejoice in fishing in a sea disturbed by a swift storm" (263) but Fawkes finds his fellow conspirators in England.

Publication, however, allowed Herring to address a wider readership than the court, and a few years later he enlarged his audience still further. In 1609, he published a Latin sequel describing the rebellion in the Midlands after the discovery of the gunpowder, and in the following year offered a translation of the original poem (an "old Historie clad in a new English coate" [A3^r]) by an A.P., dedicating the translation to Princess Elizabeth and the sequel to John Harington of Exton, who had sheltered the princess during the rebellion and whose son belonged to Prince Henry's household.[200] Such dedications offered readers a shorthand identification of their authors as members of godly Protestant circles.[201] Herring demonstrates his godly learnings most clearly in the first part of the original poem when he credits the rumour that the plotters intended to shift the blame for their crime to the puritans. It is this aspect of the plot, Herring suggests, that makes it truly monstrous, for in the next sentence he comments: "Undoubtedly these are the wiles of the Evil Demon, not of men: to conceal a crime loathsome in its astonishing wickedness, to proclaim the innocent as guilty, punish them with extreme penalties, overthrow entire kingdoms and satiate themselves with the blood of innocents" (269). At this point the conspirators intend only to blame the puritan bishops. In the 1609 sequel, however, Herring

[200] I base my assumption that Herring authorized the translation on his contribution of the introduction to the poem. This is not the case with the later translations and "dilations" by John Vicars described below. The title was entered in the Stationers' Register on 2 November 1610, suggesting that Herring or his friend was alert to commercial opportunities, timing the publication to cash in on the annual celebration. At the same time, Herring issued a warning in his dedication about the danger of forgetting, a common theme in the wake of Henri IV's assassination. Forgetting is considered a sign of ingratitude to God that puts the entire nation at risk.
[201] Later, Herring contributed Latin verses to accompany an etching of the younger Harington that was appended to the published version of his funeral sermon (Richard Stock, *The Churches Lamentation for the losse of the Godly*, London, 1614 [STC 23273]). On Herring's verses, see Ted-Larry Pebworth, "'Let Me Here Use that Freedome': Subversive Representation in John Donne's 'Obsequies to the Lord Harington,'" *JEGP* 91.1 (1992), 29-30.

alleges a plot to incite wrath against all of the godly by having some conspirators provide Fawkes with a horse belonging to a prominent puritan, then fall upon him and murder him as he flees the city after the explosion, disfiguring his corpse to make him unrecognizable. Unable to identify the man and recognizing the horse as the property of a puritan, the common people would have taken up arms against the godly in a civil war.

Herring's decision not to dedicate these new texts to the king registers not only James's decreasing accessibility but probably also the author's increasing frustration with the king's failure to heed earlier advice. He may have been among those who had hoped James would promote further church reform and have turned to the militantly Protestant group forming around Prince Henry when it became apparent that James would not support a godly agenda.[202] Even in translation, however, the poem did not invite a popular audience, cautioning against Catholics who use "odious speeches vaine" to spread sedition through

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[202] For the disappointment of puritan hopes after the 1604 Hampton Court conference, see Frederick Shriver, "Hampton Court Re-visited. James I and the Puritans," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 33 1 (1982), 48-71 Herring's other works were mostly concerned with prevention and treatment of the plague His 1603 treatise (reprinted in 1625, 1636, and in 1641, 1665 and 1757 under a variant title) offered advice on combatting the disease, with special application to the poor Like many of his contemporaries, Herring saw the plague not simply as a disease, but also as a punishment for sin, and he urged his readers to repent before applying any other remedies He describes the infection as "*not a disease, but a Monster, over matching, and quelling, offtimes both Art and Nature*" (1625, A2[v]) (See also Joy Shakespeare, "Plague and Punishment" in *Protestantism and the National Church in Sixteenth Century England*, ed Peter Lake and Maria Dowling [London· Croom Helm, 1987], 103-23) In 1604, he produced a companion text defending his exhortation against the use of poisoned amulets in the first pamphlet These were obviously popular pamphlets, regularly reprinted at times when the plague was severe Herring hints at his political views in the 1625 edition of his earlier pamphlet, which he dedicated to the new King Charles He concludes his dedication· "*The Lord of glory & mercy keep your Highnesse, with your most Honorable Councell of Parliament from the rage of this man-slaying Hyrda, and all other both open and secret evills and enemyes, and make you wise and skilfull Physitiãs to prevent the dangers, & cure the maladyes of Common-wealth and State*" (A2[v]) Herring's caution to Charles reflects what appears to have been a growing dissatisfaction with Stuart political and religious policies

"th'vnstable commons" (St. 20). Herring's concerns, expressed in printed texts, about the susceptibility of the populace to persuasion by factional rhetoric suggest anxiety about the composition of his own audience.

Phineas Fletcher, a few years later, restricted his audience by dedicating his manuscript epic to a series of court personages from whom he attempted to obtain ecclesiastical preferment. Shortly after graduating from Cambridge, Fletcher dedicated the earliest of three surviving manuscripts of his poem, *Pietas Iesuitica* (BL Sloane MS 444, *c.*1611), to James Montagu, then Bishop of Bath and Wells, and identified by Francis Bacon as "one of the three most influential servants in the king's household" (McCullough "Montagu"). Fletcher petitions Montagu on the grounds of his poverty and the bishop's acquaintance with his recently deceased father, telling him: "We are not unaware of the great assistance which you can provide for us; and you can do this not only in accordance with that favour with which the King has always embraced you, but also in accordance with that humanity which you have always embraced, and this most holy gift" (120).[203] He dedicated a roughly contemporary copy (Dobell MS) to Prince Henry, and a later revision (MS Harley 3196) to Prince Charles's tutor, Thomas

[203] Citing Fletcher's epic poses some challenges as the 1627 Latin text differs substantively from the earlier Latin manuscripts, which have not been translated into English, and the English text is sufficiently different from the Latin to make it almost a different poem I cite the Latin text from Estelle Haan's translation of the 1627 text (by page number), recognizing that there are some differences from the earlier versions I cite the English text from Frederick S Boas's 1908 edition (by canto and stanza number) Quotations from prefatory materials are from Haan's translations and are cited by page numbers Based upon a reading of Fletcher's *Eclogues*, Lloyd E Berry has pieced together the story of Fletcher's father, who died in 1611. The older Fletcher was poorly rewarded for his services and died in debt after participating in the Essex revolt. Phineas apparently embarked on a clerical career having been disappointed that his academic one had been unrewarded ("Phineas Fletcher's Account of his Father," *JEGP* 60 2 [1961], 258-67)

Murray.[204] Fletcher was clearly approaching desperation by this time, for he admits that "a cruel and clearly iron-hearted necessity has driven me to this, namely, that I should take refuge in you, a man known to me only by his face and reputation; whom I have seen only once, and one bound by no obligations to me, and that fearful indeed but not without hope I should implore you for a donation" (125). Fletcher's selection of dedicatees was singularly unlucky, since Henry died in November 1612 and Murray, whose star had been declining for several years, was dismissed for opposing the Spanish Match in 1621, the same year Fletcher finally received his living (Stanwood). A committed Calvinist, Fletcher addressed his text to godly members of the court. More circumspect than Herring, he commented obliquely on the issue of counsel rather than offering specific advice. Unlike the earlier Gunpowder epics, which focused on celebrating the plot's discovery, Fletcher devotes his almost entirely to a secret conclave (discussed below) at which Æquivocus and the Jesuits encourage Lucifer to conspire against Protestant England. Fletcher implicitly contrasts this "horride Court" (1.17) with the legitimate English council that the demons seek to destroy, making parliament rather than the court the heart of a godly nation. Despite concentrating more upon the planning of the plot in hell than its frustration upon earth, Fletcher reiterates some of the Virgilian themes of the earlier poems in his Latin text.

Although he employs the terms "England" and "Britain" somewhat interchangeably, making no references to union that might have harmed his quest for preferment at this date and calling Henry in his dedication "loved by all the

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[204] According to Peck, it was not unusual for clients to apply to a number of potential patrons until Buckingham began consolidating patronage after 1615 ("'For a king not to be bountiful,'" 44).

English people" (121), in the Latin poem Fletcher alludes to the ancient rivalry between Britain and Rome. He also associates the Jesuits with "Latium," for Fawkes, he claims, is the offspring of a Latin mother and an English father (39).[205] As in Herring's poem, Dis is attempting to redress past losses, but now it is not simply the loss of Catholic England but the loss of heaven. In his opening speech in Book I, he hopes vainly that God, "forgetful of our sin, will restore us, who have fallen, to the glory to which we were accustomed and will leave to us a heaven and a throne" (5), and to this end, he exhorts his followers to "take up again the weapons which you have cast down ... renew the battle-lines and redress the intermission in war" (5). Æquivocus, addressing the denizens of hell, however, also complains: "Alas the hated offspring and destiny of the Britons greater than the destiny of the Latins!" (27). The loss of England by the Roman church thus equals that of heaven by the rebel angels. Ignatius consequently proposes a plan "whereby we may be able to break those hard men, and import Latium into the Britons themselves" (35). The pope praises the plan, exulting: "already I see destiny being reversed and Latium flourishing and exhausted Rome growing young once again" (37). There is thus some ambiguity in identifying the Jesuits with both Rome and Latium, but Fletcher exploits this to represent

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[205] In fact, Fawkes's parents were both English. His father, Edward Fawkes, was from York, and his mother was Edith Jackson, who married Denis Bainbridge of Scotton, a recusant, after his father's death (Mark Nicholls, "Fawkes, Guy (*bap.* 1570, *d.* 1606)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2009).

England as consistently successful, both as the heir of Aeneas's victory over the Latins and in the English church's projected ascendancy over the Roman.[206]

Fletcher was not the only Protestant attempting to gain court favour through a Gunpowder poem during these years. Thomas Campion, most likely between 1615 and 1618, offered to James a manuscript epic, *De Puluerea Coniuratione*, possibly in an attempt to rehabilitate a reputation he had tarnished by writing a masque for the Howard/Carr wedding.[207] David Lindley notes that both of the dedications to James indicate the poet's intentions to write in panegyric mode, but even in a text so clearly intended to court royal favour, Campion does not scruple to remind James of his religious duties.[208] As the plotters dig their mine, Protestantism, "the heavenly Religion" (59), prays at Elizabeth's tomb that God will protect James for preserving true religion as he did Elizabeth for restoring it. Campion delivers his advice both discreetly and authoritatively through Sir Thomas Egerton, who concludes his parliamentary speech on 9 November 1605 by asking: "O mildest of kings, how far will you tolerate such ills? What bound will your ill starred patience set? Now mildness is harmfull, and unpunished the evil will increase, until, too late to remedy, it has finally turned into a disaster" (79). Ventriloquising his concerns through the

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[206] Allusions to classical Rome and Latium are much reduced in the English version, while allegorical details (such as the depiction of Sin frequently seen as a model for Milton) only appear in the English version.

[207] His modern editors provide a broad range of possible dates (1613-1619), but suggest that the poem was most likely composed between 1615 and 1618 and for this purpose (2-5).

[202] A verse dedication was pasted over the original prose dedication in the same manner as smaller corrections were made to the manuscript. The original dedication refers to presentation upon the plot anniversary while the verse dedication alludes to springtime. The editors hypothesize that a delay in completing the manuscript or in opportunities to present it may have rendered the original dedication invalid. See the textual introduction to the Lindley edition (1-2).

mouth of this influential advisor would have been a particularly safe strategy after Egerton's death in 1617, and one that allied Campion with religious moderates rather than radicals. The text remained unpublished and untranslated until the twentieth century, its survival in a single presentation manuscript ensuring it an exclusive readership.[209]

Campion's epic tells the traditional story based upon James's account, although like Herring's later text it includes a narrative of the Midlands revolt, for which the poet makes the Jesuits chiefly responsible. The poet contrasts the deliverances of England's monarchs—both Elizabeth and James—with the disastrous events in France to demonstrate God's fatherly providence towards England. In contrast, the Jesuits are evil fathers who poorly advise their spiritual sons and abandon them to their fate once they have incited them to rebellion. Remembering both the failures of other nations and the successes of his own, Campion shows how understanding its past is necessary to a nation's future health.

If the Gunpowder epics had ever been successful instruments for obtaining patronage—and we have no evidence that any of these authors benefitted substantially through their efforts—that time had now ended. James's plans for political union were long dead, and by the 1620s his failure to support his Protestant daughter and son-in-law and his plan to marry his heir to a Catholic

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[209] Leicester Bradner proposed that "some time between 1595 and 1619 Campion had secretly joined the Roman Church" ("References to Chaucer in Campion's *Poemata*," *Review of English Studies* 12.47 [1936]: 323), which accounted for his failure to print *Elegia I*, *Ad Thamesin*, and *De Puluerea Coniuratione* in his collected Latin works. More recent scholars such as Haan have dismissed Bradner's evidence as unconvincing.

princess clearly indicated that he was unlikely to favour the strident Protestantism and anti-Catholicism of these texts. Furthermore, the growing consolidation of patronage in Buckingham's hands limited the effectiveness of royal dedications. With the exception of Milton's *In Quintum Novembris*, written in all likelihood as an academic exercise, there would be no more new Gunpowder epics. Instead, English translation and pamphlet culture would reshape the genre.

An earlier printed text became more accessible to popular audiences in 1617 when John Vicars, a presbyterian usher at Christ's Hospital, published a "very much *dilated*" English translation of Herring's poem, appealing to a broad audience ranging from those who could translate his Latin marginalia to those requiring annotations to identify events in English history. Vicars offers us no rationale for selecting this particular text to translate, but given its multiple editions it was probably the best known of the Gunpowder poems, and it was the only printed Latin poem to narrate the Midlands revolt. Herring's godly credentials may also have recommended it to Vicars, and he enthusiastically expanded upon the rumour of a plot to blame the puritans. His two editions, in 1617 and 1641, both opened the poem to a wider audience and increasingly circumscribed its interpretation by adding paratextual materials as well as by "dilating" the original text. Although Herring survived until 1628, he does not seem to have actively participated in the 1617 publication, thus allowing Vicars to

begin the appropriation of the text that he effectively completed in 1641, transforming the poem from court panegyric into godly propaganda.[210]

Vicars (1580-1652) is probably best known for the series of pro-parliamentarian newsbooks he authored during the civil war, but he was a relatively prolific writer and translator throughout his life.[211] Seventeenth-century reception of his work was coloured by partisan sympathies. Anthony à Wood claims that Vicars "was esteemed among some, especially the puritannical party (of which number he was a zealous brother) a tolerable Poet, but by the Royalists not, because *he was inspired with ale or viler liquors*" (Wood 2.85). Most modern readers concur with the royalist view of Vicars's poetic talents, no matter the source of his inspiration. Brought up as an orphan at Christ's Hospital, he returned there after three years at Oxford, spending the remainder of his life at the school (2.86), where much of his work consisted of translation, his most ambitious project being an English Virgil. When translating contemporary Latin poetry, Vicars seems to have followed a pattern of appropriation. He identifies himself on the title page of his 1624 translation of George Goodwin's anti-Catholic *Babel's Balm* as "*the* Muses most unworthy *Eccho*" and includes a translation of Goodwin's dedicatory epistle to Robert Naunton, but he also inserts his own dedication to William Lord Herbert, a greeting to Catholic readers, an acrostic to

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[210] Anthony à Wood's list of Vicars's publications identifies the 1617 text as a translation of Francis Herring's poem and records Baker's refusal to license the revision (*Athenae Oxonienses an exact history of all the writers and bishops who have had their education in the most ancient andfamous University of Oxford....* London, 1692. Wing W3383A, 2.86). In his list of Vicars's publications, he does not identify the 1641 poem as a translation, or as the text that Baker declined to license, merely noting "'Tis a Poem and printed in a large oct[avo]" (2.86).

[211] These include: *Jehovah-jireh. God in the mount, or Englands parliamentarie-chronicle* ([London, 1644), Wing V313; and, *Gods arke overtopping the worlds waves, or the third part of the Parliamentary chronicle* (London, 1645), Wing V309.

the author, a letter "To the Ivdiciovs and Covrteovs Reader," and a commendation by Thomas Salisbury.[212] During the Laudian era Vicars, like Prynne, conflated formal Protestantism with Catholicism, while by the 1640s he identified both separatists and Catholics as Babylonians.[213] In his later years he engaged in increasingly vitriolic condemnations of the regicides. Thus, the civil wars seem to have challenged his faith in individual Protestants, leading him to reaffirm the monarch's role in a national, although more reformed, church that he had questioned in his translations of Herring's poem.

Vicars introduces his 1617 translation with a letter to "All the Loyall-hearted Protestants of England" and a sheaf of commendatory verses that evokes a godly network of writers and readers. Removing the poem entirely from its court context, Vicars expresses little faith in the king to provide godly leadership. Although, he says,

> t'is granted that that Letter
>
> Was the first instrument of our blest peace:
>
> Yet certainely little t'had beene the better,
>
> If *God* had not so caus'd that worke to cease
>
> Of vndermining that great Capitoll
>
> By reason of the thicke and stony wall. (43)

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[212] The *STC* lists a variant edition with a cancel dedication to John Egerton, Earl of Bridgewater. Egerton's association with Buckingham at this time may account for Vicars's change of heart.

[213] In a broadsheet published in 1649, Vicars makes an explicit comparison between Jesuits and sectarians (*Speculum scripturale schismaticorum or, A Scripture looking-glasse, most exactly characterizing all sorts of schismaticks* (London, 1649), Wing V329.

Not only does Vicars reduce James's agency in the discovery, but he even deletes Herring's lengthy tribute to the militant Prince Henry.[214] The poem ends not with assurances of Protestant victory, but with Satan vowing to continue undermining England with the help of "choice friends in Court, *Romes* champions bold" (94). Perhaps less explicitly than Fletcher, Vicars situates the court not as the site of godly rule but in opposition to a Protestant God.

While Vicars addressed his criticism of the court to all Protestants, a decade later Fletcher remained ambivalent about popular political participation in the expanded English version of his epic, dedicated to the wife of Francis Bacon's nephew, Sir Roger Townsend. Despite having established his career, Fletcher seeks to ingratiate himself with his new monarch using the familiar formula of praise and advice. His poem concludes by commending Charles for taking up a sword rather than a pen in the continental religious wars:

> Thy royall Sire to Kings this lecture red;
>
> This, this deserv'd his pen, and learned veine:
>
> Here, noble Charles, enter thy chevalrie;
>
> The Eagle scornes at lesser game to flie;
>
> Onely this warre's a match worthy thy Realmes, & Thee. (5.39)

As in the early Jacobean epics, however, flattery anaesthetizes a sting. Fletcher's Bellarmine begins his English conquest by sending priests to gain the confidence of women. Published shortly after Henrietta Maria's arrival with her entourage of

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[214] It is possible that Herring withdrew the tribute to Henry considering it inappropriate after the prince's death in 1612; however, this motivation seems inadequate since five years had already elapsed since the prince's death.

Capuchins, the poem revives anxieties about Catholic women at court, implicitly warning Charles against following his father's course.[215] If Fletcher portrays English women as credulous, his attitude towards ordinary Protestants remains uncertain. Æquivocus, who can impersonate both courtier and priest, is admired by "the vulgar rout," the "silly Commons" (2.9) in hell who are spellbound by his oratory. Does Fletcher, like Herring, distrust England's lower orders who can be duped by rhetoric, or is Æquivocus's attitude part of his villainy?

While Fletcher may still have hoped to influence Charles, Vicars had clearly determined to seek reform elsewhere when he began attempting to publish a new translation of Herring's poem, possibly as early as the late 1620s.[216] In his revised letter "To All Loyall-Hearted English Protestants," Vicars adds a lengthy marginal note excoriating Dr. Samuel Baker for refusing to license his "Historie" on the grounds that "we were not so angrie with the Papists now a dayes" (A3^{r}).[217] He claims that he also attempted in vain to get the poem licensed at both Oxford

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[215] Fletcher also in the English poem makes a veiled allusion to the more open practice of Catholicism in the wake of the queen's arrival (2.34).

[216] MacLean assumes that Vicars first attempted to publish his poem during the 1620s (*Time's Witness*, 111), but this raises the question of how Fletcher was able to publish his *Apollyonists* in 1627. Although the answer may be that Fletcher published his poem in Cambridge rather than London, Vicars claims that he also approached the university presses. In 1626, Charles I prohibited publication of works contrary to the Church of England, but Clegg points out that "The most interesting feature of press controls in 1627 is that the books the government sought to suppress were not the kind of books that had been prohibited by the 1626 proclamation" (*Press Censorship in Caroline England* 75). Instead, they were politically motivated works that addressed the king or parliament as literature of counsel. John Guy concurs that Charles was not only unreceptive to advice, but "doubted the value of counsel itself" (306). Vicars's text may have been considered offensive in this regard; however, Walsham argues convincingly that it was the book's new illustrations that prevented its approval. She traces two of the illustrations, the frontispiece and a depiction of the annual celebrations, to Michael Sparke's *Crumms of Comfort*, and suggests that these "vulgar depictions of 'Heavens All-seeing Eye' thwarting the fatal designs of 'Fauks and his Father-Satan' can hardly have been aesthetically pleasing to the Laudian regime" (*Providence in Early Modern England*, 264). See below for discussion of the illustrations.

[217] Prynne also identifies the book as a history, suggesting that Vicars's attempts to claim the veracity of his narrative were successful (*Canterburies Doome*, London, 1646, Wing P3917, 184).

and Cambridge, making a reference to Thomas Crosfield that dates this effort after 1627, when Crosfield was elected a fellow.[218] Prynne, however, situates Vicars's attempt to publish the poem in the aftermath of the 1637 Star Chamber decree that required writers to obtain new licenses for the reprinting of previously licensed texts.[219] As Gerald MacLean suggests, Vicars uses the story of his struggle to publish the poem as evidence for the country's failure in gratitude to God, which he predicts will lead to disaster if not checked. MacLean also notes the way the letter is structured, so that

> [a]fter the easy flow of the call to prayer in the opening three stanzas, the verses turn at the emphatic admonition of '*Abundance does us cloy*' to become, themselves, increasingly clogged by parenthetical struggles with syntax in the effort to demonstrate how the history of the poem that follows is itself part of the history of struggle for control of the nation's memory. (114)

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[218] See A. J. Hegarty, "Crosfield, Thomas (1602–1663)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Jan. 2008). Frederick S. Boas's printed selections from Crosfield's diary, which he claims comprise about three-quarters of the entries, make no mention of Vicars's attempt to publish the poem; however, the entry for 6 May 1636 records "Certaine Articles II. in number urged upon some Ministers, before their admission into Benefices, together wth Mr H. Burtons answer to some passages of B*isho*p Whites booke of the Doct*rine* of the Sabbath sent to me by Mr Vicars Schoole m*aste*r of Chr*is*ts Hospitall London, whose censure of the times is that, MS are nowe the best help Gods people have to vindicate the Truth, printing being now a dayes prohibited to them, especially if their writings have the least tang or tincture of opposition to Arminianisme yea or even to Poperie itselfe–vide l*itte*ras suas." Vicars's disgruntled tone clearly reflects a personal experience (*The Diary of Thomas Crosfield, Selected and edited from the ms. in the Queen's College Library by Frederick S. Boas* [London, Oxford UP, 1935], 89.)

[219] On the provisions of the 1637 decree, see Clegg, *Press Censorship in Caroline England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008), esp. Ch. 5. The new law also required the licensing of paratextual material, thus recognizing the important role that such materials played in textual interpretation.

According to Vicars, not only have people forgotten the plot, but now, led astray by Catholic and crypto-Catholic propagandists, they deny that it occurred.

Vicars's poem, eventually published in 1641, turns from the evils of the court not to parliament, as Fletcher had, but to the common people, asking his "good Reader[s]":

> O English Protestants, why stand you still,
>
> As if *affraid* to *curbe* Romes cursed will?
>
> Why seem ye (yet) to hault twixt *two opinions*,
>
> Pretending *truth*, fostring these Romish *Minions*? (53)

Removing the injunction to rulers and peers not to harbour snakes in their dwellings, he charges his ordinary Protestant readers with the responsibility for ridding the country of Catholics. By abridging stanzas in praise of Elizabeth and even depriving James of the epithet "pious," Vicars reduces the importance of a godly monarch in the nation's religious life while elevating that of the people.

In briefly tracing the history of the Anglo-Latin Gunpowder epic as a courtly genre, we have observed that the plot epic was used, by writers whose desire for patronage overcame their sometimes ambivalent attitudes towards Anglo-Scottish union, to present James with a founding myth for his new Protestant Britain. Aspirations unfulfilled, some exposed their works to those beyond the court through publication and translation, making their warnings to the monarch accessible to both larger and more diverse audiences. As the initiatives for which James had been praised, particularly the peace with Spain and the union of the kingdoms, became sources of contention, the hotter sort of Protestants came

to dominate the tradition and began looking not to a godly monarch but to their co-religionists for solutions to the nation's religio-political troubles.

3.2 Nostalgia and News: Milton's View of England in 1626

Like the publication of Fletcher's poem the following year, the writing of John Milton's *In Quintum Novembris*, probably in 1626, took place in a political and cultural climate far different from the one in which Wallace and Herring had written.[220] Instead of being at peace after decades of war with Spain, Britain had now plunged into a continental war after decades of peace. Although he ruled a united kingdom, Charles remained uncrowned as king of Scotland until 1633, and the subsequent failure of his Anglo-Scottish relations stemmed from attempting to impose religious uniformity on the Scots rather than attempting to impose political union on the English.[221] More specifically, two events in 1623 had redefined the Gunpowder Plot's place in English history: the safe return of Prince Charles from Spain and the collapse of a garret in Blackfriars during a Catholic sermon a few weeks later. Taken either together or separately, these events were understood as reversals of the Gunpowder Plot as well as demonstrations of God's continuing support for a Protestant England that was once again threatened by too much leniency towards Catholics.

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[220] Although the poem is undated, the heading "Anno Aetatis 17" points to 1626 as the composition date.

[221] On the reasons why Charles's attempts at religious unity failed, see Conrad Russell, "The British Problem and the English Civil War," in *The English Civil War*, ed. Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (London: Arnold, 1997), 111-33.

Fears that a Spanish match would result in a general toleration for Catholics began escalating in 1617-18 (Cogswell *Blessed* 16). In 1622, shortly before issuing his *Directions to Preachers*, James formally suspended the penal laws, providing Catholics with increased freedom of worship and Protestants with evidence that the king was preparing to grant toleration. Anticipating a successful conclusion to the marriage negotiations, particularly once Charles and Buckingham had embarked for Spain in February 1623, Catholics became more visible at court, and some Protestants even converted to the Roman faith.[222] When it became apparent that negotiations had stalled, probably fatally, relieved Protestants had only to await the prince's return. His arrival was greeted with unprecedented enthusiasm—Sir Simonds D'Ewes claimed that he had never seen so many bonfires in London, and he added tellingly that "Twas prettye to observe the difference betweene the bonefires made by command after his landing in Spaine, being by expresse order from the Privye Councell, and betweene these that weere made upon the matter vountarilye, the first being thinne and poore, these manye and great" (162). While connections with the Gunpowder Plot were not made overtly, they underlay some of the plot celebrations over the next several years. John Hacket included the prince in the prayer concluding his 1623 Gunpowder sermon at Whitehall, asking God to help both James and Charles to protect the English church and commonwealth (751). George Carleton's *Thankfull*

[222]In August 1622, John Chamberlain reported: "And now to make a compleat geol-deliverie all priests, Jesuites, or other papists imprisoned are set at libertie and are not henceforward to be troubled, for sayeng or (as I heare the words go) prayeng of masse, or refusing the oath of allegeance or supremacie and the like" (*Letters of John Chamberlain* 2.449). On the increasingly open practice of Catholicism in London in 1623, see Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution*, 37-49.

Remembrance (1625) chronicled all of the English Protestant deliverances from the beginning of Elizabeth's reign until the Gunpowder Plot without mentioning the prince's return, but his emphasis upon the complicity of the Catholic church and the Spanish state pointed directly towards England's most recent deliverance.

The Blackfriars incident was more openly understood at the time in relation to the Gunpowder Plot. On Sunday 26 October, 1623, the floor of a garret in a house adjoining the French ambassador's London residence collapsed under the weight of a large crowd that had gathered to hear a Jesuit preacher.[223] Almost immediately, Protestants noticed that 26 October became 5 November when adjusted for the difference between Roman and English calendars, creating an inevitable link between the two events. This connection was made in pamphlets such as the anonymous *Something Written by Occasion of that fatall and memorable accident in the Blacke-Friers*, but it appeared even more graphically in the series of engravings that Alexandra Walsham first identified as a triptych.[224] The first engraving, "A Plot with Powder," pictures the familiar figure of Fawkes stealing towards the parliament buildings with his lantern; the second, "A Plot without Powder," depicts the Spanish Match negotiations; and the third, "No Plot No Powder," illustrates the collapse, the preacher surrounded by masonry and dismembered bodies. The labelling of Fawkes's treachery as "Blacke Deeds" to correspond with "Blacke Friars" in the third engraving and the identification of

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[223] According to the author of *Something Written*, at least one hundred people were killed, but there is no reliable estimate of the casualties. According to most accounts, the curious Protestants who had formed at least part of the audience sneaked away if they were unharmed.

[224] For a comprehensive listing of pamphlets, see Walsham, "'The Fatall Vesper': Providentialism and Anti-Popery in Late Jacobean London," *Past and Present* 144.1 (1994), 41, n. 6.

one as "November 5th Old Stile" and the other as "November 5th New Stile" made the connection explicit. The accident could then be interpreted as a reversal of the Gunpowder Plot: Catholics had attempted to blow the king and parliament up towards God; God had caused the Catholics to fall towards the earth and even towards hell, which Catholics generally believed was within the earth.[225] The symmetry was inscribed in the first line of the verses below the final engraving: "Vpward had wee gone, downeward goe our foes." Combined with the prince's return from Spain, the incident offered what appeared to many conclusive proof that God favoured English Protestantism.[226] These events extended the life of the Gunpowder Plot in popular memory by demonstrating that it was not simply a past event, nor was it the apex of God's providential care, but that God might continue using it to avenge England's Catholic enemies. Even more importantly, popular rather than courtly texts—rumours, manuscripts, and the pamphlet press—became the primary sites of interpretive activity.

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[225] Although scholars have observed that doctrines regarding hell were not a major site of contention between Catholics and Protestants after the Reformation, there was some difference of opinion on the geographic location of the place of torment. Because Catholics generally located it within the earth, their hell had a finite space and was therefore subject to concerns about overcrowding. Protestants, in contrast, did not maintain a consistent opinion on the location of hell, a strategy that Marshall suggests "was in large measure intended to disrupt and disparage" the Catholic system with its multiple afterlife destinations ("The Reformation of Hell? Protestant and Catholic Infernalisms in England, c. 1560-1640," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 61.2 [2010], 295). See also: Tarald Rasmussen, "Hell Disarmed? The Function of Hell in Reformation Spirituality," *Numen* 56 (2009): 366-84; C. A. Patrides, *Premises and Motifs in Renaissance Thought and Literature* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1982), Ch. 11; Marshall, "'The map of God's word': Geographies of the Afterlife in Tudor and Early Stuart England," in B. Gordon and P. Marshall (eds.), *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 110-30. Milton uses this idea in one of his epigrams on the plot, suggesting that the plotters had attempted to blow James up to heaven, but that he had arrived there on his own merit instead.

[226] While some Protestants gloated, others recognized that delighting in others' misfortunes could seem uncharitable and mitigated their enthusiasm. Sir Simonds D'Ewes is clearly torn between his delight in the working out of providence and his humanity when he records in his diary: "Wee must iudge charitablye of this, yett sure it was the speciall worke of God" (168).

Consequently, these events did not inspire a new series of courtly Gunpowder epics.[227] The new king had been a young child when the plot had been discovered and does not appear to have recalled the anniversary with particular enthusiasm.[228] The annual celebration, however, had become a regular feature of academic as well as civic life. Richard Crashaw's English poems on the plot were likely written for college performances during his time at Cambridge in the 1630s.[229] A few years earlier, this tradition had also produced the last of the original Latin Gunpowder epics known to have been composed, Milton's *In Quintum Novembris*.[230] We can form some idea of the way in which the anniversary may have been celebrated in the university in Milton's time from an entertainment entitled *Novembris Monstrum*, not printed until after the censorship regulations lapsed in 1641, but "Made long since for the Anniversary Solemnity on the fift day of *November*, In a private Colledge at *Cambridge*" (t.p.). The first part of this pamphlet consists of an eleven-part verse narrative of the plot that was probably acted out by the students.[231] Although written in English, it follows the pattern of the epic narratives, beginning with the pope growing so big with the

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[227] The sole Latin poem to survive from this occasion seems to have been Alexander Gil's *In Ruinam Camerae Papisticae*, which utilized the story of Samson and may have been a source for Milton's *Samson Agonistes*.
[228] As we will see in Chapter 4, public Gunpowder sermons, which may have decreased in frequency during the Caroline period, became a tool of opposition clerics.
[229] Crashaw wrote three English poems and an epigram. The longer poems are largely non-narrative and so do not fall within the scope of this discussion. See *The Complete Poetry of Richard Crashaw*, ed. George Walton Williams (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1979), 74, 458-63.
[230] While John K. Hale suggests that interest in the Gunpowder Plot was declining in this period ("Milton and the Gunpowder Plot: *In Quintum Novembris* Reconsidered," *Humanistica Loveniensia* 50 [2001], 355-56), as we have seen, interest had in fact been renewed by the Blackfriars incident; however, it manifested itself more in providential histories such as Carleton's than in epic poetry.
[231] The variety of stanzaic forms suggests that this was either a group effort or a text that evolved over time or both.

plot, of which the earth is the mother and Fawkes the midwife, that he miscarries and the plot is stillborn. The last part reveals the Blackfriars collapse as just retribution upon Catholics. A poem subtitled "The Historicall narration of the Damnable *Pouder-Treason*" follows.[232] Although Dana F. Sutton finds no evidence that Milton's poem participated in such a celebratory tradition, the poet's concluding emphasis upon the anniversary makes it at least suitable for public presentation, and John K. Hale observes that the poem's "length makes one suppose an occasion, performance and audience" ("Milton" 352).

For many years regarded as an inconsequential piece of juvenilia, *In Quintum Novembris* has come to occupy an increasingly important place in Milton studies. John M. Steadman calls it a "somewhat bigoted little epic of sectarian nationalism," although he concedes that it displays "in miniature, or indeed in embryo, the techniques ...[Milton] would employ on a more ambitious scale in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*" (188). Like Macon Cheek (1957) and John Demaray (1984), Steadman sees the poem primarily as a rehearsal for the later epics.[233] Stella Revard's observation that Milton's depictions of the pope and Satan in *Paradise Lost* may have originated in the Gunpowder sermons that he almost certainly heard or possibly read, however, led critics back to the

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[232] Although the volume is continuously paginated, this poem has a separate title page and is preceded by a note to the reader.

[233] Critical explorations of the relationship between *In Quintum Novembris* and *Paradise Lost* range from Estelle Haan's identification of the ways in which Milton translated Latin phrases in the earlier poem into English ones in the later work ("The 'Adorning of My Native Tongue': Latin Poetry and Linguistic Metamorphosis," in *The Oxford Handbook of Milton*, ed. Nicholas McDowell and Nigel Smith [Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009], 64) to Paul Stevens's observation that "the earlier poem provides a template for the plot of the later one" ("Milton and National Identity" in *The Oxford Handbook of Milton*, 349).

poem.[234] The most sweeping claims for the importance of the Gunpowder Plot, and *In Quintum Novembris*, in Milton's oeuvre have been made by David Quint, who concludes that "From the beginning to the end of his poetic career, Milton's imagination was haunted by a historical event, the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, and by the literature that described that event, particularly *The Apollynists* [sic] of Phineas Fletcher" (261). Although other critics have also observed Fletcher's influence upon *Paradise Lost*, Milton probably did not have access to it before he wrote *In Quintum Novembris*.[235] Hale echoes Quint's claims for the significance of the Latin epic, however, arguing "that Milton's political awakening is found in this very poem, and indeed at its ending precisely because of the poem's act of thought" (353). This, he concludes, was "the first time Milton expressed this patriotic, zealot view of history" (366).

Milton's historical consciousness here is noteworthy, for his return to the Galfridian tradition and his celebration of union, appropriate in 1606 panegyric, seem out of date in 1626. In fact, a number of curious elements in the poem suggest that despite working in an established genre, Milton approached his task from a much different perspective than the early Latin poets had. First, he describes the union between England and Scotland as an "inviolable league"

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[234] Unfortunately, Revard confines her attentions to Andrewes' sermons, which we have no evidence that Milton attended, and only one of which (5 November 1617) had been printed before 1626. (On Andrewes's control of his sermons, see McCullough, "Making Dead Men Speak.") See "Milton's Gunpowder Poems and Satan's Conspiracy," *Milton Studies 4*, ed. James D. Simmonds (Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1972), 63-77; *The War in Heaven: Paradise Lost and the Tradition of Satan's Rebellion* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1980).

[235] The question of Milton's access to this poem has been debated by several commentators. Haan concludes that Milton was unlikely to have seen Fletcher's poem before writing his own. Although Sutton determines that Milton's poem must have been written at least three months before the publication of Fletcher's, he argues that Milton could easily have seen a manuscript copy. We should keep in mind, however, that all of the surviving manuscripts are presentation copies and we have no evidence for their circulation beyond their intended recipients.

[inviolabile foedus] (15). Russell explains the difference understood by seventeenth-century persons between a "perfect union," in which one nation was subordinated to the other, and an "imperfect union" like that of England and Scotland, in which the countries retained their own institutions and which was seen as more vulnerable to dissolution.[236] Milton's characterization of the union suggests that, like many Protestants, he favoured a solidarity that would protect the island from Catholic invasion. Milton's use of the Galfridian tradition, however, seems to undermine rather than support the regal basis of union. Referring to the English as the "Troy-born race" (15) whom James has come from the "remote north" (15) to lead accords neither James nor the Scots a place in the British History that Milton invokes throughout the remainder of the poem.[237] While James has literally come from the north, this region was often the site of hell in medieval lore and is the Jesuits' place of origin in Fletcher's poem.[238] Milton thus describes James as at best an outsider and at worst something more suspicious. Without reading back anti-Stuart sentiments into the poem, I suggest that Milton does not present an unqualified endorsement of the late king.[239]

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[236] "James VI and I and Rule over Two Kingdoms," 151-63. Cuddy argues that Edwin Sandys proposed to parliament a "perfect" union that would subordinate Scotland, intending to scupper the entire union debate ("Anglo-Scottish Union and the Court of James I, 1603-1625," 115).
[237] English references to this poem are to Merritt Y. Hughes's translation and are to page numbers (*Complete Poems and Major Prose* [New York: Odyssey P, 1957], 15-21).
[238] The idea that Satan inhabits the north seems to originate in Isaiah 14.13, in which the prophet charges Satan: "You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far north" (RSV). In *Paradise Lost*, the unfallen Satan take possession of "The Quarters of the North" (5.689), from which he plots against God.
[239] David Loewenstein cautions against our eagerness to read radicalism back into Milton's early poetry, warning that "a view that transforms the young Milton into a radical, who from the beginning consistently blasts the establishment ... presents the danger of creating a monolithic, schematic account of his early career—one that can too easily flatten out or overlook contradictory and heterogeneous impulses in the writings" rather than recognizing the complexity and ambiguity

Despite offering him the epithet *pius* and praising him for establishing peace, Milton seems to look back longingly to the days when the Roman church held England's military might in fear and awe. Satan spurs the pope to action by reminding him that the "archer-English" (18) are mocking him and promising that if he follows the devil's plan he will "rule again over the warlike English" (18). English naval power rather than God's providence defeated the Spanish Armada. Although he does not condemn the pious James, Milton seems to express a preference for the policies of "the Amazonian virgin" (18) whom he succeeded. While the Catholic authorities want to return England to the way it was under Mary, Milton seems to envision a return to Elizabethan, and even earlier, military glory.[240] If the poem was written in late 1626, then it must have been clear to Milton that this glory had departed. Although Charles and Buckingham had manoeuvred James into military intervention on the continent in the months before his death, parliament had offered only lukewarm support. The naval expedition to Cadiz in the autumn of 1625 was a dismal failure, while Mansfeld's

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of his attitudes" ("'Fair Offspring Nurs't in Princely Lore': On the Question of Milton's Early Radicalism," *Milton Studies* 28 [1992], 37-48).

[240] Thomas Cogswell (*The Blessed Revolution*, 12-14) suggests that James inherited a myth of English military, particularly naval, supremacy that proved dangerous to the king, whose inclinations towards peace were probably influenced by an empty treasury as well as a distaste for religious warfare. See W. B. Patterson, who credits the king with a sincere desire to act as a peacemaker; but see also Arnold Hunt's review in which he suggests Patterson may have been seduced by James's rhetoric (*King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*; "A Jacobean Consensus?: The Religious Policy of James VI and I," *Seventeenth Century* 17.1 [2002], 132-34). N. A. M. Rodger similarly finds that this myth hurt the early Stuarts but also explicitly connects it to a Protestant world view ("Queen Elizabeth and the Myth of Sea-Power in English History," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 14 [2004], 153-74, esp. 153-60). Susan Krantz suggests that Dekker's post-plot play *The Whore of Babylon* implicitly critiques James's pacifism by praising Elizabeth's militarism: "Thomas Dekker's Political Commentary in *The Whore of Babylon*." *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 35 (Spring 1995), 279.

land force, supported by English troops, fared little better.[241] Milton's insistence upon England's former military strength appears to be an implicit rebuke to the new ruler, and possibly even to the memory of James, who allowed his desire for peace to enfeeble the nation. Unlike Fletcher, Milton does not praise Charles, or in fact refer to him at all in the poem. The king's unpopular support for Buckingham, which had culminated most recently in the favourite's appointment to the chancellorship at Cambridge—despite his waffling at the York House conference (which had failed to accept the articles agreed to at the Synod of Dort) and the charges against him in parliament—may have contributed to the poem's nostalgia.[242]

Milton's attitude to history here is significant in the context of his later *History of Britain* and his chronicle of human history in the final books of *Paradise Lost*.[243] David Loewenstein argues that the *History of Britain* "reveals Milton ... divided between presenting an objective, factual response to history and presenting a more literary and mythopoetic one" (82). Even in his youthful "Prolusion III," he "is remarkably sensitive not only to the effect of rhetoric and embellishment in historical narrative, but to its poetic and emotive power—especially when it is well narrated" (82). The *History* "begins, like an epic story,

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[241] On the situation in Europe, see Peter H. Wilson, *Europe's Tragedy: A History of the Thirty Years War* (London: Allen Lane, 2009). Wilson notes that the Cadiz failure "damaged Britain's standing in Europe and reduced Charles I's credibility as an ally" (369); for the troubles of Mansfeld's troops, see p. 365.

[242] While one can read the poem as an expression of hope that Charles will revive the nation's glory, Milton's failure to mention Charles suggests this is not the case. On Buckingham's situation during the spring of 1626, see Roger Lockyer, *Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George villiers, First Duke of Buckingham 1592-1628* [London: Longman, 1981], Ch. 8).

[243] Despite the wealth of studies on Milton's attitudes to and representations of history, I am aware of none that include significant discussions of *In Quintum Novembris*.

with the myth of Brutus and then charts a tragic pattern of failed deliverances in national history, with numerous references made to the troubles of Milton's own age" (82). Graham Parry concurs that Milton "seems determined to recount a protracted history of failure from Roman times onwards, and the chronicle narrative method rather suited his scheme in this regard" (245). *In Quintum Novembris*, written at a time when godly English Protestants were discouraged both by military losses on the continent and increasing ceremonialism in the church, however, juxtaposes the successes of a mythologized past against the implied failures of a historical present. While Walsham is correct to point out the smug certainties engendered by the Blackfriars collapse, Milton's poem demonstrates how quickly these evaporated in the face of dismal news from abroad.

England's decline seems to have begun not with Charles but with James, whose piety is remarkably passive in Milton's poem. Milton assigns the work of discovering and publicizing the plot to Rumour rather than the king, a significant departure from the Gunpowder epic tradition. In Wallace's poem, James and his family are proceeding towards parliament, unaware of the plot, when Monteagle approaches bearing the letter. James, inspired by God, takes immediate and decisive action; he "chose courtiers from the whole company (340) and ordered them to search and examine again and again the building underneath the hall and the underground cellar" (387). Fletcher's Latin poem tells how James, "Running over with his clever eye the intricacies and unspeakable ambiguities of wickedness, (while a light scatters the clouds and reveals his mind's illumination),

soon ... uncovers all the monstrosities and alone he discloses the crime and dispels the darkness" (47). In Herring's original poem, the "prudent king" (273) similarly insists that the letter must be taken seriously, instructing his counsellors: "I want to find out who live [sic] in the building nearby, if there is any cellar lying beneath the hall. Inform me in the first instance of these facts, having made a careful investigation" (273). But Herring also wants to glorify God more than the king and so adds the episode in which God sends an angel to warn James in his sleep as well as to inspire Monteagle to do his duty. When James receives the letter, he acts more decisively, having already heard "scattered rumours concerning the followers of Rome" (273). By 1617, however, Vicars had begun diminishing the king's role in the deliverance in favour of God's, insisting upon the providential placement of the wall that the plotters were unable to tunnel through, and providing five reasons for "the great impossibility / Of hope, of this strange treasons publication / By all the reach of humane pollicy" (42). Vicars is the first to describe the spread of the news by means of rumour "through both *Court* and *Country* speedily, / Through *Towne* and *City*, street, and euery place, / Through all the kingdome" (43). He does not, however, personify rumour or associate it with the classical Fama. Most importantly, rumour does not discover the event but merely reports it. Milton is thus the first to assign the discovery of the plot to the classical Fama.

While critics have observed the contrasts between Milton's relatively favourable portrayal of Fama and the unflattering ones of Virgil and Ovid, they have not generally considered more contemporary sources in relation to the

poem.[244] Milton's representation of Rumour contrasts not only with classical ones, but also with Francis Bacon's depiction of fame and rebellion as brother and sister. Martin Dzelzainis, in reviewing Bacon's attitudes to Fama, observes that in Book II of *The Advancement of Learning* (1605) Bacon extrapolated from the *Aeneid* that "rebellion and fame are brother and sister and their mother is the malignity of the people, but they are not co-eval: for feminine fame comes into being only after masculine rebellion has been 'suppressed'" (145). By 1625, however, Bacon had apparently come to understand rumour as "a causal factor in its own right rather than a merely post facto phenomenon" (148). In other words, he reflects the suspicion of orally transmitted news that was enshrined in a law that allowed seditious words to be prosecuted as treason.[245]

Perhaps coincidentally, in 1626 Jonson equated his news agency in *The Staple of News* with "the house of *fame*" (3.2.115).[246] As Mark Z. Muggli notes, Jonson repeatedly satirized his contemporaries' fascination with the news, and his works explored the relationships between truth and lies, spying and reportage.[247] Interest in foreign news had increased dramatically with the onset of the Thirty Years War, while the government's efforts to control domestic news were rapidly

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[244] In general, the focus upon classical elements in the poem has obscured attention to its contemporary contexts. Even John K. Hale, who situates the poem within events at Cambridge, for example, is puzzled by Milton's choice to have Satan disguise himself as a Franciscan rather than a Jesuit. This decision makes sense, however, when we consider that in 1625 Henrietta Maria had arrived with an entourage of Capuchins, an order related to the Franciscans.

[245] See Adam Fox, "Rumour, News and Popular Political Opinion in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England," *Historical Journal* 40.3 (1997), 597-620.

[246] It is difficult to know whether Milton would have known this play. Although performed by the King's Men in 1626, it was not published until the 1631 folio. Nevertheless, Milton and Jonson's use of Fama to describe the circulation of news in the same year suggests that this idea was current. In addition to Muggli, see Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003), 138-43.

[247] William W. E. Slights explores Jonson's concerns with the boundaries between public and private information in *Ben Jonson and the Art of Secrecy* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1994).

becoming futile.[248] Although critics have struggled with the complexities of Jonson's satire, he clearly mocks printed news, not only because it ceases to become news once printed, but perhaps also, as Catherine Rockwood suggests, because it advocates English involvement in Europe's religious wars (148). Joseph Loewenstein suggests that Jonson attacks printed news because it deprivatizes and democratizes information, making it available to popular audiences (341-42) just as Rumour does. Like Fama's house, the Staple is a place

> Where both the curious, and the negligent;
> The scrupulous, and carelesse; wilde, and stay'd;
> The idle, and laborious; all doe meet,
> To tast the *Cornu copiae* of her rumors,
> Which she, the mother of sport, pleaseth to scatter
> Among the vulgar. (3.2.116-21)

Thus, both printed news and oral rumour are the province of the idle and uneducated.

This context helps to explain Milton's defensive assertion that although he may be criticized for his favourable portrayal of Rumour, he will "never regret this commemoration of ... [her] at such length in ... [his] song" (20).[249] Rather than merely exploiting classical sources in an academic exercise, Milton seems to

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[248] See Richard Cust, "News and Politics in Early Seventeenth-Century England," in *Reformation to Revolution Politics and Religion in Early Modern England*, ed Margo Todd (London Routledge, 1995), 232-51, Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution*, 27

[249] Paul Stevens finds the discovery of the plot through "the confused words of rumour" (350) anti-climactic, another reason why Milton might have felt compelled to defend his choice Clearly, this was a deliberate decision and needs to be understood as significant to the interpretation of the poem ("Milton and National Identity," in *The Oxford Handbook of Milton*, ed Nicholas McDowell and Nigel Smith [Oxford Oxford UP, 2009])

be aware of the current debates about news into which Jonson had launched his play. Despite recognizing that Fama both lies and withholds truth, Milton nevertheless credits her with the one good deed of exposing the plot, attributing England's safety entirely to her "good offices" (20). Fama

> First, in her usual way, ... scatters ambiguous rumors and uncertain whispers through the English cities. Presently, grown clear-voiced, she publishes the plots and the detestable work of treason—not merely the deeds which are abominable to utter, but also the authors of the crime; nor does her garrulity make a secret of the places prepared for the treacherous attempt. (21)[250]

Only after she has declared the news, "the heavenly Father takes pity on his people from on high and thwarts the outrages which the Papists have dared" (21). Milton seems to make the prevention of the plot dependent upon public information that enables God to act independently of the king, celebrating the very promiscuity of rumour that Bacon and Jonson deplored.[251]

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[250] John Demaray sees Milton's depiction of Fama introducing a theatrical element into the poem's epic structure, leading to generic confusion and aesthetic failure ("Gunpowder and the Problem of Theatrical Heroic Form *In Quintum Novembris*," *Milton Studies* 19 [1984], 11)

[251] As Dzelzainis's article on Bacon suggests, writers regarded rumour negatively because they associated it with popular rebellion David Loewenstein points out that Milton, like Bacon, saw an integral relationship between revolt and the misuse of language (*Representing Revolution in Milton and his Contemporaries Religion, Politics, and Polemics in Radical Puritanism* [Cambridge Cambridge UP, 2001], Ch 6) Scholars have had difficulty pinning down Milton's attitudes to popular political participation partly because his definition of "the people" is not easy to assess While Annabel Patterson has described Milton as an "Elitist radical" who was suspicious of the uneducated masses, others have noted in texts such as "Areopagitica" a desire for an informed and educated populace capable of political participation ("'Forc'd fingers'· Milton's Early Poems and Ideological Constraint," in *'The Muses commonweale' Poetry and Politics in the Seventeenth Century* [Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1988], 22) Hugh Jenkins notes that Milton's definition of the people in *The Second Defense* has been regarded, perhaps justifiably, as elitist, but concludes that ultimately for Milton the English people "are what they can make themselves as well as what they can be made into" ("'Quid nomine populi intelligi velimus' Defining the 'People' in The Second Defense, *Milton Sudies* 46 [2007], 191-209) Similarly, Sharon Achinstein

James's relative passivity in the poem troubles the relationship between the monarch's *pietas* and the providential history established by the earlier epics, in which the king's zeal and wisdom operated in partnership with God's to protect the Protestant nation.[252] Although Quint sees Aeneas as a model for a hero more passive than those of the Homeric epics, within the context of the Gunpowder epic tradition Milton's James strikes the reader as unduly inactive (*Epic* 95-96). Like Vicars, Milton seems to be turning away from faith in a godly monarch towards a more populist ideal of the Protestant nation. Similarly, the poem's attitude to memory diverges from the earlier ones. Milton's emphasis upon memorialization may reflect not only a performative context, but also the growing concerns with forgetting that prompted authors like Bishop Carleton to publish their chronologies of plots and rebellions. Milton's almost elegaic tribute to England's former glory, however, contrasts with this work. For him, England is not a nation overcoming obstacles with God's assistance, but a people in decline and under attack by both Satan and the pope.

While reasons for the Catholic offensive against Britain vary in these poems, only Milton offers three separate rationales for the plot. In Wallace's poem, Satan is stung to envy and rage by seeing "far and wide cities quiet and kingdoms undisturbed and peoples living their lives in tranquil peace, each person beneath his own vine and the shade of his own tree" (371), a motive that supports the panegyric function of the text by alluding to the peace with Spain. In

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argues that "Milton never gave up on the people of England" (*Milton and the Revolutionary Reader* [Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994], 14).

[252] This also seems to be the direction in which Vicars is taking Herring's poem.

Herring's, the Whore of Babylon acts from practical necessity, lamenting the loss of English revenues since the Reformation, for "Through its constant lawsuits the wealthy territory of England more than all others by itself increased the treasury of Rome" (257, 259). Herring thus makes Catholic motives even more venal than Wallace does. In Fletcher's English poem, Satan plots revenge when he sees that "Piety is increasing on a vast scale while love of religion refuses boundaries. Ignorance is fleeing, unable to endure the light; Impiety is fleeing, and Superstition with her shameful limbs naked, and Error which never fails to go astray" (3). This piety is spreading even to Virginia and may eventually reach Hell itself.

Milton's Satan, however, sees no evidence for the spread of piety. Instead, he is irked that only England holds him in contempt and rebels against him, making pride his primary motivation. He has the wit, however, to appeal to the pope in the way that will best suit his purposes, castigating him for sleeping "While a savage nation born under the northern sky mocks your throne and your triple crown and while the archer-English insult your rights" (18). Recognizing the pope's vanity and pride, Satan encourages him "to avenge the scattered Spanish Armada" (18). The pope must resort to treachery because England is too strong to attack directly; yet Satan seems to have chosen this moment precisely because he perceives that England has lost its former strength. The devil must persuade the pope, who can simply order the monstrous twins Murder and Treason to instigate the plot, telling them simply that "A race that is odious to me lives on the western verge of the world amid the surrounding ocean" (19). The

twins need no complex explanations because they are bound in obedience to the pope, as are the kings who follow in his train. Satan attacks Milton's England, then, not because he envies its peace, prosperity, or piety, but because he sees an opportunity to exploit a perceived weakness and avenge insults from a time when England was a worthy opponent. Memory is thus oriented to the past rather than the future in this poem. Perhaps less obviously than Vicars, Milton seems to question the necessity for a godly monarch and to suggest, through his representation of Fama, that the people's role in safeguarding England is more essential than the monarch's.

3.3 Containing Catholicism: Monstrosity and the Catholic Other

Several of these poems describe the Catholic threat through a discourse of monstrosity, frequently depicting the plot as a monstrous birth. Although a traditional feature of romance narrative, the monsters here serve the polemical purpose of reinforcing the need to eradicate English Catholicism.[253] Representing the Roman church as an evil mother indicates anxieties about the perpetuation of the Catholic faith in England through wives and mothers who fail to conform and are subject to fewer penalties for recusancy.[254] Like these women, English priests are monstrous because they fail to reconcile their religious and political identities. Difficult to recognize and contain in daily life, Catholicism might be safely

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[253] As David Loewenstein points out, monstrosity was frequently associated with rebellion (*Representing Revolution in Milton and his Contemporaries*, Ch. 6).

[254] Frances Dolan notes that although recusant wives could be imprisoned, and even executed if they refused to swear the Oath of Allegiance or harboured priests, their financial dependence saved them from the more common punishments of praemunire and exile to which men were subject (*Whores* 63).

dismissed in literature by labelling its practitioners as monstrous "others." At the same time, however, the seventeenth-century understanding of monsters as portents fortelling the apocalypse complicated attempts to dispose either of English Catholics or of the threat that the Gunpowder Plot represented.

Unlike Wallace and Fletcher, who began their poems with demonic enclaves, Herring chose to locate the origin of the plot in a union between Satan and the Whore of Babylon that produced Guy Fawkes. His feminized representation of the pontiff as the Whore of Babylon belonged to a tradition with a lengthy and complex history. In her study of Catholicism and gender in seventeenth-century print culture, Dolan observes that the phrase "Whore of Babylon" "yokes together the familiar seduction and corruption of the unruly feminine and the more outlandish threat of the foreign" (43), and suggests that "[b]y persistently associating the Roman church with fallen women, reformers could acknowledge its seductive appeal while simultaneously repudiating it" (52). As both Dolan and Arthur Marotti have noted, recusant women caused persistent uneasiness because they failed to accept the religious authority of the state, and sometimes of their husbands.[255] Fletcher's Gunpowder epic provides a clear example of the way in which the threat of Rome could be feminized. In his English poem, which is more anti-feminist than the Latin, the decline of the Roman church and the tendency of English women to be seduced, spiritually if not physically, by Jesuit priests replicate the falls of the angels and the first couple. Æquivocus (Bellarmine), addressing the demonic parliament, tells first

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[255] See Marotti, *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy*, Ch. 2; Dolan, *Whores of Babylon*, esp. Ch. 1.

how he has painted over the decayed Whore to fool the "drunken nations" (2.32) who cannot distinguish the true from the false, and then how priests in England

with practicke slight

Crept into houses great: their sugred tongue

Made easy way into the lapsed brest

Of weaker sexe, where lust had built her nest,

There layd they Cuckoe eggs, and hatch't their brood unblest. (149)

Just as a union between Eve and Satan has produced the deformed Sin, so the priests have worked through women to instigate the Gunpowder Plot.[256] While Fletcher portrays the Whore as a temptress, Herring casts her primarily as an unnatural mother.

Although the former depiction was more common in polemical literature, Craig M. Rustici's study of the representation of Pope Joan in this period demonstrates a tendency to conflate the legend of the female pope with that of the Whore of Babylon and thus to make the Whore also a mother. Rustici notes that Protestants employed the Pope Joan legend cautiously during the Elizabethan period, since Catholics could accuse Elizabeth of pretentions to clerical supremacy in the English church. Persistent rumours that the queen had given birth to illegitimate children also sparked attempts to link her to both Pope Joan and the Whore.[257] The evils of Catholic maternity are demonstrated in Thomas

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[256] Several critics have noticed the similarity between this incident and Milton's depiction of the origins of Sin and Death. See especially Quint, "Milton, Fletcher, and the Gunpowder Plot," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 54 (1991), 262-63.

[257] Both Rustici (*The Afterlife of Pope Joan: Deploying the Popess Legend in Early Modern England* [Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2006]) and Regina Buccola ("Virgin Fairies and Imperial Whores: The Unstable Ground of Religious Iconography in Thomas Dekker's *The Whore of*

Dekker's play, *The Whore of Babylon*, in which the Spaniards' ships are described as pregnant with soldiers, and in the comparisons of the Gunpowder Plot to an unnatural birth.[258] The plot provided particularly rich opportunities for employing the idea of monstrous birth, since the plotters' tunnelling under the earth offered the disturbing image of a subversive burrowing into the womb of the mother country.[259] In his 1617 expansion of Herring's poem, Vicars has the plotters actually formulating the details of the treason while below ground, a particularly sinister image that highlights England's vulnerability (24).

Dolan notes that

> Protestants associated Catholicism with the stranger ... by associating it, in subtle and inconsistent ways, with monstrosity, contamination, and blackness. When this association was made, it was often via imagery of 'unnatural' congress, not between individuals but between abstractions, resulting in monstrous conceptions. Catholic plots were widely described as monstrous births. (39)

I suggest, however, that the monsters are not so much "strangers" as they are misfits—men whose religion is not congruent with their nationality. Fawkes is the

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Babylon" in *Marian Moments in Early Modern British Drama*, ed. Regina Buccola and Lisa Hopkins [Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007],141-60) have noticed that even in a virulently Protestant text like Dekker's *Whore of Babylon*, Titania and the Whore have more in common than the playwright perhaps would have liked to admit. I discuss Dekker's play in Chapter 5. For the rumours that Elizabeth had given birth, see Adam Fox, "Rumour, News and Popular Political Opinion in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England," *Historical Journal* 40.3 (1997), 614-16.

[258] The plot was also described frequently as a Trojan horse, again an image of a sinister and unnatural birth.

[259] Fletcher describes the earth as the grandmother of the plotters. On the gendering of London as feminine, see Lawrence Manley, "From matron to monster: Tudor-Stuart London and the Languages of Urban Description" in *The Historical Renaissance: New Essays on Tudor and Stuart Literature and Culture*, ed. Heather Dubrow and Richard Strier (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988), 247-74. Manley argues that the city could be seen as orderly and submissive (matron) or unruly (monster) but that its status midway between nature and culture made it consistently feminine.

most blatant example of this—the Catholic son of Protestant parents and an Englishman who has soldiered in a foreign army—but the priests too are men who have lived abroad and embraced an alien religion.[260] In describing the plot's conception, Fletcher uses the Aristotelian association of the female principle with form and the male with matter. In Canto III of the English poem, the Jesuits hatch their plots in the frozen north, the "sacred nurseries of the Societie" (3.6), where

> The Fiends finde matter, Jesuites forme; those bring
> Into the mint fowle hearts, sear'd conscience,
> Lust-wandring eyes, eares fil'd with whispering,
> Feet swift to blood, hands gilt with great expence,
> Millions of tongues made soft for hammering,
> And fit for every stampe, but truths defence:
> These, (for Romes use, on Spanish anvile) frame
> The pliant matter; treasons hence diflame,
> Lusts, lies, blood, thousand griefes set all the world on flame. (3.7)

As in this stanza, Fletcher frequently juxtaposes images of monstrous birth with ones of coining, suggesting that Catholic rapacity is both sexual and financial.

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[260] Richard F. Hardin also observes Fawkes's ambivalent status as an outsider; however, I disagree with Hardin's conclusion that this makes him a scapegoat ("The Early Poetry of the Gunpowder Plot: Myth in the Making," *English Literary Renaissance* 22 [1992], 62-79). The precedence initially accorded to Fawkes resulted from early assumptions that he was the instigator of the plot. Once the facts of the case were known, Fawkes's prominence declined until the nineteenth century, when he became as much romantic hero as scapegoat. See, for example, Frank Emson's *The Gunpowder Plot: An Historical Melodrama* (London, 1874), in which Fawkes remains loyal to the plotters, of whom Garnett is the chief, despite his belief that the plan is doomed to failure, and who tries to save the heroine, Viviana Radcliffe, from Catesby's machinations.

Moving beyond the metaphorical use of this motif, however, in narrating the origins of Fawkes, he provides a typical story of a monstrous birth:

> His frighted Mother, when her time shee went,
>
> Oft dream't she bore a straunge, & monstrous creature,
>
> A brand of hell sweltring in fire and smoke,
>
> Who all, and's Mother's selfe would burne and choke:
>
> So dream't she in her sleep, so found she when she woke. (5.9)

Pamphlets depicting monstrous births frequently made maternal imagination responsible for misshapen children.[261] Traditionally, monsters were immediately recognizable by their grotesque physical characteristics and their failure to resemble their parents, particularly their fathers. In his Latin poem, Fletcher also identifies Fawkes, incorrectly, as the product of a racially mixed union between an English father and a Latin mother (39). He thus becomes monstrous not only by hybridity but also by resembling his mother rather than his father. The belief that an image or a dream that the mother had seen during intercourse or pregnancy could affect a child, as several authors have noticed, was also an indictment of idolatry, and therefore frequently associated with Catholicism. Valeria Finucci notes that such beliefs disturbed the social order because they subverted male authority by offering women a significant role in determining both the appearance and the character of their offspring. Fletcher's publication of this version of the

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[261] See Marie Hélène Huet, *Monstrous Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1993), 13-30; Valeria Finucci, "Maternal Imagination and Monstrous Birth: Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*," in *Generation and Degeneration: Tropes of Reproduction in Literature and History from Antiquity through Early Modern Europe*, ed. Valeria Finucci and Kevin Brownlee (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2001), especially pages 55-61.

poem in 1627, however, suggests a threat not only to domestic patriarchy, but to national religion and security. With a Catholic queen consort newly arrived in England, Fletcher reminds his readers that the English succession is in the hands of a foreign heretic whose imagination has power to shape the royal heirs.

Julie Crawford suggests that in accounts of monstrous births "the monsters themselves are texts: their bodies are transparent to the crimes they punish, and they render the private beliefs and behaviors of early modern men and women spectacularly legible" (3). Nevertheless, responses to Luther and Melancthon's pamphlet describing the pope-ass and the monk calf, which had forged the relationship between monstrous birth and Reformation polemic, indicated that each church could interpret physical deformities in ways favouring its own cause.[262] In response to this problem, Kathryn Brammal argues, the definition of monstrosity shifted between 1550 and 1570 to include those whose behaviour was monstrous, but who had no visible deformity. Thomas Churchyard and Thomas Norton describe the perpetrators of the Northern Rebellion as monsters for their willingness to conspire with foreigners to overthrow their country, and Bacon condemns Essex's decision to treat with Tyrone against the queen's orders as "in a kind monstrous" (C^{v}).[263] Like the Jesuits, Fawkes changes identities and names as required, becoming monstrous precisely because his deformity is invisible to

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[262] The first English edition is Philipp Melanchthon, *Of two wonderful popish monsters to wyt, of a popish asse which was found at Rome in the riuer of Tyber, and of a monkish café, calued at Friberge in Misne*. (London, 1579, STC 17797).

[263] See Thomas Norton, *To the Quenes Maiesties poore deceiued subiects of the northe countrey, drawn into rebellion by the Earles of Northumberland and Westmerland*, (London, 1569, STC 18680) E3^{v}; Thomas Churchyard, *Come bring in Maye with me* (London, 1570, STC 5224) A2^{v}.

the eye. His ability to walk through the court unremarked is frightening because his physical appearance provides no clue to his villainy.

Herring's Virgilian opening, "I sing of a monster – terrible, infamous, cruel, arrogant" (257), makes the monster, not the hero, the primary subject of his poem. Fawkes is "a second Proteus readily turning himself into all shapes. Each new district causes him to alter his name in accordance with the locality; his heart remains the same as does his eagerness to cause harm" (259). For Herring, English Catholics are more monstrous than foreign ones. The British exiles at the Austrian court are "monsters of men, who rejoice in fishing in a sea disturbed by a swift storm" (263), and who can teach even a man tutored by Satan and the Whore "how to conceal crime with crime" (263). These monsters cannot be easily recognized, classified, and deprived of power. Only by punning upon the French meaning of Fawkes's name, False, can Herring assert any control over his identity.[264] Thus, representing the priests and plotters as monsters expresses anxieties surrounding Catholics and attempts to reassert the state's ability to recognize individuals holding treasonous beliefs by their external appearances.[265]

Monstrous births, however, were also regarded as portents, and as such they represented both God's anger with his people and his willingness to delay their destruction.[266] During the civil war, Vicars published an account of prodigies

[264] Punning on the names of the plotters was common to many works on the plot including Richard Williams's "Acclamatio Patriae," in which, for example, Catesby became a "wilye catt" (l. 163) and readers "must grante" (l. 225) that Grant deserved to be hanged.
[265] Apparently in an effort to make their Catholicism more visible, later writers frequently described Fawkes wearing a crucifix and a hair shirt when he was captured and Catesby clutching an icon as he died.
[266] Valeria Finucci traces the providential interpretation of monsters back to Augustine's *De Civitate* in "Maternal Imagination and Monstrous Birth: Tasso's Gerusalemme liberata" in

that he opened with an arresting comparison between God and Tamburlaine.[267] Like the tyrant, God hangs out a white flag urging his people to repent, but if they fail to do so, then he will display his red flag. Although Vicars admits that the birth of a monstrous child can have natural causes, he insists that such events demand religious interpretation.[268] Katharine Park and Lorraine J. Daston note that references to 2 Esdras frequently shaped sixteenth-century attitudes towards monstrous births ("Unnatural" 25-26) and that these allusions fostered the twin beliefs that prodigies occurred in groups and that they foretold the apocalypse. The depiction of monstrous births in the Gunpowder poems thus emphasizes an apocalyptic view of history that adds urgency to the writers' pleas for the king to root out Catholicism. The plot becomes not simply a narrative of a past event but an increasingly urgent warning for the future.

Generation and Degeneration: Tropes of Reproduction in Literature and History from Antiquity through Early Modern Europe, ed. Valeria Finucci and Kevin Brownlee (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2001), 41-77. David Williams takes the tradition back farther, to divergent versions of Genesis 6. Williams points out that "Beyond historical detail the symbolic force of the story of the origin of monsters was meant to express the reality that the evil introduced by the first fratricide survived, and that those who practised such evil became monstrous members of his race." Taking into account the failure of the human race to improve even after Christ's death and resurrection, "a particular perspective of history was developed in which it was shown that from the beginning two movements in human history could be discerned, the one virtuous and essentially identical to Christianity, the other evil and a constant contradiction to Christianity," a view expressed most clearly by Augustine (*Cain and "Beowulf": A Study in Secular Allegory* [Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1982], 36, 38). On the contested interpretation of prodigies during the Laudian period, see William E. Burns, "Signs of the Times: Thomas Jackson and the Controversy over Prodigies in the Reign of Charles I," *Seventeenth Century* 11 (1996), 21-33.

[267] *Prodigies and Apparitions, or Englands warning piece* (London, 1643), Wing V323.

[268] In their 1981 article on monstrous births, Park and Daston argued that the religious interpretation of such births gradually died out during the seventeenth century and was replaced by a more scientific attitude. In their more recent book, the authors have revised their previous conclusions to recognize that both interpretations existed simultaneously through this period. See "Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France and England" (*Past and Present*, 92 [1981], 20-54) and *Wonders and the Order of Nature 1150-1750* (New York: Zone, 2001), ch. 5. They note that "the fact that a monster could be explained by natural causes did not always disqualify it as a prodigy" (*Wonders* 192).

The link between Catholicism and the apocalypse arose from the belief that the pope was Antichrist, which seems to have become widespread during the Elizabethan period; however, both Bernard Capp and Peter Lake note variations in the deployment of this identification. Capp traces the development of apocalyptic nationalism to the Armada crisis, arguing that it was fostered by the distinction between the true and false churches made by John Bale and popularized in the Geneva Bible and Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*.[269] Most people consequently accepted Rome's status as a false church, although it was not official church doctrine. Lake, however, distinguishes between the polemical representation of the pope as Antichrist found in the writings of divines like John Whitgift, and the politicized views of those like William Whitaker, for whom this belief was an "organising principle" (164) requiring a teleological view of history as a struggle between the opposing forces of God and Antichrist, Protestantism and Catholicism. Throughout the 1620s, as James sought a Catholic match for his son and religious war raged on the continent, the English church inched towards recognizing Rome as a true but erring church and rejecting the identification of the pope as Antichrist, thus relinquishing apocalypticism to the church's most radical elements.[270]

In his English Gunpowder epic, Phineas Fletcher depicts the church of Rome as "Clens'd, spous'd to Christ, yet backe to whoordome fel" (1.1),

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[269] On this development, see also Paul Christianson, *Reformers and Babylon* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1978), 15-44.
[270] For a detailed discussion of the debates over Rome's status as a true or false church and the pope's identity as Antichrist in this period, see Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), Chs 2 and 3.

suggesting that Rome cannot regain her status as a true church, for "Fa[l'n]e Heaven's a double hell" (1.1), and his numerous marginal references to the books of Revelation and Daniel indicate his apocalyptic understanding of the Gunpowder Plot. None of the other epic authors situates the Roman church so carefully or suggests that Rome was ever a true church. Milton's depiction of the Roman procession, with the pope carrying his "gods made of bread" (17) in what appears to be a parody of Anchises carrying Aeneas's household gods in the flight from Troy, reminds his readers that the Catholic church is founded upon the erroneous doctrine of transubstantiation.

This apocalyptic strain connects with another important change taking place in the Gunpowder poems over time. Capp and Paul Christianson both note that while John Bale had believed in the central role of the people in initiating the reformation necessary to thwart Antichrist, most Elizabethans continued to trust the godly monarch to reform the church.[271] These authors argue that although the Martin Marprelate pamphlets attempted to turn the apocalyptic tradition against the English bishops, not until separatism began to flourish did a significant part of the population cease to place its trust in a godly monarch. The differences between the Latin Gunpowder poems and their later English translations, however, complicate this view. As we have seen above, while the early Latin poems emphasize the king's responsibility for eradicating Catholicism, the English poems offer individuals a greater role in protecting the Protestant nation.

[271] According to Capp, "The role of the godly prince in protecting religious truth was central to Elizabethan thought" (95). Christianson, however, observes that before Elizabeth's accession, some subjects were sceptical about the role of the monarch in preserving religion (*Reformers and Babylon* 11, 31).

As the Latin poems were translated and popularized, however, they increasingly called upon their ordinary readers to protect English Protestantism, an idea Milton seems to endorse through his favourable portrait of Fama. The Gunpowder epics thus trace the erosion of trust in a godly monarch to prevent the papal Antichrist from subverting the English church.

3.4 Demonic Enclaves: The Marriage of Epic and Satire

Perhaps the most obvious sign of the apocalyptic perspective in these poems is the connection their writers assert between the plotters, the Catholic church, and the denizens of hell. Most commentators have located the origins of the demonic enclave in Latin and continental epic; however, I argue that a tradition of vernacular prose satire describing Roman councils and journeys to hell that had grown up in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries also shaped the later Gunpowder poems and contributed to the popularization of epic later in the century. Beginning with the 1610 translation of Herring's poem, the Gunpowder epics increasingly opened themselves to the satiric impulses that would manifest themselves in later works such as *Paradise Lost*, first through their juxtaposition with epigrams, and secondly through their representation of demonic councils.[272]

While writers initially used the brief epic primarily to praise the king and secondarily to denigrate the plotters, epigrams frequently sought to puncture the

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[272] On anti-Catholic satire in *Paradise Lost*, see John N King, *Milton and Religious Controversy Satire and Polemic in "Paradise Lost"* (Cambridge. Cambridge UP, 2000)

plotters' pretensions and less frequently served a panegyric function.[273] Haan observes that the "established genre of epigram enabled an author to treat of a single idea in terms and tones that were frequently sardonic, ironic, or marked by invective, attack, rhetorical question and exclamation" (*Fletcher* xxi). In contrast to the expansive epic, the epigram was short, written in a plain style without rhetorical figures, and frequently culminated in a witty, pointed conclusion.[274] It could also treat unheroic figures such as the plotters, whose social status made them unsuited to more lofty genres. While early Latin epigrams on the plot were published as part of miscellaneous collections, as Sir John Stradling's and James Johnson's were, or with other plot-related texts, as Thomas Cooper's were, their pairings with epic are of particular interest here.[275]

Herring appears to have initiated this tradition, in which he was followed by Campion, who later appended five epigrams to his manuscript epic. Herring's epigram first appeared in the 1609 sequel to his original poem along with a miscellany of concluding matter, but was not included with the 1610 translation, leaving Vicars to provide the first English version in 1617. Both Milton and Richard Crashaw wrote brief epigrams on the plot, apparently at the same time as

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[273] Some epigrams did flatter their subjects. Stradling's Gunpowder epigrams in *Epigrammatum Libri Quattuor* (1607) praise the king and Lord Monteagle. Milton also praised James in one of his epigrams and Campion congratulated Donne on his *Ignatius, his Conclave*. For a discussion of Stradling's epigrams, see Haan, *Phineas Fletcher*, xxiii-xxiv.

[274] On the nature of the epigram in the seventeenth century, see: Hoyt Hopewell Hudson, *The Epigram in the English Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1947); Daniel Russell, "The Genres of Epigram and Emblem," in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism v. 3 The Renaissance*, ed. Glyn P. Norton (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), 278-83 Mary Thomas Crane, "*Intret Cato*: Authority and the Epigram in Sixteenth-Century England," in *Renaissance Genres: Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation*, ed. Barbara K. Lewalski (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1986), 158-86.

[275] Johnson published his in *Epigrammatum Libellus* (London, 1615). Thomas Cooper prefaced a Latin treatise on the plot with a series of epigrams (*Nonae Novembris Aeternitati Consecratae*, Oxford, 1607). See Haan, *Phineas Fletcher*, xxii-xxv.

their longer works. Although theirs probably arose from the setting of themes in an academic environment, whereas Herring's and Campion's are drawn from the culture of London and the court, the themes are remarkably similar.[276] Mary Thomas Crane suggests that the early sixteenth-century reformers used the model of the Pasquinade to develop the type of epigram that would become, by later that century, "a vehicle for increasingly serious criticism of the Roman Catholic church" (170). Unlike classical epigrams, the pasquils usually named their victims, and sought both to embarrass public figures and to "call attention to the vices rampant in the Roman church" (171). This tradition of satirical but morally serious epigrams seems to be the one in which the Gunpowder Plot epigrammatists worked. Lawrence Manley observes that epigrams about urban life reflected an urge to categorize people, and consequently expressed uneasiness about marginal individuals who refused to be confined neatly to a single group ("Proverbs" 266-68). As we have seen above, the Jesuits' ability to disguise themselves and their reliance upon equivocation rendered them a source of anxiety. Like the discourse of monstrosity, then, satire was a means of dealing with the uneasiness created by a group of Englishmen who belonged to a foreign organization that made them outsiders in their own country and necessitated the

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[276] The repetition of the same themes throughout the anti-Jesuit epigrams composed on the Gunpowder plot may not be surprising when we consider James Doelman's observation that political epigrams in particular tended to become common property. He suggests that it "would be best to assume that most political epigrams of the period went through an initial period of mixed transmission, during which they were both written down and posted, and then also remembered and passed along by word of mouth, perhaps once again to be written down" ("Circulation of the Late Elizabethan and Early Stuart Epigram," *Renaissance and Reformation* 29 [2005], 63). On the academic epigram tradition, see Hudson, *The Epigram in the English Renaissance*, Ch. 4.

use of dissimulation. The very length of the epigram appended to Herring's poem suggests a failure to contain the Jesuit threat.[277]

In Vicars's translation, the Jesuits are guilty of five "D"s, "In *Daunting* subjects; in *Dissimulation*; / To *Depose*, *Dispose*, Kings, Realms, *Devastation*" (*Quintessence* 98).[278] The poem begins and ends with the conventional complaint that Jesuits have no right to use the name of Jesus when their behaviour contradicts Christ's teachings. Throughout, the author depicts the Jesuits as actors who "play their parts" (98) and "with *religious shows*, shelter *foule-crimes*" (99). Garnett's failure to disclose the plot is bad enough, but praying for its success makes him truly monstrous.[279] Similarly, Herring speculates on whether the civil crime of blowing up a kingdom and destroying a monarch or the religious sin of taking the eucharist while planning such a plot is more reprehensible. Vicars's translation jests that the Jesuits can "Most properly be called the *Kings-evill*" (101), a double-edged pun since the king was supposed to be able to cure this

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[277] Manley suggests that "As its neat devices begin to soften and expand, the epigram admits to a difference between the order it desires and the alien, mysterious life that order would contain" ("Proverbs, Epigrams, and Urbanity in Renaissance London," *English Literary Renaissance* 15 [1985], 275). Herring may have included the epigram as a compliment to Sir John Harington, to whom he had dedicated the second part of the poem, since Harington's uncle was a noted epigrammatist. See *Epigrams both pleasant and serious, written by that all-worthy knight, Sir Iohn Harrington: and neuer before printed*, London, 1615 (STC 12275). Many of Harington's epigrams in this collection are also lengthier, although still significantly shorter than Herring's poem.

[278] The organization of the epigram around the five "D"s echoes Coke's speech at Garnett's trial, in which he accused the Jesuits of "Dissimulation, Deposing of Princes, Disposing of Kingdomes, Daunting and deterring of subiects, and Destruction" (*A True and Perfect Relation*, T2r).

[279] Curiously, in the epic the plan to shift the blame to the puritans confirms the monstrosity of the plotters' design.

disease, provided that he was willing to do so.[280] Vicars appears to be questioning the king's will to cure the Jesuit problem.

While Herring's lengthy epigram comes closer to invective, the shorter, more pointed epigrams appended to the other poems seem to be poised uneasily between the desire to diminish the plotters by ridiculing them and the recognition that Rome poses a serious threat to England. The primary conceit of Milton's four epigrams on the plot is that the recently deceased James has attained heaven by his own piety rather than through the impiety of the plotters, who attempted to send him there before his time by means of the 5 November explosion.[281] Herring and Fletcher ironically contrast Rome's false piety with James's true piety in the original titles of their epics, *Pietas Pontificia* and *Pietas Iesuitica*, exploiting the Virgilian tradition that identifies piety with heroism. Milton's third epigram, however, takes a more serious turn, admitting how close James came to death when the Latin monster attempted to avenge his jokes about purgatory, "For he did—almost—go to the celestial shores, a cindery ghost, whirled aloft by Tartarean fire" (14). Milton was apparently familiar with James's comment on the existence of purgatory and with Herring's work, which had described Catholicism

[280] D. Harris Willson notes that although James overcame his initial reluctance to perform the touching ceremony, he remained sceptical of the royal power to heal scrofula. See *King James VI and I* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956), 172-73.
[281] On Milton's epigrams, see Stella Revard (*Milton and the Tangles of Neaera's Hair: The Making of the 1645 "Poems"* [Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1997], 54-56) who reads them as "epitaphs" for the newly deceased James but admits it is "curious" that they are modelled on "satiric epitaphs from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century that mocked controversial popes" (55) and she concedes that since his "questions indirectly warn that the Catholic conspiracy of 1605 could recur in the England of 1626" (56), he may be issuing a warning to the new king.

as the "monster of Latium."[282] Crashaw's rather innocuous epigram notes the juxtaposition of "All Saints' Day" with "all sinners day" (the Gunpowder anniversary), but Campion's epigrams share Milton's ambivalence. His first, "Against the Jesuits," rejoices in the third ejection of Romans from England, naming those brought about by Luther's reformation and the foiling of the plot, while his failure to specify the third episode implies the persistence of the Catholic threat.[283] The next two jest conventionally with the Jesuits' use of aliases, again concealing uneasiness about the difficulty of identifying, and so containing, the Jesuit threat. The final one congratulates Donne on his *Ignatius, his Conclave*, alluding indirectly to the ongoing problem of English Catholicism that necessitated the Oath of Allegiance and the ensuing controversy into which Donne had launched his satire. Thus, the epigrams seem unable to attain, or at least to maintain, the closure demanded by their concise form in the face of the ongoing Catholic threat.

As the epigrams suggest, satire offered an illusion of containment for a threat that seemed always to be in danger of proliferating.[284] Another way of containing Catholics, particularly Jesuits, through satire was to associate them

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[282] The reference appears to be to James's 1621/22 *Declaration Touching his Proceedings in the late assemblie and conuention of Parliament* in which the king sarcastically told the house "*So as this plenipotencie of yours invests you in all power vpon Earth, lacking nothing but the Popes to haue the keyes also both of Heauen and Purgatory*" (London, 1621 [STC 9241], 23-24). This context is potentially interesting as James complains in this document of parliament's lack of gratitude for his peaceful reign and their obstreperousness on the subject of a Catholic marriage for Charles. Haan's analysis of similarities between Milton's poem and Herring's suggests that Milton was familiar with the earlier poem ("Milton's *In Quintum Novembris*, 221-47).

[283] While one could assume that Campion is referring to the original expulsion of the Romans from the island, his failure to identify an occasion leaves the reference open to interpretation.

[284] On 30 April 1624 John Chamberlain claimed that there were 1,400 priests, friars, and Jesuits in England. While it is difficult to know how accurate this estimate is, there was clearly at least a perception that the number of Catholic priests was increasing (2.556).

with the denizens of hell using conventions of demonic councils that had developed both in continental epic and in vernacular prose pamphlets, but this ultimately also failed. The most immediate sources for the demonic councils in the epics are the Latin poems on Elizabeth's deliverances, but they looked back to continental models. Such councils were introduced into Christian epic by Marco Girolamo Vida, whose *Christiad* (first published in 1535) described in Book 1 a meeting in which Satan proposed to his "dire brethren and all their kindred" (1.133)[285] a plan to capture and mislead one of Christ's disciples to prevent him from accomplishing his mission on earth. Vida's Satan authorizes both force and fraud against the God who has banished them from heaven and now may even bar "these nether realms" (1.184) to them.[286] The devil operates on what appears to be a conciliar model, but manipulates the council in his own favour, just as Milton's Satan does in *Paradise Lost*. Vida's depiction was taken up by Torquato Tasso in Canto Four of his *Jerusalem Liberata*. Tasso's Satan is irked first by his own fall, but even more by the prospect that Christ will cheat death and bring all men to heaven. He also authorizes his minions to use both force and fraud so long as his object is attained.[287]

The biblical tradition also offered an epic model that emphasized man's place in a cosmic struggle between God and Satan. Barbara K. Lewalski observes that in *The Reason of Church Government* Milton referred to the book of Job as

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[285] I quote James Gardner's translation (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2009).
[286] This is likely the origin of Fletcher's Satan's apprehension that the spread of Protestant piety to the New World may be followed by its arrival in hell itself.
[287] On earlier Christian and classical sources that influenced Vida and Tasso, see Olin H. Moore, "The Infernal Council," *Modern Philology* 16.4 (1918): 169-93.

the model for a genre of "brief epic," and demonstrates that the understanding of Job as epic literature was common from patristic times to the seventeenth century among both Catholics and Protestants. This interpretation of the book focused upon the two heavenly councils "in which Job is singled out to be God's champion in the contest with Satan, and the trials and miseries which Satan inflicts upon Job" (*Brief* 20). As developed by Lewalski, this insight is helpful in understanding the brief Gunpowder epics, which see England's rulers caught, like Job, in a struggle between the divine and the demonic.[288]

In Campion's *Ad Thamesin* and the extant fragment of Alabaster's "Elisæ," Satan initiates the plot action. In the new world of Reformation polemic, however, he has become a Catholic, creating a false church to lure humanity away from the true bride of Christ. In Alabaster's opening book, after Christianity supersedes the "gentile myth," "the Destroyer was then distressed at the shameful disgrace, and determining to patch together his fallen empire, he established again in Italy the rubble he had saved from the disfigured ruins" (25), making Italy the new capital of his empire, which continues to spread until first Luther and then Henry VIII begin to undermine his conquests. Satan approaches his daughter, the "Babylonian whore" (39), who uses Bishop Gardiner to sow discord between Mary and Elizabeth, ultimately contriving Elizabeth's imprisonment in the Tower.

[288] This model would account for James's passivity in Milton's *In Quintum Novembris*, which most commentators have considered complimentary to the king It seems to me, however, that James as king is in a different position than Job, and has a responsibility to take a more active role in protecting the country. Nevertheless, Hale observes that Satan's flight above the earth at the beginning of *In Quintum Novembris* is modelled on Job

Neo-Latin poetry, however, was not the only locus for the conflation of Rome with Satan's kingdom. Representations of demonic or Catholic enclaves in two groups of English prose pamphlets beginning in the late sixteenth century—the trip to hell and the Jesuit or papal conference—also contributed to the later transformations of the Gunpowder epics. Because their structures tended to be dialogic, they gave voices to the forces of evil as well as those of good, and consequently humanized the demonic. The first of these may have originally been connected with the stage, since both Thomas Dekker and a "T.M." presumed to be Thomas Middleton contributed to it, and Dekker justifies bringing demons into print in his *Newes from Hell; Brought by the Diuells Carrier* (1606) since "tis out a fashion to bring a Diuell vpon the Stage" (B3^r^). These pamphlets usually satirize the sins typical of young men—particularly overspending and being preoccupied with their attire. The classical allusions and Latin marginalia that pepper the texts suggest that the young gentlemen who are both the subjects of the satire and its potential consumers may be those attached to the Inns of Court or the universities. Despite being written in English prose, they are directed towards the well-educated and relatively affluent. Several of the early seventeenth-century pamphlets refer to the plot, either directly or indirectly. In Dekker's 1606 publication, the devil tells his messenger to commend "all those that steale subiects hearts from their Soueraignes, say to al those, they shal haue my letters of Mart for their Piracie: factious Gnyziards, that lay traines of seditiõ to blow vp the cõmõ-wealth, I hug thẽ as my children" (F4^r^). In *The returne of the knight of the poste from Hell...* (1606), an anonymous contribution to this genre, the narrator

tells of returning to the city after some time living in the country. As soon as he rides into London, he sees guards and soldiers everywhere, and he soon discovers that a terrible plot has just been exposed. Seeking more news, he finds a down-at-heel fellow who tells him what was plotted. The narrator exclaims that this outrage must have been planned by devils, but his new acquaintance says that though they may prove to be devils, they are still men, and he offers the names of Fawkes, Percy, Catesby, the Winters, and the Wrights. The narrator is mystified, since these men are all nobodies who could not have hoped for advancement, but his new acquaintance chastises him for thinking that discontent cannot be found among the poor and obscure. Questioned, the beggar admits that he is an evil spirit in human shape, the knight of the post who carries the devil's mail. In contrast to the epic treatments, in which the primary responsibility for the plot belongs to supernatural forces, here the knight of the post places the blame squarely on human agents.

The narrator, referring to Dekker's pamphlet, then asks how the devil received Piers Penilesse's supplication. The devil's reply identifies pride as the sin that brings men to hell and papistry as another form of pride. Those who

> denie the reading of holy writ, the forme of meditation, the vse and number of sacraments, the function of the elect, the congregation of the belieuing, and heape such infinite authoritie vppon a sinful mans iurisdiction, that casting faith into that ende of the wallet which euer hangs behinde them, they shall rob the great almighty both of his true homage and alleagance and in the ende when their batterie shalbe able not to moue

> one stone in christianitie, they shall like true souldiours of hels kingdome, practise to make such mines and vndermininges as may blowe vp all truth and religion with vnmerciful gunpowder, adding vnto Cattelins conspiracye and all other treasons how vilde soeuer great showes of charitie in comparison of their inhumanitie. (D4^{r})

Thus, impiety leads directly to political disobedience. In these pamphlets, then, we can see that what begins as a satiric genre directed at the sins of young urban gentlemen such as those at the Inns of Court becomes inflected with anti-Catholic polemic in the wake of the Gunpowder Plot.[289] Nevertheless, the primary purpose of these texts remains satiric rather than polemical.

The second group of texts is dedicated to describing papal or Jesuit enclaves. The purpose of this genre from the beginning is clearly to educate readers about the evils of the Roman church. Joachim Beringer, in *The Romane conclave* (1609), justifies the use of this form, claiming that in learned disputation both sides may appear valid, whereas the examples he offers cannot be refuted (A2^{r-v}). The audience for these pamphlets, however, also seems to be less educated than the one for disputations. In this case, the author chronicles the relations between various popes and emperors, demonstrating how the popes have interfered in human governments. Since he follows this with a general synopsis of the ways in which the Jesuits have argued against oaths to heretics, this publication seems to have been intended as an intervention in the Oath of

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[289] As late as 1614, John Taylor, the water poet, in a pamphlet entitled *The Nipping and Snipping of Abvses* that includes "A Proclamation from Hell in the Deuils name concerning the propagation, and excessive vse of Tobacco," extends his compliment to James with a short poem praising him on his deliverance from the Gunpowder Plot.

Allegiance dispute. More generally, these texts revealed Rome's errors, particularly its encouragement of civil disobedience and rebellion, to both Protestants and Catholics.[290]

One of the earliest examples is Bernardino Ochino's *A Tragedy or Dialogue of the unjust and usurped Primacy of the Bishop of Rome*, published in a 1549 translation by John Ponet. The pamphlet consists of a series of dialogues among various parties, beginning with a meeting between Lucifer and Beelzebub in which they agree to subvert the Roman church by making the Bishop of Rome pope.[291] Among the most interesting of the dialogues are those in which the people attempt to prevent the church's decline into error by querying the pope's elevation over their monarch. Although Satan and the pope are too clever for them, the pamphlet suggests that informed Christians may be better able to resist religious errors. While the epic tradition privileges the heroic perspective, these vernacular pamphlets are inherently dialogic or even multi-vocal, giving voices to the forces of evil as well as those of good, if only to satirize or refute them.

Through the continental epics, then, we see the development of councils in which Satan and his minions seek to subvert God's plan for the world. The vernacular pamphlet tradition rewrites these councils as anti-Catholic polemic in which Satan collaborates with the Roman hierarchy, while the Elizabethan neo-Latin tradition inherited by the Gunpowder poems offers us the first glimpse of a

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[290] Other examples of this genre include William Fennor, *Pluto his Travailes, or the Diuels Pilgrimage to the Colledge of Iesuites* (London, 1612); Anon. *The Hellish and Horrible Councell, practised and vsed by the Iesuites, (in their priuate Consultations), when they would haue a man to murther a king* (London, 1610), which describes the plotting of Henri IV's murder.

[291] Unlike later pamphlets, this one works from the assumption that Rome was once a true church and lost that status by becoming obsessed with worldly domination.

Catholic, Anglophobic Satan. In the demonic council that begins Wallace's poem, Satan admits to authoring the Gowrie conspiracy as well as the Bye plot out of envy for England's peace and piety. In response to his request for advice on formulating a new plot, Abaddon proposes that since force has been ineffective, fraud should be tried. He offers the assistance of Rome, which he has tutored in cruelty and deception. Satan, in agreement, heads to earth, taking the appearance of a Jesuit. In this guise, he befriends Guy Fawkes, convincing him that he would be better to destroy the English parliament than to waste his life serving a foreign country. Whether he succeeds or fails, he will become a saint. Fawkes finds accomplices in the Netherlands and, after taking the sacrament, they begin to dig a tunnel, which is almost complete when they discover the empty cellar and move their gunpowder into place there. Since the panegyric function of the text requires giving James the starring role in the event, Wallace minimizes divine intervention. The wall does not providentially prevent the plotters from completing their tunnel, and God merely gives James the opportunity to decipher the Monteagle letter. Although God watches, he allows human agents to carry out his designs, just as Satan operates through the corrupt agency of Fawkes.

Herring's poem similarly focuses upon the plot's human agents, while the most extensive demonic machinery occurs in the later epics of Campion and Fletcher. Campion's Satan is motivated by envy of God generally, and of Jacobean England more specifically, disappointed at seeing "the once doubtful affairs of Britain now settled and peace going olive-crowned through all the realm, sacred worship on the increase, joy resounding in the woods, cities and

palaces replete with splendour in varied pomp" (41). In addition to this peace and prosperity, Satan also perceives an unwelcome unity developing among the kingdoms—"that the Irish now of their own accord suppressed their wonted hostility and extended the hand of friendship, that the conspiring arms of the Scots were quiet and that there was no place left for the clank of armour or for secret guile" (41). Ignatius's ghost, appearing to the plotters, helps the priests incite open rebellion once they learn that the powder has been discovered. Returning to hell, he releases the Furies to assist the rebels, but Satan deserts them once he sees that the cause is lost.

Fletcher's poem focuses almost exclusively on two demonic councils. Only at the second of these does Loyola's eldest son, Bellarmine, propose a plan to send priests to England to worm their way into women's hearts and then to blow up parliament. The poem's structure not only makes the Jesuit mission complicit in the plot, but makes the plot the mission's sole purpose.[292] In his English poem, which is more satirical than the Latin, Fletcher conducts the demonic council in explicitly political terms that parody English government, "A full foule Senate, now they all are set, / The horride Court, big swol'ne with th' hideous Counsel swet" (1.17). Fletcher's demons subvert good by allying "Counsel" with the court rather than with parliament, where James had located it in his 9 November 1605 speech to that body.

[292] Northampton's speech in the published account of Garnett's trial may have been the source of this idea, since by linking Garnett's arrival in England with the Armada, the earl implied that treachery had always been the purpose of the English mission.

The demonic council proved to be suited to the satiric mode, and flexible enough to be used against a variety of opponents, becoming a contested genre in the civil war period as each side attempted to use it against the other. Royalists favoured the prose form for associating the institution of parliament with hell; however, one of the earliest examples is Milton's *Newes from Hell, Rome and the Inns of Court* (1641), which attempts to retain the genre for anti-Catholic polemic. Lucifer praises the pope for sowing discord among English Protestants and provoking the Scots to attack their neighbour, offering that

> In respect of which services, as also for their fidelity to us and our Kingdome, we haue caused our principall Secretary of estate, *Don Antonio Furioso Diabelo*, to make an especiall Inroulement of their names in our Calend amongst those our deare servants the plotters of the *Gun-powder-treason*; and the most renowned the complotters of the former Invasion of England, in the year of grace 1588. (2)

Not only did later royalist writers use this technique to equate parliamentarians with hell's rulers, but one very nearly used Milton's own words to do so. The anonymous author of *Hells Triennial Parliament, Summoned five years since, by King Lucifer* (1647) has Lucifer applaud the presbyterians for "sowing the seedes of discord amongst three Kingdomes of my professed enemies, the English, Scotch, and Irish" (1) and declares that as a result he has "caused our principall Secretary of Estate *Dom Antonio Demonibus* to enter your names in our diabolicall Calender, amongst our deare children the complotters of the *Gunpowder Treason*, and of the *Spanish Invasion*" (2). In Francis Wortley's verse

Mercurius Britanicus his Welcome to Hell: With the Devills Blessing to Britanicus (1647), written during his imprisonment in the Tower, Lucifer offers to make the parliamentary newsbook his "speciall favourite" (3), promising "And brave *Guy Faux* with famous *Ravilliack* / Shall wait on thee from boord unto thy bed" (6). Similarly, in his *Mercvrivs Infernalis, or Orderlesse Orders* (1644), John Taylor numbers Ravillac and Fawkes among the devil's counsellors (2). Thus, associating one's enemies not only with Satan but also with the Gunpowder plotters had become a powerful means of satirizing them.[293]

Beyond these obvious links, however, there are more subtle echoes of anti-Catholic polemic in the anti-parliamentary pamphlets. In Taylor's pamphlet, "*Sultan Sathan*" (1) is irked particularly because "the Kingdomes of Great *Brittain* and *Ireland* have been these many yeares in such a happy condition of Peace, plenty, and all other blessings, to the Envy and admiration of all Nations" (1). Satan's remedy for this situation is remarkably similar to that of Fletcher's Catholic Satan, as he orders "that some of our cunningest Divels should be sent by our Authority into those parts, who should take upon them the shapes and habites of sincere religious persons, and insinuate them selves, first among foolish women, and silly Tradesmen" (2), persuading them to abandon true religion. This Satan sees Britain's subversion as a greater good even than the fall of the angels or the temptation of Adam and Eve. A series of pamphlets that satirized the expanded political roles of women in this period demonstrates that the anti-puritan

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[293] When the plot was paired with the Armada, it also drew attention to the failure of attempts to subvert God's plans for England. The association of Fawkes with Ravillac was more ambiguous, since Ravillac had been successful in assassinating Henri IV.

pamphlets retained the anti-feminist perspectives of the earlier anti-Catholic polemic.[294] Such satire attempts simultaneously to exaggerate and to contain the threats posed by these groups, but it also gives voices to them through its inherently dialogic form. Ironically, then, these texts had the effect of humanizing evil even as they insisted upon its Satanic origins. Their influence upon the Gunpowder epics was to reorient them in the direction of romance.

3.5 Romantic Subversion: John Vicars Re-visions the Plot

As monuments to the founding of a Protestant Britain, the early Latin poems on the plot had concluded with the discovery of the gunpowder, sometimes tying up the narrative with the punishment of the traitors, but avoiding any reference to the abortive rebellion in the Midlands. When Francis Herring reprinted his original poem with minor corrections in 1609, however, he added a twenty-four-page sequel describing the revolt.[295] In this second part, Herring tells of the plotters' meeting on the pretext of a hunt, their dismay at learning of Fawkes's arrest, and their attempt to rouse the Catholic population before eventually surrendering to the law. The official source for this event was the "Discourse," a narrative that emphasized the plotters' lack of support, their

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[294]See for example: Anon., *Now or never: or, A new Parliament of women assembled and met together neer the Popes-Head in Moor-Fields, on the Back-side of Allsuch; adjoyning upon Shoreditch (*London, 1656) and a series of pamphlets by Henry Neville including *The Ladies Parliament* (1647), *An Exact Diurnall of the Parliament of Ladyes* (1647), and *The Ladies, a Second Time Assembled in Parliament* (1647).

[295] Herring's corrections in the first part are mainly minor revisions to wording. The most substantial changes are the insertion of two new lines at the introduction of Fawkes to explain that while he is introduced first he is not the most important conspirator, and a change of speakers that allows Catesby rather than Fawkes to propose the plot, since the original poem had been written when Fawkes was considered the primary conspirator.

ignominious arrests by the common sheriff, and their providential burning with gunpowder, doubtless to impress upon readers the futility of open rebellion. Herring seems to have been the first to attempt an aesthetic depiction of these events, and the addition of this narrative fundamentally shifts the balance of the poem, which increasingly tilts away from epic closure towards the open-endedness of romance in John Vicars's later translations and "dilations." Although the plotters themselves are killed or executed, this second part suggests that recusants continue quietly biding their time in the country, a concern that the upsurge in anti-Catholic sentiments unleashed by the acrimonious international debate over the Oath of Allegiance may have exaggerated. It also demonstrates the difficulties and ambiguities of seeking closure in apocalyptic narrative.

In the early Gunpowder poems, the rejoicing following the plot's discovery and the punishments of the plotters, actual or projected, marked a definitive ending. Although poets warned the king not to trust Catholics in future, the epic structure of their poems left no doubt that the episode was unique and closed, ending a long series of Catholic attacks upon English Protestantism beginning in Elizabeth's reign. Quint succinctly defines epic as the story of history's victors and romance as the story of its losers, arguing that romance narratives "valorize the very contingency and open-endedness that the victors' epic disparages: the defeated hope for a different future to the story that their victors may think they have ended once for all" (*Epic* 9). The boundary between epic and romance, however, has always been indistinct. Virgil's poem progresses from the disconsolate wanderings that Aeneas narrates to Dido to the purposeful

and heroic conquest of Latium. Beginning with his 1609 sequel, however, Herring's poem reverses this teleological progression, moving from the purposeful actions of the English authorities to the wanderings of the plotters during the failed Midlands revolt, a process that becomes particularly problematic in Vicars's later revisions.

While Herring, or his printer, seems to have considered the original poem's brevity a selling point, Vicars in 1617 boasts that his new edition is "very much *dilated*," a phrase that would have offered considerable information to Renaissance readers trained in rhetoric. Patricia Parker explains that

> The specifically rhetorical meaning of 'dilate' – the amplifying and prolonging of discourse – involves both an expansion and an opening up, the creation of more copious speech through the explication, or unfolding, of a brief, or closed, hermetic 'sentence,' widening the space between its beginning and ending and generating much out of little, many words (or things) where there had been few. ("Dilation" 520)

It was classified as a type of *amplificatio* and was usually accomplished through *divisio* and *partitio*, dividing a sentence into parts and expanding each part. Since it could be used to make a topic seem more important, or to add moral weight, it was a staple of sermon rhetoric.[296] Vicars uses this method to add additional descriptive phrases and epithets to Herring's depictions of characters and events. But he makes changes that go well beyond amplification by introducing new

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[296] Nigel Smith notes that Vicars's newsbooks were "written in the sermon rhetoric of popular puritanism" (*Literature and Revolution in England 1640-1660*, 340). The standard source for the technique in the Renaissance was Longinus's *On the Sublime*, Sections 11 and 12.

material pertinent to the current political situation that also intensifies the poem's godly orientation. The most significant change in the first part of the poem is Vicars's introduction of the Jesuits, who do not appear in the original. Recreating a dialogue between Catesby and Garnett in which the two discuss the problem of killing innocents, he offers a corrective to Garnett's advice, showing that the priest should have argued from scripture rather than analogy, and concluding with a warning against doing evil that good may come of it.[297] This not only shifts primary responsibility for the plot onto the Jesuits' shoulders, but also uses dialogue to offer instruction in reasoning to his readers.

Although he does not comment directly on the current political situation, he adds an account of Fawkes's initial visit to Spain during Elizabeth's reign, at which time Spain had agreed to support the English Catholics.[298] Following James's accession, the Spaniards declined further participation, citing the peace negotiations proceeding between the two countries. The introduction of Spain allows Vicars to represent her as an unreliable ally, always intent on her own interests, at a time when James was negotiating a Spanish marriage for his heir.[299]

A third addition to this part of the poem is also brief but telling. One of the points in his numbered series offering evidence that only God could have thwarted the conspiracy is that the wall prevented the plotters from completing their tunnel, a detail he introduced into the poem. God, rather than James, is also

[297] It is worth noting that in correcting Garnett Vicars insists upon the need to argue from scripture rather than using the humanist method of arguing by analogy.

[298] Albert J. Loomie discusses Fawkes's dealings with Spain in *Guy Fawkes in Spain: the 'Spanish Treason' in Spanish Documents* (London: University of London, Institute of Historical Research, 1971).

[299] The emblem that precedes the text also includes Spain as one of the figures attempting to subvert England.

responsible for the most important factor in the plot's discovery, the delay to the opening of parliament. One of the deletions from the text is Catesby's lengthy tribute to Prince Henry. Indulging in no nostalgia, Vicars suggests that God's providence does not depend upon a godly ruler.[300]

Although he displays little confidence in his readers' abilities to comprehend any kind of figurative language, Vicars introduces a new layer of allegory by identifying Treason, rather than Fawkes, as the son of the pope and the Whore. The original poem had made Fawkes the primary conspirator, a role from which Herring had demoted him in the 1609 Latin edition and its 1610 English translation. To justify the introduction of Fawkes before Catesby, Vicars adds a note explaining that, although Catesby is the real author of the plot, Fawkes is introduced first because of his inhumanity. He thus revises the history of the poem, explaining on moral grounds what was really the result of incomplete information available at the time of Herring's composition.[301] Allegorizing the monstrous offspring as Treason, who then lodges in Guy Fawkes's breast, requires that Vicars provide additional explanatory notes, but the change supports his interpretation of the plot as merely one episode in an ongoing war between true and false religions. As Guy Fawkes, the offspring of Satan and the pope can be executed, and closure can be attained; as Treason, this monstrous being will simply move to another host and generate yet more plots. This deferral

[300] In addition, Vicars removes tributes to both Elizabeth and Prince Henry from the concluding materials that Herring had introduced into the 1609 edition.
[301] Sutton concludes that the change to Catesby as instigator of the plot "was ruinous to the literary effect Herring originally strove to create," since it shifted responsibility for the plot from a supernatural to a human agent, thus rendering the demonic machinery superfluous ("Milton's" 364).

of closure points to one of the tensions between epic and apocalyptic history, for the apocalyptic ending, unlike the epic ending, remains unattainable.

Parker explains that "dilatio" has a theological meaning as well as a rhetorical one, for

> The time between First and Second Coming is itself a respite or 'dilation,' an interval in which the eschatological Judgment is held over or deferred, a period of uncertain duration when the 'end' already accomplished in the Advent is, paradoxically, not yet come, when, though the Promised Land has been conquered, the spiritual Israel still wanders in the wilderness. (*Inescapable* 58)

At the end of the poem, Satan vows to continue his offensive against England:

> Indeede, I must confesse, we did expect
> A greater haruest, farre more company:
> But this shall now suffice, and wee'le erect
> Vnto our selues *trophies* of victory
> For this attempt, *Fortune* heereafter may
> Grant vs a time, more mischeefe to display. (*Mischeefes* 94)

Significantly, Satan, not the English poet, is now erecting monuments, although his victory is brief and delusive. While the first part of the narrative demonstrates that Satan cannot win, Vicars makes clear that there is still a battle to be fought. Parker adds that

> The almost cartoon character of the Book of the Apocalypse is a feature of romance dialectical in its tendency. The traditional function of Apocalypse

> is to portray the enemy as already defeated, in a vision of the end which places us outside the monsters we are still inside—as Job at the end of his trial is shown the externalized forms of behemoth and leviathan—and, by this act of identifying or naming, proleptically overcomes them. (*Inescapable* 77)

The first part of the poem names the Catholic enemy, despite the difficulties caused by the Jesuits' equivocation and use of aliases, and the defeat of the plotters foreshadows the final victory for God and England. Meanwhile England, like Israel, remains in a state of unfulfilled promise. Lake has noted that for those who saw the pope as Antichrist "the assurance of eventual victory (which could only be complete with the Second Coming, the date of which was unknown and unknowable, and which applied only to the universal Church, not to particular, visible Churches) was balanced and held in tension by a lively, indeed perhaps exaggerated, sense of the enormity of the danger" ("Significance" 169).[302] The contrast between the two parts of the poem demonstrates this tension between assurance and fear. Although Vicars clearly believes in the ultimate victory of the true church, he also insists upon continued vigilance as a requirement for ensuring that this victory will be achieved. Having a godly monarch is no longer sufficient protection for the church—all Protestants must now participate in this work.

Whereas in the first part characterization is limited, in this second part the plotters are individuated. According to Helen Cooper, the movement from epic to

[302] Although Lake notes that victory over Antichrist was not to be attained by the visible church, Vicars's version of Protestant nationalism tended to identify the defeat of Antichrist with the English church.

romance involves a "shift of emphasis, from the founding of nations to the thoughts and feelings and aspirations of their protagonists" (25). This becomes problematic in the expanded Gunpowder epic because Vicars explores the feelings not of the authorities but of the plotters. He introduces their perspective immediately in the second part by reporting a dialogue between Fawkes and Winter in prison, in which Winter comforts his co-conspirator by reminding him that he and Catesby both leave sons to follow them. Although the discovery of the plot has left James's succession intact, these men can also console themselves with hopes that their rebellion will not die with them. By allowing the plotters human emotions and aspirations, Vicars opens the door to a viewpoint that contradicts authorized versions of the story.

The reorientation towards romance, however, is most evident in the story of the plotters' circuitous wanderings through the countryside as they attempt first to start a rebellion and then simply to evade capture. To some extent, this part of the poem functions as parody, in which Vicars deflates the plotters' pretensions by depriving them of heroic status. Digby, after the hunt,

> *walkes* and *stalkes* with Princely gate
>
> Amidst his cursed consorts, traiterous traine,
>
> Prescribes them statutes, answers, askes in state:
>
> His brest no triuiall trifles doth retaine,
>
> His *heart* and *head* negotiate Princely affaires
>
> He vnto each his place of *honour* shares. (*Mischeefes* 74)

This assumption of kingly airs appears foolish when word of the plot's failure arrives. In contrast to James, who takes control of the situation when he reads the Monteagle letter, Digby is so distressed by the news of Fawkes's capture that Percy must assume the leadership of the remaining conspirators. Similarly, describing Catesby and Percy's fall, Vicars begins with what appears to be a conventional epic simile attesting to their heroism, but ends in anticlimax:

> And like two mighty *Oakes*, whose branches high
> May seeme to touch the top of heauen faire;
> But by a rapid whirlewind suddenly
> Are blowne and ouerturn'd, whose branches are
> Laid low vpon the earth, the bowes being meate
> For cattell in the field to brouse and eate. (*Mischeefes* 88)

The would-be heroes are made food for livestock. However, Vicars portrays the plotters here not so much as monsters but as men badly counselled by the Jesuits. It is Garnett who advises Catesby to proceed with the plot, and Tesimond who incites them to rebel when the original plan fails. The lay plotters are dupes who waste their money and their lives for a church concerned with financial gain rather than the souls of its members.

While Gerald MacLean correctly notes that this part of the poem shows corruption spreading outward from the court to the countryside, the "holy hunt" also disturbingly reverses roles in the religious disputes (105). Winter, speaking to one of the Catholics who has joined the hunt, tells him that they are actually hunting "*Wolues hereticall*" (*Mischeefes* 73). For a Protestant audience, the idea

that Catholics refer to them in the same terms that they refer to Catholics must be disorienting.[303] As Quint reminds us, "the romance narrative bears a subversive relationship to the epic plot line from which it diverges, for it indicates the possibility of other perspectives, however incoherent they may ultimately be, upon the epic victors' single-minded story of history" (*Epic* 34). By allowing the plotters voices in the story, Vicars, perhaps unintentionally, validates their perspectives.[304]

3.6 Epic for All: Educating the Protestant Reader

As we have seen above, the Latin epics originally offered compliments, usually seasoned with mild critique, to prospective royal or highly placed patrons. These poems credited the king with saving the country and praised both God and the monarch. In popular English poetry, the plot was more frequently represented as part of an attempt to subvert English, and even European, Protestantism, and thus represented a single battle in an apocalyptic struggle that was won but not yet concluded. Vicars' 1617 translation maintained the patriotic loyalty of Herring's poem, although tinged with increasing scepticism, but he added to it the militant Protestantism of writers such as Rhodes and I.H. Vicars's translation of Herring's epic brings together the English and Latin traditions, melding them into a militantly Protestant text directed towards godly middle-class readers.

[303] See for example, the first of Campion's epigrams.
[304] It is also possible that Vicars, on some level, identified with the disempowered Catholics because of his own marginal position as a presbyterian.

Both in his 1617 text and in his paratextual materials, he popularizes the literary conventions of elite culture, while declaring his intention to stimulate his readers' memories so they will not underestimate the Catholic threat.

In his introductory letter to "All the Loyall-hearted Protestants of England," Vicars outlines his purposes: to remind the English that they should be grateful to God for their deliverance, and to move their "*Christian* hearts to *zealous* detestation, / Of *Romes* most impious foule abhomination." (A^r)[305] Perhaps in accordance with these aims, Vicars introduces three emblems into the text, one serving as the title page for each section of the poem, and the third placed facing the opening lines of the first part. Margery Corbett and Ronald Lightbown trace the origins of the title page featuring a single picture to German religious disputation during the 1520s, when Lutherans began using such pages as "pictorial propaganda for their religious beliefs," with images "deliberately chosen for doctrinal and controversial significance" (3). Vicars uses woodcut illustrations paired with brief verses in a less obviously controversial way to direct and educate his readers.[306] In his later pamphlet on prodigies, Vicars describes his series of such illustrations as "figures or emblems," thus indicating his own understanding of these illustrations. Alastair Fowler connects the emblem with the mnemonic image, accounting for the simultaneous decline of both in the later seventeenth century ("Emblem" 8-9). While Vicars's use of the form here

[305] It is worth noting that Vicars does not limit those addressed, as is customary, to readers, but addresses all Protestants, and that he also implicitly connects Protestantism with political loyalty.
[306] Daniel Russell notes that the length of the emblem text remained flexible, but that the texts generally became longer as the epigram became a separate genre. See "The Genres of Epigram and Emblem" in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism v. 3 The Renaissance*, ed. Glyn P. Norton (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), 278-83.

supports his goal of stimulating his readers' memories, his appropriation of an elite genre seems to mirror the transformation taking place in the poem.[307]

How Vicars perceived his role in the creation of the text at this point is not easy to determine, since the ideas he articulates are not always either clear or consistent. Flora Ross Amos notes that in this period there was no consensus regarding the need for a translator to acknowledge the original author, and that he or she could freely add to or delete from the original text (99). Vicars acknowledges Herring's learning and godliness on his title page, but he also presents a series of verse letters commending his own work that fail to acknowledge it as a translation. According to Franklin B. Williams, the practice of prefacing texts with complimentary verses began with serious literature, but trickled down to popular culture after about 1560. In the Stuart period, he suggests, publishers rather than authors usually solicited such letters (7). Nevertheless, Vicars seems to have participated in a network of writers who regularly exchanged such favours. Both Thomas Salisbury and Nathaniel Chambers contributed verses to other works by Vicars, and his verses appear in works by Joshua Sylvester, also a prolific translator. While not all of these authors can be traced, their names may have been intended to display Vicars's relationships to other presbyterians.[308] Thus, both his use of emblems and commendatory verses and his Englishing of a Latin poem point to a project of making high culture traditions accessible to less learned audiences.

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[307] On the uses of the Renaissance emblem both in literature and decoration, see Rosemary Freeman, *English Emblem Books* (New York: Octagon, 1966), especially Ch. 4.

[308] Nathaniel Chambers mentions in his verse that he does not know Vicars personally. Some of the verses are signed only with initials, making identification difficult.

Recognizing that his readers might not be capable of understanding literary devices, Vicars both makes accommodations for them and at the same time teaches them, particularly through his marginal notes, to read and understand epic conventions. His change of the main title from *Popish Pietie* to *Mischeefes Mysterie* provides the first indication of his perception of his audience's abilities. The word "mischief" appears frequently in works about the plot, including the 1610 translation of Herring's text.[309] While it is now commonly associated with a misdemeanour, the meanings current in the seventeenth century generally implied more serious wrongdoing.[310] More significantly, Vicars's change eliminates the irony from the original title, as though he does not trust his readers to decode the correct meaning.[311] Similarly, the purposes for which Vicars uses marginal notes include pointing out similes and identifying Treason's parents as the devil and the pope, his concern that readers will misconstrue even this simple allegory leading him to mark it twice. Although he uses occasional Latin tags in the margins, he also frequently explains both classical references and events in English history in English notes that seem to be directed towards a less knowledgeable audience. Some of these notes also seem to be finding aids for browsers who are not reading the text sequentially, supporting William Slights's observation that margins could serve as rudimentary indices before the modern index became common ("Edifying" 697). The marginal notes also seem to reinforce Vicars's

[309] John Speed also used the word "mischiefs" to describe the plot in his *History of Great Britaine* (1614), 889.
[310] For the full range of contemporary meanings, see the *OED*.
[311] This seems to have been an ongoing concern for Vicars. In an address to the readers of his 1644 pamphlet, *Babylons beautie*, he informs his readers that the title is ironical and that he actually plans to make them loathe Catholicism (Wing V293).

determination to call attention to the historicity of the plot and to cultivate the memories of his readers. When explaining the unprecedented cruelty of the plot, he numbers the points in the margin, apparently to make them memorable for his readers. In a similar vein, he inserts the Monteagle letter into the text. By both summarizing the letter and including the document, he not only offers tangible historical proof of the event, but also gives his readers two opportunities to impress the words upon their memories.

Vicars's 1641edition offered a new translation in which he melded the two parts into a single block of text and added more paratextual material. Relegating the earlier emblematic title pages to illustrations placed later in the work, Vicars provided a new frontispiece emblem in which Fawkes, now rendered as a demon complete with horns and tail, is caught escaping from the cellar. This time, however, the beam of light falling directly upon the scene from heaven dramatically outshines the feeble light of Knevet's torch.[312] As Maclean notes, the accompanying verse emphasizes the distinction between light and darkness, and explicitly identifies England with Israel. Most of the other new paratextual materials support Vicars's project of demonstrating the truth of his earlier assertion that the plotters had planned to blame the destruction on the puritans. He introduces this theme in his advertisement to the "Covrteovs" reader, promising to provide the testimony of two witnesses. Rather than producing his evidence immediately, however, he defers gratification of the reader's curiosity by interjecting a new dedication to the mayor and governors of Christ's Hospital,

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[312] As Walsham has pointed out, the source of the illustration is Michael Sparke's *Crumms of Comfort* (*Providence in Early Modern England*, 264).

followed by a six-page "Table of the Heads of the most materiall passages in this History." As an index, this list seems to be of limited use. Names are indexed inconsistently, some individuals being identified by their titles while others are entered under their last names. Some of the headings appear to have been taken directly from the marginal annotations, including three that point generically to similes. Woolf notes that indices were becoming more common in historical works during this period, and perhaps this addition was intended to enhance Vicars's efforts to represent his work as creditable history.[313]

Following the table, Vicars returns to his project of demonstrating the existence of a plot to blame the puritans by inserting a supporting letter from a W. Perkins.[314] Perkins's story rests upon information received from Clement Cotton, who claims to have learned it directly from Lewis Pickering. Perkins's story is that Pickering, whose sister was married to Robert Keyes, learned of trouble brewing among the Catholics and gave James a warning about six months before the plot was discovered. Keyes had asked to borrow a horse that Pickering had ridden while hunting with the king, and which therefore would have been recognizable to members of the royal household. The horse was to have been waiting for Fawkes in St. George's Field on the morning of 5 November, but when he arrived to make his escape he was to have been murdered and his corpse disfigured beyond recognition. Pickering, the same morning, was to have been slain in bed and conveyed to the field so that he would appear to have been the

[313] See *Reading History in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 82-84.
[314] I have been unable to trace this individual.

perpetrator of the plot. According to Vicars, the result would have been a puritan massacre, followed by civil war.

This story follows the outline of the one Herring had originally proposed, but offers names and details to increase its authenticity. Pickering was a favourite at the early Jacobean court, having been the second Englishman to arrive in Scotland bearing the news of Elizabeth's death in 1603. His promising career was blighted in March 1604/05 when he was accused of authoring a libel that had been pinned to Archbishop Whitgift's hearse. In a landmark libel case, he was found guilty and sentenced to both a fine and imprisonment. Although he was eventually released without paying the fine, he could not regain favour at court.[315] Alastair Bellany suggests that even without this dramatic finale, Pickering's star might have set as James lost sympathy for the puritan agenda. After his release, Pickering disappears from the historical record, even the date of his death being unknown (Bellany "Pickering"). Given his political troubles, it seems unlikely that he was in a position either to hunt with the king or to offer him advice in the spring of 1605, and, had he done so, it seems unlikely that he would still have been prosecuted on the libel charge.[316] Nevertheless, both Pickering and Keyes were from central England, and a marriage connection is not impossible.[317] In

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[315] On the case against Pickering, see Alastair Bellany, "A Poem on the Archbishop's Hearse: Puritanism, Libel, and Sedition after the Hampton Court Conference," *Journal of British Studies* 34 (1995), 137-64; and Philip Hamburger, "The Development of the Law of Seditious Libel and the Control of the Press," *Stanford Law Review* 37 (1985), 661-762, especially pages 690-94. Bellany also provides a brief summary of Pickering's career in the *ODNB*.

[316] It also seems unlikely that the plotting would have been allowed to continue unless the king himself was complicit in a sham plot.

[317] Pickering was born into a puritan family in Northamptonshire and attended Emmanuel College, Cambridge (Alastair Bellany, "Pickering, Lewis (*bap.* 1571)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman [Oxford: OUP, 25 Dec. 2010]).

fact, the evidence that both "Mistress Key wife of Robt: Key" and "Mistress Vaux" were "Discharged vpon Lewis Pickerings bond" in the days after the plot was discovered adds credibility to the possibility of a family relationship (BL Add. MS 11402, f. 108^{r}). Pickering's assistance to Keyes's wife is perhaps best explained in this way. Why he stood bond for Anne Vaux remains unclear.[318] Pickering himself may have originated the rumour that he was to have been killed in the hopes of rehabilitating his reputation at court, but we may never know the truth. Nevertheless, Vicars seems to have assumed that this testimony would impress sceptical readers.

In this second edition, Vicars makes two major revisions to the poem's structure. The first is to change the six-line stanzas of the 1617 edition into couplets. As MacLean notes, Vicars uses the "jingling rhyme of the loose pentameter couplet for conveying the excitement of his message" (115), but it also contributes to the increasing open-endedness of the text. Vicars's couplets generally lack the mid-line pauses, as well as the balance and parallelism, of more sophisticated writers' couplets, giving them a relentless forward movement. At the same time, since the couplet form is infinitely extendable, it also delays final closure. As a form in which a conversational tone could be achieved, it particularly suited a poem with a substantial dialogical component.[319] As J. Paul

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ODNB). Keyes's father was a protestant minister at Stavely, Derbyshire, while "his mother was a Catholic relative of Lady Ursula Babthorpe. He was converted by the Jesuits. His wife was governess at Turvey (Bedfordshire) to the children of the Catholic Lord Mordaunt" (Haynes, *The Gunpowder Plot*, 49-50).

[318] Mark Nicholls mentions that Vaux was discharged on Pickering's bond, but does not offer any explanation. See *Investigating Gunpowder Plot*, Ch. 5, n. 575.

[319] The most extensive study of the couplet remains William Bowman Piper's *The Heroic Couplet* (Cleveland: Case Western Reserve UP, 1969). On the "conversational" tone of the couplet, see J.

Hunter points out, couplets could also make poems appear more accessible, "as if readers can approach them in a way similar to prose" (25). Thus, Vicars may have been attempting to make his poem more available to those who were unfamiliar with more complex stanzaic forms.[320]

His second major change was to integrate the two parts of the poem into a seamless whole, which undermines the closure of the first part even more than in the previous edition. A scant four lines describes the celebration after the discovery of the plot as

> Annoy is turn'd to joy and sweet content,
>
> Mens *hands* and *hearts and* knees to praises bent:
>
> Making great *bonfires*, *feasting*, ringing *bels*,
>
> Each-one his *neighbour* this Gods goodnesse tells. (*Quintessence* 46)

Immediately, however, Vicars turns back to the impenitent Fawkes refusing to concede defeat. Although the couplet form makes the poem appear longer, Vicars actually decreases the total number of lines, deleting more material than he adds.[321] There are few substantial changes in the content of the first part, but Vicars increases his emphasis upon details that ground the plot in historical facts, such as the exact thickness of the wall that impeded the plotters' tunnel.[322] Having

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Paul Hunter, "Couplets and Conversation" in *The Cambridge Companion to Eighteenth-Century Poetry*, ed. John Sitter (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001), 11-35.

[320] Another indication that Vicars was moving the poem down the social scale is the change from quarto format in 1617 to octavo in 1641.

[321] The 1617 edition is approximately 3486 lines, while the 1641 is approximately 3034 lines.

[322] Historians remain divided on the question of whether there really was a tunnel. James Sharpe cautiously states that "[t]he plotters apparently planned to dig a tunnel" (*Remember, Remember* 55), while Antonia Fraser argues that the story of the tunnel was invented to vilify Catholics, and Alan Haynes accepts the existence of the tunnel. Fraser points out the practical difficulties of concealing the excavated earth in support of her argument.

removed his invocation to the tragic muse, he seems to have been concerned with representing the event more as history than as literature.[323] Along with the Monteagle letter, he inserts a copy of the oath supposedly taken by the plotters as further proof of Catholic sacrilege. To facilitate his readers' retention of his narrative, he provides additional numbered lists of points to be remembered. On several occasions, he addresses his readers directly, first calling the attention of the "good Reader" (11) to the foolishness of the Catholic plotters who believe they will become saints by destroying England, exhorting them, not the king, to banish the Jesuits. Although Vicars continues to support the king, he has shifted responsibility for the nation into the hands of individuals, even Catholics.

Divine providence can no longer be counted on to keep England safe without the continuing political loyalty of individuals. At the beginning of the second part of the poem, Vicars adds to the description of Fawkes's resolution after his capture that "the *King* he did not take / To be his lawfull Soveraign, Gods annoynted" (47), and elsewhere he envisions the horror of a kingdom without a king. In this part Vicars, not surprisingly, provides a more detailed version of the plot to blame the puritans. Despite their attempt to discredit the innocent, however, Vicars increasingly views the lay plotters as men led astray by their leaders, both lay and ecclesiastical. In doing so, he uncovers the dangers of rhetoric used in the service of false religion, narrating not only Garnett's false justification for killing innocents but also Tesimond and Percy's impressive but erroneous appeals to the plotters to engage in further rebellion. The idea that

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[323] Early in the second part, Vicars also eliminates a lengthy digression (pp. 62-67 of the 1617 edition) that includes representation of the plot as a tragedy.

individuals may be misled by the very religious advisors who are supposed to care for their souls might have had a particular resonance among the godly during the Laudian period. In a marginal note obviously added just prior to publication, Vicars reminds his readers that Satan's vow to continue the war against Protestantism has been "most fully confirmed by Satan and his Agents, our Church & State projectors, in this lately discovered plot, by our blessed Parliament, 1641. Which would have far transcended this of the Pouder-plot had it taken effect" (80), thus directly associating Laudianism with Catholicism.[324] The transformation of the epic thus mirrors the concerns with bad counsel that emerged in the later Jacobean period and became acute in Charles's reign. At the end of the narrative, Vicars adds two new woodcuts, the first depicting Fawkes's head displayed on the parliament building and the second illustrating the annual anniversary celebrations, taking place under God's watchful eye.[325] The poem concludes with a lengthy addition that offers first a warning to Catholics and then a reminder to all Englishmen to be grateful or risk God's wrath.

Vicars, then, gradually transforms this text from a panegyric to a Protestant king to a panegyric to a Protestant God. In the "Letter to all loyall-hearted English Protestants" in the 1641 edition, he reminds his readers "*How powerfully God to our Church did stand*" (A3^{r}), only adding at the end that king and kingdom were the initial targets of the plot. The preservation of the king is

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[324] On the fears of popish plots in this period, see Caroline M. Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina, 1983) and Robin Clifton, "The Popular Fear of Catholics during the English Revolution," in *Rebellion, Popular Protest and the Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984), 129-61.

[325] The latter is the second illustration that had appeared previously in Sparke's *Crumms of Comfort.*

important only to the extent that he is a preserver of the church. Increasingly, however, puritans have come to represent the persecuted church, and the real targets of the plot. The increasing emphasis upon the Midlands revolt after 1609 suggests a growing sense that the closed narrative has been re-opened. While the gunpowder plotters may have been punished, Catholics still lurk not only in England's forests, but also in her church and court.

We are faced finally, then, with the irony that a genre originally intended to support the project of a united Protestant state came to demonstrate the nation's religious and political fragmentation. As the Anglo-Latin Gunpowder epics ceased to be vehicles for obtaining patronage, they lost their panegyric function and sought the support of godly Protestants in printed editions and English translations. Increasing disillusionment with the king's will and ability to eradicate Catholicism led both to attempts to contain false religion through satire and to appeals to godly readers to take up the challenge of maintaining the Protestant nation. Francis Herring's addition of a sequel describing the Midlands rebellion revoked the closure of the earlier epics, nudging this text towards a more open-ended romance narrative and providing the foundation on which John Vicars was able to establish an English epic that both instructed a new class of readers in the conventions of the genre and promoted a more militantly Protestant agenda. As conforming royalists like Abraham Cowley found themselves unable to complete their heroic epics, the godly were inheriting from the Gunpowder tradition a form that offered heroism to ordinary Protestants in the ongoing struggle against the papal Antichrist.

4. "For God and the King": Preaching on the Plot Anniversary

4.1 Church and Nation: Religion and Politics in the Gunpowder Sermons

When James I initiated the preaching of annual sermons to commemorate the country's, and his own, deliverance from the Gunpowder Plot, he could hardly have anticipated that this tradition would contribute to raising popular discontent in his son's reign, help to justify one grandson's restoration to the English throne, and participate in celebrating the exile of another. Although intended to memorialize a historical event, the sermons also frequently provided information about and interpretation of current events through the lens of the plot. Perhaps more importantly, however, they helped individuals to acquire sophisticated skills of listening and reading, particularly when utterances were constrained by generic conventions and political necessity. Unlike the Latin epics, which initially emphasized the role of the godly monarch in preserving the Protestant state, the sermons from the beginning were based upon the premise that ordinary individuals played a crucial role in the nation's religious and political life.

Political sermons held in tension two separate functions, one controlled by the monarch and the other by the minister. They were a means for the ruler to display his power and authority to his subjects, and they were at the same time the minister's opportunity to offer counsel to his sovereign or parliament. Thus, they participated in the often contentious process of defining the English church in its relations both to the state and to its rivals, Catholicism and puritanism. The four sermons that I focus upon in this chapter provide case studies of the ways in

which these two functions interacted at some crucial periods in the century. I argue that by learning to negotiate among the messages to multiple audiences that characterized these sermon, listeners, and later readers, developed skills that helped them to participate in a wider range of political and religious discourse.

Although the record of Gunpowder sermons is incomplete, the occasion was the most durable of the political anniversaries, surviving officially until 1859.[326] In 1605, 5 November was added to an English preaching calendar that included the Gowrie anniversary and James's accession day.[327] Cressy has argued that these anniversaries replaced the saints' days that had punctuated the year before the Reformation with a specifically nationalistic set of occasions.[328] The Gowrie anniversary, always something of an embarrassment to the clergy, was tacitly dropped on James's death. Less fond of sermons than his father, apparently indifferent to the importance of "representative publicness," and married to a Catholic, Charles I seems to have neglected both the Gunpowder anniversary and his accession day.[329] Godly preachers who saw the occasional political sermon as

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[326] The liturgy remained in the prayer book until 1859 and was celebrated, at least when politically useful (except when the prayer book was prohibited during the Interregnum), until that time.
[327] Queen Elizabeth's accession day did not survive as a preaching occasion, although it continued to be celebrated informally, frequently as a protest against the policies of the reigning monarch. See Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth*, Ch. 4, as well as Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells*, Ch. 4.
[328] See Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells*, especially Chs. 2 and 3 and "God's Time, Rome's Time, and the Calendar of the English Protestant Regime," (*Viator* 34, 2003), 392-406.
[329] The phrase "representative publicness" comes from Habermas's *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (5) where it is used to describe the way in which a sovereign power appears before the people without interacting with them. He or she is seen at a distance under carefully controlled circumstances and as an embodiment of the church or state rather than an individual. Morrissey notes that "Charles I failed to follow his father's lead in making public sermons on political anniversaries an important part of his political image making" ("Presenting James VI and I to the Public: Preaching on Political Anniversaries at Paul's Cross" in *James VI and I: Ideas, Authority, and Government*, ed. Ralph Houlbrooke [Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006], 111). The only surviving accession day court sermon for Charles I seems to be Isaac Bargrave's 1627 sermon (*A Sermon Preached before King Charles, March 27. 1627*, London, 1627, STC 1414).

a means of negotiating the relationship between the church and the monarchy, however, maintained the Gunpowder tradition, exploiting the opportunity to increase public awareness of what they considered unacceptable alterations in the Caroline church, while claiming to operate within their traditional role of counselling the monarch. During the civil war, the anniversary underwent a crucial change from a celebration to one of a series of fast days, but retained its role of jutifying hostility to Catholics and crypto-Catholics.[330] In the 1650s, clergy seem to have been uneasy about exactly how the anniversary should be interpreted, and the responsibility for the celebration in large measure devolved from the national to the civic level.[331] Surviving the Restoration, however, it was joined by a new set of occasions, most importantly 29 May as the date of the Restoration and 30 January, the fast day for the regicide, frequently interpreted as a successful Gunpowder Plot perpetrated by dissenters. The ongoing political importance of the anniversary, perpetuated largely by sermons, is demonstrated by William of Orange's exploitation of its symbolic value in representing his arrival as a new Protestant deliverance.

While some pamphlets, particularly those of Bishop Carleton and Michael Sparke, as well as the original "King's Book," enjoyed wide circulation at various

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[331] Only two parliamentary sermons survive from this period, both by Peter Sterry (*Englands Deliverance from the Northern Presbytery*, 1651 and *The Way of God with his people in these Nations*, 1656). In contrast, sermons preached before the Lord Mayor and aldermen include: William Ames, *The saints security*, 1651; William Strong, *A Voice from Heaven*, 1653; Thomas Horton, *The Pillar and Pattern of Englands Deliverances*, 1654; Ralph Venning, *Marcies memorial*, 1656; and, Edward Reynolds, *The Brand pluck't out of the fire*, 1659.

times during this period, sermons provided more regular reminders of the plot.[332] Unlike a printed text that could be accessed at any time, they were tied to a specific time and place, for most individuals the parish church. Attendance at these services was, at least in law, compulsory, and Cressy's research demonstrates that, at least on occasion, laws requiring church attendance on political anniversaries were enforced.[333] Thus, much of individuals' exposure to plot rhetoric was oral, usually received through the experience of liturgy and sermons in parish churches. Other venues, however, were available, particularly to Londoners. Outdoor sermons at Paul's Cross took place until the 1630s and frequently attracted large crowds.[334] Sermons at court, preached regularly during the Jacobean period and reinstated at the Restoration, were accessible to those with court connections. During the civil war, members of the public could also attend sermons preached to parliament at St. Margaret's Westminster. We must

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[332] Carleton's catalogue of deliverances from the Elizabethan accession to the Gunpowder Plot was extremely popular and was reprinted many times after its first appearance in 1625. While Carleton was a bishop who dedicated his work to Charles I, Sparke was a printer of puritan sympathies who published what began as a single broadsheet with plates illustrating the deliverances from the Armada, the Gunpowder Plot, and the plague of 1625. The plates were later adapted for John Vicars's 1641 edition of Herring's epic and the pamphlet expanded into an enormously popular collection of prayers that was printed repeatedly through the late 1620s and 1630s. On Carleton and Sparke, see Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, 258-65. The "King's Book" remained a standard source for the history of the plot, although in the Restoration authors wishing to appear less biased based their accounts on those of Thuanus and other Catholic authors (see Ch. 1).

[333] Cressy, "God's Time, Rome's Time, and the Calendar of the English Protestant Regime," 404.

[334] Laud may have discouraged popular Gunpowder sermons as part of an effort to downplay the occasion. While the demise of the Cross is usually assumed to have occurred at the same time as the destruction of the Charing and Cheapside crosses in 1643, the event is unrecorded. The last Gunpowder sermon known to have been preached at the Cross is Joseph Nailor's in 1631 (St. Paul's Cathedral Library, MS. 52.D60.01). Nailor's sermon is an unequivocal condemnation of the "Antichristian-Romanists" (17) who perpetrated the plot and a warning against a "dangerous & intollerable Toleration" (32). Although Nailor praises Charles for having all his father's virtues along with that of youth, and chastizes the puritans for criticizing the king from their pulpits, the anti-Catholicism of the sermon was unlikely to have pleased Charles and the sermon was apparently never printed. I am grateful to Mr. Joseph Wisdom, Librarian of St. Paul's Cathedral Library, for permitting me to examine this manuscript.

remember, however, that access to commemorative sermons was not universal. In parishes without trained clergy, subjects participated in the liturgy and possibly listened to the "Homily against Wilful Disobedience," but did not have the opportunity of listening to an occasion-specific sermon.[335] Increasingly, however, printed copies allowed transmission beyond the original auditories, creating a body of texts not subject to the limitations of their oral performances and engaging in dialogue with each other and with other texts.

This ability to reach a diverse audience had given the political sermon a lengthy history by the seventeenth century. Susan Wabuda suggests that Erasmus's *Ecclesiastes* had first opened the door to political preaching, since he saw the sermon as "an exercise in deliberative oratory, a moralizing force, specifically aimed at the lowliest members of society, the most ordinary of men and women, to teach them the will of God and the wisdom of Scripture" (89). Henry VIII's claim to supremacy in the church provided the first opportunity to put into practice such a preaching program, and the king took advantage of Paul's Cross, as the most public pulpit in the country, to justify his new role.[336] W. J. Torrance Kirby observes that "With respect to the Supremacy, there are discernible phases of rhetoric employed. Sermons of the 'first Reformation' (1533–1539) place strong emphasis on justifying the principle of the King's supremacy, while those of the 'second Reformation' (1547–1553) stress the

[335] Bryan Crockett reminds us that preachers took a political risk in composing their own sermons rather than using the *Homilies* (*The Play of Paradox: Stage and Sermon in Renaissance England* [Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1995],15-17). As will become apparent below, preachers could court trouble by using political occasions to advance their own causes.
[336] On Paul's Cross and its preaching traditions, see MacLure, *The Paul's Cross Sermons, 1534-1642*; Morrissey, "Rhetoric, Religion, and Politics in the St. Paul's Cross Sermons 1603-1625."

obedience of subjects to an institution now clearly recognized" (10). In June 1535, Cromwell ordered the bishops to preach the king's supremacy in the church; at the same time, the Bishop of Lincoln printed copies of his letter to his preachers announcing Cromwell's orders. Wabuda notes that "Few alterations to the political and religious landscape can be more striking than this, that the laity was elevated as watchdogs over the clergy" (95). Every individual, lay and clerical, became responsible for ensuring that every sermon was both politically and doctrinally sound. At the same time, Kirby and Morrissey have both observed that the royal use of sermons created a "culture of persuasion," as monarchs recognized that their subjects needed to be convinced, not merely coerced into external conformity.[337] This belief that sermon rhetoric could influence thought and thereby shape action was responsible for the creation of such instruments as the Elizabethan *Homilies*.

Political sermons thus helped to create an English religious identity, particularly in opposition to Catholicism (Kirby 5).[338] Preaching itself was on some level an expression of anti-Catholicism, since the elevation of sermon over sacrament in worship was distinctively Protestant. Attacks on Catholics began at

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[337] Kirby takes the phrase "culture of persuasion" from Andrew Pettegree's book, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). See Kirby, "The Public Sermon," 23, n 10.

[338] The question of popular response to the Reformation has been debated for many years. While some have seen the Reformation as imposed from above on a largely unwilling population, others have argued for substantial popular support. For summaries of this debate, see: Nicholas Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism* c. 1530-1700 (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2001), Ch. 1; Christopher Haigh, "The Recent Historiography of the English Reformation" in *Reformation to Revolution: Politics and Religion in Early Modern England*, ed. Margo Todd (London: Routledge, 1995), 13-32.

the Reformation, but became increasingly prevalent in the 1570s,[339] thus helping to solidify a religious identity based upon a repudiation of Catholic doctrine, both theological and political. The institution of Queen Elizabeth's accession day, beginning in the 1570s and celebrated as a deliverance from the reign of her Catholic half-sister, as well as occasional services of thanksgiving for the defeat of the Armada and the discovery of various Catholic plots against the queen beginning in the 1580s, reaffirmed the pulpit's role in promoting the benefits of Protestantism. When James I introduced his annual observance of the Gowrie plot into England, he grafted it onto an existing tradition of political preaching that required recasting the Gowries as crypto-Catholics.[340] The addition of the Gunpowder Plot anniversary, however, required less political finesse. As I have suggested in Chapter 2, James used these occasions to weave together personal and national deliverances through a "vocabulary of celebration."[341] In the occasional sermons, as in the Anglo-Latin epics, however, this rhetoric developed binary oppositions that could later be applied to other religious and political opponents.[342]

The Reformation has frequently been seen as a transition from a religion centred upon rituals comprehended largely by the eye to one in which oral

[339] According to Millar MacLure, the anti-Catholic rhetoric at Paul's Cross became part of official policy beginning in the 1570s. See *The Paul's Cross Sermons, 1534-1642*, 65.
[340] See Chapter 2.
[341] "Vocabulary of celebration" is David Cressy's phrase. See Cressy "The Protestant Calendar and the Vocabulary of Celebration in Early Modern England."
[342] By "occasional political sermon" I mean a sermon preached on a specifically political occasion such as the Gunpowder or Gowrie anniversary. That preachers recognized these sermons as a distinctive type is suggested by Daniel Featley's observation to his congregation on the anniversary of the Gowrie conspiracy in 1618 that "the occasion of our meeting at this present is rather to offer unto God the fruits of our devotion for his Majesties and our enemies destruction, than to gather fruits of knowledge from Scripture for our instruction" ("Traitor's Guerdon," 60). Clearly, sermons on other occasions frequently contained political commentary.

instruction was apprehended by the ear; however, Eric Josef Carlson argues that a more significant result of the break with Rome was "the magnitude of the change in the relationship between preacher and audience" (250). While the thematic sermon characteristic of pre-Tridentine Catholicism consisted of a discourse on a theme, Protestant preaching emphasized textual explication, refocusing interpretation upon the literal sense of scripture.[343] The standard understanding of English preaching before the civil war was that "it was an act of biblical interpretation whereby the teachings of the Bible were made relevant (or applied) to the circumstances of the sermon and to the hearers' lives" (Morrissey "Scripture" 693). The preacher's role was not to invent, but to interpret. Most preaching manuals allowed the use of rhetorical techniques, provided that they were used for the purpose of persuasion rather than for mere ornamentation but encouraged preachers to illustrate the significance of the text to their hearers by interpreting scripture through scripture.[344]

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[343] According to J.W. Blench, most sixteenth-century Protestants, both English and continental, insisted upon the literal sense of scripture, although some preachers continued to use typological and even allegorical interpretations (*Preaching in England in the late Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* [Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1964], Ch. 1). On the history of Catholic preaching in this period, see Thomas Worcester, "Catholic Sermons" in *Preachers and People in the Reformations and Early Modern Period*, ed. Larissa Taylor (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 3-53.

[344] The most influential of the preaching manuals in England seem to have been Keckerman and Andreas Hyperius's *De Fromandis Concionibus Sacris* (1553). Keckerman was popularized in England through William Perkins's *Art of Prophecying*. On homiletic theory in this period, see Blench, *Preaching in England in the late Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*; Carlson, "The Boring of the Ear," in *Preachers and People in the Reformations and Early Modern Period*, ed. Larissa Taylor (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 249-96; Horton Davies, *Like Angels from a Cloud* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1986), esp. 10-50; James Thomas Ford, "Preaching in the Reformed Tradition," in *Preachers and People in the Reformations and Early Modern Period*, ed. Larissa Taylor (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 65-88; Jameela Lares, *Milton and the Preaching Arts* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 2001), Ch. 2; Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979), Ch. 7; W. Fraser Mitchell, *English Pulpit Oratory from Andrewes to Tillotson* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1962).

This change in homiletic theory required a more sophisticated mode of understanding from the auditor in order to apply the teachings of scripture to his or her own life. Consequently, the preacher had to be sensitive to the abilities of his audience to understand and interpret his words. "Decorum" required that he suit his preaching to the educational and social status of his hearers as well as the time, place, and occasion of the sermon.[345] On anniversaries such as 5 November, the minister's task was to apply the scriptural text to a specific historical and political situation without "wresting" or distorting the meaning.

Two themes predominated in these sermons. The first was the importance of obedience to maintaining the social order. This was an inherently anti-Catholic theme, since the perceived threat of Catholicism was largely based upon the belief that Catholics were permitted to resist a ruler whom the pope had declared a heretic. Under the law, Catholics were punished for treason only, not for heresy, and this point was consistently reiterated by preachers as well as by the secular authorities. Preachers, however, frequently connected the two, making every Catholic potentially guilty of treason. As both Morrissey and Kirby have pointed out, the very act of preaching such a message acknowledged the need not merely to enforce obedience but to persuade subjects of their duties. The second theme was gratitude for God's blessings, usually deliverances from military and political threats. This theme, too, was anti-Catholic because most of the deliverances

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[345] On the concepts of "decorum" and "discretion" in preaching, see Shami, "Donne on Discretion," *ELH* 47.1 (1980), 48-66; and, Morrissey, "Scripture, Style and Persuasion in Seventeenth-Century Theories of Preaching," 694-96. This recognition that the minister adapts his preaching to the occasion and auditory complicates the older critical practice of classifying preachers into rigid categories such as "plain" or "metaphysical."

celebrated in the early part of this period were from Catholic plots. At the same time, it gave all listeners a role in preserving the state, since God's continued blessings were seen to be contingent upon gratitude for his earlier ones. While these were conventions of the occasion, the preacher was also required to suit his discourse to the particular venue and audience. Thus, a sermon before the people from a pulpit such as Paul's Cross required a different preaching style than one before the monarch and court.

When preaching to the sovereign, the minister was in the position of an authorized giver of counsel. Peter McCullough has described how the architecture of the royal chapels visually represented the preacher's position as both dependent and spiritual advisor.[346] While the preacher had to look up at the king, the monarch was effectively trapped in the royal closet, where he could be forced to listen to unpalatable truths. Such a position allowed John King to give James I a powerfully worded warning against leniency towards Catholics in his 1608 sermon at Whitehall, and authorized Lancelot Andrewes's critiques of sermon-centred piety at court in his later Gunpowder sermons. Before the people, however, the preacher was expected to support the king's policies, as John Donne did in his 1622 sermon defending James's *Directions to Preachers*.[347] Nevertheless, the medium of print permitted the blurring of boundaries between audiences, a circumstance that caused uneasiness for some clergy. Although James authorized the publication of King's sermon in order to issue a warning to a

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[346] See *Sermons at Court*, Ch. 1.

[347] For analysis of Donne's sermon on this occasion, see Shami, *John Donne and Conformity in Crisis*, Ch. 4; "'The Stars in their Orders Fought Against Sisera,'" *John Donne Journal* 14 (1995), 1-58.

broader Catholic audience, the same means enabled Henry Burton later in the century to feed popular discontent by pointedly dedicating his printed sermons to the king and claiming the privileges of counsel.[348]

Studying the textual remains of these preaching occasions presents several methodological challenges. As Shami has pointed out, we still lack any accepted methodology for studying sermons, given their unique status as texts.[349] Historians have sometimes treated them as documentary sources without sufficiently acknowledging their rhetorical character as texts "written to influence events" (Morrissey "Interdisciplinarity" 1121) as well as to document them. Literary scholars, meanwhile, have focused almost exclusively on a relatively small group of texts by prominent preachers, or have attempted stylistic comparisons of sermons based on questionable theological or ecclesiological categorizations of their authors.[350] In the case of the Gunpowder sermons, the very volume of texts may have worked against a systematic study and fostered a reliance on a few examples, particularly Andrewes's court sermons, creating an impression of homogeneity that a wider reading dispels.[351] Thus, although the

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[348] On the political situation of King's sermon, see Ferrell, *Government by Polemic,* 97-102.
[349] "Women and Sermons in Early Modern England: An Immodest Proposal," Unpublished paper (a paper on this topic is forthcoming in *The Oxford Companion to the Early Modern Sermon*), 1. Shami observes that despite calls for interdisciplinarity in sermon studies, we lack methodologies even for their use within disciplines. I thank Professor Shami for permission to cite this paper.
[350] Such studies include W. Fraser Mitchell's *English Pulpit Oratory from Andrewes to Tillotson*, and more recently Horton Davies's *Like Angels from a Cloud: The English Metaphysical Preachers 1588-1645* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1986), which perpetuates Mitchell's distinctions between "plain" and "metaphysical" style.
[351] For example, Revard and Haan both focus upon Andrewes's sermons when discussing the relationship between the Gunpowder sermons and epic literature. The only study of the Gunpowder sermons as a group is Thomas Nowak's dissertation "'Remember, Remember the Fifth of November': Anglocentrism and Anti-Catholicism in the English Gunpowder Sermons, 1605-1651" (State U of New York at Stony Brook, 1992). While some of Nowak's insights are

large number of surviving sermons has made them a valuable resource for studying the cultural history of the plot, citations from them have been restricted to a relatively narrow group of texts and little attempt has been made to understand individual sermons within their specific historical contexts.

This large group of sermons nevertheless represents a relatively low survival rate. Godfrey Davies, many years ago, calculated that on a conservative estimate 360,000 sermons were probably preached in England and Wales between 1603 and 1640, whereas Edith L. Klotz's sampling of *Short Title Catalogue* records suggests that only about 1,600 survive (1). While Davies's calculations could be refined and updated to take in additional sources, including manuscripts and sermons included in other publications, he is correct in cautioning that our evidence is woefully incomplete. In addition, Mitchell's assumption that the surviving printed sermons are representative is questionable.[352] Sermons by well-known preachers, those delivered at prominent locations, and those preached at times of political crisis seem to have been the most likely to survive in print. Many more manuscript copies and sermon notes almost certainly remain in local archives and private libraries where they have not been catalogued or made widely available, as well as in major repositories such the British Library.[353] This

useful, the dissertation is dated by its categorization of preaching styles according to Horton Davies's rhetorical distinctions.

[352] Mitchell concludes a useful summary of the ways in which printed sermons have come down to us with the surprising statement that "diverse as the sources of the printed texts are, they may be taken on the whole as a fairly true representation of typical sermons of the period" (38), a conclusion unsupported by his own evidence.

[353] Sermon notes in particular remain a relatively unexplored source of information, especially in their relationships to printed sermons, although Arnold Hunt's forthcoming book, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and their Audiences, 1590-1640* (Cambridge UP) promises to begin addressing this gap as well as sermon reception more generally.

reminds us particularly of the need for caution when arguing from negative evidence. For example, I have found few printed Gunpowder sermons from the 1660s, but it would be unwise to assume that they lapsed early in Charles II's reign. John Evelyn's diary records attendance at a 1664 sermon by Robert South of which I have found no other trace.[354]

One of the thorniest problems of sermon study, however, is that we have little means of knowing what relationships printed sermons bear to their original deliveries, or how they were received by their original audiences, either in person or in print. Most preachers spoke from notes and did not write their sermons out in full until a decision had been made to publish.[355] Prefatory materials sometimes indicate that the preacher has expanded the sermon, especially if circumstances forced him to abridge the oral performance. This seems to be particularly true of the sermons preached to the Long Parliament. Both Cornelius Burges in 1641 and Matthew Newcomen in 1642 note that the pressure of business in the House prevented them from delivering their entire sermons. (This was likely true, but it also reminded their readers of parliament's more immediate task of governing the nation.) Other preachers, however, tell us that care has been taken to reproduce the sermon as originally delivered.

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[354] Evelyn says that South "preached at Westminster Abbey an excellent discourse concerning obedience to magistrates, against the pontificians and sectaries." (*The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. William Bray, [London: Dent, 1966], 1.384).

[355] Mitchell suggests that early conformists and puritans tended to memorize their sermons, while Restoration preachers preferred to use notes (*English Pulpit Oratory from Andrewes to Tillotson*, 5-38); however, John Sparrow notes that the "approved method of preaching, then, in the first half of the century was to speak a sermon with as little dependence on manuscript as possible. Yet a sermon was not given *ex tempore*: the preacher when he entered the pulpit would have it in his head, and he might have copied it out in full. How fully it had been written out, and how minutely he knew what he was going to say, varied no doubt with circumstances and individuals" ("John Donne and Contemporary Preachers: Their Preparation of Sermons for Delivery and for Publication," *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association* 16 [1930], 151).

While William Barlow wanted to replicate the experience of the original event for readers of his 1605 sermon, claims of accuracy were more frequently motivated by adverse responses to the preached sermon. Gilbert Burnet admits in the introduction to his 1684 sermon that he cannot guarantee that the words are the exact ones he used, but he insists that he has reproduced the sermon with care, supplementing his own recollections with the memories of his more attentive auditors, in order to vindicate himself of charges that he is disaffected from the government.[356] In contrast, Henry Burton deliberately conflated his two 1636 sermons into a "summe" in order to prevent being charged with uttering specific words.[357] In drawing up the charges against him, Star Chamber circumvented this problem by using such phrases as "y[e] used the like words in effect & substance."[358] In other cases, however, the decision to merge several sermons into one does not seem to have been politically motivated.[359]

While not all printed sermons include dedications or notes to their readers, some bear other marks of their histories, such as imprimaturs and requests to publish from their original hearers—friends, the king, or parliament. When single sermons were published as pamphlets, the title page frequently included other interpretive contexts, including the original place and date of preaching and

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[356] Gilbert Burnet, *A sermon preached at the Chappel of the Rolls on the fifth of November, 1684 being Gun-Powder-Treason day*, London, 1684

[357] Henry Burton, *For God and the King The Summe of Two Sermons Preached on the fifth of November last in St Matthewes Friday-Street*, [Amsterdam], 1636 (STC 4142) Another edition was printed in London later that year (STC 4141)

[358] "Articles objected by his majesties command for causes ecclesiastical against Henry Burton Clerk parson or vicar of St Mathews Friday Street London" (SP16/335), Article 4

[359] For example, Daniel Dyke's sermons to Princess Elizabeth were published in 1616, although evidently delivered before the princess's marriage· Daniel Dyke, *Certaine comfortable sermons vpon the 124 Psalme tending to stirre vp to thankefulnesse for our deliuerance from the late Gunpowder-treason preached before the Lady Elizabeth her Grace, at Combe* (London, 1616) STC 7396.

scriptural epigraphs.[360] On occasion, auditors made notes in letters or diaries that can also assist us in piecing together the contexts and receptions of early modern political sermons as events related to but separate from their surviving traces.

Despite the difficulties in reconstructing the contexts of these sermons, it is vital, as Morrissey has pointed out, to understand early modern sermons both as texts and as events. Political sermons participated in the construction of the "rudimentary public sphere" that Lake and Questier believe began to develop as early as the late sixteenth century during such religious and political controversies as the establishment of the English Jesuit mission and the Elizabethan succession crisis.[361] Sermons were public in two ways. Morrissey, Ferrell, and McCullough have all shown that as public performances sermons reinforced existing social and political hierarchies by presenting the ruler before the people, in person at court and through the preacher at other venues. Thus, they provided a form of "representative publicness" to the monarch, and to parliament during the civil wars, but they also supplied information and interpretations that could provide the basis for public discussion and debate.

Preachers considered themselves responsible to God as well as to the king, and therefore believed that they had the right to chastise a monarch who failed in his spiritual and ecclesiastical duties. Although preaching was subject to various controls, preachers could express dissenting opinions even in the most public

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[360] These are sometimes preserved in sermon collections, particularly those in which the original title pages of previously published sermons are used In many cases, however, particularly in later compilations, even the date and occasion of preaching may have been removed

[361] See Lake and Questier "Puritans, Papists, and the 'Public Sphere' in Early Modern England," 587-627

pulpits. In fact, Annabel Patterson's thesis that in this period "there was clearly and widely understood a theory of *functional* ambiguity, in which the indeterminacy inveterate to language was fully and knowingly exploited by authors and readers alike (and among those readers, of course, were those who were most interested in control" (18) seems to apply to oral sermons as well.[362] Preachers seem to have been punished only when they openly crossed the line between critique and sedition.

In perhaps the best documented case of sermon-fed controversy in the early seventeenth century, the Spanish Match crisis, both Shami and Cogswell have demonstrated the importance of sermons in forming public opinion.[363] Their work suggests that James I intervened only when confronted with John Knight's open advocacy of resistance from the Paul's Cross pulpit in April 1622. As Patterson has suggested with reference to print, both sides appear to have known the rules and usually played by them, but this required both ordinary listeners and the authorities to develop sophisticated interpretive skills. Arnold Hunt describes the early modern sermon as an inherently dialogic form, the final product a shared creation between minister and congregation.[364] Particularly in oppositional

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[362] Patterson articulates nine principles that she believes are important to understanding the ways in which potential censorship influenced printed texts. See *Censorship and Interpretation*, Ch. 2. Shami observes that "moderate" preachers "could rely on choice of text, application of biblical example to present circumstances, and analogy to comment discreetly on the spiritual and political condition of England" (*Conformity in Crisis*,18).

[363] See Cogswell *Blessed Revolution* (Ch. 1) and "England and the Spanish Match" in *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics 1603-1642*, ed. Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (London: Longman, 1989), 107-33; and Shami *Conformity in Crisis*, Ch. 2.

[364] See Hunt, "Tuning the Pulpits," 107. Hunt observes the difficulties in convicting ministers of seditious preaching when political messages could be conveyed simply by "stating a general doctrine and leaving it to the audience to supply the obvious application to current events" (107). In these cases, "the 'meaning' of the sermon was not something that could be read off from the

contexts, the minister relies upon the congregation to make explicit connections that he has not, potentially even those he has specifically denied. McCullough has also observed that court sermons responded to previous ones, thereby forcing readers to resolve contradictory messages they might have received from the same pulpit on a particular subject.[365] Sermons thus played a crucial role in training individuals to read and interpret in sophisticated ways.

The political sermon straddles, however uneasily, the boundary between the individual's relationship to God and to the community. Eiléan Ni Chuilleanáin suggests that, unlike theatrical audiences, sermon audiences are addressed as individuals (203-04). Political sermons, however, exhort listeners both as individuals and as members of a political and religious body. Traditionally, as Morrissey has demonstrated, these sermons were divided into an explication of the text followed by an application to the specific occasion.[366] The text, as explained by the preacher, frequently implied a comparison between England and Israel, or, less often, the primitive church. The application made this comparison between biblical and modern nations more explicit, but also instructed each member of the congregation on his or her personal obligations. For a sermon preached at Oxford on 5 November 1607, John King chose as his text Psalm 46.7-

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written text, but resulted from an act of interpretative collaboration between preacher and audience, specific to the occasion on which it was preached" (107).

[365] See *Sermons at Court*, 113-15. McCullough adds that the process might be further complicated when one sermon was published by royal authority and the other was not. On at least one 5 November, Andrewes presented his sermon as a continuation from that of the previous year, apparently expecting his auditors to recall the previous sermon. He begins his 1614 sermon with the words: "We begin, this year, where we left the last" (4.296).

[366] On the typical structure of political sermons, see Morrissey, "John Donne as a Conventional Paul's Cross Preacher," 160-61.

11.[367] King compared the difficulties from which God saved the Israelites to the English deliverance from the Gunpowder Plot, concluding that the text describes an event very similar to the one commemorated. Although he declared at the outset that his sermon would focus upon applying rather than explicating the text, he established the relationship between God and the children of Israel before demonstrating that God offered the same care to England. In return, God required praise and gratitude. While these were individual duties, they were also responsibilities both of and for the community, since God might punish individual forgetfulness with community disaster.[368] The "doctrines and uses" type of sermon, more common among puritan divines, similarly required specific tasks of the congregation both individually and collectively. For his sermon, "The Church's Deliverances," most likely preached on 5 November 1626, but not published until 1638, Thomas Hooker takes as his text Judges 10.13, "Wherefore I will deliver you no more."[369] He draws from this verse three doctrines: that God does not help those who come to him in their sins, that God delivers his church and his people in times of trouble, and that the state of the church may be such that God will finally refuse any further assistance. In the uses of each doctrine, Hooker moves from the individual's responsibility to repent to the need for collective changes of heart and will to ensure God's continued favour to England.

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[367] John King, *A Sermon preached in Oxon: the 5. of November, 1607* (Oxford, 1607), STC 14985.

[368] See Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, Ch. 3.

[369] Thomas Hooker, "The Church's Deliverances" in *Thomas Hooker: Writings in England and Holland, 1626-1633,* ed. George H. Williams, *et al.* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1975), 60-88. On the date of the sermon, see the editor's introduction, 53-59.

The frequent identification of England with Israel also highlighted the uneasy boundary between religion and politics that the nature of the English reformation had created. In her analysis of prophetic sermons preached at Paul's Cross, Morrissey observes that "the 'Israelite paradigm' by which Jacobean preachers made God's dealing with Israel an example to England is *only* that: an example of God's dealing with a nation *as a nation*, a mixed community of saints and sinners. The *typical* signification of Israel is used by preachers only when they speak of the invisible Church, some of whose members are English" ("Elect" 51). The significance of this distinction is that England corresponds to Israel in being a sinful, rather than a chosen nation: "Any nation can be temporarily blessed by God, be it heathen or holy, and any nation can be punished for its sins because no people has a licence to sin with impunity" ("Elect" 53). Nicholas Colt, preaching at Norwich in 1616, distinguishes between the godly, "*they that rightly know the true God, and doe duely worship him in Iesus Christ*" (43), and the visible church consisting of the religious, the irreligious, and the superstitious.[370]

Increasingly throughout this period, however, the question arose: to what extent were the church and the nation one?[371] On political anniversaries such as 5 November, preachers could emphasize the deliverance of the king, parliament, the nation as a whole, or the church. While early sermons tended to focus on the king and nation, puritan preachers gradually began highlighting the dangers of the

[370] Nicholas Colt, *The Seale of the Churches Safety; or a Sermon preached at Norwhich, the fift of Nouember, 1616* (London, 1617) STC 5585.
[371] Achsah Guibbory calls the idea that "nation and church were coterminous" a "fiction" created by James and parliament ("Israel and English Protestant Nationalism: 'Fast Sermons' during the English Revolution," in *Early Modern Nationalism and Milton's England*, ed. David Loewenstein and Paul Stevens [Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2008], 116).

Caroline church by stressing the historical deliverances of the reformed English church. During the civil war, the church was identified with the godly nation, yet the events of this period demonstrated the impossibility of creating such a nation. After the Restoration, the voices of dissenting preachers were largely silenced, at least in the print record, yet conformist sermons testify to the strain of attempting to hold together a state and a church that could no longer even pretend to include all of its people.

The intertwining of religion and politics is evident in the relationship between the sermons and their places of preaching. Outdoor sermons, such as those at Paul's Cross, took place in public spaces that had unique relationships to the sacred and secular, since this space had been used for both political and religious functions, including the reading of royal proclamations and the Armada celebration, from the beginning of its recorded history.[372] Other sermons were delivered in churches but to congregations organized around political functions—both houses of parliament, the judges, the Lord Mayor and aldermen of London, and sometimes civil governments of other cities. Many of the surviving sermons from the 1650s were preached to civic authorities, in London and elsewhere, and civic sermons remained important occasions after the Restoration. Their title pages and dedications frequently emphasize the political basis of the gatherings more than the ecclesiastical spaces in which they took place.

Political authorities might pass judgment upon either the oral or the printed sermon in a number of ways, including granting or withholding royal or

[372] On the history of Paul's Cross, see Millar MacLure, *The Paul's Cross Sermons, 1534-1642*, esp. chs. 1 and 2.

parliamentary commands to publish. James I called in Donne's 1622 Gunpowder sermon, but thwarted the preacher's apparent hopes of authorized publication.[373] Similarly, although printed orders to publish parliamentary sermons in the civil war follow a standard formula, not all preachers were invited to print.[374] While preachers may have been disappointed by such slights, they also understood the dangers printing posed. William Strong, in 1654, accepts parliament's order to print, but confesses that he would have preferred to remain silent at a time when "some men are made *Transgressors for a word*" (a[r]). Strong's distinction suggests that, at least sometimes, print was more dangerous than speech. That preachers' fears of legal reprisals were justified at times of political strain is evident from the most notorious cases of Henry Burton in 1636 and Henry Sacheverell in 1709, but Samuel Ward of Ipswich was also questioned for a Gunpowder sermon in the 1630s.[375]

While the people's wrath might be less dangerous than the state's, some clergy feared exposing their sermons to unknown, and potentially critical, print audiences. Some questioned the spiritual efficacy of printed sermons; others were

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[373] Donne wrote to Sir Thomas Roe on 1 December 1622, sending him a copy of his 15 September sermon and regretting that he could not also send a copy of his 5 November sermon, since he had sent his manuscript to the king and it would, in any case, be indiscreet of him to circulate the sermon "whilst it is in that suspence" (SP 14/134/59, qtd. by Shami in the introduction to *John Donne's 1622 Gunpowder Plot Sermon: A Parallel-Text Edition* [Duquesne UP, 1996], 12). Shami suggests that "Donne's language in the letter to Roe is deliberately ambiguous" (13), since he understood the dangers of circulating a sermon that had not received royal approval, even though he does not seem to have anticipated any negative consequences arising from the sermon.

[374] John F. Wilson estimates that between 60 and 65 percent of the parliamentary fast sermons were published. See *Pulpit in Parliament: Puritanism during the English Civil Wars 1640-1648* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1969), 11.

[375] "Answers of Samuel Ward to 43 articels objected against him by the commissioners for causes ecclesiastical, 19 Dec. 1634," PRO SP 16/278/65, fo. 144r.

concerned about their own reputations.[376] Although Charles Herle in 1644 called a sermon a kind of miracle, since the crumbs left by the initial auditory could be published for the nourishment of others, James Rigney notes that the proliferation of printed sermons, particularly after 1640, seems to have devalued them.[377] William Cave, in 1680, complained that printed sermons were usually either slandered or tossed aside rather than read for spiritual improvement.[378] At times of heightened political tensions, preachers seem to have been more likely to offer detailed justifications for publication, usually replying to critical rather than favourable responses. Richard Carpenter, in 1656, declares that "*This Sermon had been* nothing but a Voice, *though the* Printers *were the Auditors; had not impudent Slander extorted it from me, and bound it over to the Press*" (A2^{v}). Edward Pelling offered the distinction that "*Some discourses may be fit enough for the Pulpit, which may not be so fit for the Press*" (A4^{v}).[379] Nevertheless, congregations could also express disapproval of the sermon in performance. In the dedication of his 1679 sermon, Francis Gregory claims that he had originally written the sermon for his village church, but was ordered to preach in London before the Mayor and aldermen at St. Mary le Bow. The church, he complains, was large and well filled, making it difficult for his audience to hear him over a

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[376] See Eric Josef Carlson, who observes that John Rogers and John King argued that only the live sermon had saving power. "The Boring of the Ear," 281-82.

[377] James Rigney, "'To lye upon a Stationers stall, like a piece of coarse flesh in a Shambles': the sermon, print and the English Civil War," in *The English Sermon Revised: Religion, Literature and History 1600-1750*, ed. Lori Anne Ferrell and Peter McCullough (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000), 188-207.

[378] William Cave, *A Sermon preached before the Right Honourable, the Lord Mayor, Alderman and citizens of London, at S. Mary-le-Bow on the fifth of November, 1680* (London, 1680), Wing C1606, A3^{v}.

[379] Pelling was still professing unwillingness to publish in the dedication to his sermon the following year (*A Sermon preached before the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, at St. Mary le Bow, on Nov. 5, 1683*, London, 1683, Wing P1095) A2^{r-v}.

din of coughing and other sounds (A4^{v}).[380] Was the congregation particularly unhealthy that day or were they less than engaged by Gregory's performance?

Preachers on this occasion were particularly sensitive to the prospect of Catholic audiences, occasionally addressing them in their sermons, but more frequently acknowledging them as potential, and frequently hostile, readers in paratextual materials. At times when Catholics seemed to be regaining favour, especially at court, preachers seem to have anticipated more criticisms either from them or their supporters. Publishing his series of five vitriolic anti-Catholic sermons in 1620, Thomas Taylor observed that he expected to arouse the envy and anger of the Catholic population.[381] Thomas Reeve, in a 1629 sermon printed in 1632, addressed "all the adherents of the Romish Church amongst us" (A2^{r}) in a note before the sermon, warning them to return to the church of England and discard their political ambitions. In 1641 Richard Heyrick, publishing three sermons including his 1638 Gunpowder sermon, complained that Catholicism was increasing in Lancashire and Manchester, while admitting that at least papists were easier to identify than puritans. He preached the sermons, he asserts, "(*with danger enough*)" (a3^{r}), since they "*breath enmitie to* Rome" (a^{r}). Such fears of Catholic readers returned in the 1670s. John Scott, in 1673, claimed to fear Catholic reprisals, while in 1678 Aaron Baker imagined, perhaps improbably, that

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[380] Recent scholarship has provided us with a clearer picture of how disorderly early modern worship might be. See, for example: Laura Feitzinger Brown, "Brawling in Church: Noise and the Rhetoric of Lay Behavior in Early Modern England," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 34.4 (2003), 955-72; and John Craig, "Psalms, groans and dogwhippers: the soundscape of worship in the English parish church, 1547-1642," in Will Coster and Andrew Spicer, eds, *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005), 104-123.

[381] "The Authors Apologie," Thomas Taylor, *A Mappe of Rome* (London, 1620) STC 23838, A4^{v}.

he might experience martyrdom for his comments.[382] In 1682, Edward Pelling confessed that his friends had encouraged him to publish to clear himself from charges that he was popishly affected because he supported church and king.[383] While these fears may seem excessive in a culture that offered most Catholics little political power, they generally point to fears of highly placed Roman adherents, usually at court. Catholic consorts evoked uneasiness through much of this period, especially in the 1630s and 1680s. Nevertheless, such comments may also have exaggerated the threat of Catholicism for polemical purposes.

Although our glimpses into the reception of these printed sermons are tantalizing rare and brief, we have evidence from many of the sources noted above—prefatory materials, diaries and letters, and legal proceedings—that sometimes they continued discussion and debate that had begun in the pulpit, broadening the audience for such controversy. In their dedications and prefaces, many preachers attribute the publication of their sermons to the importunities of friends or other auditors, a claim that may frequently be conventional, but that may also reflect either general approval or the desire for the sermon to participate in some larger context. John Chamberlain recorded both the public's approval of Donne's Paul's Cross sermon on James's accession day in 1617 (2.67), and its lukewarm reception of his September 1622 sermon defending the *Directions to*

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[382] In his introduction, Scott observes with some asperity that "perhaps the Protestant Reader, who is unacquainted with the transactions of the last 600 years, may think *I* have been too severe upon the *Roman* Religion," but he takes responsibility for what he has written, most of which has been taken from Catholic authors: *A Sermon preached before the Right Honorable…* (London, 1673), unpaginated. Baker used the analogy of Protestants as sheep to the Roman wolves, but insisted that he hoped to be an example to his flock, even if captured by these predators: *Achitophel befool'd: a sermon preached November 5, 1678 at St. Sepulchres* (London, 1678) Wing B478, A2[r-v].

[383] Edward Pelling, *The True Mark of the Beast* (London, 1682) Wing P1106, A4[r].

Preachers (2.451). Sermons not only elicited responses, but were themselves frequently both responses to and interventions in existing controversies signalled by other texts. Many of the titles mentioned in the Gunpowder sermons are part of the voluminous Catholic-Protestant controversial literature. Richard Carpenter identified his 1662 sermon as a response to a pamphlet entitled *Reasons why Roman Catholicks should not be persecuted* (t.p.), while William Lloyd (1680), complained of being maligned for co-authoring a book on suppressing popery ($A3^r$-$A4^v$). Numerous other discussions and controversies are embedded less overtly both in the texts themselves and in marginal annotations. Lists of Catholic atrocities including the assassinations of Henri III and IV in France, the Paris massacre, the Spanish treatment of the indigenous populations of the Americas, and the various English plots, all sites of contested interpretation, recur frequently in various configurations.

As the event itself receded into history, accounts of the plot became increasingly contentious. Early preachers generally referred their audiences to James I's 9 November speech and the *True and Perfect Relation*, but as multiple interpretations became available this consensus fragmented. Some perpetuate myths originating in ephemeral sources including ballads, such as the one that the Spanish ships in 1588 carried instruments of torture. Similarly, the tale of Garnett's straw reappears occasionally as evidence of Catholic gullibility. Nicholas Colt refers to Garnett praying twice for the success of the plot (70). Carleton's narrative became a popular source in the 1620s and puritan preachers occasionally cited Michael Sparke's *Crums of Comfort*. By the Interregnum and

Restoration, Thuanus seems to have become the preferred source, since using a Catholic account offered at least the illusion of fairness. Partisanship, however, reasserted itself in the late 1670s and 1680s amid heightened fears of Catholicism. Thomas Wilson (1679) refers his readers to Foulis's *History of Romish Treasons* if they require further examples of Catholic infamy (32). Others engaged directly with the opposition. Edward Stillingfleet, in 1674, cites two Catholic works that describe the plot as the work of a few unfortunate gentlemen (42). In 1684, Gilbert Burnet cites Delrio's book containing an analogous case to that Garnett was supposed to have proposed in his conversation with Catesby concerning the killing of innocents. Occasionally, preachers offer other types of documentary evidence. John Tillotson claimed to have Digby's letters from prison, demonstrating that he had been corrupted by Rome—a use of evidence that apparently impressed John Evelyn.[384] In addition, preachers could set up dialogic relationships with earlier sermons either through direct references or more subtly by selecting the same scriptural texts. While some duplication of texts was inevitable, and probably unintentional, Henry Burton's choice of the one that had been used by Lancelot Andrewes for a conventional sermon in 1614 was not lost upon his hostile readers.[385] Thus, gunpowder sermons engaged in various ways, and for a variety of rhetorical purposes, with earlier texts. The margins of printed texts allowed for more extended engagements than the oral sermons were likely to have provided, extending from cryptic references to selective animadversion. By

[384] For Evelyn's account of the sermon, see *The Diary of John Evelyn*, 2.130-31.
[385] See Peter Heylyn, *A Briefe and Moderate Answer, to the seditious and scandalous challenge of Henry Burton...* , 1637 (STC 13269), Ch. 3.

assuming or encouraging familiarity with other texts, these sermons promoted their listeners' and readers' engagement in discussions and debates that required critical listening and reading skills.

The foregoing suggests the impossibility of generalizing from such a large and diverse group of sermons, or attempting adequately to contextualize each within its milieu. Instead, in the following sections, I consider more closely four sermons preached in different venues at various times of political stress. The sermons chosen are not intended to be representative since, as I have suggested, there is no "standard" Gunpowder sermon. Instead, they are intended as case studies that can illuminate the various ways in which Gunpowder rhetoric participated in a number of debates and discussions from 1622 to 1688, and even beyond. These sermons, preached and published in different circumstances, all contributed to the construction of audiences capable of reading, and listening, between the lines.

4.2 John Donne (1622): Samuel Ward and Criticizing the King

Donne's 1622 Gunpowder sermon, written for Paul's Cross but delivered in the church because of inclement weather, is situated at a tense moment when James I curtailed the freedom of preachers in response to increasingly vocal challenges from press and pulpit regarding both his attempt to negotiate a Catholic marriage for Prince Charles and his failure to intervene in the Palatinate on behalf of his Protestant daughter and son-in-law.[386] As Jeanne Shami points

[386] See Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution* (Ch. 1), and Shami, *Conformity in Crisis*.

out, this sermon deliberately foregrounded issues of interpretation and so offers a number of challenges to modern readers, as it did to Donne's original auditory.[387] While Shami has meticulously examined the circumstances surrounding the sermon, we are left to consider how Donne's audiences might have understood and responded to it. Little evidence for actual reception exists in this case; however, we do have two versions prepared for different readers. Many questions remain to be answered about the relationship between the scribal manuscript produced for James I in late 1622 and the text first printed in 1649; however, both provide us with hints about how Donne constructed his sermon in order to place the burden of interpretation upon his listeners and readers. Donne seems to have used the occasion to offer a methodology of listening and reading that balances obedience to royal authority with the subject's freedom to interpret, responding not only to James's *Directions to Preachers*, but also to one of the challenges that had provoked them, Samuel Ward's *'Double Deliverance' ['Deo Trin-vni Britanniae bis ultori...]*, an engraving linking the Armada, the Gunpowder Plot, and possibly the Spanish Match negotiations. By introducing complex problems of interpretation Donne endorses the individual's right to interpret; however, by highlighting questions of means and responsibilities, he warns against interfering in matters of state beyond one's capacity and position.

Shami and Cogswell have carefully documented the crisis that developed around the role of the pulpit in shaping public opinion during the Spanish marriage controversy. As MacLure phrased it succinctly: "There was trouble in

[387] Shami observes that many of the printed sermons from this period placed a similar emphasis upon interpretation (*Conformity in Crisis* 53-54).

Israel, and for the first time in half a century, the Paul's Cross pulpit got out of hand" (101). Forced to respond to the escalating public discontent that had culminated in John Knight's open advocacy of resistance theory at the Cross on 22 April, James issued *Directions to Preachers* that would inhibit discussions of both his foreign policies and abstruse Calvinist theology from public pulpits and selected Donne to defend them from the same pulpit on 15 September. Although Donne's support for the king here, as elsewhere in his preaching career, has been read as evidence of "absolutism," Shami and Morrissey have demonstrated that this sermon was characteristic of Donne's casuistical approach.[388] Morrissey points out that Donne typically made the structure of his sermons part of their argument, in this case redividing his text in order inconspicuously to separate the issue of the Spanish Match from the *Directions*. In this way, Donne is able to defend the principle of order, rather than the specific orders, "with all the force of scriptural authority" ("Conventional" 170). Shami also notes the division of the sermon into what is effectively two sermons, "on the one hand, a call to active and zealous preaching, within the terms of the *Directions*; on the other, an assertion of monarchical power to restrict controversial preaching" (*Conformity* 114). She

[388] Shami, "'The Stars in their Orders Fought Against Sisera,'" *John Donne Journal* 14 (1995), 1-58; Morrissey, "John Donne as a Conventional Paul's Cross Preacher" in *John Donne's Professional Lives*, ed. David Colclough (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2003), 159-78. For "absolutist" readings of Donne's sermons see: John Carey, *John Donne: Life, Mind and Art* (London: Faber and Faber, 1981) and Debora Shuger, "Absolutist Theology in the Sermons of John Donne" in *The English Sermon Revised: Religion, Literature and History 1600-1750*, 115-35. For contrasting views see: David Nicholls, "Divine Analogy: The Theological Politics of John Donne," *Political Studies* 32 (1984), 570-80; Paul Harland, "Donne's Political Intervention in the Parliament of 1629," *John Donne Journal* 11 (1992), 21-37; and Jeanne Shami, "Donne's Sermons and the Absolutist Politics of Quotation" in *John Donne's Religious Imagination: Essays in Honor of John T. Shawcross*, ed Raymond-Jean Frontain and Frances M. Malpezzi (Conway, AR: UCA Press, 1995), 380-412. See also Shuger's reassessment of this debate in terms of seventeenth-century understandings of the concept of "absolutism" ("Donne's Absolutism," in *The Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, Oxford UP, 2011), 690-703.

emphasizes the way in which Donne offered his fellow preachers a model for future sermons that would fulfill their duties to God, their congregations, and their superiors. John Chamberlain, in a letter to Dudley Carleton, indicates that the sermon did not entirely please the public; however, the king was satisfied enough to order it printed and to give Donne his third, and final, commission at the Cross, that of preaching on 5 November.[389] As Shami observes, this invitation placed Donne in a difficult situation: "Donne in fact was handed an anti-Catholic occasion and asked to defend the policies of a monarch who seemed to many all too pro-Catholic" (*Conformity* 132). In defending James's policies, however, Donne showed his audience that they had the capabilities and the right to interpret the king's actions, but not to give him advice. If his fellow preachers were a primary audience for the September sermon, then Donne made his audience for this one the entire kingdom, for all would be beneficiaries of the *Directions*.[390]

Throughout their seventeenth-century history, one of the recurring themes of the Gunpowder sermons was that of thankfulness for the deliverance itself. Preachers generally approached this theme by choosing a scriptural text that allowed a comparison of England's deliverance from her enemies with one of Israel's. While the Psalms was one of the more popular sources for texts, other books, primarily from the Old Testament, are represented in surviving sermons.[391] Depicting Israel's enemies allowed preachers to make analogies with England's

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[389] John Chamberlain, *The Letters of John Chamberlaine*, 2.451.

[390] Wabuda points out that preachers at Paul's Cross were expected to serve as models for younger clergy (*Preaching during the English Reformation* 48).

[391] Some preachers, however, did use New Testament texts. Both Lancelot Andrewes (1609) and Arthur Lake (1614) preached from Luke 9.54-56, while Andrewes turned to Luke 1.74-75 in 1617. John Rawlinson compared the plot to the betrayal of Christ in Luke 22.48 (1610) and Nicholas Colt (1616) chose 2 Peter 2.9.

Catholic enemies, either local or international. Although the number of surviving sermons preached outside the court from this period is relatively small, they seem to have grown more hostile to Catholics, particularly lay Catholics. Perhaps the most ominous sign in this period, however, is the widening gap between court sermons and those preached in other venues.

With the exception of John King's denunciation of Catholics at Whitehall in 1608, the publication of which Ferrell argues was politically motivated, the rhetoric of the court sermons was relatively balanced. In fact, Ferrell suggests that the "moderate" discourse of Lancelot Andrewes and other preachers both at court and at Paul's Cross promoted anti-puritanism as much as anti-Catholicism.[392] Andrewes increasingly used the occasion to attack sermon-centred piety at court, a tactic that allowed him to avoid commenting on the king's foreign policies by criticizing his religious practices.

In contrast, public sermons became increasingly anti-Catholic. Early sermons blamed the plot upon the Jesuits, and ultimately upon Satan. As the Oath of Allegiance controversy escalated, however, more widespread condemnation of ordinary Catholics seems to have increased. At Paul's Cross, Martin Fotherby had advocated chasing papists out of the English church as early as 1607 (85), and the following year Robert Tynley had preached against toleration. Although Ferrell interprets John Boys's 1613 sermon as more anti-puritan than anti-Catholic, both he and William Goodwyn in the following year emphasized memorialization of Protestant deliverances, while Goodwyn also made a detailed analogy between

[392] See *Government by Polemic*, Ch. 3. On King's sermon see pp. 97-103.

Rome and Babylon.[393] Unfortunately, we have a lengthy gap in the surviving Paul's Cross Gunpowder sermons between Goodwyn and Donne, but sermons preached in other venues appear to have become more openly anti-Catholic. In 1620, Thomas Taylor published a set of five vitriolic Gunpowder sermons, the first preached in 1612. These sermons, particularly the later ones, argue against any form of toleration, one of the most controversial topics of the Spanish Match negotiations, as does John Prideaux's sermon at St. Mary's Oxford in 1621.

The 1622 *Directions* responded to this blatant anti-Catholicism as well as to Knight's call for resistance by: restricting those below the rank of bishop or dean from opening texts not in accordance with the Thirty-Nine Articles or the *Homilies* or preaching on doctrines related to predestination before popular audiences; limiting afternoon sermons to the Catechism, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer; and restraining all preachers from meddling in affairs of state or railing against either papists or puritans.[394] John Wall and Terry Bunce Burgin suggest that one way in which Donne responded to the *Directions* in his Gunpowder sermon was by obtaining a copy of the 1547 *Homilies* and using it for guidance, as James had recommended. He not only

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[393] Ferrell interprets Boys's sermon as the first published instance of combining anti-puritanism with ceremonialism (*Government by Polemic* 107-09). I believe that she has overestimated the anti-puritanism of the sermon somewhat. Boys, I suggest, sees holy days, including political anniversaries, as a means of restoring the strength of Protestant community to defeat international Catholicism. I believe this interpretation is supported by Goodwyn's sermon of the following year, which also focuses on the importance of memorialization in creating a nation (William Goodwyn, *A Sermon Preached at Pauls Cross ye 5. of Nouember. 1614. by Doctor Goodwyn. then Vice Chanceller of Oxford*, Doctor Williams's Library, ms.12.10).Although Goodwyn's sermon was not published, it suggests that the theme of memorialization had particular resonance at this time and was not only an obsession of Boys. I am grateful to Dr. David Wykes and the staff of Dr. Williams's Library for access to this manuscript.

[394] For the full text of the *Directions*, see James I, "Directions to preachers, 1622," in *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church*, ed. Kenneth Fincham (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1994), 211-14.

echoes the language of the first "Homily" and quotes some of the same scriptures, but he also borrows from the "Homily against wilful disobedience," which allows him "to undercut the arguments of James' protestant opposition by associating them with the disobedience to royal authority manifested by the Catholic Guy Fawkes and his fellow plotters" (29). This interpretation supports Ferrell's contention that anti-puritanism began to overtake anti-Catholicism in these sermons in the second decade after the plot's discovery.[395] According to Wall and Burgin, Donne also conforms to the *Directions* by shifting his focus from religion to politics, although, as Shami points out, the prayer before the sermon, which is not included in the manuscript version, specifically identifies Catholic doctrine as the source of the plot (Donne *1622*, 28).

The survival of two versions, prepared at different times and for different readers, both enriches and complicates our understanding of this sermon. The king was apparently the intended reader for the first version, a scribal manuscript (BL MS Royal 17.B.XX) corrected by Donne, apparently produced shortly after the sermon's delivery when James requested a copy and identified by Shami in 1992. Previously, the only known version was that printed first by Donne's son in *Fifty Sermons* (1649), probably based upon a copy that Donne revised for possible publication a number of years later.[396] Shami argues that the two texts constitute

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[395] See Ferrell's argument that the anti-puritanism of Gunpowder sermons has been underestimated (*Government by Polemic*, Ch. 3). A weakness in Ferrell's analysis, I think, is a failure to distinguish sufficiently between court and public sermons on this occasion.

[396] Potter and Simpson cite Donne's letter of 25 November 1625 to Sir Thomas Roe in which he said he had written out eighty of his sermons and hoped to complete more. Donne seems to have bestowed them on Henry King with his other papers at his death. See Potter and Simpson, *The Sermons of John Donne*, 1.46-47. The manuscript upon which the 1649 text was based is not extant.

different versions according to Hans Zaller's definition, since they reflect different intentions.[397] She cautions, however, that we cannot know how carefully Donne corrected the manuscript, and consequently that the "question of authorial intention as it relates to Donne's apparent revisions of his manuscript for publication is crucial to further textual and interpretive decisions" (*1622*, 24). Although many of the alterations in the printed text reflect "the shift from oral to written delivery" (26), many "also show a shift in politics" (26). After examining Donne's three major additions, Shami concludes that the later version is more critical of the king, but the succession of a new monarch in the interval complicates our interpretation of the revisions. In what follows, I wish to consider more closely the structure of the sermon and the rhetorical means by which Donne creates spaces for his readers' critical interpretations in the text, a strategy that he seems to have extended in the later version. This procedure involves shifting our focus slightly from the question of Donne's intentions to his relationships with multiple audiences.

Joan Webber suggests that since Donne's talent lay in communicating his own experience, he focused upon persuasion rather than proof in his prose works and consequently developed relationships with his audiences (12-13). As commentators such as Morrissey and Kirby have argued, the Paul's Cross pulpit had become a site for persuading the people through both the eye and the ear, and in this sermon Donne sought to convince his hearers to accept the king's *Directions* without relinquishing their own interpretive faculties. Whereas Robert

[397] See Shami's introduction to her parallel-text edition of the sermon, *John Donne's 1622 Gunpowder Plot Sermon: A Parallel-Text Edition* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1996).

Willan in his sermon to the judges on the same day focused solely upon those present, Donne sought to make the entire kingdom his auditory, reminding them in his prayer before the sermon that

> *Now, in these houres, it* [the plot] *is thus commemorated, in the* Kings House, *where the Head and Members praise thee; Thus, in that place, where it should have been perpetrated, where the Reverend* Judges *of the Land doe now praise thee; Thus, in the* Universities, *where the tender youth of this Land, is brought up to praise thee, in a detestation of their Doctrines, that plotted this; Thus it is commemorated in many severall Societies, in many severall* Parishes, *and thus, here, in this* Mother Church, *in this great Congregation of thy Children, where, all, of all sorts, from the Lieutenant of thy Lieutenant, to the meanest sonne of thy sonne, in this Assembly, come with hearts, and lippes, full of thankesgiving.* (*Sermons* 4.235-36)

Just as the king's *Directions* divided England into groups, Donne has attempted to reunite them through the act of simultaneous worship. Nevertheless, the very effort acknowledges the fragmentation of the political and religious body, not only through separate places of worship, but also through degrees of responsibility, a subject to which Donne will return in the sermon.

Donne's concern with unity is reflected again in his unusual choice of text. Northrop Frye identifies Lamentations 4.20 as an example of the "royal metaphor," in which "the king *is* his people, their existence as a 'body'" (108). This metaphor "was expressed in terms of unity and integration, as the unity of a

social body into which the individual is absorbed" (118). Because the church represented the body of Christ in history, "sacred and secular authority had the same metaphorical construct" (118). Subsequent Gunpowder preachers seem to have understood the verse in similar ways. In 1636, Henry Burton, insisting upon his loyalty, referred to Lamentations 4.20 as proof that subjects should always pray for the king and remain loyal to him (43). Similarly, Matthew Newcomen in 1642 saw the actions of the king's evil counsellors as taking him into their pits by dividing him from his Protestant subjects (42, *vere* 50). In 1709, Henry Sacheverell, preaching upon the need for obedience, argued that to justify resistance as self-defence would be to authorize any act of rebellion, and then "A Prince indeed, in another Sense, will be the Breath of his Subject's Nostrils to be Blown in, or out, at their Caprice, and Pleasure, and a worse Vassal than even the meanest of his Guards" (20). Thus, despite their different political and religious orientations, all of these preachers seem to have understood this text as an illustration of the monarch's inseparability from his people.

Koos Daley suggests that the situation in the Palatinate, specifically the fall of Heidelberg on 6 September, influenced Donne's choice, arguing that his selection reflects the "literary topos of the grief over a ruined city" (61). Thus, on her view, the sermon becomes "a discreet but pertinent attack on the politically dangerous schemings of James" (58) that "bristles with warnings against Catholicism" (65) as Donne enjoins both king and subjects to be wary of dealings with Spain. While this context is clearly relevant to the sermon, several aspects of Daley's interpretation are problematic. First, Donne does not exploit the theme of

the ruined city, although he could easily have done so within the conventions of the Gunpowder sermon. Beginning with Barlow's 1605 sermon, it was not unusual for preachers to describe imaginatively the devastation that would have occurred had the plot been successful.[398] That Donne fails to take this opportunity, focusing upon disunity rather than destruction as the most catastrophic result of a successful plot, suggests this was not a primary motivation in his choice of texts. Secondly, Daley suggests that Donne addresses the king directly, although he was not present at the sermon, a violation of the discretion or decorum ascribed to Donne by other scholars. Morrissey argues that in all three of the sermons he preached at Paul's Cross, Donne uses discretion "in preaching about the subject's duties while avoiding any prescriptions to the king in a sermon *ad populum*" ("Conventional" 177) and Shami explains that "discretion is measured by the degree to which the preacher can fit his sermon effectively to his auditory" ("Discretion" 61). After examining the ways in which Donne accommodated his preaching style to the Paul's Cross pulpit and the exigencies of the political sermon, Morrissey argues that Donne's highly developed sense of rhetorical decorum prevented him not only from addressing an absent monarch, but also from "wresting" Scripture in order to convey a political message.[399]

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[398] For example, in his 1612 court sermon on Lamentations 3.22, Lancelot Andrewes contrasted the averted destruction of London with the actual destruction of Jerusalem in the text ("A Sermon Preached before the King's Majesty at Whitehall, on the fifth of November, A.D. MDCXII" in Lancelot Andrewes, *Ninety-six Sermons by the Right Honourable and Reverend Father in God, Lancelot Andrewes, sometime Lord Bishop of Winchester*, [Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1841; New York: AMS Press, 1967], 4.261-276).

[399] Morrissey, "John Donne as a Conventional Paul's Cross Preacher," in *John Donne's Professional Lives,* ed. David Colclough (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2003), 159-60.

Donne seems to have been attracted to the Book of Lamentations over a number of years, preaching two surviving sermons on texts from it and writing a verse translation of the entire book. Scholars have offered a wide range of possible dates and occasions for this translation, ranging from before 1611 until 1621, and from personal affliction (his wife's death in 1617 or his failure to gain ecclesiastical preferment in 1621) to political disillusionment (the situation in the Palatinate).[400] Whatever Donne's personal associations with the book, however, they seem to have been part of a more general attention to it in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. A glance at the publication dates for commentaries and versifications of this book in the Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods compiled by William B. Hunter suggests substantial interest in Lamentations between 1587 and 1591, while the Spanish threat was particularly acute, and again in 1608-10 when the escalating Oath of Allegiance controversy increased fears of international Catholicism. A number of publications saw at least one reprint, suggesting that they were popular works.[401]

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[400] Frontain notes Helen Gardner's suggestion that Donne completed the translation in the summer of 1621 when he was frustrated by his failure to obtain ecclesiastical preferment as well as by the situation in the Palatinate ("'the man which have affliction seene'" in *Centered on the Word* [Newark: U of Delaware P, 2004], 134). William B. Hunter suggests that the versification might have been written upon Anne's death in August 1617, noting that the liturgical readings for the days leading up to her death were from this book ("An Occasion for John Donne's 'The Lamentations of Jeremy,'" *ANQ* 12.3 [1999], 19). One of the crucial issues involved in dating the translation has been the version of the Bible that Donne used. Ted-Larry Pebworth suggests that the echoes of the Geneva bible in Donne's poem may have come through Fetherstone's translation of Tremellius rather than through the Authorized Version, which means that Donne's poem could have been written even before 1611("John Donne's 'Lamentations' and Christopher Fetherstone's Lamentations...in prose and meeter (1587)" in *Wrestling with God*, ed. Mary E. Henley and W. Speed Hill [Mary E. Henley, 2000], 92). Graham Roebuck also argues that the translation could have been written before 1611 ("Donne's *Lamentations of Jeremy* Reconsidered," *John Donne Journal* 10.1-2 [1991], 37-44).

[401] John Udall's *A Commentarie upon the Lamentations of Jeremy* was printed in 1593, 1595, 1599, and 1608. Hugh Broughton's *The Lamentations of jeremy...with Annotations* was printed at Amsterdam in 1606 and 1608, while Michael Drayton's "Praier of Ieremiah, bewailing the

Donne headed his translation "for the most part according to Tremellius," and Ted-Larry Pebworth makes a case for Donne's use of Fetherstone's version of Tremellius. Of particular relevance to this sermon is Pebworth's observation that in the dedicatory epistle "whereas Tremellius placed Lamentations firmly in its historical setting, 'after the death of king Iosias' (The Argvment, 1), Fetherstone saw the book from a millenarian perspective, linking Jeremiah's lament to prophecies of the Second Coming" (87). One of the most notable aspects of Donne's sermon is his insistence on both the historical and prophetic aspects of the text, leading him to what Shami identifies as the most challenging aspect of the sermon, the question of whether the text refers to a good or a bad king, a Josiah or a Zedekiah.[402] Similarly, Pebworth's observation that Fetherstone appears to have been Calvinist and violently anti-Catholic raises interesting points and connects it with a text not on Hunter's list, John Hull's *An exposition vpon a part of the Lamentation of Ieremie:Lectvred at Corke in Ireland.* This detailed commentary upon the first five verses of the book was printed in London in 1618 and reprinted in 1620, the later edition revising the subtitle to "First preached and now published by *I. Hull* B. of D. for the benefit of Gods Church" (t.p.). Hull dedicates his text to George Abbot and, after rehearsing the calamities of Jerusalem, adds: "To keepe vs from such calamitie, I haue brought in place this mappe of miserie: bold to present it to your Grace: yet bolde, because by you our Church enioyes prosperity, by deliuering truth, and defending veritie" (A4^r). His

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captiuity of the people. In the fift Chap. of his Lamentations" appeared in *The Harmonie of the Church* (1591, C4^v-D^r) and again in *A Heauenly Harmonie of Spirituall Songes* (1610, STC 7200). See Hunter "An Occasion for John Donne's '*The Lamentations of Jeremy,*'" 18-23.

[402] Shami, *John Donne and Conformity in Crisis*, 131.

primary concern is to bring to the archbishop's attention the trials of the Irish church and state. Like Fetherstone, Hull is virulently anti-Catholic, attacking Rome as Babylon. Like Donne, he acknowledges various levels of meaning in the text, although he uses the traditional categories of historical, allegorical, and tropological. Both Hull and Donne seem to have understood Jeremiah particularly as a model for preachers. As Hull puts it, "*Ieremiahs* case is the case of all the Ministery, placed betweene two gulfes, two seas, two rockes, two fires: Gods curse, and the worlds hatred: *Paules* woe if hee preach not, *Ezechiels* Sword if he found not, & *Ieremiah* his end if he speake the truth" (6). This seems an apt description of Donne's situation in November 1622, caught as he seemed to be between the king's orders and his pastoral duties.

Donne's choice of Lamentations 4.20 on this occasion, however, may also reflect a closer engagement with the public outcry surrounding the Spanish Match. In the previous year, the Ipswich preacher Samuel Ward had printed at Amsterdam an engraving of his "invention" entitled "To God, In Memory of his Double Deliverance From the Invincible Navy and the Unmatchable Powder Treason."[403] The cartoon depicted in the first panel God's playful winds scattering the Spanish Armada, in the second, a Catholic enclave engaged in plotting against England, and in the third Guy Fawkes caught by the beam of light emanating from God's all-seeing eye as he approaches Parliament to ignite the gunpowder. When

[403] By using the term "invented," Ward was probably trying to minimize his responsibility for the cartoon. As Walsham points out, what Ward had done was simply to juxtapose three existing images; however, Christina Carlson argues that this was what made the engraving so politically explosive. See Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, 255-58; Christina Carlson, "Free-Speaking Cartoons: The Rise of Political Prints and Drama in Seventeenth-Century England" (Diss. U of Chicago, 2008), 63-66.

the Spanish ambassador, Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, Count of Gondomar, complained to James, the engraving was withdrawn from circulation and Ward was arrested and questioned by the Privy Council. Nevertheless, the illustration was evidently popular, even serving as a pattern for several surviving pieces of needlework, and was reprinted as late as 1689.[404]

As Alexandra Walsham has suggested, a reciprocal relationship had developed between the Gunpowder sermons and the engravings that began to be produced to celebrate the plot anniversary, since both were understood as monuments to God's deliverance of England. In his sermon before the Privy Council on the first anniversary of the plot, William Barlow reminded his listeners that God enjoins two kinds of memorials for great deliverances, spoken and unspoken, and that Parliament has provided for both in its legislation of the celebration. William Goodwyn reiterated this need for perpetual memorialization at Paul's Cross in 1614 when he preached on the text Ezekiel 24.2: "Son of man, write thee the name of the day, euen of this same day: the king of Babilon set himselfe against Jerusalem this same day." Both sermons insist on the need to record, both in words and acts, the nation's providential deliverances.

Early visual representations of the plot also functioned as "monuments," interlacing "patriotism, royalism, and providential anti-popery as mutually

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[404] The needlework adaptations are discussed by Alexandra Walsham in *Providence in Early Modern England*, and by Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass in *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*, 162-65. Xanthe Brooke describes the embroideries in *The Lady Lever Art Gallery: Catalogue of Embroideries* (Stroud: A. Sutton in association with the Trustees of the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1992), 18-20. Dorothy Selby's stitchery was mentioned prominently in her funerary epitaph, which led, curiously, to her being identified in some strands of tradition as the writer of the "Monteagle" letter. For additional sources of information, see Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, 261, n 140. I am grateful to Professor Beverly Lemire for drawing my attention to these artifacts.

reinforcing creeds" (Walsham *Providence* 255). David Kunzle observes that the Gunpowder Plot is the first of the Catholic conspiracies against the English crown for which pictorial representation survives (123). The earliest is a 1606 Dutch engraving in which the upper frame depicts the plotters scheming while the lower three frames illustrate their executions. The German and French texts suggest that the engraving was designed primarily for a continental audience, perhaps both to capitalize on a sensational news story and simultaneously to warn subjects into submission, since they conclude: "This is the reward of traitors, this is what will happen to all others" (Kunzle trans. 123).

The two earliest surviving engravings intended for English audiences, however, are emblematic rather than narrative. "The Papists' Powder Treason," presumably printed before Prince Henry's death in 1612, and Richard Smith's "Powder Treason" (*c.*1615-1623) both feature architectural designs that demonstrate the traditional hierarchy proceeding from God at the top of the illustrations, through the monarch to parliament, while the demonic plotters crowd the lowest level of the pictures.[405] In her detailed comparison of the two, Christina Carlson notes, among other differences, that the earlier illustration allows human agents, including both good and bad kings, a greater role in human affairs.[406]

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[405] Richard Smith's *The Powder Treason*, British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings. Griffiths and Gerard date the Smith engraving to 1621/23 on the assumption that it participated with Ward's drawing and Thomas Scott's *Vox Populi* as part of the anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic propaganda that resulted from the Spanish match negotiations, but nothing is known of Smith or his relation to Droeshout, who engraved the image. Both Walsham and John N. King accept an earlier date, *c.* 1615 (*Providence in Early Modern England* 254; *Milton and Religious Controversy* 47-48).

[406] See "Free-Speaking Cartoons," Ch. 1. For other discussions of these images, see Antony Griffiths with Robert A. Gerard, *The Print in Stuart Britain 1603-1689* [London: British Museum, 1998], 144-54; John N. King, *Milton and Religious Controversy*, 115-22; Alexandra Walsham,

Nevertheless, as Walsham argues, the monumental framework of each drawing links God's providential deliverances of England to his approval of her institutions—king, church, and parliament.

Providence in Early Modern England, 250-66 and "Impolitic Pictures: Providence, History, and the Iconography of Protestant Nationhood in Early Stuart England," *Studies in Church History* 33 (1997), 307-28.

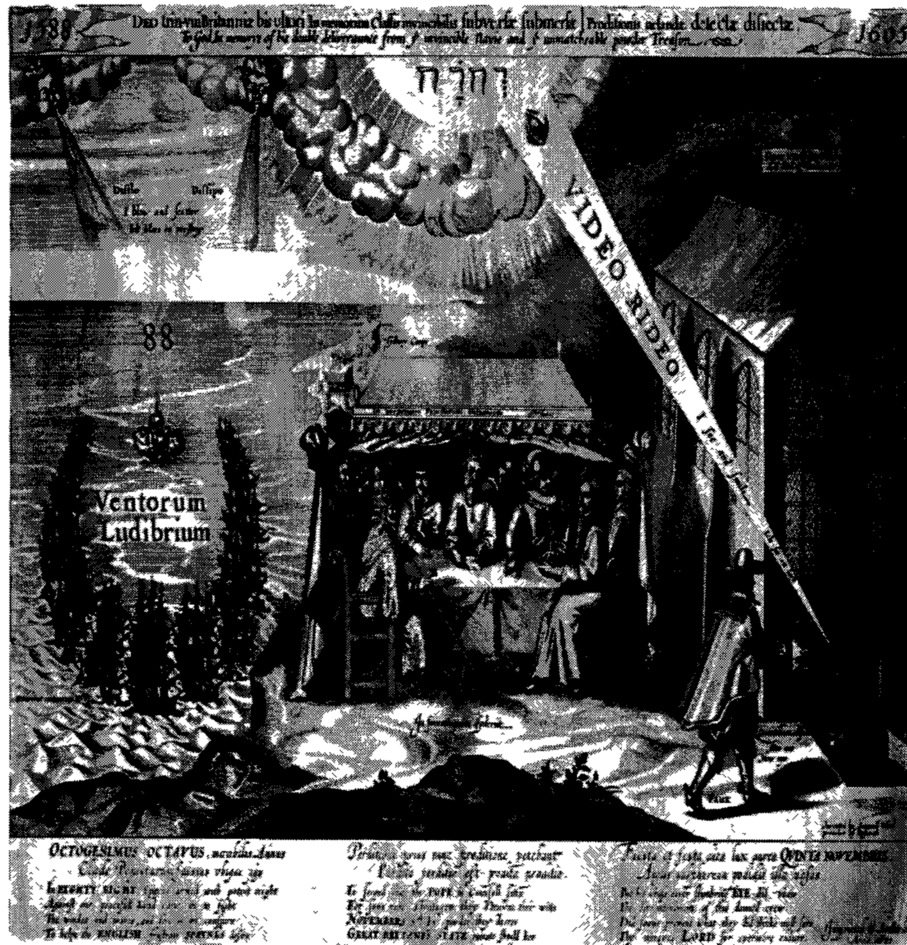

Figure 1: "The Double Deliverance 1588 - 1605." Etching "invented" by Samuel Ward of Ipswich and printed at Amsterdam, 1621. © Trustees of the British Museum. Reproduced with the kind permission of the British Museum.

The absence of these institutions in Ward's drawing destabilizes the assurance of God's continued preference for England. God does not operate through English institutions, but intervenes directly in English history through his capricious winds and his all-seeing eye. As Northrop Frye has pointed out, however, the eye of God is "always potentially hostile" (130), for God sees and judges all actions, not necessarily in our favour. By drawing attention to God's scornful amusement in the "Video Rideo" caption on the beam of light illuminating Fawkes, Ward calls into question the uncritical assumptions about divine justice favouring England offered by the earlier drawings.

As Carlson suggests, the horizontal, linear focus of the picture, with the Catholic enclave at its centre, "forces the viewer to evaluate this central scene in light of the thematic and political implications of those illustrations that fall to either side of it, performing the work of contextualization and questioning that is the domain of satire, polemic, and propaganda" (95). The degree to which Ward intended a critique of the Spanish Match negotiations rests partly on our interpretation of the figures in the central enclave.[407] Gondomar based his complaint to James I on the alleged misrepresentation of his master, Philip IV, who has been identified by both Frederic George Stephens and Antony Griffiths as the figure in a ruff seated to the viewer's right of the devil.[408] Carlson, however, contends that the devil represents Philip IV and that the figure seated to

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[407] Although the verses beneath the enclave clearly identify the occasion as the plotting of the Gunpowder Plot, this attempt to prevent a broader interpretation seems unlikely to have been effective given the emotive power of the visual

[408] Griffiths and Robert A Gerard identify the figures as the king of Spain, "the Pope, a cardinal, a Jesuit and two monks" (*The Print in Stuart Britain 1603-1689*, 152)

his right is George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. Regardless of which figure is seen as Philip IV, it seems clear that contemporaries identified a Spanish presence at the table. Even without such a presence, the flanking of the enclave with the destruction of the Armada and the foiling of the Gunpowder Plot would implicate Spain in the plot, for reading chronologically from left to right the viewer understands the hatching of the plot as an outcome of the failed Armada. A Spanish presence, however, also allows for a thematic reading, in which the enclave can simultaneously represent both the gunpowder plotting and the Spanish Match negotiations.

Ward, of course, denied that he was commenting on James's foreign policies, claiming in his second petition to the king that he had composed the "embleme" (minus the English verses and some additions made by the engravers) five years previously and had sent it to the printer almost a year earlier "without anie other sinister intencion, especiallie of meddling in any of your Majesties secrett affaires" (qtd in Bruce, 2). But Ward was neither the first nor the last to claim the innocence of his intentions when pressed by the Jacobean authorities.

The print itself may have been too costly for many, but Ward's imprisonment doubtless made it a topic of conversation in London.[409] Certainly, it seems to have been on the minds of both Donne and Willan as they composed their 5 November sermons in 1622. In the conclusion to his sermon, Willan

[409] Chamberlain tells Dudley Carleton in a 10 March 1621 letter that "one Ward a speciall preacher of Ipswich is but newly released out of prison (where he lay a good while) for having a picture of the Spanish fleet in 88 with the gun-powder treason, and some other additions of his owne invention and hand (having some delight and skill in limming) which his friends say had lien by him at least seven or eight yeares, and not looked into till now" (2.351). Interestingly, Chamberlain implies that Ward's offence was not interfering in the marriage negotiations, but drawing attention to the poor performances of both land and naval forces in the continental war.

expands at length on the idea that God laughs or smiles at the designs of wicked men. Since God's ironic laughter does not appear in surviving Gunpowder sermons before 1622, it seems likely that Willan's source was Ward's drawing. Although he cautions that the attribution of laughter to God can only be symbolic, Willan suggests that this derision expresses both how easy it is for God to overthrow the designs of the wicked and how patient he is in restraining his destructive powers. Using a theatrical analogy, the preacher reminds his auditors that "We may not iudge of Gods workes vntill the fift act, the case deplorable and desperate in outward appearance, may with one smile from heauen finde a blessed issue" (38). Willan's sermon, as Shami has pointed out, unquestioningly endorses the king's *Directions*, and therefore reaffirms the conventional providential belief that God will continue to protect England through the institutions of monarchy, religion, and law, directing his scorn only towards her enemies.[410]

Donne's response to the engraving, however, appears considerably more substantial and complex, extending from his unusual choice of text to the structure of the sermon itself. While Morrissey has suggested that Donne deliberately chose a text without the words "king" or "kingdom" in order to avoid tying his discussion of monarchy to a particular scriptural context ("Conventional" 173), it seems more likely that Donne was attracted by the final word in the verse: "The breath of our Nostrills, the Anointed of the Lord was taken in their pitts." Despite the subterranean venue of the Gunpowder Plot, preachers before 1621 seem to

[410] Like the conventional engravings, Willan's sermon seems to be indebted to the official account of the plot, in which the author identified piety and justice as the pillars of good government (*His Maiesties speech*, E4^{v}).

have favoured images of nets or fowler's snares over pits as symbols of treachery. Smith's engraving, however, quotes Psalm 57.2, "They have digged a pit for me," in which Saul's attempt to entrap David redounds upon himself. Under the papal enclave in Ward's drawing are printed the words "In foveam quam foderint" [How they dug themselves into a pit]. Not only does Donne choose a text that offers the image of the pit, but he also draws attention to this word in the later part of the sermon, and even to the Geneva Bible's mistranslation of it as "nets," using this opportunity to distinguish a king merely caught in a net when he "discerns not a flatterer from / a Counsaylor" (1284-85), from one in the more desperate condition of being "taken in their pitts."[411] In Donne's sermon, however, the king remains both historical and potential victim, and retribution upon the plotters is never inevitable.

Donne begins his sermon by drawing his audience's attention to several problems of interpretation regarding the book itself: first, whether it is a distinct book or part of Jeremiah; then, whether it is historical or prophetical, and consequently whether it applies to a good or a bad king. These are questions for which there are no easy answers. Nor can they be resolved solely on confessional lines, for Donne points out that while the Council of Trent omitted the book, probably intending it to be subsumed in the Book of Jeremiah, one of their own Jesuits declares it a distinct book. In this dispute, both sides cannot be right—the book must either be independent or part of Jeremiah. Donne then introduces the

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[411] Except where noted, quotations are from Shami's transcription of the manuscript version of the sermon and line references are to this edition, as this version probably bears the closest relationship to the preached sermon. I have not reproduced the underlining by which the editor has identified differences from the 1649 print version.

second problem, which is more complex, for the book *can* be both historical and prophetical. Having presented these interpretive dilemmas, Donne then divides his listeners not by their abilities in understanding, as the *Directions* had, but by their levels of political responsibility—private citizens, preachers, advisors, and the monarch himself. The king is to be supported "by prayer / from them who are private persons, by / Counsayle from them, who haue the / great honor, and the great chardge / to be near them, and by support and / supplie from all of all sorts, from fal= / linge into such dangers" (144-50). Once again, however, division is a means of producing unity, for despite their different tasks, everyone in the kingdom must preserve the king from falling into "their" pits.

Throughout the first three quarters of the sermon, however, Donne deliberately refrains from identifying those who dig pits for the king, using only the pronouns "they" and "them." Not until line 1299 of the manuscript version does he confront this question directly. Here he reaches the crux of the second problem of interpretation that he had raised at the beginning of the sermon, that of whether the text is to be interpreted historically or prophetically: "If it were *Josiah*, the persecutor was *Necho* / king of Egipt, for from his army *Josiah* / receyud his deaths wound; It if were / *Zedechiah*, the persecutor ~~the~~ was / *Nebuchadnezzar*, king of *Babilon*" (1299-1304). Throughout the early seventeenth century, Babylon was generally associated with Rome as the false church, whereas Egypt most frequently represented Spain. One, then, defined a religious adversary while the other referred to a political one. Although Donne never mentions Spain in the sermon, and he blames the plot only upon Englishmen

(1098), he avoids resolving the question of whether the king has political as well as religious enemies by insisting upon both the historical and the prophetical interpretations. As long as Catholics accept the pope's authority to depose heretical rulers, they will continue to behave in the future as they have in the past. But Donne warns his audience that Protestants who doubt the king's religious fidelity are also digging pits for him. While Ward's cartoon collapses the Armada, the Gunpowder Plot, and potentially the Spanish Match negotiations into a demonstration of the constant unreliability of both Spain and Rome, Donne refuses this uncomplicated form of anti-popery.[412] Catholic treachery may be both historical and prophetical, but this does not exonerate Protestants from their duties to pray for and speak well of the king.

After asserting the status and authority of the book in the first 150 lines, Donne outlines his "handling" of the text, dividing it into three parts: 1) that the cause of lamentation was the decline of the state; 2) that the people did not sever the king from the kingdom but accepted that any king, good or bad, was "the breath of their nostrils"; and, 3) that the past tense of the verb "was falln" (174) ensures that the lamentation presages a deliverance. Morrissey provides a useful outline of these stages as they appear in the marginal notes of the 1622 manuscript ("Conventional" 173), observing that the unusual way in which Donne distinguishes between the division and handling of the text allows the first and

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[412] For divergent views on anti-Catholicism in Donne's sermons, see Marotti, "Donne's Conflicted Anti-Catholicism," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 101.3 (2002), 358-79; Shami, "Anti-Catholicism in the Sermons of John Donne," in *The English Sermon Revised: Religion, Literature and History 1600-1750*, ed. Lori Anne Ferrell and Peter McCullough (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000), 136-66.

final sections of the sermon independence from the text. Donne's mode of working with the text here is particularly significant, since methods or "ways" are one of the sermon's underlying themes.

He describes the sermon at the outset as having both a temporal and a spatial dimension. The temporal trajectory is that of the Lamentations themselves, which fall neatly into the two halves of mourning and rejoicing, just as the sermon falls into two distinct parts. The time of the sermon will thus encompass the entire book, of which the text essentially becomes a microcosm. In an hour, he tells his listeners, his text will grow from mourning to rejoicing; but the sermon is also a "Royall progresse" (186) through the kingdom. The progress was one of the most visible displays of royal power and authority in the early modern period. Nevertheless, it could also invite discussion and critique, as James's 1617 progress to Scotland had done.[413] Beginning at line 186, Donne announces his first step in this progress, highlighted by a marginal note (1. *Regnum*) in both the manuscipt and print versions, a history of kingship in which he introduces the issue of means. Between lines 186 and 445, he chronicles the origins of kingship in Israel, focusing on the problem of human meddling with divine design. What the Israelites wanted was not wrong, but their manner of asking for it was, because they failed to understand God's timing. The second step, "Regnum in Rege" according to the marginal note, insists upon the unity of the king and the kingdom, regardless of whether the king is good or bad. Beginning at line 641, Donne applies this part of the sermon historically to the Catholics who attempted

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[413] Interestingly, Donne's first invitation to preach at the Cross, on James's accession day in 1617, had coincided with this controversy.

to sever king and kingdom by means of gunpowder, locating the source of Catholic plotting in the doctrine of papal deposition promulgated in the pamphlet literature. As long as Catholics believe these things, they will continue to behave as they have historically, and so the text can also be interpreted prophetically. Donne then broadens the application from Catholics to all individuals who censure kings based on their experience as private individuals. Ministers who pray for the king to remain Protestant are misusing prayer; their ends are not wrong but their means are. Donne suggests that individuals rooted in time and space, whether Catholics like the plotters or Protestants like Knight and Ward, are inadequate judges of either God or kings. Thus, Donne begins by refocusing not upon interpretive abilities but upon the hierarchies that determine political actions.

Not until line 798, almost the exact midpoint of the manuscript version, does Donne turn to the first words of the text, which describe the king as "spiritus narium," the breath of our nostrils. In the printed version, Donne clarifies this movement back to the text somewhat by adding "(as it lies in our Text)" (*Sermons* 4.251). In this second part, he turns his attention not only to his text but also to the vertical relationship by which God's will descends through the king and his agents to his people, and it is surely no coincidence that he attributes to the king the two instruments of divine providence that Ward represents in his drawing, God's breath and God's eye. Donne refutes the scholastic view that God does not work in secondary causes, insisting: "This is not true; / god doth worke in euery Organ, and in euery / particular action" (903-05), but he immediately qualifies this statement by denying that God causes "the / peruersnes of any action" (906-

07). He seems to conflate God and the king as the spirit moves upon the waters shaping an island that is the source of both physical and spiritual sustenance, while the king, "he who is the Spirit of the lord, he who is / the breath of our Nostrills" (816-17) takes special care of the navy. It is the king's "breath and influence of his prouidence / throughout the land" that "makes vsefull ... [God's] blessings vnto vs" (821-23). The king, according to Donne, acts not only as God's eye, but also as God's hands and feet. He is "This ey of god, He by whome god / looks vpon vs, This hand of god, He by / whome god protects vs, This foote of god, / by whome, in his due tyme, ... god shall tread downe his / own and our enemies" (1206-12). Donne thus reinserts the king into the providential hierarchy from which Ward had eradicated him. What he appears to be creating here is a visual representation of England as God sees it, with a broader vision, both temporally and spatially, than any individual, except the divinely anointed monarch, may have. Through his unusual structure, then, Donne offers two views of England, first as seen by people such as Ward with their limited spatial and temporal perspectives, and secondly as God sees it from his omniscient viewpoint.

By describing the king as God's lieutenant, however, Donne inverts the problems he discussed in the first half of the sermon.[414] Whereas there he focused on human meddling with God's plans, here the issue is God's, and the king's, use of fallible human instruments. God delegates England's care to the monarch, who is likewise required to employ agents who may, through weakness or malice,

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[414] Donne's use of the word "lieutenant" suggests that, like Willan, he had reviewed the official plot pamphlet, since James had referred to kings as God's "Lieutenans and Vicegerents on earth" (B^r) at the beginning of his 9 November speech to Parliament, and had subsequently reminded the members that the "weales" of king and country could not be separated ($D3^v$).

corrupt the execution of his plans. Donne raises this possibility almost immediately, but quickly veers away from such a dangerous topic in the first of the abrupt transitions that characterize this part of the sermon. In this second half, Donne repeatedly opens up avenues of thought only to close them off, creating discontinuities that the revisions of the 1649 text intensify. Wolfgang Iser's conception of "blanks" and "negations" helps to interpret some of these shifts. Although Iser has been criticized for failing to define what he means by a "blank," he does provide some guidelines for recognizing one in a text, explaining in *The Act of Reading* that "Wherever there is an abrupt juxtaposition of segments, there must automatically be a blank, breaking the expected order of the text" (195).[415] The blank, however, is not simply a gap to be filled, but something that enables the reader to set up a relationship between two ideas. The referential field set up with the aid of the blank becomes a new theme set against the horizon of the previous one. The more blanks that break up the "*good continuation*" (188) of the text, the more "Second degree images" (186) will be created by the reader. The use of blanks and negations relinquishes more control of the text to the audience and therefore places more interpretive responsibility upon the reader, for "Whatever experience each individual reader may have, he will always be compelled to adopt an attitude, and this will place him into a prearranged position in relation to the text" (217). Since didactic texts generally resist blanks, Donne's

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[415] Although Iser's work is concerned with fictional texts, I believe that the idea of "blanks" may also be applicable to texts such as sermons where authors wished to leave space for readers to interpret without compromising their own safety.

rhetorical strategy suggests a desire to offer his readers and listeners the kind of interpretive opportunities that the *Directions* would deny them.

We can trace Donne's method in his scattered references to evil counsellors. In the first passage (ll. 823-39), he exonerates the king from responsibility for the evil done by ministers who have executed his orders improperly. He then shifts to a discussion of the need for subjects to speak well of the king, since disrepecting the monarch will lead to disrespecting God. Focusing this time on God rather than the king, he returns obliquely to the problem of secondary causes. God works in all actions, but does not cause evil actions. Similarly, the king must delegate his power to others, and so is excused from responsibility for wrongdoing by his ministers. Then, bringing the focus back to the act of interpretation with an abrupt transition in the words: "But here, we carry not this word, *Ruach*, / Spirit, so highe" (840-41), Donne chokes off the line of thought that he has initiated, creating what Iser would term a blank. Revoking the analogy he has made between the king and the Holy Spirit, he insists upon a literal interpretation of the word "breath" as speech, reminding his audience of their own duties to speak well of the king. Significantly, he makes the distinction between God and the king immediately after he has reminded his audience that God can read our thoughts. The unstated implication is that the king can only read our actions. Donne then returns to the problem of works carried out by inferior agents (ll. 905-14). In the 1622 manuscript, he excuses kings of responsibility in these situations, placing the blame solely upon the agents who have executed the actions. Rejecting the king's quasi-divine status in favour of an analogy between

divine and monarchical government, Donne refocuses upon responsibilities—the king's responsibility to his people and their duties to him.[416] As God's instrument, the king is responsible for his people, but he may be compelled to carry out his duties through imperfect human agents. Donne thus refuses a simplistic providentialism by insisting upon human accountability at all levels of the hierarchy.

In the 1649 version, however, Donne opens the gap in the text wider, concluding that kings "communicate power to others, and rest wholly themselves; and then, the *power* is from them, but the *perversenesse* of the action is not. God does work in ill actions, and yet is not guilty, but Princes doe not so much as worke therein, and so may bee excusable; at least, for any cooperation in the evill instrument; but that is another case" (*Sermons* 4.253).[417] In this short section, Donne uses the conjunction "but" three times in order to change directions. God works in all actions, but is not the cause of the evil; kings do not work in all actions, but communicate power to others; kings may not be excusable when they authorize an evil instrument, but that is not the case in this situation. Applying Iser's theory, Donne has not merely created spaces in his text, but by repeatedly juxtaposing interpretations of the king's actions with the need to speak well of

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[416] David Nicholls argues that Donne used the analogy between God and the king both to support and to limit the king's authority ("Divine Analogy: The Theological Politics of John Donne," *Political Studies* 32.4 [1984], 576).

[417] If Donne revised the sermon in late 1625, he was likely thinking of Charles's actions rather than James's, which may have caused him to sharpen his criticism of the king for employing evil counsellors. Even at this early stage of Charles's reign, many of his subjects seem to have been sceptical of his ability to govern. See Shami's analysis of the major changes between the manuscript and print version (*John Donne's 1622 Gunpowder Plot Sermon* 24-32).

him, he has suggested that the two are not incompatible.[418] It is possible, Donne seems to be telling his audience, to remain obedient to the king even when one disagrees with his policies.

But disagreement does not give one the right to criticize the king openly, as Ward and Knight have done. Daley notes that one of Donne's strategies in the sermon is to create his own "ethos," his authority to speak on this subject. The crucial moment in this process is the monstrously long sentence that begins at line 959 and continues to line 985. Donne begins the sentence by rebuking those who insert caveats into their prayers for the king, then demonstrates through the convolutions of his own syntax that making judgments about the king is not to be done lightly or by those lacking adequate information. The tensions of this sentence seem to be compounded by Donne's desire to establish both his spiritual and his political credentials. He begins by identifying himself as a Christian, then as a preacher, placing himself within the earthly church but expressing his hope of future participation in the heavenly church. In contrast, he merely glances over his political experience, offering instead his personal knowledge of the king. Nevertheless, Donne does not ultimately presume to speak for the king's constancy of religious beliefs, but only for his consistency of actions as head of the English church. While going so far as to compare James's commitment to the church with Elizabeth's, he also distinguishes their methods, taking us back to his

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[418] Donne's strategy here also seems to reflect Annabel Patterson's ninth principle regarding censorship, that "in a work of oblique sociopolitical import any markedly topical allusions will tend to be widely scattered through the text, so that they appear to be random shots at local irritations, rather than a sustained and coherent attack on a government or a court" (*Censorship and Interpretation* 63).

discussion of means in the first part of the sermon. James is dealing differently with the situation in the Palatinate than Elizabeth would have, but "There ways may be diuers, and yet theyr / ends the same" (985-87). Cautiously, however, Donne avoids a preference for either method.

In conclusion, then, Donne's sermon can be seen not only as an attempt to work within James I's *Directions to Preachers*, but also as a response to one of the public challenges to the king's authority that had precipitated them. Samuel Ward's drawing, by eliminating the king and by conflating the origins of the plot with the Spanish Match negotiations, threatened that God would withdraw his earlier favour from England should James conclude a Catholic marriage for his son. Donne, in contrast, reinstates the king as God's agent, his breath and his eye. While the king's actions may appear contrary, God can work through them to preserve his people. Insisting upon English Catholic responsibility for the plot while reminding his auditors of their own responsibilities in the current crisis, Donne problematizes Ward's anti-Catholicism as well as his providentialism. In his later revisions of the sermon, Donne seems to have modified his position to place more responsibility upon flawed human instruments, including the king, but that was in the altered political circumstances of a new reign.

4.3 Henry Burton (1636): The Perils of Interpretation

In the spring of 1637, William Prynne, John Bastwick, and Henry Burton appeared in the Court of Star Chamber charged with seditious attacks on the

English bishops.[419] Burton's offences were the preaching of two sermons on 5 November 1636 in his parish, St. Matthew Friday Street, London and their subsequent printing at Amsterdam. Following what David Cressy describes as a "show trial" (*Travesties* 219) each author was fined £5,000, had his ears cropped in the pillory, and was sent into permanent solitary exile, in which he was to be deprived of all writing materials.[420] Clegg calls these excessive punishments "anomalous and desperate efforts to contain religious opposition .... a measure not of the success of Caroline press censorship but of its failure" (181). Censorship and corporal punishment, however, were not the only avenues open to the authorities in their efforts to counter dangerous writings. A dual strategy involving both censorship and printed refutation had been in use at least since the Martin Marprelate controversies of the 1580s, when the government had not only sought out the illegal presses on which the offending tracts were being printed, but had also retaliated with its own texts.[421] While censorship deprived the author of profit and the reader of information, refutation was intended to discredit the author and re-educate the reader.

Burton's 1637 appearance in Star Chamber capped a ten-year history of escalating skirmishes with the bishops. Born near York in 1578, Burton had received his M. A. from St. John's College, Cambridge and, after a stint as a tutor,

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[419] All three had been charged previously in other matters and Prynne had already had his ears cropped for the publication of *Histrio-Mastix*.

[420] In fact, the exile lasted only until 1641, when the Long Parliament returned the three to London and exonerated them.

[421] On the responses to the Marprelate tracts, see Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain*), Ch. 2; Joseph Black, "The Rhetoric of Reaction: The Martin Marprelate Tracts (1588-89), Anti-Martinism, and the Uses of Print in Early Modern England," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 28.3 (1997): 707-25.

become Clerk of the Closet first to Prince Henry (1605-1612), then to Prince Charles. Appointed rector of St. Matthew Friday Street in 1621, he had lost the living temporarily, possibly for opposing Laud in 1626.[422] As early as 1628, he warned of possible changes to the prayer book, recording in the dedication of his *Tryall of Private Devotions*, a response to John Cosin's *Collection of Private Devotions*, that while visiting a printer he had seen a copy of the prayer book marked up with changes in Cosin's hand (A^v). In his own book, he conducted a close reading of Cosin's work and concluded that some of the precedents he had cited in his margins did not exist. Although such clashes with authority have led to his identification as an independent even at this early date, Clegg insists that Burton "may indeed be among the more radical clergy in the Church of England, but he is conformable, no enemy to ecclesiastical ceremony, and an opponent to Rome. If Wotton, Yates, and Burton are Puritans, as Anthony Milton has classified them, they are so only 'in a second degree.' In the first degree, they regarded themselves loyal ministers of the Church of England" (57). Clegg argues instead that a series of incidents, beginning with his first appearance before the High Commission for dedicating *Babel No Bethel* to Parliament in 1629, gradually radicalized Burton. Through the early 1630s, increasingly in collaboration with Prynne, he repeatedly attacked what he considered Laudian "innovations" in the church. Nevertheless, Clegg argues that Burton, like other critics of his age, was not courting trouble when he dedicated works to Charles or

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[422] There is no consensus on when and why Burton first lost his living. Clegg cites Kenneth Gibson's *ODNB* article indicating that the cause was Burton's letter accusing Laud and Neile of Catholic sympathies, but Gibson appears to be referring to the loss of Burton's position as Clerk of the Closet rather than loss of his living. (*Press Censorship in Caroline England*, 56, 248-49, n63).

parliament, but acting under the Renaissance imperative to counsel the governor.[423]

In his 1643 autobiography, he admitted that he chose the Gunpowder anniversary for his inflammatory sermon deliberately to provoke a reaction from the prelates, taking as his text Proverbs 24.21-22: "My sonne, feare thou the Lord, and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change. For their calamity shall arise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruine of them both?"[424] The sermons question what happens when the subject's duty to the king conflicts with the Christian's duty to God. The text, he argues, does not mean "that wee may not meddle at all, by way of reproofe, detection, conuiction, impeding or impeaching their wicked courses and practises" (6). Since a king being misled in religion should be counselled by his Christian subjects, Burton claims to be informing the king of the bishops' popish innovations, including revisions to the 5 November liturgy. As an experienced controversialist, however, he uses the technique of retortion, juxtaposing contradictory royal pronouncements to cast doubts on the king's trustworthiness. He complains, for example, that he was accused of opposing the King's "Declaration" when he preached the golden chain of

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[423] Although I agree that Burton was not a separatist at this point, I find it difficult to share Clegg's faith in the transparency of his own claims. Burton's insistence upon his rights of counsel seems to have been part of his careful self-representation as a martyr.

[424] According to his autobiography (*A Narration of the Life of Mr. Henry Burton*, London, 1643), it was not the first time that Burton had taken advantage of the plot anniversary. He admits that he had, in an earlier (undated) "Sermon on the 5. of *November* spoken of sundry fore-running signes of the ruine of a State, which upon that return of the Duke [Buckingham], would not (it seemes) indure the Examination" (6). Unfortunately, the sermon does not survive. After that he claims he began deliberately preaching on controversial topics and neglecting ceremonies, watching "for an occasion to try it out with them, either by dint of Arguments, or force of Law, or by the King and his Counsell, resolving of this, that by this means I should either foile my adversaries (though I had no great hope this way) or at least (which I was sure not to faile of) discover the mystery of iniquity, and the deceit of hypocrisie, which like a white vaile they had cast over all their foule practices, and false pretences" (8).

salvation in a sermon on Romans 8, even though Charles's declaration on dissolving the 1629 parliament promised to maintain the Elizabethan Settlement (54-55). Burton presumably knows this was not the "declaration" he was accused of violating, but he wants to demonstrate the king's dangerous inconsistencies of both speech and religious policy. Thus, although Burton insisted on his loyalty to Charles, his readers recognized that he made the king guilty at least of negligence in failing to control his bishops and possibly of devious and dishonest language.

Burton was not the first Caroline preacher to use the Gunpowder anniversary to critique what he saw as a regression into Catholic error, but he was the most severely punished. The first to incur the government's anger seems to have been Samuel Ward, already suspect because of the 1621 cartoon discussed above, who was questioned for a potentially seditious sermon preached in 1633. Although the sermon does not appear to have survived, it seems that Ward used the occasion to contest Charles's reissuing of the Book of Sports.[425] Like Burton, then, he was protesting moves that were radicalizing the godly.

Predictably, Burton was charged in the Court of High Commission on 17 November with "uttering 'scandalous and offensive speeches'" (Clegg 179).[426]

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[425] "Answers of Samuel Ward to 43 articels objected against him by the commissioners for causes ecclesiastical, 19 Dec. 1634," The National Archives, PRO SP 16/278/65, fo. 144r.

[426] The choice of the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's accession may have been completely fortuitous, or it may have been intended to help brand Burton as disrespectful to the monarchy. One of the mysteries of the case is exactly what crime the three were charged with. Philip Hamburger suggests that it was likely *scandalum magnatum*, although the crown originally wanted to prosecute them for treason ("The Development of the Law of Seditious Libel and the Control of the Press," *Stanford Law Review* 37 [1985], 661-762, esp. 678-79). Roger B. Manning argues that the crown increasingly prosecuted those who had spoken against the authorities for sedition because it was difficult to get a treason conviction given the extreme penalties. See "The Origins of the Doctrine of Sedition," *Albion* 12.2 (1980), 99-121. For the most complete account of the case and of Burton's earlier troubles with the law, see Clegg, *Press Censorship in Caroline England, passim.*

Refusing to appear, he appealed directly to the king. A private commission suspended his preaching license in December and Burton, by his own account, barricaded himself in his house and expanded his two sermons for the press. Pursuivants broke into his house just as he finished and removed him to the Fleet prison.[427] Proceedings against him, along with Prynne and Bastwick, began on 10 March 1637, and sentence was carried out in the pillory on 30 June, with exile commencing a month later.[428]

Even before the sentence took effect, a strategy for refuting Burton's pamphlet in print had taken shape. Laud's trial speech, in which he briefly answered the accusations of all three writers and which contains his only printed defence of Caroline church policies, was published by royal command. The detailed refutation of Burton's errors promised by Laud was entrusted to Peter Heylyn, whose pamphlet, *A Briefe and Moderate Answer, to the seditious and scandalous challenge of Henry Burton* had been written several months earlier and was entered in the Stationers' Register the same day as Laud's speech. A third pamphlet, Christopher Dow's *Innovations unjustly charged upon the present church and state* does not seem to have had official status, but was subject to ecclesiastical control. Dow declares that his text was ready for the press by the end of Easter term, and it bears an imprimatur dated 17 June, three days after the

[427] Burton also claims that the book was printed sheet by sheet as he wrote it, both himself and the presses being hounded by pursuivants. In fact, according to the *STC*, the first edition was printed at Amsterdam, so Burton was probably over-dramatizing the situation in retrospect (*A Narration of the Life of Mr. Henry Burton*, 10). An edition was subsequently printed in London.
[428]For a puritan account of the trial and punishment of the three, see the anonymous *A Briefe Relation of Certain Speciall and Most Materiall Passages, and Speeches in the Starre-Chamber, occasioned and delivered Iune the 14th 1637. At the censure of those three worthy Gentlemen, Dr. Bastwicke, Mr. Burton and Mr. Prynne, as it hath been truly and faithfully gathered from their owne mouthes by one present at the sayd Censure* (n.p. 1637).

delivery of Laud's speech. When it was half printed, Dow learned of Heylyn's response to Burton's *Apology of an Appeal* and retracted that section of his own work. There was, then, an organized and remarkably prompt series of textual responses by the ecclesiastical establishment.

That only Burton's work generated an official response supports Richard Hughes's contention that the authorities considered him the most troublesome offender.[429] In his final speech to the court, Laud announced: "But when Mr. Burton's book, which is the main one, is answered, ... neither Prynn, nor Bastwick, nor any attendants upon Rabshakeh, shall by me or my care be answered. If this court find not a way to stop these libellers' mouths and pens, for me they shall rail on till they be weary" (68). Refutation, Laud knew, was a strategy to be used cautiously. One of the most common methods of response was selective animadversion, in which the respondent quoted and then refuted selected passages from the original. According to Joad Raymond, "Extensive quotation had manifold effects: it constrained, by rhetorical and typographical means, the ways in which the original work might be read; it also made the original work more widely available, and so undermined it as a commercial enterprise" (211). At the same time, it could have the unwelcome effect of publicizing the original

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[429] Despite this fact, Prynne has attracted significantly more attention from modern scholars than has Burton, possibly because of his attack on the theatre in *Histrio-Mastix*. The only full-length studies of Burton are Richard Hughes's dissertation, "Henry Burton: A Study in Religion and Politics in Seventeenth-Century England" (University of Iowa, 1972) and Stephen Rowlstone's dissertation, "Religion, politics and polemic in seventeenth-century England: The public career of Henry Burton, 1625-1648" (University of Kent, 2005). I have been unable to obtain a copy of Rowlstone's dissertation.

ideas.[430] Laud's words support Clegg's contention that while Calvinists wanted discussion and debate, the bishops wanted silence. But censorship was not the only way to achieve this goal. The ecclesiastical authorities attempted not only to limit *what* readers could read; they also strove to control *how* readers should read. In contrast to the close independent reading advocated by Burton, they imposed modes of interpretation circumscribed by authority.

The clerics who replied to Burton's work, however, were pointedly excluded from the audience he had addressed. Dedicating his text to the king and appealing to him as a judge, Burton literalizes the familiar Renaissance trope of the reader as judge. Anticipating an unfair trial from the bishops on the Star Chamber bench,[431] he sets up an alternative textual court in which his book represents him and he calls his congregation to witness that he preached obedience, not sedition. An anonymous puritan account of the proceedings justifies Burton's concerns, complaining of the court's selective reading from all three authors' works.[432] When asked whether he was guilty, Burton answered: "My Lord, I desire you not onely to peruse my Booke, here and there, but every passage of it" (14). "As for my Answer," he says, "yee blotted out what yee would, and then the rest which made best for your owne ends, you would have to

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[430] On the strategies and dangers of response, see Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering*, Ch. 6.

[431] See Phillips, H.E.I., "The Last Years of the Court of Star Chamber, 1630-41," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 4th series 21 (1939), 103-31. Phillips argues that the demise of the Star Chamber was largely due to public hatred of the bishops. Ecclesiastical representation in the Court had increased markedly in the Stuart period and by the 1630s the bench included both archbishops and the Bishop of London.

[432] See *A Briefe Relation of Certain Speciall and Most Materiall Passages, and Speeches in the Starre-Chamber, occasioned and delivered Iune the 14th 1637* (n.p., 1637), STC 1569.

stand" (14). As in his text, Burton made the bishops' reading practices an issue in the court.

In his sermons, Burton represents his godly readers as competent interpreters, whereas the bishops have consistently misread the king's orders, first by compelling all ministers to read from the Book of Sports when the king only wanted it reprinted, and then by incorrectly applying to learned ministers James I's order prohibiting university students from reading Reformed theologians. Now, ordered only to reprint the prayer book, they have also revised the text, thereby acting "contrary to the Kings expresse Proclamation" (141). By making two minor changes in one of the 5 November prayers, Burton argues, they have completely altered its meaning. According to Clegg, Charles and Laud created a culture of censorship by following a process of "transformational literalism," reading "legal precedents so literally that their conservatism effectively produced extraordinary transformation" (101-02). Burton here turns this tactic against them in his own readings of the king's orders and the changes to the liturgy by insisting upon just such a relentlessly literal mode of interpretation. A closer examination of Burton's interpretation of the changes, and the Laudian clerics' responses, suggests that each side had very different attitudes towards reading.

The 1605 prayer asks God to scatter England's enemies, to "infatuate their counsels, and roote out that Babylonish and Antichristian Sect, which say of Jerusalem, 'Downe with it, downe with it, euen to the ground'" (D2^{v}).[433] The

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[433] Quotations from the original service are from *Prayers and thankesgiuing to bee vsed by all the Kings Maiesties louing subiects: for the happy deliuerance of His Maiestie* (London, 1606, STC

revision adds the phrase "of them," reading "root out that Babylonish and Antichristian Sect of them which say of Jerusalem, 'Downe with it, downe with it, euen to the ground'" (D4[v]). Burton argues that

> whereas the words of the Originall copy doe plainely meane, that all Iesuites, Seminary Priests, and their confederates, are that *Babilonish and Antichristian Sect, which say of Ierusalem*, &c. this latter Booke either restraines it to some few, that are of that mind, or else mentally transferres it to those Puritans, that cry, Down with Babilon, that is, Popery, which these men call Ierusalem, and the true Catholike Religion. (130-31)

By accusing the bishops of the Jesuit trick of equivocation through mental reservation, Burton has progressed from branding them simply as poor readers to accusing them of wilful misreading, thereby aligning them not only with Catholics, but even with Jesuits.

In the next sentence, the original prayer supplicates God to "cut off these workers of iniquitie, (whose Religion is Rebellion, whose faith is faction, whose practise is murthering of soules and bodies) and to roote them out of the confines and limits of this kingdome" (D2[v]). Burton insists that the revision, "*to cut off these workers of iniquity, WHO TVRN RELIGION INTO REBELLION, AND FAITH INTO FACTION,*" weakens the association of Catholicism with rebellion, "So as by this turning, they plainly imply, that the religion of Papists is the true religion, and no rebellion, and their faith the true faith, and no faction" (131). For proof that Catholicism is a rebellious faction, he refers his readers both to the

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16494). Quotations from the revision are from *Prayers, and thanksgiuing* (London, 1635, STC 16499).

Homilies and to specific chapters in treatises by John White and Richard Crakenthorpe.[434] After quoting several passages from Crakenthorpe, he encourages his readers to peruse the text themselves, for "The whole Chapter is worth the reading" (134). His faith in his Protestant audience's reading ability contrasts sharply with his accusations that the bishops have read both incorrectly and maliciously.[435] Nevertheless, he does not advocate uncontrolled reading, conceding that Charles may be wise to restrict reading of the Church Fathers, since "an injudicious Reader, not being well grounded aforehand, comming to read some Fathers and Schoole-men, may in some passages ... bee infected with the poyson of Popish error and Superstition, before hee be aware" (113). His solution, however, is not to deny access to the unwary, but that students should be taught by "those uncorrupt Conduit-pipes, the Divines of the Reformed Churches" (113), just as inexperienced seamen are taught by pilots before venturing into dangerous waters on their own. How his adversaries responded to his charges demonstrates their uneasiness with close reading, particularly by the less educated and the godly.

Laud's speech is directed first to Star Chamber and the king, but in its published form to the broader audience of the kingdom. His dedication to the king

[434] Burton refers to a "Treatise of the Popes temporal Monarchy" which is presumably Crakanthorpe's *A treatise of the Fifth General Councel held at Constantinople, anno 553*, London, 1634 (STC 5984) and to John White's *Defence of the way to the true church against A.D. his reply*, London, 1614 (STC 25390).

[435] Burton is not the only one of the gunpowder preachers in the 1630s to express confidence in the abilities of his Protestant audience. In his 1638 sermon (published in 1641), Richard Heyrick encourages his congregation to "reade the whole eighteenth of the *Revelations* at your leisure, hee that reades it may understand, for the Text you see is plaine enough, it must downe" (88). Esther Gilman Richey in *The Politics of Revelation in the English Renaissance* (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1998) observes that the Caroline court had begun discouraging the reading of Revelation because of its susceptibility to anti-Catholic interpretations (3-7).

expresses his distrust of close reading, cautioning that "many things, while they are spoken and pass by the ear but once, give great content; which when they come to the eyes of men, and their often scanning, may lie open to some exceptions" (37). He begs the king to protect both himself and his text from "the undeserving calumny of those men, 'whose mouths are spears and arrows, and their tongues a sharp sword'" (37). Whereas Burton represents his text as a court, a site for examining conflicting interpretations, his respondents all equate textual disputation with warfare. Laud's extreme reluctance to publish suggests a deep fear of a puritan audience that reads too closely and publicly challenges authority.

Dismissing the first change as too inconsequential even to merit a response, Laud offers three possible explanations for the second. First, it avoids the "scandal" of calling another faith rebellion. Secondly, making Catholicism rebellion casts aspersions on all Christians, since all were Catholics before the Reformation. Finally, the state has consistently maintained that it executes Catholics for treason, not for heresy, but "if their religion be rebellion, it is not only false, but impossible, that the same man, in the same act, should suffer for his rebellion, and not for his religion." However, the Archbishop concludes cautiously: "Which of these reasons, or whether any other better, were in his Majesty's thoughts when he commanded the alteration of this clause, I know not. But I took it my duty to lay it before you, that the king had not only power, but reason to command it" (54). While willing to offer speculative readings in defence of Charles, Laud disclaims any authority to interpret the king's words or judge his

intentions. Elizabeth Skerpan argues that Laud's speech "is a model of forensic oratory" (44) addressed only to Star Chamber:

> With the law on his side, as he sees it, he selects a genre that excludes general readers who do not understand the intricacy of the issues involved. Logical and self-assured, he relies on his own authority and the facts of the case to prove his argument. He makes no effort to unify his audience, assuming that all that truly counts is the Star Chamber, which shares his interpretation of events. (44)

Laud effectively chose the wrong genre, one that relied upon reason and logic rather than emotion. Skerpan, however, by reading Laud's speech in isolation, fails fully to appreciate the government's strategy in simultaneously publishing the pamphlets of Heylyn and Dow, which *were* intended to engage directly with Burton's original audiences.[436]

According to Anthony Milton, Heylyn's apologetic works "defined government policies in more radical terms, and raised the political and ideological stakes by the extremism which he imputed to the regime's opponents, and the ideological agenda which he glossed onto the government's own policies" ("Creation" 173). In other words, in the absence of clear statements by Laud, Heylyn radicalized the archbishop's program. Here, his assigned tasks are to reassure other clerics that religion is not endangered and to inhibit further

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[436] Skerpan also fails to account for the wide distribution of Laud's speech. Although Laud himself seems to have targeted an elite audience, sending copies to Wentworth in Ireland and offering copies to the ambassador in Holland, Alastair Bellany also notes that "Shortly after its publication, one newsmonger reported that the book was selling so fast it was hard to get a copy" ("Libels in Action: Ritual, Subversion and the English Literary Underground, 1603-42" in *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, ed. Tim Harris [Houndmills: Palgrave, 2001], 111).

discussion by refuting Burton's errors. Like Laud, Heylyn suspects Burton's use of print, complaining in his preface that "*The* Presse, *which was devised at first for the advancement and increase of learning; was by him made a meanes to disperse his* pasquills, *that they might flye abroad with the swifter wing, and poyson mens affections, whom he never saw*" (b2[r]). Burton's words are arrows, directed not only against the king and the bishops, but also against anonymous conforming clergy. Like the Gunpowder plotters, Burton wants to "raise combustions in the state," and seized the opportunity of the plot anniversary, "*that day being by him thought most proper for their execution, whom he had long before condemn'd, and meant to blow up now without helpe of Powder*" (b3[v]). Heylyn exposes Burton's technique of retortion, accusing him of misreading both Scripture and the king, while himself quoting selectively from Burton's pamphlet.

In the body of the pamphlet, Heylyn addresses Burton directly and, through him, other clergy. Although he admits Burton's reading of the first change, he attributes his opponent's perspicacity to a guilty conscience—he too must wish ill against Jerusalem. Burton's fear that the prayer may be invoked against puritans is justified, nevertheless, for Heylyn threatens that "howsoever the *Iesuites*, Priests and their confederates were at first intended: yet if the *Puritans* follow them in their designes of blowing up the Church and State, and bringing all into a lawless and licentious *Anarchie*; the prayer will reach them too, there's no question of it" (152).[437] He thus asserts the government's authority to

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[437] Heylyn is determined to make a direct association between Burton and the gunpowder plotters. While Lori Anne Ferrell has documented the increasing anti-puritanism of the Gunpowder sermons, it seems that as the puritans began openly to accuse conformists of Catholicism,

reinterpret texts for political purposes, regardless of authorial intent, reminding Burton that although recusancy legislation and the Court of High Commission were established to prosecute Catholics, they can also, as Burton is fully aware, be used against the godly.

Burton is also correct that the revision to the second sentence changes its meaning, but since asserting that Catholicism is not necessarily rebellion does not declare it a true religion, he is guilty of a *non sequitur*. The revision does not extenuate the traitors, for "Before the imputation seemed to rest on the faith it selfe: which being a generall accusation concerned no more the guilty, then it did the innocent. But here it resteth where it ought, upon the persons of the *Traytors*, who are not hereby justified, or their crime extenuated: but they themselves condemned, and the treason aggravated in a higher manner" (154). Burton has offered two proofs that Catholicism is rebellion: priests and Jesuits refuse the Oath of Supremacy and the church promotes disloyalty to kings. Heylyn correctly taxes Burton with confusing the Oath of Supremacy with the Oath of Allegiance and reminds his readers that some priests and lay Catholics have both taken the oath themselves and also urged others to take it. In response to Burton's second proof, Heylyn argues that since John Calvin, David Pareus, and George Buchanan also authorized subjects to rebel against kings, "we may from hence conclude, or else your argument is worth nothing, that out of doubt the *Puritan religion is rebellion*, and *their faith faction* (156). Burton's error allows Heylyn to suggest

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conformists retaliated by sharpening their accusations against puritans, openly making analogies with the Gunpowder plotters (*Government by Polemic: James I, the King's Preachers, and the Rhetorics of Conformity, 1603-1625*), Ch. 3.

that puritans are worse than Catholics, since only a few Catholics were guilty of the Gunpowder Plot, while all puritans may be guilty of sedition. By illustrating the dangers of interpretive warfare, he tries to threaten puritan preachers into silence.

While Heylyn attempts to undermine Burton's clerical support by attacking his text, Christopher Dow seeks to turn Burton's middling readers against him by satirizing his person. Despite complimenting his readers by addressing them as "Ingenuous" (A2^r), he does not allow them freedom to interpret. In his first chapter, he observes that although folly should usually be met with silence, some texts require responses in order to educate those who may be misled by popular opinion. Like Laud and Heylyn, he immediately introduces the metaphor of combat. Since both words and weapons function according to the force with which they are employed, we must establish a writer's authority before evaluating his work. Burton, according to Dow, had an uninspiring career at Cambridge followed by a brief stint as a tutor before becoming Clerk of the Closet to Prince Charles, "Which sometime he was wont to execute in his hose and doublet, with a perfuming pot in one hand, and a fire-shovell in another" (8).[438] Dow's observation that during this time Burton "got into Holy orders" (8) implies that there was something shady about his ordination. Stricken from the list of those to accompany Charles to Spain in 1621 after his baggage was on the ship,

[438] The Clerk of the Closet was responsible for the care and repair of the furnishings of the closet in which the king or queen sat during worship in the royal chapels By this date, however, John Bickersteth and Robert W Dunning suggest that the practical work of the office was done by subordinates Clerks of the Closet, including future bishops Richard Neile and William Juxon, not infrequently rose within the ecclesiastical hierarchy (*Clerks of the Closet in the Royal Household Five Hundred Years of Service to the Crown* [Stroud Alan Sutton, 1991], ix, 1-10). Thus, Dow's dismissive remarks must have been intended for an audience unfamiliar with court offices

Burton became so unpopular in his own parish that when his parishioners learned he was preaching they attended services elsewhere. A harmless bumbler until his dismissal from court, Burton then became vindictive and extended his animosity from a few bishops to the entire order. While the facts of this sketch are essentially correct, Dow interprets them in the most unflattering manner possible. Had Burton been as unpopular as his adversary claims, the authorities would have had no reason to fear him. Dow's purpose, however, is not to present an objective biography but to deny Burton's authority to interpret the king's words and actions.[439]

Like Heylyn, Dow identifies Burton with the very Catholics he condemns, but he presents his arguments in a simplified form accessible to a less educated audience. He then dismisses the debate entirely, concluding that since the same authority that originally established the prayers is responsible for revising them, "it is neither for him, nor me, nor any other of inferiour ranke to question them, but with humble reverence to submit to their iudgements, and to thinke them wiser and farre more fit to order those things that belong to their places, than we, whom it neither concernes, nor indeed can know the reasons that move them, either to doe or alter any thing" (136-37). While Dow does not necessarily consider his readers incompetent, he sees interpretation as a form of meddling, unsuitable for those other than authorized counsellors. When practiced by the

[439] Richard Hughes accepts Dow's statement that Burton's congregation did not support him, but Dow hardly seems a reliable source for such information ("Henry Burton: The Making of a Puritan Revolutionary," *Journal of Chruch and State* 16 [1974], 433-34).

common people, the close independent reading both modelled and advocated by Burton threatens the Laudian church's emphasis on authority and hierarchy.

Burton's case, then, suggests that the Laudian ecclesiastical authorities attempted to impose silence not only through censorship, but also by discouraging textual practices that could foster debate and discussion, particularly among the godly and middling sorts. Yet, Burton's use of a sermon, and one preached on one of the nation's most important political anniversaries, as a vehicle for his criticisms suggests that he wanted to bring debate to the very people who had been excluded from the interpretive dilemmas of religious controversy. The reaction to the sermon also indicates clearly the dangers inherent in the anti-Catholic rhetoric developed in Gunpowder sermons, which could be redeployed against other groups, particularly puritans.

4.4 Matthew Newcomen (1642): The Church Beseiged

Despite their role in creating opposition to the Caroline administration in the 1630s, Gunpowder sermons declined in importance during the civil war, perhaps because a series of regular monthly fasts quickly overwhelmed the calendar. The most important site of public preaching in London became St. Margaret's Westminster, where the House of Commons gathered, and the day of public celebration became a day of fasting. A number of scholars have examined the parliamentary fast sermons, but most either fail to distinguish Gunpowder

sermons from those of the other fasts or exclude them altogether.[440] Yet while the role of official Gunpowder sermons diminished as the 1640s progressed, parliament enlisted puritan preachers in the early years of the war to justify conflict among Protestants.

The Commons sermons addressed two distinct auditories, their separateness highlighted by the interior arrangement of St. Margaret's. Although members of parliament were the primary audience, individual subjects seeking information about the political and military situation frequently joined them. Here, I explore the ways in which this circumstance may have affected these sermons by examining the traces of Matthew Newcomen's 1642 Gunpowder sermon—the printed text published at the request of parliament and sermon notes attributed to Walter Yonge, son of the diarist. Newcomen, preaching at a moment of crisis when London had barely escaped assault and parliament had agreed to

[440] Studies of the fast sermons include: Christopher Durston, "'For the Better Humiliation of the People': Public Days of Fasting and Thanksgiving during the English Revolution," *Seventeenth Century* 7.2 (1992), 129-49; Jacqueline Eales, "Provincial Preaching and Allegiance in the First English Civil War, 1640-6," in *Politics, Religion and Popularity in Early Stuart Britain: Essays in Honour of Conrad Russell*, ed. Thomas Cogswell, Richard Cust, and Peter Lake (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), 185-207; Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Fast Sermons of the Long Parliament," in *Religion, the Reformation, and Social Change and Other Essays by H.R. Trevor-Roper* (London: Macmillan, 1967), 294-344; Barbara Donagan, "Did Ministers Matter? War and Religion in England, 1642-1649," *Journal of British Studies* 33.2 (1994), 119-56; Edward Vallance, "Preaching to the Converted: Religious Justifications for the English Civil War," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 65.3/4 (2002), 395-419; Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-Century Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1993), Ch. 3; Achsah Guibbory, "Israel and English Protestant Nationalism: 'Fast Sermons' during the English Revolution," in *Early Modern Nationalism and Milton's England*, ed. David Loewenstein and Paul Stevens (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2008), 115-38.The most comprehensive study remains John F. Wilson's *Pulpit in Parliament: Puritanism during the English Civil Wars 1640-1648* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1969). On the role of the puritan clergy and sermons in the war more generally, see: Stephen Baskerville, *Not Peace but a Sword: The Political Theology of the English Revolution* (London: Routledge, 1993); Tai Liu, *Discord in Zion: The Puritan Divines and the Puritan Revolution, 1640-1660* (The Hauge: Nijhoff, 1973); Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics* (Cambridge MA: Harvard, 1965).

pursue a negotiated settlement, used the occasion to reject the possibility of compromising with those he identified as crypto-Catholics.

Over the past decades, the role of religion in the the outbreak of the war has been contested and revised by historians. Although much remains unresolved, most historians now accept that religious discontents played a significant part in instigating the conflict. Caroline Hibbard's work usefully reformulated the terms of the discussion around perceptions rather than facts, an approach extended by Jonathan Scott in his larger study of England's "troubles" in the seventeenth century.[441] Hibbard contended that whether or not Charles and Laud intended to re-Catholicize England is less important than the fact that they were widely believed to be doing so. John Morrill argues that these perceptions in turn created a parliamentary agenda driven more by religious than political issues—moving slowly to address legislative remedies while proceeding swiftly against the men perceived to be Charles's evil counsellors. Morrill warns that "Talk of 'popery' is not a form of 'white noise', a constant fuzzy background in the rhetoric and argument of the time against which significant changes in secular thought were taking place" (172), but was a crucial feature of the political landscape. Sermons consequently played an important role in politicizing a religious agenda.

Making 5 November a fast day was itself a relatively radical alteration of the Gunpowder tradition. Although sermon attendance had always been

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[441] Caroline Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot*; Scott, *England's Troubles*. On popular belief in a popish plot, see also Clifton, "The Popular Fear of Catholics during the English Revolution," in *Rebellion, Popular Protest and the Social Order in Early Modern England*, ed. Paul Slack (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984), 129-61. Scott (*England's Troubles*) reminds us that England must be seen within a European context and that the nervousness of English Protestants may have been justified by the resurgence of Catholicism on the continent.

mandatory, the day had never been marked by abstinence from food or labour. While most of the fasts established by the Long Parliament were new, this one required the reorientation of an existing calendrical occasion.[442] Like the earlier anniversary sermons, fasts were political acts. Consequently, both Elizabeth and James I had been wary of establishing a fast tradition, and Elizabeth had squelched the first proposal in 1580. In 1614, a test communion was proposed as a way for parliamentarians suspected of Catholic sympathies to demonstrate their loyalty to both church and state. The communion, concluding with a sermon, was repeated in 1621 and was, according to John F. Wilson, the genesis of preaching before the House of Commons. In 1624, however, Edward Cecil proposed a general fast, initiating a second regular preaching occasion, separate from the test communion, that became part of the opening of each session of the Caroline parliament.[443]

Wilson points out that "This independence of the two religious events served puritan purposes in a significant way. If the fast and the communion were yoked together, only one fast would be appropriate during each session of parliament. Severed from the test ritual, however, there was no theoretical limit to the number of occasions on which Commons could be subjected to preaching" (36). In addition to these authorized fasts, however, some clergy organized their own fasts to make political statements. Christopher Durston observes:

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[442] Based upon surviving sermons, 17 November does not appear to have been celebrated after 1640, when Stephen Marshall preached (*A Sermon preached before the Honourable House of Commons, now assembled in Parliament, at their publicke fast November 17, 1640*, London, 1641,Wing M776).

[443] Isaac Bargrave preached on this occasion (*A Sermon Preached before the Honorable Assembly of Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses of the Lower House of Parliament* [London, 1624], STC 1415).

"Throughout the Personal Rule, therefore, the ecclesiastical authorities viewed public fasting with extreme suspicion, identifying it closely with those most implacably opposed to the religious policies being promoted by the king and Laud" (132). As we have seen, the Gunpowder sermons could also provide sites—both physical and textual—for staging opposition and were viewed with similar distrust by the late 1630s. Regular monthly fasts began in early 1642 and continued until 1649, when parliament outlawed political preaching.[444] Over the course of the war, this proliferation of sermons seems to have diminished their effectiveness so that even parliamentarians had to be scolded into attendance.[445] Hugh Trevor-Roper suggests that those in the country resented the fasts, which "were always regarded as party propaganda" (309), while Durston argues that the requirement to abstain from both food and work contributed to their unpopularity with the general public (139-42). At the same time, Londoners appear to have flocked to the sermons, just as they had earlier to Paul's Cross, to learn the latest news.[446]

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[444] *An Act for Setting Apart a Day of Solemn Fasting and Humiliation; and Repealing the Former Monethly-Fast* (London, 1649), cited in John F. Wilson, *Pulpit in Parliament*, 96, n. 186.

[445] In his 12 September 1644 sermon preached before both Houses of Parliament, Matthew Newcomen accused the members of angering God by failing to keep their fast days (*A sermon, tending to set forth the right vse of the disasters that befall our armies*, London, 1644, Wing N913).

[446] On 8 May 1646, Clarendon recorded that "It was an observation in that time, that the first publishing of extraordinary news was from the pulpit; and by the preacher's text, and his manner of discourse upon it, the auditors might judge, and commonly foresaw, what was like to be next done in the Parliament or Council of State" (Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1958], 4.194). In May 1642 Edmund Waller's plot was first made known at St. Margaret's: "At a solemn fast, when they were listening to the sermon, a messenger entered the church, and communicated his errand to Pym, who whispered it to others who were placed near him, and then went with them out of the church, leaving the rest in solicitude and amazement." St. Margaret's, then, seems to have taken over the role of Paul's Cross in the transmission of news.

The institution of the test communion in 1614 had a second implication for the parliamentary sermons of the 1640s. Refusing to take communion in Westminster Abbey, which continued to use wafers, the Commons moved its service to the smaller St. Margaret's. The separation of the religious observances of the two houses that followed must only have underlined to observers their political differences during the early 1640s.[447] According to Julia Merritt, an influx of puritan gentry in the 1630s had gradually transformed St. Margaret's parish, formerly a bastion of conservatism.[448] Nevertheless, this site contained undeniable remnants of its Catholic history and its more recent formalist past. At least in the early civil war years, the communion table seems to have needed to be moved from its altarwise position before parliamentary communions, suggesting that Laudian influence had not been entirely superseded in the parish.[449] In addition, the church was rich in stained glass and statuary.[450] In 1641, a north

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[447] From the published sermons, it appears that on occasion the houses did meet together at St. Margaret's.

[448] Medieval and early modern Westminster has been the subject of several studies. See: J.F. Merritt, *The Social World of Early Modern Westminster* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2005); J.F. Merritt, "The Cradle of Laudianism? Westminster Abbey, 1558-1630," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 52.4 (2001), 623-46; and, Gervase Rosser, *Medieval Westminster 1200-1540* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1989). Studies of St. Margaret's include: Philip Holland, *St Margaret's Westminster: The Commons' Church within a Royal Peculiar* (Nuffield Henley on Thames: Aidan Ellis, 1993); Charles Hugh Egerton Smith, *Church and Parish: Studies in Church Problems, illustrated from the Parochial History of St. Margaret's, Westminster* (London: SPCK, 1955). For additional sources, including ephemeral ones, see the very useful bibliography compiled by Tony Trowles, *A Bibliography of Westminster Abbey between 1570 and 2000* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005).

[449] There are two references to motions to move the communion table before parliamentary communions in *The Journal of Simonds D'Ewes from the beginning of the Long Parliament to the opening of the trial of the Earl of Strafford* (New Haven: Yale, 1923) 43, 46. Nevertheless, Merrit has found "no evidence that the parish seized the opportunity of the Laudian reforms to invest more heavily in church ornamentation – there are no references to an enhanced communion table or rails" (*The Social World of Early Modern Westminster*, 348).

[450] On the interior of the church, see Merritt, *Social World of Early Modern Westminster*, 15-17; Gervase Rosser, *Medieval Westminster 1200-1540* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1989), 271-75; Albert Edward Bullock, *Westminster Abbey and St. Margaret's Church* (London: J. Tiranti and Co, 1920).

gallery was built, and it was here that parliamentarians sat during sermons, slightly above and to the right hand of the preacher.[451] Parishioners and the general public sat below facing the preacher but must have been forced to crane their necks to see him, given his distance above them.[452] This segregated the two groups into separate auditories and privileged the parliamentarians through their proximity to the preacher. Parliamentary authority is replicated in the printed sermons, which are prefaced by the official order to print and by what appears to have been an obligatory dedication to parliament, frequently expressing relations of patronage. Together, the physical site of preaching and the conditions of printing may have contributed, both at the time and for modern scholars, to the perception that the preachers and parliament spoke as one. While placing the preacher in what appeared to be a subordinate role to parliament, however, this arrangement also made parliament effectively a captive audience, much as the king had been in the royal closet during Jacobean court sermons.[453]

One of the thornier questions about the sermons is whether, or to what extent, the preachers were promoting their own agendas rather than acting as mouthpieces of parliament. Trevor-Roper's argument that "The real purpose of the monthly fast had been to provide a constant sounding-board of parliamentary policy, a regular means of contact with, and propaganda to, the people" (342) assumes that the clergy acted solely at the prompting of parliament. More recent

[451] An ordinance of 1644, after the signing of the Solemn Oath and Covenant, required parliament to sit in the gallery in order to accommodate other spectators (Holland, *St Margaret's Westminster*, 54).

[452] According to Merritt, the church either replaced or refurbished its pulpit in 1638-39 (*The Social World of Early Modern Westminster*, 348, notes 192 and 193).

[453] The similarities between this arrangment and the court preaching arrangement that Peter McCullough has described in *Sermons at Court* (Ch. 1) are worth noting.

scholars have recognized that preachers had theological as well as political motives. David Zaret argues that the "Secular benefits of preaching were always treated as an appendage to its primary purpose, which was to proclaim the gospel" (83). Stephen Baskerville likewise posits a deeper engagement between the two, suggesting that the doctrine of justification by faith gave "to Protestants and especially to Puritanism the claim to be an *ideology*: a system of ideas that creates its own reality, that derives its fulfillment from the very fact that it is believed" (8) and that its ideas became revolutionary simply by being opened to a mass audience. He concludes: "The sermon then was not simply a medium, and the pulpit not simply a platform, for issuing political statements; the promotion of preaching, the very act of delivering a sermon, was itself a political statement" (8-9). In fact, I suggest that the preachers acted in both their traditional roles of supporting what they saw as divinely ordained authority and providing counsel and critique to their new patrons, the English parliamentarians.

Trevor-Roper asserts that parliament used the fast sermons "both for strategic and for tactical purposes: both to declare long-term aims and to inaugurate temporary shifts of policy" (294). While he emphasizes the ways in which the sermons were used to prepare people for specific political actions against particular individuals—Laud, Strafford, and eventually the king—the Gunpowder sermons seem to have functioned not only to justify the actions of parliament to the people but also to promote the preachers' own religio-political agendas to parliament. A primary function of these sermons appears to have been to legitimate the narrative of a popish plot that had developed during the 1630s,

thereby justifying hostilities towards the king.[454] In 1641, parliament was recessed until 20 October due to plague and smallpox. When it resumed, "Commons seized the occasion to authorize the first of an annual series of public thanksgivings for the deliverance from the Gunpowder Treason. November 5 provided an obvious opportunity for the puritan preachers to rehearse the perfidy of papists so dramatically displayed, they believed, in the Irish rebellion" (Wilson 54). It also provided an opportunity to condemn crypto-Catholics closer to home and to glorify parliament.

Cornelius Burges was the only preacher appointed for the Gunpowder anniversary, and even so he notes in his dedication to the printed sermon that the pressure of other business forced him to abridge his delivery, a circumstance that was to be echoed by a number of his successors. From his text, Psalm 76.10, Burges draws the first application that "*the rage of the wicked against God and his people is bottomlesse and endlesse*" (9), but he concludes that this rage only gives more glory to God and more benefits to his people, for God will not forsake them. Having described earlier plots, including the Gunpowder Plot, he claims that Catholics continue to scheme even while pleading for toleration, not, as they claim, because they are persecuted, but because their religion compels them to do so. In this, Burges's sermon is completely conventional, but it breaks new ground in making parliament the site of God's primary deliverance in 1605. The calling and actions of the present parliament demonstrate the ongoing benefits of the initial deliverance, for this parliament's work is to continue reforming the church.

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[454] On the development of this narrative, see Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot*.

He rebukes the parliamentarians for failing to deal with the religious crisis, but here his main targets are sectarians, not crypto-papists (160). Thus, while flattering parliament, Burges also claims the traditional right of chastising his political superiors. The sermon's function as political counsel becomes clearer when it is juxtaposed with one preached by Henry Miller on the same day at his parish church of St. Leonard Foster Lane. Miller is careful not to stray from the historical occasion and conventionally reminds his parishioners to show gratitude to God for their deliverance.[455]

On the same day, preaching at the Cathedral of St. Peter at Exon on Judges 5.31, William Sclater, a preacher with royalist connections, pointedly ignored the Irish rebellion and the question of toleration.[456] Instead, he compared England's situation to that of Israel without a king. The puritan enemies of the church are "a crooked and perverse generation" (13) who are reducing the country to anarchy; some of them "are full of all subtilty and all mischief, enemies of all Righteousnes, by their wrangling, and contentions, time-serving disturbance, never ceasing to pervert the ancient, right, and established wayes of the Lord" (13). His allusion to Charles's 18 October letter affirming his intentions to live and die a member of the Church of England counters the popish plot claims advanced by preachers such as Burges.

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[455] See: Henry Miller, *God the protector of Israel: a commemoration sermon, for our gracious deliverance, from that monster of treacheries, the gunpowder treason : preached on Friday the fifth of November, at the parish church of S. Leonards Foster-lane, anno domini, 1641*, London, 1641 (Wing 2060A).
[456] The sermon is dedicated to Henry Murray, one of the grooms of the king's bedchamber. William Sclater, *Papisto-Mastix: or Deborah's Prayer against Gods Enemies, explaned and applyed*, London, 1642 (Wing S919).

Sclater appropriates for his own cause the authority of tradition, while attributing many of the qualities formerly associated with Catholics, particularly their dangerous tendency to innovate, to the new puritan antagonists. He treads cautiously over the question of whether it is acceptable to hate one's enemies. Although we may think that Christ does not permit such action, Sclater insists that Jesus's prohibition in Luke 6.27 comes from tradition rather than scripture and is therefore a guideline rather than a law. When our enemies are also God's, we are permitted to curse them—to pray for their physical, but not their spiritual, annihilation. Those who destroy the peace of the state must be eradicated. He concludes this part of the sermon somewhat enigmatically: "Your selves with due Cautions, may make the application: I have spoken unto wise men, who can judge, I doubt not, what I say" (29).[457] Both sides appear to have been troubled by the problem of hating other Protestants, and Sclater turns with some relief to the evils of Rome, particularly of the Jesuits, in the second hour. While this is customary for the occasion, it also allows him to distinguish formalists from Catholics. Nevertheless, Sclater's sermon, beginning with his choice of text, makes puritanism the new enemy. Although this sermon, unlike Burges's, was delivered under no special authority, the two preachers seem to have drawn the battle lines in a rhetorical war that would be continued by Newcomen in 1642.

Newcomen's was the only parliamentary sermon preached on 5 November 1642, and none appear to have been preached the following year. In 1644,

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[457] Sclater's cautious authorization of his auditors' interpretive faculties suggests that as royalists moved into an oppositional role they were more inclined to permit individual interpretation, but that they remained sceptical about the abilities of the average listener or reader.

however, both Anthony Burges and Charles Herle preached before the Commons, while William Spurstowe and John Strickland preached to the Lords. On this occasion, the ambiguous success at Newbury and the Scottish capture of Newcastle called forth carefully worded sermons, some optimistic, others more cautious. All fast sermons, including those of 5 November, declined after 1645. According to Wilson, the "fast institution languished, not only because it had outlived its usefulness within parliament and the realm but because its premise—that political men could submit themselves and their interests to divine purposes—was cruelly refuted for all but the most radical and obdurate of believers" (Wilson 97). Wilson downplays what may be a more crucial factor—the fracturing of parliament on religious matters as separatists began to outnumber presbyterians.[458]

Newcomen was already recognized as a popular preacher before the civil war, and he continued to play an important role in parliament during the early 1640s. As a presbyterian, however, his influence waned, perhaps partly because he supported a program that would accommodate both presbyterians and independents.[459] Like Burges in 1641, Newcomen in 1642 was forced to abridge his Gunpowder sermon due to the pressure of other business in the House. In his dedication to the Commons, he explains that he has nevertheless published the entire sermon in the hope that it will be of use in "establishing Religion,

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[458] Wilson's discussion of individual preachers indicates that after 1645 most of the ministers invited to preach were independents rather than presbyterians, an indication of the independents' increasing power (*Pulpit in Parliament*, Ch. 4).

[459] Tom Webster, "Newcomen, Matthew (*d.* 1669)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oct. 2006).

Reforming the Church, rooting out Popery" (A3^{v}). In fact, the Commons had already offered the sermon such a role, for along with the customary order appointing a parliamentarian (William Massam in this case) to thank Newcomen for his sermon, and directing the preacher to have the sermon printed, is the request for him "to give a Coppy thereof to the Committee for Religion, that when they shall have liberty to sit, they may consider by it, how to prepare and provide for the extirpation of Popery" (n.p.). Newcomen's sermon, then, is the only Gunpowder sermon known to have been considered as a basis for public policy.

The Committee for Religion had been at work since the late 1620s both pursuing recusants and calling for stringent enforcement of the laws that had been passed in the wake of the Gunpowder Plot.[460] Unfortunately, due to the loss of most of the committee records of the Long Parliament, we do not know whether the sermon was ever discussed in this forum. Our two main sources for the work of the committee during the Long Parliament are the records of Sir Edward Dering and Sir Simonds D'Ewes, neither of whose surviving papers covers the period in question.[461] We do know, however, that within a few months some of Newcomen's proposals were being put into effect through assaults on images in churches, including St. Margaret's, and clerical deprivations.[462] Did Newcomen

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[460] Sheila Lambert, "Committees, Religion, and Parliamentary Encroachment on Royal Authority in Early Stuart England," *English Historical Review* 105 414 (1990), 60-95

[461] Simonds D'Ewes, *The Journal of Sir Simonds D'Ewes from the beginning of the Long Parliament to the opening of the trial of the Earl of Stafford*, Lambert Blackwell Larking, *Proceedings, principally in the county of Kent, in connection with the Parliaments called in 1640, and especially with the Committee of religion appointed in that year from the collections of Sir Edward Dering, bart, 1627-1644* ([Westminster].Camden, 1862).

[462] The spring of 1643 saw a wave of iconoclasm in which the stained glass east window of St Margaret's was destroyed and the statue of the saint herself defaced On 1 April 1643, an act was passed sequestering the estates of "notorious delinquents," both lay and clerical See John Walker,

activate these concerns, or was he garnering popular support for a program already being planned by parliament?

Newcomen takes as his text Nehemiah 4.11, "And our adversaries said, they shall not know nor see till wee come in the midst among them and slay them and cause the work to cease." The only other surviving Gunpowder sermon on this text was preached by Thomas Reeve in Colbey, Norfolk in 1629 and published in 1632. Although Reeve's sermon is a relatively standard piece of anti-Catholic polemic, it is ominously directed against the great as the chief targets of Catholic proselytizing. Already, he warns, some are willing to work with the Catholic Antichrist, particularly at the Caroline court. During the early years of the civil war, Nehemiah's struggles to rebuild the walls of Jerualem seem to have been considered an apt parallel for the parliamentarians' task of restoring the English church. In a commentary published in 1653, but drawing upon an earlier work by Konrad Pellicanus, John Mayer notes that Jerusalem is a figure for the church.[463] The gates in the wall control access to the church, both keeping the faithful in and enemies out. Citing Pellicanus, Meyer notes that "they who doe the like for their native Countrey and Church, labouring to reform things amisse, and to repaire the decays of both are praised, and we are taught always to have them in remembrance, as most worthy instruments" (56). On the 29 June fast in 1642, William Gouge preached from Nehemiah 5.19, offering the Israelite to his

An attempt towards recovering an account of the numbers and sufferings of the clergy of the Church of England, ... who were sequester'd, harrass'd, &c. in the late times of the Grand Rebellion: occasion'd by the ninth chapter (now the second volume) of Dr. Calamy's Abridgment of the Life of Mr. Baxter. Together with an examination of that chapter. By John Walker, ... Vol. 1. London, 1714. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale. Univ Of Alberta. 2 Oct. 2009, 54.

[463] John Mayer, *A Commentary upon the whole Old Testament...*, London, 1653 (Wing M1424).

audience as the role model of a good patriot. Richard Cust observes that the term "patriot" had been first invoked as a slogan in the elections of spring 1640 and suggests that in this context patriots were defined as those dissociated from the court who were uncontaminated by Arminianism, popery, or participation in the Caroline administration of the 1630s.[464] Near the end of his sermon, Gouge produces a list of the specific duties of good patriots and parliamentarians: "Heare complaints, receive Petitions, examine Accusations, punish Delinquents, cause restitution of that which is uniustly taken away, and satisfaction for that which is wrongfully done, to be made" (24). Among Nehemiah's patriotic actions, according to Gouge, was the enforcement of a "solemne covenant and oath" (26) to ensure that the people maintained their good order. He adds that this is "the rather to be noted for justification and commendation of the course which both Houses of Parliament have taken, about bringing most of this Land into a solemne Covenant" (26). Thus, Gouge endorses parliament's actions while prescribing an ongoing political agenda.

Between Gouge's sermon in June and Newcomen's in November, the gulf between uneasy peace and open warfare had been crossed, and the story of Nehemiah had acquired a new resonance. On 10 August Parliament had issued "Directions for the Defence of London," but the urgency to defend the city had increased markedly in the fall, spurred by Prince Rupert's plan to attack London after the battle of Edgehill in late October. He halted his progress towards

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[464] Richard Cust, "'Patriots' and 'popular' spirits: narratives of conflict in early Stuart politics" in *The English Revolution c. 1590-1720: Politics, Religion and* Communitie,s ed. Nicholas Tyacke, (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2007), 46.

London, however, stopping at Oxford to regroup and to transform the city into a garrison. By 2 November, the Commons had agreed to peace negotiations, and on the third the king left Oxford for London. Newcomen's text, then, must have seemed particularly apt. Responding in particular to the prospect of a negotiated peace settlement that he felt would threaten reform in the church, the preacher justifies continuing the war in the service of religion. As in the oppositional sermons of the 1630s, the Gunpowder anniversary offered a perfect opportunity to preach this message because it provided apparently incontrovertible proof that Catholics were guilty of plotting against Protestants, and especially against parliament. It then required only insisting upon the crypto-Catholicism of Charles and Laud to make the Caroline bishops, and by association the king, guilty of a popish plot that would reassert itself in the event of a negotiated settlement.

As in the case of the other Gunpowder sermons, our understanding of Newcomen's is complicated by the problem of multiple audiences—performance and print, parliamentarians and people. Juxtaposing the two remaining traces of the sermon, the printed pamphlet and notes attributed to Walter Yonge, second son of the parliamentarian and diarist, provides an opportunity to probe Newcomen's interactions with his listeners and readers, since differences between the notes and the printed version suggest that Newcomen adapted his message for oral and print audiences. Nevertheless, we must proceed with caution when considering the evidence of the notes. Scholars are only beginning to grapple with questions about how early modern listeners and readers took notes and how they

used them.[465] In particular, there has been very little study of sermon notes and their relationships to sermons as either preached or printed. Yonge's notes survive in a small notebook containing records of sermons attended between November 1642 and February 1643/44 (BL Add. MS 18781). On the same day, Yonge also took notes at a sermon by a "Mr. Craynford," probably James Cranford, in an unknown location. In the dedication to the printed version, Newcomen tells his readers that lack of time forced him to abridge both the textual introduction and the application of the sermon. This seems to be confirmed by Yonge's notes, which begin at the bottom of page nineteen of the printed version with Newcomen's transition from the scriptural text to the contemporary application, suggesting that he may have omitted the commentary on his text entirely in the oral delivery.[466]

Based upon Yonge's notes, Newcomen began his sermon that day with a fairly conventional narrative of the plot, but also a more bloodthirsty one than perhaps any preacher since Barlow. The opening was arresting, as Newcomen reminded his listeners that "this day 37: yeares did god ma=ke his people to ride in a triumphall chariott of Celebraciõn" (131^{v}). He compared the plot to a variety of Old Testament treacheries, stopping short, however, of his claim in the printed sermon that the plot was second in scale only to that committed by the fallen angels, who planned "to blow up all *Man-kind in Adam*" (24). Both Newcomen

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[465] What little research has been done on the subject of notetaking in the Renaissance generally relates to making notes from printed texts rather than sermons. The most useful study in this context is perhaps Ann Blair's "Note Taking as an Art of Transmission," *Critical Inquiry* 31.1 (2004):, 85-107.

[466] It is of course possible that Yonge simply did not take notes on this part of the sermon, or that he arrived late. Nevertheless, the notes provide the outline of an effective abridgement, suggesting that the sermon may well have been preached in this form.

and Yonge seem to relish the preacher's catalogue of Satan's works, of which the Gunpowder Plot was to be grand finale: "the fu=nerall pire of England in Q. maryes dayes, the massacre of Ffance, the wors of Germany the fresh blood of Ireland, are goodly sights to ... [Satan] & yet this had bin much more delightsome" (130^{r}).[467] Having described the results of a successful plot in graphic detail, the preacher attributed its failure to the direct intervention of God, unaided by King James. In the printed version, he makes the same claim that the plot was prevented not by "any *State vigilancy* or *prudence*, but *meerely divine providence*" (28); however, he then refuses to describe the deliverance, claiming that everyone already knows the story. This evasion is probably intended to avoid crediting James with the interpretation of the Monteagle letter. Perhaps most notably, Newcomen seems to have added to the published version an emphasis upon the role of parliament. He asserts at the beginning that in 1605 the king had called parliament "to secure the *Church*, the true Religion and worship of God, with needfull, healthfull Lawes" (20), and he concludes by advising the currrent parliament that their first action should be to make and enforce more stringent laws against Catholics. These passages do not appear in Yonge's notes.

In the printed sermon, a lengthy textual explication that edges into an application, not to the Gunpowder Plot but to the current crisis, precedes the plot narrative. Newcomen begins by drawing a parallel between Nehemiah's discouragements in rebuilding Jerusalem's walls and England's struggle to reform her church over the previous hundred years, casting Catholics in the roles of

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[467] As the writer began from both ends of the notebook towards the centre, the foliation of the sermon notes is in reverse order.

Sanballat and Tobias. The doctrine that the preacher extracts from his text is that "*The great designe of the enemies of the church, is by craft or cruelty, or both, to hinder any worke that tends to the establishment, or promoting of the churches good*" (3). Beginning with Abel's murder, all the designs against the church have been instigated by Satan. Frequently, the church's enemies claim to have no plans to alter religion, even when they limit preaching to one sermon per day or allow sports on Sunday. The church's enemies may also work through intermarriages between believers and non-believers, enacting laws against the church, prosecuting false charges against it, or using secret conspiracies. Newcomen emphasizes the dangers of "outlandish" women without making specfic application to Henrietta Maria, describing the problem of unequal marriage particularly in regard to children corrupted by a Catholic parent. Jesuits are especially practiced at creating turmoil, particularly by ingratiating themselves with kings and princes. Newcomen thus manages to identify the king's evil counsellors, to whom he returns later in the sermon, with Jesuits, the source of much anxiety during the civil war and Interregnum.[468] By associating Charles and Laud not only with Catholicism, but even with Jesuitism, he intensifies his attack on those he takes to be the church's enemies. Although not explicitly, he also suggests that if parliament negotiates with the king and his crypto-Catholic counsellors, it will become complicit in the plot to destroy England's true church.

[468] Arthur Marotti cites Hugh Aveling's assertion that there were only nine Jesuit priests in England in 1593 and John Bossy's estimate that by 1641 there were almost 400 Jesuits in England, 180 of them missionaries (Arthur F. Marotti, *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy: Catholic and Anti-Catholic Discourses in Early Modern England* [Notre Dame, Ind.: U of Notre Dame P, 2005], 52).

Yet, Newcomen also situates himself as a peacemaker by recognizing that "Hatred [sic] grounded in differences of Religion, are the most bitter and uncapable of Reconciliation" (15), and that the closer the two groups are in doctrine the more bitter the animosity between them. Therefore, the greatest hatred is between puritans and formalists. God chooses not to restrain this antagonism both in order to try his people and to increase his own glory. Like Sclater in the previous year, Newcomen seems to have recognized that his listeners might have scruples about Protestants going to war against Protestants. But Newcomen's message to his readers is that ending the war would frustrate God's plans for England and so potentially incur his wrath.

After interjecting his narrative of the plot, Newcomen returns, according to both the printed version and Yonge's notes, to his project of proving that Catholics have been plotting continuously since 1605. The Irish Rebellion, he claims, was plotted for seventeen years, while the interruption of parliaments in England was also part of a Catholic plot, disguised as Arminianism. Although many still insist that the Laudians had no intention of changing England's religion, he insists that they followed a template set out in a Jesuit pamphlet for exactly that purpose. This pamphlet claimed to be a translation "*by a Catholicke Spy*" of the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters (Book 2) of a Latin work entitled *Politicorum Libri Decem*.[469] First published in 1630 with a Latin title, and presumably without authorization since the title page asserts that it was "Printed

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[469] The first English edition (1630) is STC 16800; the second (1641) is Wing L3004. Contzen's seems to have become one of the texts routinely used as proof of Catholic plotting in this period. Selections were printed in 1653 in *The Plots of Jesuits* (Wing P2603) and in 1663 by Richard Baxter in *Fair warning, or XX prophesies concerning the return of popery* (Wing F104).

at the Cat and Fidle for a Dancing Mouse," it was reprinted in 1641 as *Look about you. The plot of Contzen, the Moguntine Iesuite, to Cheate a Church of the Religion Established therein, and to serve in Popery by Art, without noise or Tumult*. The text recommends a number of strategies for restoring Catholicism without unduly alarming a population, much as a musician gradually tightens the strings of an instrument. It describes, in other words, a plot that is almost the exact opposite of the Gunpowder Plot.

Rather than being enacted in an instant of terror, this plot reveals itself gradually and almost imperceptibly. A prince may conceal his plans by pretending concerns with the consciences of his subjects so that they will applaud him for loving peace rather than suspect him of changing religions. Meanwhile, he may be quietly removing heretics and making laws against the obstinate. Newcomen is careful merely to outline this program and to allow his hearers to make their own analogies with the Caroline administration. Nevertheless, his purpose is to show that Arminianism was only a prelude to restoring Catholicism, a belief that justifies the war against the king. In addition, it shows that the king cannot be trusted—his actions may be concealing his intentions. There are at least as many Catholics in England as there were at the time of the Gunpowder Plot, according to Newcomen, and their doctrines have not changed. But the treachery plotted now has exceeded even that of the 1605 plot, for these plots have been laid in the heart of the king under the guise of protecting the Protestant faith. And thus, "*The breath of our nostrils, the Anointed of the Lord is taken in their pitts; of whom we said, under his shadow we shall live*" (42 *vere* 50). The king has been captured

not by a foreign nation, but by the evil counsellors who have divided him from his Protestant subjects.

Newcomen justifies war as the only way to resist popery, but licenses his hearers only to hate Catholicism, not individual Catholics. Yonge's notes end with Newcomen's hope that the king may be divided from his evil counsellors. In the printed version, however, Newcomen expands on the problem of evil counsel. Even a king who converts to Catholicism may be deposed by the pope; therefore it is not in the king's best interest to make himself a papal subject, since neither his crown nor his head will be safe. It is, however, to the benefit of the bishops, who must therefore be responsible for the king's actions. Taken together, both this conclusion and the opening scriptural exegesis, neither of which seems to have been part of the oral sermon, offer a much more critical view of the king's ecclesiastical advisors and a much more positive view of his political advisors in parliament.

Newcomen's sermon builds on Gouge's representation of Nehemiah as a patriot, but for him Parliament has become a collective Nehemiah. He claims that James called the 1605 meeting postponed by the plot to enact anti-Catholic legislation to protect the English church, asking rhetorically: "Wherefore should a Parliament meet, but for that worke?" (20).[470] The question, however, invites agreement to what is clearly a drastic revisioning of Parliament's role in governing the nation. Although only the Commons may have been present, he

[470] Here Newcomen, without documenting his sources, accepts the veracity of Catholic commentators on the plot, who attempted to justify the conspiracy as a reaction to fears of harsher measures against their religion. Newcomen, however, applauds this intention, seeing the sole purpose of Parliament as the maintenance of Protestantism.

addresses the members of both houses as "*Princes of the tribes of England*" (33) who "representatively are the whole Nation" (31). Just as Parliament was the primary target of the Gunpowder Plot, so it has been the target of a plot without powder that prevented it from being called for twelve years. Newcomen emphasizes the secrecy with which all of these plots have been carried out in order to demonstrate that the Gunpowder Plot, the Laudian "innovations," and the Irish rebellion, despite their different modes of operation, are all part of the same Catholic treachery and warns that the same enemies who tried to divide the king from his counsellors are now trying to divide parliament from the people.

The printed sermon concludes with a list of the religious means for eliminating Catholicism—establishing public fasts, eradicating all remaining traces of popery in churches, ridding the church of corrupt ministers, conforming as much as possible with the other reformed churches (including the Scots), establishing a faithful ministry throughout the country, and suppressing Catholicism in Ireland. Secular means, he says, should be left to the state, thereby claiming for himself a status above politics that is negated for the reader by the authorization to publish.

While we must use caution in reading the differences between the printed sermon and Yonge's notes, they raise some interesting questions about who was being addressed in the parliamentary sermons. Newcomen appears to have been more wary of openly criticizing the king and his counsellors before his audience at St. Margaret's and less fulsome in his praise of parliament than he was in the printed sermon. This discretion suggests that he wished to be perceived by his

general audience as a pastor saving his flock from the Roman wolves rather than a political advisor offering counsel. Despite Newcomen's belated attempt to draw a distinction between religion and politics, however, the printed sermon accepts a direct political function. Clearly he disagreed, for religious reasons, with parliament's decision to negotiate with the king. The religious program Newcomen proposed in his printed sermon, but not necessarily on 5 November, included the destruction of the remnants of the Catholic past in churches.[471]

Whether such a program had already been planned or whether Newcomen's sermon initiated it, a fresh wave of iconoclasm commenced in the following spring. Among the casualties were the stained glass windows of St. Margaret's, and Newcomen may have been reluctant to propose such a program before the parishioners. Although he was forced to abridge his sermon that day due to time constraints, the choices he made in both the spoken and the printed sermons may indicate that he recognized several different audiences. The printed sermon, as a document that could be read over, and potentially used as a guide for public policy, included detailed advice to parliament and a stronger justification for the war, possibly intended both for wavering MPs and a broader national audience of uncommitted subjects. At St. Margaret's, however, Newcomen sensed

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[471] Achsah Guibbory, who explores the ways in which parliamentary preachers used Jewish history, particularly references to rebuilding the temple, in their sermons, observes that despite scholarly interest in iconoclasm, preachers were generally more interested in the work of building rather than destroying. Newcomen's sermon, which she does not discuss, is interesting in this context, since he uses a text alluding to the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls to call for a program that includes destroying the remnants of Catholicism in churches. See "Israel and English Protestant Nationalism: 'Fast Sermons' during the English Revolution" in *Early Modern Nationalism and Milton's England*, ed. David Loewenstein and Paul Stevens (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2008), 123-28.

a greater need to concentrate on his spiritual role, reinterpreting the myth of deliverance created by James I to justify rebellion against his son.

4.5 Seth Ward (1661): Obedience Restored?

With the Restoration, sermons returned to the court, but the most significant political anniversaries became those of the regicide and the return of Charles II. The Gunpowder anniversary thus remained the only prerevolutionary occasion in what was effectively a new political calendar.[472] This change removed 5 November from its earlier contextualization among the records of other Catholic plots and situated it within what was essentially an anti-puritan calendar, making the failed plot a foreshadowing of the successful one plotted not by Catholics but by the godly. Unlike his father, Charles II seems to have recognized the importance of sermons as a mode of "representative publicness," even if he lacked his grandfather's fondness for the genre. In what appears to have been the first Gunpowder anniversary sermon of the new reign, Seth Ward seems to have determined to use the pulpit as his Jacobean predecessors had done, as a means of supporting the monarch while also offering him counsel. Ward, however, approached his court audience in a new way, seeing them not as competent interpreters, but as potential subversives needing to be coerced into submission. At the same time, Ward offered Charles II a clear warning about the limitations of his religious authority. Reprinted during the 1710 controversy over Henry

[472] On the role of 5 November in this new calendar, see Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells*, Ch. 11. Paul Connerton observes that revolutions are frequently marked by the implementation of a new calendar (*How Societies Remember*, Ch. 2). While the Restoration was not a revolution, its founders also saw the calendar as a means of justifying political change.

Sacheverell's impeachment for another Gunpowder sermon, Ward's message of passive obedience does not seem to have entirely satisfied a new generation.

Although few gunpowder sermons from the 1660s survive, the preaching and publication of Ward's Whitehall sermon in 1661 suggest that Charles at least intended at the beginning of his reign to revive the Gunpowder anniversary as a royal occasion.[473] Carolyn Edie notes that sermons comprised a significant component in the three official celebrations of the Restoration that took place between late April and the end of June 1660. Her analysis of the surviving copies of these sermons indicates that although their tone varied widely, the sermons were guardedly hopeful of a future in which order would return to the nation under a new monarch.[474] In a more recent study, Edie also observes that Charles carefully selected St. George's Day (23 April 1661) as the date for his coronation, reviving an old festival that had languished during the years of puritan rule (313). The sermon preached by George Morley, Bishop of Worcester, on this occasion emphasized the restoration of the monarchy itself more than Charles's personal qualities, insisting upon the divine institution of monarchy and its opposition to tyranny. Edie concludes that "There was nothing very remarkable or original in what Morley said, but the point he made was clear. England rejoiced in the restoration of order, propriety, monarchy, and the laws which protected all three"

[473] It is possible that the program authorized by Charles II was opposed by preachers who wished to maintain the traditional anti-Catholic focus of the day. In 1662, Richard Carpenter preached a diatribe against Catholicism and toleration, ending by advising Parliament to conduct a just war against the Roman church and asking God to make Charles an example to his people (*Rome in her fruits being a sermon preached on the fifth of November, 1662 near to the standard in Cheapside* [London, 1663, Wing C626], 32).

[474] See "Right Rejoicing: Sermons on the Occasion of the Stuart Restoration, 1660," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 62.1 (1979), 69.

("Public" 316). Convocation spent the summer of 1661 writing orders of service for the 29 May and 30 January anniversaries, suggesting that this was a priority for the new regime (Spurr 40). If Charles hoped to use sermons to reinforce his position as a monarch by divine right, however, his clergy were determined to remind him of the limitations upon his power.

In 1661, Ward preached a message of passive obedience to the monarch, but at the same time clearly articulated the boundaries of Charles's ecclesiastical responsibilities. He chose his text from the thirteenth chapter of Romans, the standard scriptural source of anti-resistance texts from the Elizabethan period.[475] In fact, he seems to have deliberately harkened back to the Elizabethan and Jacobean sermons. In his dedication, he attributes his reluctance both to preach and to publish to anxiety of influence, confiding to the reader his concern "that in a Cause of so great consequence, so clear, so nobly handled by the greatest *Worthies* of the *Church* of *England*, I should not finde any thing to be tolerably spoken, before the greatest, and most revered Judgment under Heaven" (A3^{v}). Without mentioning names, he seems to be placing himself in a series of royal preachers that includes men like William Barlow, Lancelot Andrewes, and John King, conveniently blotting out the memory of the parliamentary preachers. Despite these attempts to recreate the past, however, Ward is clearly addressing issues that had arrived with the Restoration. While Ferrell has suggested that the gunpowder occasion had always elicited a certain strain of anti-puritanism, this for the first time completely overshadowed anti-Catholicism. Ward makes an

[475] See Glen Bowman, "Elizabethan Catholics and Romans 13: A Chapter in the History of Political Polemic," *Journal of Church and State* 47.3 (2005), 531-44.

analogy between the Catholic League and the Solemn League and Covenant that clearly identifies the regicide as a successful Gunpowder Plot. In addition, he attacks a notion that would not have occurred to James I or his subjects, that government and religion are opposed. He begins by insisting that the church and the state must operate together. Religion and government cannot be separated, since the bishops are responsible for religion, but their canons must be enforced by civil laws. This state of affairs leaves little opportunity for the monarch to intervene in religious matters, and Ward specifically bars the king from any direct role in the church. Jeffrey R. Collins notes that one of the defining characteristics of the Restoration "was a degree of hostility between the royal court and the English episcopate unprecedented since the Reformation" (549). Unlike Laud, who had allowed Charles I full royal supremacy, the Restoration bishops were unprepared to grant Charles II any prerogatives they perceived as belonging to themselves. Ward outlines clearly the king's duties in religious matters—to regulate worship and reform abuses in the church. But, he cautions: "we do not *entitle* him to the *Priest's Office* (the *Spiritual* Function) or the *Execution* of it, in *preaching* the *Word, administring* the *Sacraments*, *exercising* the power of *Ordinatio*n, or of the *Keyes*, &c" (20). The exclusion of the sovereign from preaching and administering the sacraments had been accepted from the time of the Reformation, so Ward's need publicly to articulate these restrictions seems significant. At the same time, his "etc." offered the threat of expanding the list of exclusions. As Collins points out, this developing insistence upon the separation of royal from episcopal functions resulted in a tendency to view the sacred and

secular as parallel but separate spheres of authority (566). In addition, it opened the episcopacy to charges of popery, which may partly explain the bishops' propensity to draw attention to puritan disobedience.

Relations between the king and the bishops had not yet become so polarized, nor had Ward yet become a bishop, but he was clearly embarking on a career path that allied his interests with those of the episcopate. The king rewarded him for his loyalty in August 1660 with the parish of St. Lawrence Jewry, which was in the royal gift. Appointments as precentor, prebendary, and dean of Exeter Cathedral followed the next year, and in the summer of 1662 Ward became Bishop of Exeter, later being translated to the see of Salisbury (1667). Although his biographer, Walter Pope, painted a flattering picture of his conduct during and after the civil wars, some saw him as a consummate politician. According to Pope, he was maligned by Anthony à Wood, who claimed that he had changed his politics and taken the Oath of Engagement "the effect of which was *to be faithful to the Commonwealth of England, as it was then established without a King or House of Lords*" (Wood 2.627) in order to obtain an Oxford professorship in 1649.[476] Anticipating the Restoration in 1660, however, he had arranged to be imprisoned at Cambridge to demonstrate his loyalty to the crown. Once made dean of Exeter, he had "wound himself in a short time, by his smooth

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[476] Ward was a notable mathematician and astronomer, who also had an interest in the development of a universal language, although he gave up these pursuits after the Restoration. For a more balanced summary of Ward's career, see: John Henry, "Ward, Seth (1617–1689)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2006).

language and behaviour, into the favour of the Gentry of the neighbourhood" (2.628). While Pope and Wood disagree about Ward's sincerity, neither denies that he had superior rhetorical skills.

According to Pope, Ward's sermons "were strong, methodical and clear, and, when Occasion required, pathetical and eloquent" (24). In this sermon, Ward's choice of text offered little scope for subtlety of interpretation, nor did he exploit any that there might have been. Structured in neither of the traditional ways, but as an essay that establishes a thesis in order to refute it, the sermon exemplifies the fear of interpretation that Ward articulates throughout. Treating Romans 13.1-7 as a "theory," he sets out to prove that God never places restraints on sovereign power. The traditional argument for submission to political authorities, as offered in the "Homily against Wilful Disobedience," was that human government was a reflection of divine government, but Ward seems uncomfortable with arguing from analogy. Instead, he offers Moses, the children in Daniel, the Virgin Mary, and Christ and his apostles as examples of loyalty to civic authority, not devotion to God, and reiterates that God did not give any of these individuals, even Christ on the cross, power to resist either just or unjust authority. But although Ward structures his sermon according to the practices of rational discourse, he makes no effort to persuade his audience, stating curtly that "The strongest, and most operative *Arguments* upon men ... are Arguments *of Terrour*" (8). Ward is interested in subdued subjects, not independent, thoughtful ones who will read, or listen, between the lines of his sermon.

But while Ward's sermon offers a ringing endorsement of passive obedience, it also clearly limits the sovereign's power in religious matters. Later in his reign, when Charles's confrontations with the bishops over these issues had escalated, the king might not have ordered the sermon printed, but at this point he was apparently inclined to overlook Ward's admonition to himself in order to publicize the message that royal authority was to be obeyed.[477] Ward's theme seems to have been echoed in the only other known gunpowder sermon from the 1660s, the Robert South sermon recorded by John Evelyn, who notes approvingly that South had preached on obedience to magistrates in 1664.[478]

Ward's sermon was reprinted in collections of his sermons in 1672 and 1674, then reappeared as a pamphlet during the 1710 exchanges over Henry Sacheverell's immensely controversial sermon the previous November. In the intervening years, Gunpowder sermons had actively participated in political life during two periods. The first was in 1673, when, as John Spurr points out, Charles II's attempt to impose the Declaration of Indulgence had caused fear of popery once again to overcome fear of dissent (64-65). Some indication of the change in relations is indicated by South's 1675 sermon at Westminster Abbey, which insisted upon the king's duty to his subjects along with the subjects' duty to the monarch. In particular, South stressed the king's duty to care for the church. God preserves kings not because monarchy is divinely ordained, but because it is the best form of government; however, "the greatness or strength of a Monarchy

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[477] In 1608 James had apparently acted from similar motives when he ordered John King's virulently anti-Catholic 5 November court sermon published despite King's blunt warning to James about his dangerous leniency towards papists. See Ferrell, *Government by Polemic*, 99-106.
[478] *The Diary of John Evelyn*, 1.384.

depends chiefly upon the Personal Qualifications of the Prince or Monarch" (587). This is a significant, and ominous, shift from the rationale for obedience presented in the *Homilies* as well as from Morley's coronation sermon, which had de-emphasized Charles's personal qualities. South concludes by reminding subjects to obey the monarch and advising kings to be thankful for their deliverances and not court further mischief. At least eight sermons survive from 5 November 1678, more than for any earlier year, as the discovery of the "popish plot" unleashed the greatest flood of anti-Catholic sermons since the Restoration.[479] By the following year, however, preachers were again attacking sectarians as well as Catholics. Francis Gregory returned to conflating the two, asking: "Do we not yet understand, that the *Jesuits* are the men, who, under the notion of *Quakers* and *Anabaptists*, have broken our *Publick Congregations* into *Private Conventicles*?" (35) and the importance of the occasion diminished again until it became a celebration of triumphant Protestantism as the anniversary of William III's arrival.

The issues Ward's sermon raised regarding the relationship between church and state, however, continued to surface intermittently into the eighteenth century. According to Clyve Jones, "The reign of Queen Anne saw the last major flowering of the traditional tory [sic] political values and ideals of passive obedience to the monarchy, non-resistance and divine right" (759), and was marked by two significant incidents. Tory politicians in 1705 roused the queen's ire by insisting that occasional conformity endangered the church, and forced a

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[479] The 1670s also saw the institution of a variety of popular celebrations that included burnings of effigies of the pope and the Whore of Babylon (See Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells*, Ch. 11).

lengthy debate in the House of Commons on 6 December 1705. The House eventually voted 61 to 30 that the church was not in danger, and the temperature cooled until the actions of Sacheverell and his supporters raised it again in 1710. On 5 November 1709, Sacheverell preached a sermon before the mayor and aldermen at St. Paul's on the text 2 Corinthians 11.26, "In perils among false brethren," in which he identified both Catholics and extreme Protestants, who had hatched respectively the Gunpowder Plot and the 1649 regicide, as false brethren.[480] In this incident, the doctrine of royal supremacy became a source of the very anarchy that Ward deplored, perpetrated this time not by dissenters but by those loyal to the national church.

Although he had arrived in London only a short time earlier, Sacheverell was already making a name for himself as a preacher. Geoffrey Holmes suggests that his success in the pulpit was based more upon the manner of his delivery than the matter of his sermons. He "did not seduce his audiences with words; he bludgeoned them with metaphor and epithet, delivering the blows in such bewildering profusion that the wonder is that all his hearers were not regularly reduced to insensibility" (*Trial* 50). His voice, however, was apparently excellent and his manner entertaining if hardly dignified.[481] London's new Lord Mayor, Samuel Garrard, later claimed that he had not witnessed any of Sacheverell's pulpit performances before issuing the invitation for him to preach the annual Gunpowder sermon at St. Paul's. Curiously, Sacheverell did not compose a new

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[480] It is perhaps not surprising that both Ward and Sacheverell chose texts from the New Testament. Any attempt to map England onto biblical Israel was suspect after the Restoration.
[481] For a fuller description of Sacheverell's preaching style and the 5 November 1709 sermon in particular, see Holmes, *The Trial of Doctor Sacheverell* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1973), Ch. 3.

sermon for the occasion, but revised one that he had preached several years previously. According to an entry in Thomas Hearne's diary, it had first been preached at St. Mary's Oxford on 23 December 1705, immediately following the "Church in Danger" debate in the House of Commons.[482] Holmes, noting that the content of the sermon was the same doctrine that Sacheverell had been preaching for years, suggests that repeating this sermon may have appealed to him precisely because it was unconnected with the occasion of the Gunpowder Plot (*Trial* 61-62). In attesting to its irrelevance, Holmes observes that "At the start it took Sacheverell under three minutes to dispose of the Gunpowder Plot and the Papists; and even here, by bracketing 5 November with 30 January as days of equal significance in the English calendar, he was able to brand the dissenters as being no less abhorrent than the Guy Fawkes's Day conspirators" (*Trial* 64). While Holmes is disconcerted by this approach, it had in fact become standard from the time of the Restoration to align the unsuccessful Catholic plotters of 1605 with the successful puritan regicides of 1649. For Sacheverell, however, the central problem is the analogy made after 1688 between the rebellion against Charles I and the accession of William and Mary. He insists that in 1688 the throne was vacant, and that William III never claimed to be a conqueror; therefore the "protestant revolution" cannot be used to justify resistance. Like earlier defenders of passive obedience, including Ward, Sacheverell argues that justifying resistance as a form of self-defence is dangerous because it can be used to justify any act of rebellion. Rule by many is worse even than papal tyranny, for

[482] See Clyve Jones, "Debates in the House of Lords on 'The Church in Danger', 1705, and on Dr Sacheverell's Impeachment, 1710," *Historical Journal* 19.3 (1976), 759-77.

each person will interpret the king's actions differently. Under these circumstances, "A Prince indeed, in another Sense, will be the Breath of his Subject's Nostrils to be Blown in, or out, at their Caprice, and Pleasure, and a worse Vassal than even the meanest of his Guards" (20). A unified church is the only way to maintain the state, for neither can continue without the other.

Sacheverell pays little heed to situating his scriptural text, although he does offer a list of Paul's vicissitudes, in which the perils of false brethren cap even shipwreck. Once he divides his text, however, he focuses entirely upon the contemporary application. Even more than Ward's, the sermon speaks entirely to the political situation and not at all to the spiritual considerations of its listeners. Nevertheless, like Ward, Sacheverell hearkened back to the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, referring to the *Homilies*, quoting from Lancelot Andrewes's 1610 Gowrie sermon, and reactivating the discourse of monstrosity to describe the "false brethren" who are threatening the church.[483] While Sacheverell's sermon caused an immediate sensation, it might have been quickly forgotten had he not followed it up immediately with publication.

Sacheverell's threat to the authorities was, as Holmes puts it, that "although he preached Obedience, he failed to practise it" ("Sacheverell" 61).

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[483] These references did not go unnoticed by contemporaries. In his speech at Sacheverell's impeachment, Gilbert Burnet noted that Sacheverell had quoted eleven times from the *Homilies*, and analyses these references in order to show that only one of them related to rebellion in general, while the others related to rebellion against wicked princes only. Burnet concludes that between 1558 and 1628 the church's consistent doctrine was that rebellion was justified in self-defence; between 1628 and 1640, the doctrine that the king was God's agent came back into vogue. Consequently the civil war did constitute a rebellion and was never justified as self-defence. Under these circumstances, it was not surprising that the doctrine of passive obedience should be urged so strongly after the Restoration. See Gilbert Burnet, *The Bishop of Salisbury his Speech in the House of Lords on the First Article of the Impeachment of Dr. Henry Sacheverell* (London, 1710), 1-12.

Claiming the mayor's authorization, he published the sermon, although Garrard later denied granting his approval. The printed sermon immediately became a bestseller, selling as many as 100,000 copies within weeks. The Whigs initially attempted to attack Sacheverell through the pamphlet literature, but soon realized that this would not suffice.[484] Legal counsel advised that prosecuting him for sedition would be difficult because "at a number of crucial points he had chosen his words carefully enough, or inserted enough studied ambiguities or contradictions to make it uncertain, to say the least, that he could be convicted of sedition *on words alone*" (Holmes *Trial* 81). Nevertheless, the scope of Sacheverell's audacity forced the government to resort to impeachment proceedings in early 1710. His trial and ultimate conviction led to a series of disturbances in which rioters attacked a number of dissenting meeting houses before moving on to other targets. Holmes's studies of the riots indicate that participants came from a variety of social classes and that the destruction seems to have been carefully planned in advance and carried out, at least in the beginning, methodically and efficiently. High church clergy both preached and prayed publicly in support of Sacheverell.[485] Lee Horsley gives some conception of the pamphlet war that accompanied these proceedings and "to which some of the leading journalists of the day contributed with ingenuity and vigor" (339). She points out that Tories "were of two minds, both pleased by their overwhelming popularity and embarrassed by disorderly demonstrations in their cause" (340).

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[484] Lee Horsley,"'Vox Populi' in the Political Literature of 1710," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 38.4 (1975), 335-353.

[485] Geoffrey Holmes, "The Sacheverell Riots: The Crowd and the Church in Early Eighteenth-Century London," *Past & Present* 72 (1976), 55-85.

At some time in this period of political tension and excitement, Seth Ward's 1661 sermon was reprinted. The title page bears no date, simply "Printed in the Year of Grace," while the following page contains this unsigned and somewhat cryptic note of instruction to the reader: "*If you are minded to see more of the Spirit of Dr.* Sach----l, *than what appears in his Sermons, you may look in two Books printed some Years ago at* Oxford, *the one was* The Character of a Low-Church-man, *and the other, as I remember*, The Rights of the Church asserted, &c." The first of the two works to which the reader is referred is Sacheverell's 1702 response to an electioneering pamphlet entitled *The Character of a Church-man*, in which he attacks Latitudinarians for misinterpreting scripture for political ends. The second pamphlet also contributed to an existing debate, this one over the status of dissenters. Whoever reprinted Ward's sermon was thus launching it into the Sacheverell controversy, presumably in aid of the High Church party, but was reluctant to have his own name associated in any way with the publication or to endorse Sacheverell personally. For all this, there is a vast difference between the two texts. Ward's conceals beneath its direct style two messages, one for the king and one for his advisors. The ornate, and frequently impenetrable, style of Sacheverell's is intended to present a single message but in such a way that the authorities have difficulty prosecuting him even though his audience could not have failed to grasp his meaning.

4.6 Conclusion

The publicity over Sacheverell's sermon demonstrates that the Gunpowder Plot anniversary could now promote political agendas unimagined in 1605. As Catholic plotting became an occasional rather than a quotidian threat, it became an analogy for crises created by other religious and political issues. Not until the mid-nineteenth century would a Catholic threat resurface as the primary context for Gunpowder sermons.[486] By this time, however, the people rather than the authorities clearly controlled the agenda.

Throughout the seventeenth century, the Gunpowder anniversary had offered preachers opportunities both to counsel the king and to persuade his subjects to practice obedience. In 1622, Donne had defended not only the king's right to political leadership but also the individual's responsibility to interpret both scripture and current events. Although he used his sermon originally to advise subjects to support the king with both their actions and their prayers, his later revisions implicated the king in the actions of evil or corrupted ministers. The threat of evil counsellors was taken up in 1636 by Henry Burton, who claimed to be informing Charles I about the independent actions of his bishops. Matthew Newcomen, in the first year of the civil war, counselled parliament not to negotiate with royalists and crypto-Catholics, while in the political instability of 1661, Seth Ward advised Charles II to grant the church a measure of independence even as he proclaimed the king's right to the obedience of his subjects.[487] Throughout this process, the Church of England sought to define itself

[486] This was the controversy over the re-establishment of a Catholic hierarchy in England.
[487] Jonathan Scott reminds us that the Restoration is best seen as an era of continued instability. See *England's Troubles,* Ch. 7.

against first Catholicism and then puritanism, and sometimes both. John Spurr remarks that

> What makes the Church of England's continuing search for her identity such an absorbing historical problem is that, as a church, she is particularly dependent upon her 'occasion'. She has no irreducible doctrinal core, no confession of faith nor petrine rock, upon which to rest, but must go out, armed only with her Bible, liturgy, Articles and traditions, to do battle with each new set of political, social and cultural circumstances. (Spurr xiii-xiv)

I would add sermons to this inventory of linguistic ordnance. The Gunpowder anniversary as an occasion proved particularly resilient in adapting to new circumstances and particularly resistant to threats of extinction.

The history of the Gunpowder sermon in many ways traces the life of the occasional political sermon in the seventeenth century, as no other anniversary was continuously celebrated throughout this period. These occasions could, and did, function on many levels, but one of their effects was to teach listeners and readers to decode meanings that the preacher was unable or unwilling to express in hostile, or potentially hostile, political climates. Whereas the Elizabethan *Homilies* had offered regular and consistent royalist messages for public consumption, James I's desire to create a Jacobean myth of deliverance in the wake of the Gunpowder Plot offered preachers opportunities to interpret both scripture and political events according to their own lights and to disseminate these interpretations through both the pulpit and the press. Increasingly

uncomfortable with the flood of independent thought that he had unleashed, James attempted to dam it with his 1622 *Directions to Preachers*; however, the events of the 1630s proved that the tide could not be turned back. Similarly, attempts by Restoration preachers to enforce passive obedience and religious uniformity were doomed to failure despite the warnings offered by the civil war and Interregnum. Having learned to read critically, parishioners refused any longer to endorse the "fiction in which nation and church were coterminous" (Guibbory "Israel" 116). They had recognized the political sermon as an instrument of persuasion that acknowledged their crucial role in the nation's religious and political life. At the same time, the critical listening and reading skills that they had learned by hearing and reading occasional political sermons offered individuals opportunities to participate in a wider range of political and religious discourse. As we shall see in the next chapter, these interpretive skills were required nowhere more than in the theatre, where representations of the plot were subject to various forms of control that required authors to demand the full cooperation of their audiences.

5. "And no religion binds men to be traitors": The Plot on Stage

5.1 Drama, Politics, and Religion in Early Jacobean London

While the Gunpowder Plot provided sensational matter for both the printed pamphlet and the sermon throughout 1606 and beyond, it appeared on stage only in disguises that modern scholars have frequently had difficulty penetrating. As Frances E. Dolan observes, "The stage refers to the Gunpowder Plot only through allusion, indirection, and displacement" (54). Although critics have caught glimpses of the plot in a number of plays produced after 1605, evidence of a direct connection is lacking in most cases.[488] Resorting to what Annabel Patterson calls "functional ambiguity," playwrights set their plays in far-off times or places in order to avoid questions, or to be able to evade those that

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[488] Studies that have connected specific plays with the plot include: Rebecca Lemon, *Treason by Words*, Ithaca, Cornell UP, 2006; Garry Wills, *Witches and Jesuits*, New York, Oxford UP, 1995; Susan E. Krantz, "Thomas Dekker's Political Commentary in *The Whore of Babylon,*" *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 35 (1995), 271-91; Regina Buccola, "Virgin Fairies and Imperial Whores: The Unstable Ground of Religious Iconography in Thomas Dekker's *The Whore of Babylon*" in *Marian Moments in Early Modern British Drama*, ed. Regina Buccola and Lisa Hopkins (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007), 141-60; Julia Gasper, *The Dragon and the Dove: The Plays of Thomas Dekker* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990); Nina Taunton and Valerie Hart, "*King Lear*, King James and the Gunpowder Treason of 1605," *Renaissance Studies* 17.4 (2003), 695-715; Richard Dutton, *Ben Jonson, "Volpone" and the Gunpowder Plot*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008) (as well as a number of other discussions of *Volpone* and the plot); Frances Teague, "Ben Jonson and London Courtrooms" in *Solon and Thespis: Law and Theater in the English Renaissance*, ed. Dennis Kezar (Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 2007), 64-77; and B. N. De Luna, *Jonson's Romish Plot: A Study of "Catiline" and its Historical Context* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1967). While individual plays examined in these studies include *Macbeth*, *Volpone*, *The Whore of Babylon*, and *King Lear*, other plays including *Sophonisba*, *The Devil's Charter*, and *Isle of Gulls* receive passing references. The tendency in Renaissance theatre criticism to concentrate studies upon the work of a single author has been replaced in recent years by a methodology that focuses upon the histories of particular companies. Unfortunately, neither methodology is particularly conducive to studies documenting the response of commercial theatre throughout London to current events. Section three of this chapter attempts such an analysis of three plays produced in 1606-07 in order to test the effectiveness of comparative analysis with plays that can be dated relatively accurately. Ideally, a longer study could be done involving more plays, but thorny issues of dating, particularly around *Macbeth* and *King Lear*, make such a study difficult.

were asked.[489] Since the state itself scripted the first dramatic representations in the form of public trials and executions, authors were probably wise to use caution in offering unauthorized interpretations. Far from providing univocal demonstrations of state power, however, these performances reflected ambivalences that influenced later representations on the commercial stage.

Whereas the authorities required that the plot be brought before the people annually in commemorative sermons, trusting preachers to persuade individuals to thank and obey both God and the monarch, they sought more direct control over the re-enacting of such events on stage, suspecting playwrights of promoting beliefs and behaviours that could threaten the state. Censorship is probably responsible, directly or indirectly, for the absence of any record of a play taking the Gunpowder Plot as its acknowledged subject. According to Janette Dillon, "Popery and treason represented the two kinds of subject matter most likely to run into trouble with the authorities: matters of religion and matters of state" (367). In 1559, Elizabeth I had issued a proclamation specifically prohibiting the performance of plays on these topics.[490] Nevertheless, political, and even religious, matters continued to be represented on stage throughout both her reign and that of her successor, leading some scholars to question how effectively the system of dramatic censorship actually operated.[491] A series of notorious cases in

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[489] Patterson uses this term to describe nine principles by which Renaissance authors could encode political meanings into their works while avoiding overt allusions that the authorities would feel compelled to challenge. See *Censorship and Interpretation*, especially Chapter 2, in which Patterson outlines these principles.

[490] Elizabeth I, *By the Quene. Forasmuche as the tyme wherein common interludes in the Englishe tongue ar wont vsually to be played...* London, [1559].

[491] The subject of dramatic censorship has received increasing attention in the past thirty years from critics including Richard Dutton (particularly *Mastering the Revels: The Regulation and*

which playwrights and actors were punished for representing potentially seditious ideas has often been enumerated as evidence of repressive censorship; however, Paul Yachnin suggests that the theatre succumbed to a more subtle form of control. He contends that "As a result of both the vigor of Elizabethan government censorship and the compliance of the players with that censorship, the theater of the late Elizabethan and early Stuart period came to be viewed as powerless, unable to influence its audience in any purposeful or determinate way" (50). In his view a combination of censorship, increased commercialization, and a growing sense that poetry was somehow unrelated to the real world conspired to render drama toothless. While the "theater had been an important instrument of the powerful factions engaged in the political and religious conflicts in the years before Elizabeth came to the throne" (68), by about 1600, as the court took over patronage of the theatre companies, commercial theatre became "powerless to influence its audience toward one view or another of the political issues of the time" (58). He concludes that "the authorities do not seem to have counted on the players to support the established political order by instructing the public in the official view on matters of state and religion, and they do not seem to have thought it possible for the players seriously to disrupt the political order" (73). In other words, by self-censoring, playwrights found themselves outside of the political process.

Censorship of English Renaissance Drama [Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991]; *Licensing, Censorship and Authorship in Early Modern England: Buggeswords* [New York: Palgrave, 2000]; and Janet Clare ("Transgressing Authority in English Renaissance Drama," *Textus* 19.2 [2006], 352-69; "Historicism and the Question of Censorship in the Renaissance," *English Literary Renaissance* 27 [1997], 155-76). In her 1997 article, Clare criticizes historicist critics for limiting their interests to a small group of texts and for focusing excessively on power relations.

Janet Clare, however, suggests that although authors wished to avoid trouble, they also felt a commercial imperative to stage topical issues that would engage their audiences. One way in which authors could subvert the system of censorship was through what Patterson has termed "functional ambiguity," or Richard Dutton calls "plausible deniability," ways of encoding meanings into texts in subtle ways that enabled an author to deny any political meaning with which he was charged.[492] Concealing meanings, however, restricted the playwright's assurance that any message in his play would be "correctly" decoded by audiences either in the theatre or in print. As Patterson cautions, "authors who build ambiguity into their works have no control over what happens to them later" (*Censorship* 18). Plays could thus accumulate additional, even contradictory, meanings when performed under different political circumstances. As Jerzy Limon reminds us, political readings are the creations not of texts alone but of texts within their contexts. Offering a useful distinction between political texts and political functions, he suggests that "the political function of a literary text, acquired within the particular context in which the communicational process takes place, is independent both of the author's 'intentions' and of the autonomous meaning of the text" (14). Thus, "it may be said that a literary text is capable of functioning as a political piece only in a communicative process during a particular historical period, within a given society and within the social and

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[492] Patterson's central argument in *Censorship and Interpretation* is that the authorities were not anxious to enforce regulations and did so only when authors blatantly transgressed the set of unwritten rules that both sides followed. While this "functional ambiguity" did give authors a defence against prosecution, it did not always protect them. Much depended upon the political circumstances of the particular moment. Dutton uses the phrase "plausible deniability" in *Ben Jonson, "Volpone" and the Gunpowder Plot* (7). I take both to be expressions of the same idea or perhaps solutions to the same problem.

political context that the given period creates" (19). When the Jacobean authorities took action against texts, it was because they were serving, or could serve, political functions. In two of the most notorious cases of the early seventeenth century, the performance of *Richard II* on the eve of the Essex revolt and the nine performances of Thomas Middleton's *A Game at Chess* shortly after Prince Charles returned unwed from Spain in 1624, critics have debated the political functions of the plays, but clearly the dangers that the authorities associated with the performances related to their perceived abilities to influence subjects' actions.[493] While they expected, at least before the 1620s, that sermons would encourage appropriate behaviour in individuals, they feared plays would provoke inappropriate behaviour by groups or classes of people.

Our own abilities to understand the political functions of these plays are limited not only by gaps in our knowledge of their performative contexts, but also by uncertainties about the status of the texts as we have received them. Clare notes that since plays had to be licensed for both performance and publication, those that have survived passed two tests, but may have been so altered in the

[493] Much critical ink has been spilled upon the question of why Essex and his friends commissioned this particular play to be performed. Recently, Paul E. J. Hammer has argued that the play performed on Saturday 7 February "had no direct connection with what happened the following day because those events were unforeseen on Saturday afternoon, let alone a day or so earlier when the performance was commissioned" ("Shakespeare's *Richard II*, the Play of 7 February 1601, and the Essex Rising," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 59.1 [2008], 1-35). Whether or not this will end the discussion remains to be seen. The literature on *A Game at Chess* is almost as extensive as that on *Richard II.* Critics of this play continue to debate who might have had an interest in putting on this play (Charles and Buckingham are the most obvious contenders) and why it was allowed to continue playing for so long before it was suppressed. Studies of particular interest in this context include: Richard Dutton, "Thomas Middleton's *A Game at Chess*: A Case Study" in *The Cambridge History of British Theater v. 1: Origins to 1660* (2004); Ian Munro, "Making Publics: Secrecy and Publication in *A Game at Chess*," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 14 [2001], 207-26; and, T. H. Howard-Hill, "Political Interpretations of Middleton's 'A Game at Chess' (1624)," *Yearbook of English Studies* 21[1991], 274-85.

process that the original performance text is not recoverable ("Transgressing" 354). As Dillon admits: "One of the difficulties of trying to make sense of controversial plays after the event is that the printed text is rarely likely to represent what was performed, and we are not usually in a strong position to second-guess what was cut out and why" (369). At best we have fragmentary accounts of the reception of individual plays on stage and printed texts that may have been subjected to various non-authorial interventions. A modern critic, attempting to reconstruct early responses from such imperfect and incomplete evidence, is then faced with a formidable task that, as Dutton observes, will always "be more an art than a science" (*Volpone* 10). Given the importance of time and place of performance to the audience's ability to decode political meanings, we are required to construct the best possible contextualization for these events with the evidence we have.

In some cases, such evidence may be negative. We have no reason to postulate the existence of any play that dramatized the story of the Gunpowder Plot. The reason for this may lie at least in part with the mysterious fate of the lost Gowrie play. Dillon argues that the play's disappearance indicates that it was censored (369). While Raymond Burns opines that the play may have offended by exposing marital discord between the royal couple, Gustavo Secchi Turner has suggested more recently that the play may simply have trespassed upon the king's desire to be the only narrator of the Gowrie incident.[494] If Turner is correct, this

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[494] See: Dillon, "Theatre and Controversy, 1603-1642," in *The Cambridge History of British Theatre. V. 1: Origins to 1660*, ed. Jane Milling and Peter Thomson (Cambridge: Cambridge UP,

may help to explain why no playwright wanted to take the chance of dramatizing the Gunpowder Plot, of which James was also rumoured to have written the official account.[495] Perhaps an additional source of authorial caution was the trouble Samuel Daniel and the Children of the Queen's Revels had incurred over their recent production of *Philotas*, understood as a commentary on the Essex rebellion, which seems to have been first performed in the winter of 1604-05.[496] Whatever the explanation, it seems that no company took up the challenge of dramatizing the plot. Nevertheless, the number of contemporary plays that refer to it, however obliquely, suggests that audiences were interested in the topic or at least that playwrights believed they were. Unfortunately, in some of these cases uncertain dating makes difficult the kind of contextualization needed to understand the relationship of a particular play both to the plot and to other contemporary events. While most critical studies have examined individual plays, and a few have attempted to sort them into thematic groupings, I take a chronological approach to three plays that can be dated relatively accurately—John Day's *Isle of Gulls*, Ben Jonson's *Volpone*, and Thomas Dekker's *Whore of Babylon*—in an attempt to investigate the extent to which these plays may have

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2004), 366-67; Burns, *John Day's The Isle of Guls: A Critical Edition* (New York: Garland, 1980), 25-26; Turner, "The Matter of Fact," 90.

[495] Although the "King's Book" was printed anonymously, the assumption of James's authorship is reflected in the book's popular appellation. Royal authorship was virtually admitted by Cecil in his *Answere to Certaine Scandalous Papers, scattered abroad vnder colour of a Catholicke Admonition* (London, 1606).

[496] On the controversy over *Philotas*, see: Hugh Gazzard, "'Those Graue Presentments of Antiquitie': Samuel Daniel's *Philotas* and the Earl of Essex," *Review of English Studies* 51.203 (2000), 423-50; Laurence Michel (ed.), *The Tragedy of "Philotas,"* 2nd ed. (Hamden, CN: Archon, 1970). Gazzard provides significant new evidence to support Michel's conclusion that the play was intended to comment on the Essex affair. For the earlier viewpoint, see G. A. Wilkes, "Daniel's *Philotas* and the Essex Case: A Reconsideration," *Modern Language Quarterly* 23 (1962), 253-42.

been operating in dialogue.[497] Dutton's work has established the importance of the Gunpowder Plot to *Volpone*, the writing of which can be dated to the time of Henry Garnett's trial in early 1606, and the topicality of Dekker's play, probably written about a year later, is unmistakable despite the Elizabethan camouflage. The case for *The Isle of Gulls* is less certain, but the play makes clear references to the trials and executions of the lay plotters, which had just occurred when it was first performed. I argue that if *The Isle of Gulls* and *Volpone* treat the plot sceptically, satirizing Robert Cecil's attempt to use it to consolidate his power, then Dekker's play may be an attempt to restore faith in the representation of the plot as yet another example of Catholic treason. Dekker's conservative treatment, however, also points up the difficulty of determining what the official interpretation was, since he insists upon the Spanish involvement that the government loudly denied. Moreover, although in a somewhat obscure scene he repudiates the claims of playwrights like Day and Jonson who practice satire as a means of curing social and political ills, his own representation of royal counsel may be slyly biased against the Cecils.

Looking back on this controversy five years later, Jonson reconsiders his earlier response in *Catiline, his Conspiracy*, significantly moving from comedy to tragedy, from satire of an individual to a more general indictment of those who serve themselves by serving the state.[498] In this play, Jonson sees the plot as a

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[497] Thematic treatments include Frances Teague's juxtaposition of *Volpone* and *King Lear* on the basis of their trial scenes, and Garry Wills's observation that *Sophonisba*, *The Devil's Charter*, and *Macbeth* all feature witches in political roles, although Wills concentrates his analysis upon *Macbeth*.

[498] Barbara De Luna was the first modern critic to study the play as a commentary on the Gunpowder Plot in *Jonson's Romish Plot*. While her successors have questioned her methodology

reprise not of the Catholic plots against Elizabeth, as Dekker had, but of the Essex revolt, an interpretation made possible by the authorities' failure to establish a definitive narrative. Here, religion becomes the servant of ambition for both men and women. I argue that the most remarked aspect of the play, the appearance of Sylla's ghost in the first act, and the least remarked, the role of the women, are fundamentally linked to Catiline's own fears of dissolution. A few readers in the play's early history appear to have appreciated this fact, but later reception has obscured the connection. Although apparently unpopular at its original appearance, *Catiline* became one of the most successful tragedies of the century, enjoying stage revivals and reprintings in the reigns of Charles I and Charles II. In addition, it served as a source, either directly or indirectly, for a number of other plays and poems. In the final section of this chapter, I explore the ways in which Jonson's text engaged in dialogues not only with other dramas but also with texts in genres such as the ghost poem throughout its seventeenth-century history. While many of these connections have been remarked before, I place them in order not to demonstrate influence but to trace a pattern of interpretive understanding that leads towards an anonymous poem of 1684, *Sylla's Ghost: A Satyr against Ambition.*

All of these interpretations were made possible by the events of early 1606, when the authorities self-consciously staged dramas in which Catholic traitors were tried and executed on the public stage of London. While Michel

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and her insistence that the play is a "parallelograph," requiring that each character in the play be an exact match for a conspirator, few have questioned her overarching conclusion that there is a connection between the plot and the play.

Foucault argues that such punishments represented the power of the state before the people, more recent work by Peter Lake and Michael Questier has suggested that, at least in early modern England, such spectacles often sent mixed messages.[499] Consequently, in the courtroom, on the scaffold, and in print, the authorities attempted to control the meaning of these dramatic spectacles for their audiences. The printed record of the trials and executions of the Gunpowder plotters, however, reveals inconsistencies created by various officials playing to different members of the audience for different reasons. Vacillating between presenting the plot as the product of religious fanaticism inspired by the Jesuits and offering it as an example of the sins of pride and ambition, the authorities created the conditions for a range of future representations.

5.2 Staging Treason: Trial and Execution

The earliest plot dramas may be regarded as the trials and executions of the plotters themselves. Since the initial publication of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, scholars have explored the theatrical qualities of Tudor and Jacobean executions primarily by engaging with his assertions that trial and punishment function as spectacles of state power. According to Foucault, the state inscribes its power upon the bodies of individual subjects in public spectacles as a warning to

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[499] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York Vintage, 1979), esp Pt. 1, Ch 2 "The Spectacle of the Scaffold", Peter Lake and Michael Questier, "Agency, Appropriation and Rhetoric under the Gallows," 64-107, Peter Lake with Michael Questier, *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat*. On the political complexities of determining and executing punishments in the early seventeenth century, see also Mark Nicholls, "Treason's Reward The Punishment of Conspirators in the Bye Plot of 1603," *Historical Journal* 38 4 (1995), 821-42

other potential offenders.[500] In recent years, however, a number of early modern scholars have begun to question, if not to reject entirely, Foucault's insistence upon the state's monopoly on power.[501] In particular, Lake and Questier have argued that executions of Catholics revealed to subjects the weaknesses as well as the strengths of the early modern English state and its religious policies. They observe that "every time a catholic priest was executed the issue of where legitimate royal authority ended and tyranny and persecution began was, through speech and gesture, re-opened and thrust onto the public stage" (*Antichrist's* 239). Public executions forced the government to convince its audience that Catholics were being punished for treason rather than for heresy.

These executions, Lake and Questier argue elsewhere, could also expose disparities between religious and secular authorities that should call into question our notions of a monolithic Jacobean "state."[502] We should, perhaps, also be wary of postulating a homogeneous audience for these performances. Aware that trials and executions, like other dramatic spectacles, rely upon the interpretive skills and prejudices of individual spectators—variables even more difficult to control than the events themselves—the authorities attempted to preempt "incorrect" interpretations by publishing accounts of trials and executions.[503] The narrative of

[500] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, especially Pt. 1, Ch. 2, "The Spectacle of the Scaffold."
[501] Karen Cunningham notes in *Imaginary Betrayals: Subjectivity and the Discourse of Treason in Early Modern England* that the use of the Foucauldian model in literary studies has tended to emphasize court-centred power while ignoring other bases of power such as the Inns of Court (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2002), 23. For Lake's critique of Foucault, see the Introduction to *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat* (xvii-xviii).
[502] See "Agency, Appropriation and Rhetoric under the Gallows," 83-89.
[503] The account of the Gunpowder trials, *A True and Perfect Relation of the Whole Proceedings against the late most barbarous traitors, Garnet a Iesuite, and his confederats* (London, 1606),

the Gunpowder plotters' trials and punishments, however, inadvertently reveals subtle discrepancies among judges competing for the favour of specific groups or individuals, inconsistencies that readers were not slow to perceive and exploit.

As we have seen in Chapter 2, two narratives of conspiracy dominated in Elizabethan and early Jacobean England at least from the time of the Parry plot. While the official account of this treason offered a story of excessive ambition leading to a fall, the more sensational pamphlet written by Phillip Stubbes emphasized Parry's religious motivation. By 1605, the Bye plot, in which the secular priest William Watson had conspired to kidnap James at Greenwich on 23 June 1603, could be added to an impressive list of attempted treasons demonstrating Catholic treachery.[504] Nevertheless, the conventions of *de casibus* tragedy could also be used to represent conspiracy, particularly when religious motivations were ambiguous, as in the cases of Essex and Ralegh.[505] The Gunpowder Plot almost immediately invited the suspicion that a peer had been involved, if only as a potential regent for Princess Elizabeth, and suspicion lighted first on Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland. As hopes of tying Northumberland directly to the plot faded, however, the authorities focused their attention

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followed in the tradition of earlier pamphlets including Bacon's account of the Essex affair (see Ch. 2) but was unusual in being published separately from the narrative of the event.

[504] Attempts to assassinate Elizabeth included the Ridolfi plot (1570), Throckmorton plot (1584), Parry plot (1585), Babington plot (1586), and Lopez plot (1594), while by 1605 James had already been threatened by the Main plot, for which Ralegh lost his freedom, and the Bye plot.

[505] On Essex, see Bacon's narrative, *A Declaration of the practises & treasons attempted and committed by Robert late Earle of Essex and his complices* (London, 1601), as well as my discussion in Ch. 2. On Ralegh, see Karen Cunningham, "'A Spanish Heart in an English Body': The Ralegh Treason Trial and the Poetics of Proof," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 22.3 (1992), 327-51. Cunningham argues that at his trial Ralegh attempted to defend his actions while Coke insisted upon his decline in character from courtier to conspirator.

increasingly upon the Jesuits.[506] By the time of the trials, the official interpretation of the plot was that religious fanaticism rather than ambition motivated the lay plotters. Mark Nicholls has observed, however, that religious and personal motives were both likely at play.[507]

If the motives of the plotters were complex, so were those of their judges. Contemporary libels accused Robert Cecil of attempting both to implicate the Jesuits in order to justify harsher enforcement of the penal laws and of scheming to put Henry Percy out of the way by implicating him in the plot.[508] According to Pauline Croft, Cecil in general supported a moderate position in regard to Catholicism, distinguishing, as the king did, between loyal Catholics and traitors, but "his lenity was rarely perceived outside high political circles, and to many catholics it followed that since Cecil ran the country he must be responsible for their hardships" ("Religion" 784).[509] Although he seems to have had less tolerance for Jesuits, his insistence upon their culpability at the Gunpowder trials may have been exacerbated by concerns that Percy's imprisonment would recall his success in eliminating an earlier rival, Essex.[510] As a member of a Catholic family and one who had himself been suspected of participation in a religiously motivated conspiracy, Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, wanted to

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[506] Mark Nicholls provides a detailed examination of the attempt to build a case against Northumberland in *Investigating Gunpowder Plot*, 185-210.

[507] See Mark Nicholls, "Strategy and Motivation in The Gunpowder Plot," *Historical Journal* 50.4 (2007), 787-807.

[508] Cecil was moved to respond to the libels charging him with cruelty to Catholics in his *Answere to Certaine Scandalous Papers*, 1606. For libels charging him with conspiring against Northumberland, see Bellany and McRae, *Early Stuart Libels*, and below.

[509] Croft observes that Cecil distinguished the plotters from loyal Catholics, even in his *Answere to certaine scandalous papers* written in early 1606, and that later in life he favoured increased ceremonialism. See "The Religion of Robert Cecil," *Historical Journal* 34.4 (1991), 773-96.

[510] For the spate of libels that accused Cecil of eliminating Essex see Bellany and McRae, *Early Stuart Libels*.

demonstrate to King James that he was loyal to the crown and repudiated the pope's deposing authority, but he also had reason to demonstrate that the roots of the plot lay more in ambition than in religion.[511] Of the plotters on trial, however, only Sir Everard Digby could with any plausibility be represented as a "great man" or an ambitious overreacher. Although Cecil and Northampton had established a political alliance, their religious differences, Northampton's obsession with lineage and breeding, and competition for favour with a new monarch all led them to play different parts at the Gunpowder trials. Edward Coke was allied closely with Cecil, having been patronized first by his father, Lord Burghley. Coke, too, probably hoped to impress James, and in the event he was appointed chief justice of the court of common pleas in June of 1606, shortly after his performances in these sensational trials.[512]

Even had the authorities been completely united, the circumstances of the plot and the aftermath of its discovery would have hampered their efforts to offer a univocal interpretation in several ways. The most dramatic events, the quelling of the rebellion and the capture of the priests, occurred outside London where there were few witnesses, and the most prominent conspirators, Robert Catesby and Thomas Percy, were killed along with Christopher and John Wright in the abortive rebellion, thereby escaping exemplary punishments. To complicate

[511] Northampton had been suspected many years earlier in a plot to replace Elizabeth with Mary, Queen of Scots. See Pauline Croft, 'Howard, Henry, earl of Northampton (1540–1614)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Jan. 2008). For a more detailed analysis of Northampton's political career, see Linda Levy Peck, *Northampton: Patronage and Policy at the Court of James I* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1982).
[512] See Allen D. Boyer, 'Coke, Sir Edward (1552–1634),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Jan. 2009).

matters, two men arrested in connection with the plot died in suspicious circumstances before they could be tried and executed. Nicholas Owen, the carpenter responsible for designing and constructing many of the ingenious priest holes in recusant houses died suddenly during interrogation.[513] The official cause was suicide, but many suspected the unintentional effects of torture. Francis Tresham also died in the Tower, apparently of natural causes, but rumours of poisoning almost immediately began to circulate.[514] In a deathbed letter, Tresham recanted his previous confession and claimed that he had not seen Garnett for sixteen years (Nicholls *Investigating* 70). In perhaps the most frustrating circumstance of all, the priests' success in evading capture forced the crown to proceed against the lay plotters before Garnett and Oldcorne were located. Having determined to make the Jesuits the principal offenders, the authorities were forced to insist upon the guilt of those absent from the courtroom during the first trial.[515]

As in the drama, the relationship between performance and printed text is difficult to reconstruct, but we have reason to suspect that the printed account of the trials and executions was constructed to satisfy a number of conflicting demands by the prosecutors. The first of these was clearly defensive, for the writer of the preliminary address "To the Reader" justifies the publication as

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[513] On Owen, see Gerard, *Conditions of Catholics under James I*, 182-90. Alice Hogge, *God's Secret Agents*, 364-366, relying heavily on Catholic accounts, accepts the view that Owen's death resulted from torture.

[514] Although Tresham's name remained in the pamphlet account despite his death before the trial, Nicholas Owen's is missing. This may be accounted for by the fact that he was not suspected of direct involvement in the plot but was only being questioned to assist in the search for the priests. Nevertheless, his erasure from the record does suggest that the authorities wanted to avoid any reference to his fate. John Gerard's insistence upon describing and interpreting what happened to Owen suggests a determination to restore his presence to the record, particularly since his lack of direct involvement made him a candidate for martyrdom.

[515] For a detailed analysis of the plot's investigation, see Nicholls, *Investigating Gunpowder Plot*.

necessary to counter rumours and to ensure that people understand what has taken place. This seems to affirm Lake and Questier's suspicions that state authority could be compromised rather than enhanced by the spectacles of trial and punishment if individuals interpreted them incorrectly. Consequently, the government needed not only to provide a series of spectacles, but also to ensure a "true and perfect" interpretation of these events for both a local and an international audience. The pamphlet, not published until after Garnett's trial and execution, included an account of the entire legal process, which makes it difficult to know how much editing of the earlier trial occurred after the later one.[516] As the final pamphlet stands, it clearly sets out to establish the Jesuits as the real culprits; however, Northampton's speech blames not the Jesuits' religion but their ambition for secular power.

Two lists, first of the prosecutors and secondly of the lay accused, that function essentially as "Dramatis Personae" follow the address to the reader. The indictment, however, begins with the names of Father Garnett and Father Tesimond, each followed by a list of aliases. Just as this list suggests a larger group, so also the authorities insisted upon alluding vaguely to other Jesuits, a fact that seems to have particularly rankled with John Gerard, who no doubt suspected his inclusion in this group.[517] As for the lay plotters who are actually on trial, Coke asserts that they are "Gentlemen of good houses, of excellent parts,

[516] As in the case of executions, there were enough witnesses at the trials that the authorities could not easily falsify words or actions; however, choices such as summarizing rather than quoting speech and even print conventions such as layout and typeface could be used to influence interpretation.

[517] See Gerard, *The Condition of Catholics under James I*, 193-94. No doubt the authorities wanted to leave open the possibility that additional Jesuits would be apprehended.

howsoeuer most perniciously seduced, abused, corrupted, and Iesuited, of very competent fortunes and States" (E4^v^), concluding "that the principall offendors are the seducing Iesuits" (F^r^). By representing the Jesuits as agents of corruption he not only attacks Catholicism but also represents the lay plotters as "gentlemen," if not great men, who succumbed to evil influences.

The prisoners at the bar having pleaded "not guilty" to the charges against them, Coke and Sir Edward Philips spoke. The compiler of the pamphlet insists that Coke's speech has been recorded as nearly as possible, thereby demonstrating his commitment to a "perfect" record. Coke shows himself particularly conscious of an international audience in a cause "vpon the carriage and euent whereof the eye of all Christendome is at this day bent" (D2^r^), beginning by justifying the delay in mounting this performance. One of the stated reasons is that the king has timed the event to coincide with parliament, since this was the institution the plotters had attempted to destroy, but the authorities may also have wanted to ensure a larger audience in London.[518] Aware of his international readers and fearful of jeopardizing the new peace with Spain, he is careful to exonerate "Forreine Princes" (D4^v^). Coke's speech contains strong elements of homiletic rhetoric, offering a detailed description of the punishments meted out to traitors and their symbolism, presumably to warn audience members against disobedience while also complimenting James's clemency. The pamphlet demonstrates the trial's performative aspect most clearly when, "for further satisfaction to so great

[518] Mark Nicholls suggests that it was talk of having the plotters tried in parliament, as the king had suggested in his 9 November speech, or of devising special punishments for them that ultimately hastened the trial (*Investigating Gunpowder Plot*, 51-52).

a presence and audience, and their better memorie of the carriage of these Treasons, the voluntarie and free confessions of all the said seuerall Traitors in writing subscribed with their owne proper hands, and acknowledged at the Barre by themselues to be true, were openly and distinctly read" (K3^r). The "great ... presence and audience" probably refers not only to the size of the crowd, but also to the attendance of the monarch himself, concealed from the view of the other spectators as he was when he listened to sermons in the Chapel Royal.[519] Since guilty verdicts were a foregone conclusion, the event was primarily a spectacle in which members of the Privy Council, acting as judges, performed before the monarch and most of fashionable London. As in the performance of a play based upon a familiar story, these actors could be assured that the spectators knew the outcome. Their parts were to keep the audience entertained while showing them that justice was being done, but the situation must also have provided an unparallelled opportunity to display their own political and rhetorical skills before their peers as well as their sovereign.[520]

The plotters were, of course, unwilling actors in this drama, and it was the judges' responsibility to provide them with characterization and motivation. Most of the plotters were assumed to have acted out of religious fanaticism, but the arraignment of Sir Everard Digby tells a different story. According to the list of

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[519] Mark Nicholls (*Investigating Gunpowder Plot*, 52-53) cites Hawarde (*Les Reportes*, 257) as proof that "'the Kinge and Queene were bothe there in pryuate,' as were most of the peerage and a majority of 'all the whole parlimente.'" John Chamberlain mentions the king's presence at Garnett's trial and also lists a number of aristocratic ladies who attended (1.220). On the king's closet in the Chapel Royal, see McCullough, *Sermons at Court*, Ch. 1.

[520] Nicholls notes that Coke "liven[ed] up the proceedings" by telling the "old fable" of the cat and the mice (*Investigating Gunpowder Plot*, 53) but concludes that even so "the trial was apparently rather lacking in spectacle for the crowds of onlookers, many of whom had paid high prices to be present" (52).

charges, Digby was arraigned separately because his crime had occurred in a different county, but since attempts to implicate Henry Percy had failed, he was accorded superior status as the highest ranking of the surviving plotters.[521] While Digby's arraignment and indictment are not recorded, the pamphlet reports his speech, in which he offers as his primary motivation not religion but his friendship with Robert Catesby. In a short speech, Northampton then represents Digby's fall according to the terms of *de casibus* tragedy as that, if not of a great man, at least of a man who had the potential to achieve greatness. Digby, he claims, had been high in Elizabeth's estimation and had every prospect of continuing to enjoy favour from James had he not involved himself in the plot. Behaving as a gentleman, Digby apologizes for his conduct, asks to be beheaded, and responds graciously when this courtesy is denied. Catesby's servant, Thomas Bate, who also apparently acted out of loyalty rather than religious fervour, and who turned King's evidence, is treated leniently but no effort is made, given his station, to turn him into a fallen hero.

The second trial, Father Garnett's, begins in much the same way as the first but is distinguished by its more self-conscious theatricality. In his opening speech, Coke repeats his response to those concerned about the delay and again cautions against blaming foreign powers. He directs more attention in this case,

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[521] Having been one of the last to join the conspiracy, Digby's primary roles had been to arrange the hunt as a cover for Catholic activity in the Midlands and to provide much-needed financial resources. Percy was tried for contempt in June 1606 and stripped of his offices, fined, and committed to prison until he was released in 1621 as part of an amnesty for James's fifty-fifth birthday. See Mark Nicholls, 'Percy, Henry, ninth earl of Northumberland (1564–1632)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Jan. 2008). Of the other peers suspected of involvement, Lord Montagu was released in late 1606 without standing trial and Lord Stourton in 1608, while Lord Mordaunt died in prison in 1609 (Nicholls, *Investigating Gunpowder Plot*, 74-77).

however, to the local than the international audience, apologizing for repeating himself as he does not wish to be "tedious" (O3^r) but is aware that many were unable to hear at the former trial. Coke immediately makes explicit a distinction between the lay plotters and the priests that had only been implicit in the first trial. In what he now calls the "Iesuites treason," the laymen were merely actors, while the priests were authors. Furthermore, according to Coke: "The Author or procurer, offendeth more then the actor or executor, as may appeare by Gods owne Iudgement giuen against the first sinne in Paradise, where the Serpent had three punishments inflicted vpõ him, as the originall plotter; the woman two, being as the mediate procurer; and *Adam* but one, as the partie seduced" (P^v).[522] Although Coke does not use the word "author" in an explicitly literary sense here, this statement in conjunction with a number of theatrical metaphors suggests a distinction of roles between the two sets of conspirators analogous to that under negotiation in the theatre, where the functions of author and actor were splitting apart, but responsibility for seditious performances could still fall upon either.[523]

Coke reinforced his theatrical analogy when he told his audience: "this is but a latter Act of that heauy and wofull Tragedie, which is commonly called the Powder-treason, wherein some have already plaied their parts, and according to

[522] Ironically, of course, the priest could expect the same punishment as the lay plotters.
[523] For the changing nature of the theatre and relations between authors and actors at the turn of the seventeenth century, see Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992), 200-42. According to Douglas A. Brooks, Jonson seems to have been the first playwright made to answer to the government for a potentially treasonous play (*Sejanus*). See *From Playhouse to Printing House: Drama and Authorship in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 22-23. As we will see below, however, the actors in John Day's *Isle of Gulls* were the ones prosecuted, possibly because they had gone beyond the bounds of the script they had been given.

their demerits suffered condigne punishment & paines of death" (O2^{v}). Cecil repeated the metaphor later in the trial when he

> tooke an occasion to declare, that the City of London was so deare to the King, and his Maiesty so desirous to giue it all honour and comfort, as when this opportunitie was put into his hands, whereby there might be made so visible an Anatomie of Popish doctrine, from whence these Treasons have their source and support, hee thought hee could not choose a fitter Stage, then the City of London. (Y^{v}-Y2^{r})

The city has become a stage on which to demonstrate the relationship between Catholic heresy and treason.

While the judges created an essentially univocal narrative in the first trial, Garnett's, according to the published account, became a debate among the priest, Cecil, and Northampton, until Garnett eventually ceased to participate and was replaced by Coke, whose systematic rebuttal of the priest's previous answers created a kind of commentary on the earlier proceedings. With the Jesuit doctrine of equivocation one of the main issues at stake, the authorities were determined to show that Garnett's word, like that of a stage villain, could not be trusted and that the audience had to be warned against him. In his first speech, Northampton warns that Garnett can move people to sympathy, and he seems to have had some justification, for on 2 April John Chamberlain wrote to Dudley Carleton that Garnett "caried himself very gravely and temperatly" (1.222). The judges seem consequently to have deliberately pursued a strategy of interrupting the priest in order to contain his influence. Gerard, in his *Narrative of the Gunpowder Plot*,

claims that even the king complained of Cecil's constant efforts to interrupt the priest (264). While Gerard's narrative is hardly an unbiased source, it is corroborated by the official account when Cecil encourages Garnett to speak at one point with a promise that he will not be interrupted (Cc4[v]).

Despite this containment of Garnett's speech, little of which is recorded word for word in the pamphlet, the Lord Admiral, Charles Howard, told the priest at the conclusion of the trial "that he had done more good this day in that Pulpit which he stood in (for it was made like vnto a Pulpit wherein he stood) then hee had done all the dayes of his life time in any other Pulpit" (Cc4[r]). If anyone had preached, however, it was Northampton, who wrapped up the proceedings with a lengthy speech, expanded to almost one hundred pages for publication.[524] The speech provides a historical overview, international in scope, of the Catholic church's increasing interference in European secular affairs. Discoursing at length on the infamous Pope Gregory VII, Northampton demonstrates that papal ambition to rule over kings led the popes to claim powers of deposition. Similarly, Garnett and his malcontent "disciples" (Dd4[r]) have hatched a conspiracy that uses religion for political ends. Garnett, as a parody of Christ, is one who has been sent not to save but to destroy English Protestantism. The "invasion" (Zz3[r]) of the priests was merely a forerunner to the Spanish Armada. Thus, in contrast to Coke's appeals to avoid implicating other nations in the Gunpowder Plot,

[524] The original speech seems to have been at least an outline of the expanded version, for Chamberlain, who did not attend the arraignment, reports to Carleton that the "summe" of the proceedings "was that Garnet comming into England in 86 hath had his finger in every treason since that time" (1.220).

Northampton's history makes a connection that would not have been lost on those who disapproved of the new peace with Spain.

After this speech, the printer inserted a note to the reader accounting for its length. The copy he received, he claims, was "unperfect," so he consulted the earl, who offered him a copy of the actual speech as nearly as he could remember it, as well as an expanded version. Anticipating demand from readers, Barker decided to print the longer version. The note makes the decision seem casual, almost accidental, and the printer's sole responsibility rather than a calculated strategy by the authorities. Linda Levy Peck, however, offers documentary evidence that Northampton compiled the pamphlet carefully, assisted by Robert Cotton and supervised by the king (111-13). Northampton's authorship was recognized in international circles, for the Venetian ambassador told the doge in December 1606: "The fact that the author has been and still is reckoned a Catholic is expected to lend the work a greater authority."[525]

As we have them, the proceedings read as a curious hybrid of stage and pulpit performances. Throughout the trial, letters and confessions had functioned both as evidence and as stage properties, as they would in many of the dramas associated with the plot.[526] Coke, Cecil, and Northampton had taken opportunities to make speeches as well as to engage in dialogue. Northampton, who wanted to demonstrate his loyalty despite possible religious irregularities in his life, and

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[525] Qtd in Peck, *Northampton: Patronage and Policy at the Court of James I* (112) from BL Cotton Mss Titus C VI, f. 160.

[526] For example: the letters from the Catilinarian conspirators to the Allobroges that Cicero arranges to have intercepted in *Catiline, his Conspiracy*; Edmund's use of a letter to trick Edgar in *King Lear*; and, Macbeth's letter to his wife.

Cecil, who wanted to display his indispensibility along with his impartiality, played these roles before a mixed audience, royal and common, local and international. While Coke, Cecil, and Northampton all ensured that the official pamphlet memorialized their starring roles, the plotters, lay and religious, had been given few opportunities to speak, and most of their words were reported rather than recorded. In fact, their presence at times seems largely irrelevant.

In the next act, too, the authorities attempted to deflect the spotlight from the traitors even as they suffered what were intended to be exemplary deaths. The city of London once again provided the stage as the conspirators were executed in various locations and their severed heads and quartered bodies prominently displayed both at the place intended for destruction and throughout the city. Here again, however, the authorities sent mixed messages. Just as Northampton had linked the arrival of Garnett and the other priests to the Armada, so the decision to execute the Jesuit superior on the west side of St. Paul's, where the thanksgiving for the victory over the Armada had taken place in 1588, seemed to reinforce for the local audience a connection that the government had assiduously denied to an international one. There seems to have been a general effort to play down the executions of the lay plotters, which are described in a single sentence at the end of the first part of the pamphlet. Garnett's execution, however, was reported in more detail, almost certainly to counter rumours circulating about the event.[527]

[527] The extent of public interest in Garnett is attested by the number of surviving accounts of his trial and execution in manuscript. These include: BL Add. MS 21203, ff. 26^{r}-40^{r}; BL Add. MS 34218, ff. 67^{r}-81^{r}; BL Add. MS 73085 ff. 185^{v}-188^{v}. Some of these are handwritten copies of or extracts from printed texts.

While the authorities had limited Garnett's speaking opportunities at his trial, the priest took responsibility for devoicing himself at his execution, claiming that he was unable to speak to the entire audience because of a weak voice, and therefore restricting his remarks to a select audience in close proximity to the scaffold. He maintains that he regrets the plot, but reiterates that he had only a "general" knowledge of it and that his sole offense was not communicating what he knew to the authorities.[528] The state's concern with the representation of his execution is demonstrated by the interventions of the Recorder of London, whose presence had apparently been engaged by the king.[529] When Garnett attempts to extenuate himself, the Recorder leaps in to remind him of the four points to which he had confessed at the trial. Rather than contesting the rebuke, Garnett apologizes both to the government and to Anne Vaux for involving her in a scandal. The account highlights the inability of Catholic doctrine to console or support by observing that Garnett "could not constantly or deuoutly pray" because "feare of death, or hope of Pardon euen then so distracted him" (Fff2^{v}). At the same time, he rudely rejects the charitable offices of the deans of St. Paul's and Winchester. Garnett now plays a coward, deserted by his religion in the hour of

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[528] The extent of Garnett's foreknowledge and the reasons for his decision not to impart that information to the authorities have provided a perennial source of speculation for subsequent writers and historians. Frequently, these have been polarized by confessional interests. Philip Caraman's biography (*Henry Garnet 1555-1606 and the Gunpowder Plot*) painted a largely flattering portrait of the priest, but Protestant commentators have generally been less forgiving. Mark Nicholls concludes that "While great efforts have subsequently been made to clear the names of the three proclaimed Jesuits, it is difficult to believe that any one of them, with the possible exception of Gerard, was ignorant of the plotters' intentions" (*Investigating Gunpowder Plot*, 51).

[529] The Recorder of London at this time was Henry Montagu, appointed in 1603. He was subsequently made king's serjeant in 1610 and became Chief Justice of King's Bench in 1616. See John Noorthouck's *A New History of London, including Westminster and Southwark*, London, 1773 (893).

his death, although the pamphlet records his Latin prayers, presumably to demonstrate their inefficacy. The final words of the account, that he was "hung till he was dead" (Fff3[v]) may have been intended to counter rumours that sympathizers had pulled his legs to prevent him from being cut down alive. By keeping details to a minimum, by reporting them selectively, and by invoking a state official's words, the authorities sought to prevent Catholics from interpreting the execution as a martyrdom.

Lake and Questier observe that in offering accounts of these occasions the authorities were restricted to interpreting the facts—they could not safely tamper with them for the obvious reason that "These were very public performances and the theatre was usually full. Even the most brazenly biased critic knew he could not get away with telling barefaced lies about what was generally known to have happened" ("Agency" 80). These restrictions, of course, also applied to Catholic accounts, although an international Catholic readership may have been more willing to suspend disbelief. Ending the narrative with Garnett's death was intended to provide closure, but in Catholic accounts it nevertheless became the starting point for subversive accounts of martyrdom.

The limited success of the official "drama," at least in its printed form, is reflected in the accounts of miracles that almost immediately attached themselves to the dead priest. The fullest account of Garnett's "martyrdom" appears in Gerard's *Narrative of the Gunpowder Plot* and includes stories of such miracles as the grass in front of the house in which Garnett and Oldcorne were captured displaying the pattern of a martyr's crown and Garnett's severed head being

encircled with a red garland.[530] Gerard also, presumably to counter the official representation of Garnett as a coward, insisted upon the significance of the execution taking place on a holy day, the Invention of the Holy Cross (since Garnett had protested being executed on the secular holiday of 1 May), and claimed that he had died with his arms folded on his chest in the form of a cross and had not struggled. A sympathetic crowd had prevented him from being cut down alive, and when a spectator pulled his legs, "it was much marvelled how the people durst do this so publicly, seeing the State so generally bent against Father Garnett in this cause" (296). According to Gerard, even non-Catholics were moved by Garnett's behaviour at both his trial and execution. There may be some truth to these claims, considering Chamberlain's expression of approval regarding Garnett's deportment at the trial, although he added that "likewise he was used with goode respect and goode wordes, whether yt were that the King mislikes that fowle railing and reproaching of prisoners at the barre: or that they hope by fayre meanes to drawe more from him, for that he knowes much, and is thought yf he list he may deserve his live" (1.225). While Chamberlain ascribes Garnett's good behaviour to hopes of clemency, his words also recognize the authorities' manipulation of these hopes for their own benefit.[531] Gerard's account remains problematic, since we do not know how well it may have been known in England. Nor is it an eyewitness narrative, since the priest was busy escaping to the continent at the time and presumably had to rely on news from other Catholics.

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[530] For Gerard's interpretation of the execution and subsequent miracles, see *The Conditions of Catholics under James I*, Chs 15 and 16.

[531] The lengthy delay between sentencing and execution suggests that the authorities did hope to obtain more information from Garnett (see Nicholls, *Investigating Gunpowder Plot*, 72-73).

At least one of the martyrdom legends, however, was clearly known in England, that of "Garnett's straw."[532] According to this legend, a relic hunter picked up an ear of corn spattered with Garnett's blood at the site of execution. Within a few days, the drop of blood was said to have formed itself into an image of the Jesuit's head wearing a martyr's crown. According to Gerard, Archbishop Bancroft attempted to purchase the straw, presumably to silence the rumours (303).[533] Nevertheless, it may have acquired a presence in a piece of commercial theatre, namely that single edgy comic scene of the Porter in Shakespeare's *Macbeth.* Garry Wills interprets this obscure scene with the porter as a "reverse conjuration" (98) in which the porter welcomes Garnett to hell under three of his aliases (emphasized at his trial), just as Macbeth has three identities in the play. He argues that "The Gunpowder Plot would have been suggested [by the play] in two ways—its menace to the king in Macbeth's regicide, and its failure in the final disposition of traitorous Garnet (safely made the butt of scorn in the Porter scene)" (105).[534] Since *Macbeth* was probably performed before the king, it seems possible that this was Shakespeare's intent.[535] Yet the very need for such comic

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[532] An account of the straw appears with a narrative of Garnet's arraignment in BL Add. MS 21203, f. 23^{r}-24^{r}, which is clearly the work of a sympathetic author, since it appears among items detailing anti-Catholic legislation and the executions of other priests. A hostile account by Charles Cornwallis (1 May 1607) is recorded in BL MS Stowe 169, f. 27.

[533] That the religious authorities were anxious to disprove the legend of the straw is confirmed by H. L. Rogers, who observes that "The Archbishop of Canterbury wrote to the Lord Chief Justice on 25 November 1606 asking for the apprehension of 'one Barret, who went up and down with a miracle of Garnet's head supposed to be on a straw'. The Archbishop also examined witnesses, including Hugh Griffin the tailor, who was questioned on 27 November and 3 December" (45). See "An English Tailor and Father Garnet's Straw," *Review of English Studies* 16 (1965), 44-49.

[534] See also H.L. Rogers, "An English Tailor and Father Garnet's Straw," 44-49.

[535] Rebecca Lemon notes that "The spectacle of Macbeth's severed head at the end of the play ... arguably serves to contain the traumatic events of the Gunpowder Plot" (84), but her analysis suggests that this triumph is undercut by the ways in which the play represents the interdependence of kings and traitors (*Treason by Words*, Ch. 4).

containment suggests the inability to enforce a more permanent closure by means of trial and execution.

The scene in *Macbeth* suggests how deeply secular politics was engaged in representations of the trial and execution. Northampton, with his lengthy speech appended to the account of Garnett's trial, was not the only individual attempting to use the occasion to demonstrate his loyalty and utility to the Crown. Cecil, already a powerful man, was apparently determined to consolidate his power further. Both Catholics and Protestants seem to have been uneasy with Cecil's position, as many Elizabethans had been with that of his father.[536] The family's relative obscurity before William's rise to power and the ways in which father and son had consolidated offices made Robert suspect, and his physical deformity made him appear even more sinister in a time when a crooked back was seen as a reflection of moral depravity.[537] His role in discovering the Gunpowder Plot was the subject of enough libels to force a response from him. Because the king was away hunting when Monteagle received the famous warning letter, he had delivered it to the Privy Council, whose members made the initial decisions on how to proceed. Cecil's determination to await the king's return seems to have initiated many of the subsequent rumours about his conduct. While few dared to accuse him of actually inventing the plot, some suspected that he had known about it before the letter arrived and had concealed the information in order to

[536] On the rise of the elder Cecil, see Stephen Alford, *Burghley: William Cecil at the Court of Elizabeth I* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2008). For attitudes to both Cecils, particularly in relation to the rise and fall of Essex, see Paul E. J. Hammer, *The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics: The Political Career of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, 1585-1597* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999).

[537] A number of the libels current at the time of Cecil's death refer to his physical deformity (see Bellany and McRae, *Early Stuart Libels*, e.g. D4, D5, and D8).

give the plotters more time to incriminate themselves thoroughly and to increase his own opportunities for heroism.[538] At this historical distance, the truth is unlikely to be known, but as Dolan observes, the Gunpowder Plot has always been more about representation than about what actually happened (*Whores* 45).

5.3 Contesting Interpretations: The Plot as Theatre, 1606-1607

Most studies of the theatrical response to the Gunpowder Plot have focused either upon individual plays or upon thematic groupings of plays that minimize the role of chronology (see note 488). Instead, I consider three surviving plays that can be dated with some certainty within the year following the trial and execution of the plotters. My working assumption is that plays would have responded not only to the event itself but to previous representations of it on the stage. This is not a methodology that has generally been applied to early modern drama, but seems potentially useful to a consideration of representations of a historical event over time. Its disadvantages, however, must be acknowledged at the outset. Not every play written or performed that year referred, either directly or indirectly, to the Gunpowder Plot, nor do we possess copies of all plays produced that year, making it difficult to determine how many of the year's plays referred to the plot or explored themes related to it. Some of the plays performed that year, like *Sophonisba*, were conceived earlier, so that although topical references may have been added in performance or printing, the plays themselves

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[538] Dennis Flynn quotes Dudley Carleton, secretary to Northumberland, who referred to the whole plot as a "fable" "as soon as the government issued its report on the Plot" ("Donne's *Ignatius his Conclave* and Other Libels on Robert Cecil," *John Donne Journal*, 6.2 [1987], 173 and 182, n. 52). Carleton may have been biased by his relationship to Northumberland.

were not designed to offer commentary on the plot.[539] In addition, I make no attempt to untangle the relations among the three dramatists or take more than passing note of the companies that performed the plays. Of the three plays, only John Day's *Isle of Gulls* seems to have incurred official displeasure, and probably not on account of its references to the plot.

Despite the official prohibition against representing matters of religion and state on stage, plays retelling stories of revolt and conspiracy from the historical past were performed regularly.[540] Such plays, however, do seem to have risked censorship, particularly when performed in contexts that made parallels with recent events too transparent. The most recent example at the time was probably Samuel Daniel's *Philotas*, performed at court by the Children of the Queen's Revels during the winter of 1604-05. The Privy Council accused Daniel not only of representing the Earl of Essex's downfall, but more provocatively of using the performance to demonstrate his support for the deceased earl. He probably lost his position of licenser to the company, but the play was printed and he apparently

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[539] Garry Wills, for example includes *Sophonisba* with *Macbeth* and *The Devil's Charter* as post-plot plays featuring witches (*Witches and Jesuits*, 152-53 and *passim*). In their edition of the play, Peter Corbin and Douglas Sedge note that Marston referred to his writing of this play in the Preface to *The Fawne* (1604). While the play may not have been completed until after the Gunpowder Plot, its conception was clearly earlier. See *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1986), 4. Nina Taunton and Valerie Hart, in arguing for *King Lear* as a response to the plot, note that E. K. Chambers dated the play to 1604/05 but that more recent scholars have argued for 1606/07 ("*King Lear*, King James and the Gunpowder Treason of 1605" *Renaissance Studies* 17.4 [2003], 695-715). For a summary of the dating controversy over *Macbeth* see Wills, *Witches and Jesuits*, Appendix 1.
[540] Such plays include *The Famous Historie of the Life and Death of Captaine Thomas Stukeley* (printed in 1605 but presumably performed earlier as it was originally licensed in 1600), *The Famous Historie of Sir Thomas Wyat* (1607 but licensed in 1600). Although there are textual difficulties with these plays, it seems that both were handled with some caution by the authorities.

suffered no other punishment.[541] While a few scholars have accepted Daniel's protestations of innocence, the evidence that he deliberately created a parallel between the classical text and the English situation seems fairly conclusive.[542]

The use of such parallels, whether classical or modern, provided one of the best opportunities for making political statements with "plausible deniability," but Daniel's experience illustrated the inevitable risks. With this example before them, it may not be surprising that John Day and Ben Jonson looked to literary rather than historical sources when they wished to critique Robert Cecil's role in the Gunpowder Plot. Suspicions that Salisbury had used the plot not only to discredit Catholics (especially the Jesuits) and to make himself indispensible to James, but possibly also to put a rival out of competition seem to have motivated these attacks. Moreover, this was not the first time such suspicions had settled upon Cecil. Both at the time of Essex's execution and at the time of his own death in 1612, libels accused Cecil of arranging the fall of the Elizabethan favourite to advance his own political career.[543] An epigram dated by Alastair Bellany and Andrew McRae after the Gunpowder Plot links the disgraces of Essex and Northumberland, implicating Cecil in both:

Essex did spend, Northumberland did spare,

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[541] Daniel's position as licenser was established in the 1604 patent that created the company (Lucy Munro, *Children of the Queen's Revels: A Jacobean Theatre Repertory*, 19), but Munro cautions that "It is difficult ... to be sure exactly when Daniel ceased to be involved with the company" (20).

[542] The most recent discussion of the political overtones of the play demonstrates that Daniel actually incorporated material from the trial into his play. See Hugh Gazzard, "'Those Graue Presentments of Antiquitie': Samuel Daniel's *Philotas* and the Earl of Essex," 423-50.

[543] A selection of libels circulating about Cecil at the time of his death appears in Bellany and McRae's *Early Stuart Libels* (Section D). Some of these are discussed by Pauline Croft in "The Reputation of Robert Cecil," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th Series, Vol. 1 (1991), 43-69. Richard Dutton also notes those relevant to his discussion of *Volpone* in *Ben Jonson, "Volpone" and the Gunpowder Plot*, 114-15.

> He was free, this close; How shall we live then?
>
> Of Plotts, these courses both suspected are
>
> No: they are not suspected, but great men. (*ESL* A16)

Another libel, posted over the Burghley pew in Newark in 1606, accuses Cecil's nephew William, third Lord Burghley, of being a Catholic, a charge that Bellany and McRae suggest "was particularly explosive in the immediate aftermath of the Catholic Gunpowder Plot" (*ESL* B12, note). At the same time, Catholic libels were apparently circulating so promiscuously that Cecil was forced to respond to them. In *An Answere to Certaine Scandalous Papers*, he printed a sample of the threatening letters he had allegedly received along with his response. The letter accuses Cecil of persecuting recusants since the Gunpowder Plot through "*sudden banishment, Massacre, imprisonment, or some such vnsupportable vexations, and pressures*" (B3^{r}), with the express purpose of rooting out the old religion entirely. These libels indicate how thoroughly popular opinion was ranged against Cecil at this time, and his compulsion to defend himself attests to the seriousness of the position in which he had been placed.[544] But Cecil's elaborate defense may have been an act of misdirection, drawing attention from the rumours that he had arranged Northumberland's fall and at the same time garnering support from loyal Protestants. If first Day and then Jonson took the opportunity to produce anti-Cecil satires, it is probably because they sensed his weakness. Whereas Day's

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[544] De Luna suggests that Cecil's use of theatrical language in this pamphlet indicates that he was aware of being satirized on the stage (*Jonson's Romish Plot*, 145-46). While this is certainly plausible, Cecil's words are also a reminder of his recent performance on stage at the plot trials.

play was censored, however, Jonson's satire was sufficiently disguised to avoid detection, or at least prosecution, by the authorities.

The Isle of Gulls was performed for the first time *c.* 16 February 1606 (L. Munro 174), and the reaction against it seems to have taken place relatively swiftly, since a letter from Sir Edward Hoby to Sir Thomas Edmondes dated 7 March 1606 describes the furore and the action taken against those involved.[545] From the letter, the offence appears to have been connected to the portrayal of Scots in the play. The players, rather than the author, may have been punished because they had used costumes and accents to make the satire more pointed.[546] Either the satire of the court, and of Robert Cecil in particular, was unremarked or was considered beneath notice.[547] Given the wide-ranging nature of Day's satire, critics have been hesitant to identify Dametas as a specific individual. E. K. Chambers sees the evil courtier as Somerset, but subsequent scholars have pointed out that he had not yet risen to prominence at court.[548] Raymond Burns, in his edition of the play, warns against attempting to make any individual the model for Dametas, and Gary Paul Lehmann echoes his caution, concluding instead that "Day's play is a searing attack on courtiers, their shallow tastes, artificial manners, sham chivalry, and misapprehensions of duty" (151). More confidently,

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[545] Qtd. in L. Munro, *Children of the Queen's Revels*, from BL MS Stowe 168, fol. 363r. Also qtd. in Thomas Birch, ed., *The court and Times of James the First*, 1.60-61.

[546] Hoby's letter states cryptically that "sundry were committed to Bridwell" and Munro postulates that this may have included "some of the actors, the shareholders and/or managers and the dramatist, but Hoby did not regard the dramatist as having sole responsibility for the performance and the offence it caused" (*Children of the Queen's Revels*, 29).

[547] W. David Kay, in relation to Jonson's *Eastward Ho*, writes that "King James had been surprisingly permissive about allowing satire on his person, but in this case his anger was apparently fanned by his Scottish courtiers" (*Ben Jonson: A Literary Life* [Houndsmills: Macmillan, 1995] 75). The same may have been true of Day's play.

[548] E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1951, 2nd ed.), 3.286.

Pauline Croft asserts that "Dametas can be seen as a composite character, incorporating all the vices found at court, but the topical reference was unmistakable" ("Reputation" 56). Dutton posits an even more certain identification of Dametas as Cecil. Echoing De Luna, he insists that the play "patently focuses on Cecil in the person of the hunchbacked Dametas" (*Volpone* 63).[549] Nevertheless, he too concludes that the play is a diffused satire offering "something transparent and unambiguous, a caricature of a king's wicked counsellor, unabashedly Machiavellian and self-seeking" (64). Day may have been attempting to create "plausible deniability" by taking on multiple targets and by using as his source the text of Sidney's *Arcadia*, yet the play offers evidence of topicality that could hardly have been missed by an alert playgoer.

The Children of the Queen's Revels, then under the patronage of Anne of Denmark, performed the play at Blackfriars. In its short history, this company became notorious for staging topical satire, possibly with its patron's encouragement (Tricomi 11-12). Christopher Love questions the tradition that the Blackfriars company served only a "coterie" of courtiers, concluding after a survey of the evidence that while the theatre catered to an urban elite in an upscale neighbourhood, its audience reached beyond the court.[550] According to Croft, the play was "a London sensation in the winter of 1606" ("Reputation" 56), and printing would have made it available to an even wider audience. Failure to

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[549] De Luna declares that "With amazing boldness and a degree of viciousness that was really reprehensible, Day makes the identity of his principal victim clear from the very first" (*Jonson's Romish Plot*, 147).

[550] See "The Private Theaters in Crisis: Strategies at Blackfriars and Paul's, 1606-1607," (Diss., U of Maryland, 2006), 1-83.

license the printing was not, Burns points out, in itself suspicious.[551] Textual evidence that a nervous printer made last-minute changes during compositing, however, the most obvious being the replacement of the titles "King" and "Queen" with "Duke" and "Duchess," leads him to conclude that the play was considered "hot property" and that Day intended to provoke trouble (3, 1-8).

The title self-consciously refers back to Nashe and Jonson's *Isle of Dogs*, a reference reinforced in the Induction when the First Gentleman asks why the play has been given its title, and the Prologue responds: "Not out of any dogged disposition, nor that it figures anie certaine state, or private government" (Ind 38-39). Although *The Isle of Dogs* is lost, we know that it aroused the ire of the Elizabethan government to the extent that Richard Topcliffe was engaged to go through Nashe's papers.[552] In addition, Day's title reveals that the play concerns itself with the "gulling" of an entire island. The *OED* defines a "gull" as a "credulous person; one easily imposed upon; a dupe, simpleton, fool" (n3). The unmistakable implication is that the entire nation has allowed itself to be duped and that the hunchbacked Dametas is responsible. The origins of the play's plot in Sidney's *Arcadia* only complicate our understanding of Day's intentions. Michael Andrews calls the play a "travesty" that ridicules the *Arcadia*, while Gary Lehmann justifies Day's expropriation of Sidney's courtly text for satirical

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[551] Burns represents Daniel as the licenser for the Children of the Queen's Revels at this point, but as Lucy Munro suggests his appointment may already have been terminated (*Children of the Queen's Revels*, 20-21).

[552] See Dutton's summary of the *Isle of Dogs* controversy: *Ben Jonson, "Volpone" and the Gunpowder Plot*, 13-14.

purposes.[553] These interpretations, however, require an uncomplicated reading of Sidney's text as courtly entertainment. Approaching the *New Arcadia* from the perspective of its varied reception through the seventeenth century, Annabel Patterson finds that Sidney has used his "pretty tales" to create "a medium of expression that may, with luck, break through the political restraints and cultural assumptions" (*Censorship* 43) of late Tudor England to offer counsel to the court. In her reading, Sidney's ideals of reformation are inscribed into the text, but with sufficient ambiguity to preserve his own safety. If we read the *Arcadia* this way, then Day's use of it in an almost transparent anti-Cecil satire may be at once less surprising and even more audacious, for it invites a critical rereading of the *Arcadia*. Rather than opposing himself to an uncritical courtly tradition, Day may be placing himself in a tradition of giving counsel. Unlike Sidney, however, he did not disguise his intentions with sufficient care to avoid censorship.

From the beginning, the play gestures towards the trials of the lay gunpowder plotters that had taken place only a few weeks earlier. In the opening lines of the Induction, the Second Gentleman advises his companions to find seats or "quarter" themselves. The First Gentleman responds: "If some had had the wit to doe so in time, they might ha savde the hangman a labour" (Ind. 5-6). Additional references to hanging and quartering sprinkled through the play make it topical but not dangerous, while offering a kind of serious counterpoint to the plot's comic action. This action revolves around a conspiracy, though a comic

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[553] See Michael Andrews, "The *Isle of Gulls* as Travesty," *Yearbook of English Studies* 3 (1973), 78-84; Gary Paul Lehmann, "A Critical Analysis of the Works of John Day (*c.* 1574-*c.*1640)," (Diss. Duke University, 1980), Ch. 9.

rather than an overtly political one, involving an attempt to isolate the King (or Duke) from his daughters while they are out hunting. Although the objects of this plot are Basilius's daughters, the plan itself bears an uncanny resemblance to the outline of the Gowrie conspiracy as narrated in the official account.[554] It might also have reminded viewers of the Gunpowder plotters' intention to kidnap Princess Elizabeth.

A stronger connection with the Gunpowder Plot involving Dametas/Cecil occurs in Act 1, Scene 3 when Julio says: "The example lives in this *Dametas*, who notwithstanding the Duke hath raised him to that height that hee lookes equall with himselfe, yet for the base hope of incertaine government, hee offers him to sale, but let his treason live to the last minute" (1.3.140-44). These lines seem inescapably to refer to the rumours that Cecil had permitted the plot to "mature" in order to make his "discovery" more dramatic, a strategy that might have endangered the lives of the royal family. The context makes this comment even more suggestive, for in the previous line Aminter refers to the fable of the cold snake that, once revived, turns its venom upon the one who has saved it. Although all of the surviving examples are later, this tale occurs frequently in post-plot literature, with English Catholics cast in the role of the snake.[555] Instead, Day suggests that the snake is the king's closest advisor. Earlier in the same act, Dametas claims that he could hang Aminter by a "pattent" (1.3.76), boasting: "Ile tell thee how it runnes, It allowes mee 24 knaves, 6 Knights, 10 fooles, 13 fellons, and 14 traytors by the yeere, take em howe, why, when, and where I please" (77-

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[554] See Chapter 2 for a discussion of this pamphlet.
[555] See particularly Lodowick Lloyd's *The Tragicomedie of Serpents* (London, 1607) STC 16631.

79). If we count the lay plotters, those who had been tried at the time the play was written and those who had died in the rebellion or in prison, and the two priests, Garnett and Oldcorne, the number comes to fourteen, although only eight had been executed at this point. While this may not be a reference to Cecil's involvement in the plot trials, it does highlight his ability to catch and prosecute suspected traitors at his discretion. Day's satire may be broader than Jonson's, but it is even more openly topical.

Jonson's mysterious involvement with the Gunpowder Plot, particularly as it affects our understanding of *Volpone*, has become the subject of more intense interest in recent years.[556] Newly released from his imprisonment following the equally mysterious prosecution for *Eastward Ho*, he dined at the Mitre Tavern on 9 October 1605 with a party that included Francis Tresham, Robert Catesby, Sir Jocelyn Percy (a relative of Thomas Percy), and Thomas Winter. On 7 November, he was called upon to help locate a certain priest. Frances Teague argues that this was Father Thomas Wright, who had probably converted Jonson to Catholicism, and that he was probably wanted to help with Fawkes's interrogation.[557] Wright was found after several days, possibly by Jonson, but Fawkes had confessed by then. If Jonson did find Wright, Teague speculates that his "success might explain why Jonson was treated so gently when he was brought up on charges of

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[556] See for example Frances Teague, "Jonson and the Gunpowder Plot,"; Dennis Flynn, "Donne's 'Amicissimo et Meritissimo Ben. Ionson' and the Daring of *Volpone*," *Literary Imagination: The Review of the Association of Literary Scholars and Critics*, 6 (2004), 368-69; James Tulip, "The Intertextualities of Ben Jonson's *Volpone*," *Sydney Studies in English* 20 (1994), 20-35; and several studies by Richard Dutton culminating in *Ben Jonson, "Volpone" and the Gunpowder Plot* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008).

[557] For more on Wright, see Theodore A. Stroud, "Ben Jonson and Father Thomas Wright," *ELH* 14.4 (1947), 274-82. According to Richard Harp (see note 559 below), the identification of Wright as the priest responsible for Jonson's conversion has not been challenged.

recusancy on 26 April, 1606" ("Jonson" 251). Jonson's presence at the dinner party raises more difficult questions about his political affiliations. Some scholars have argued that Jonson was part of Cecil's extensive "spy network," and De Luna even hypothesizes that Jonson leaked the plot to Cecil.[558] These arguments, however, sit uncomfortably with readings of *Volpone* as an anti-Cecil play. While Jonson's return to the Church of England and his diminishing need for literary patronage may explain his possible criticism of Cecil in *Catiline, his Conspiracy*, scholars have debated whether he would have taken this risk in 1606, when his recent brushes with the law and his recusancy (or, more likely, church papacy) had left him vulnerable.[559] Both Croft and Dutton acknowledge these issues, but while Croft believes they would have inhibited the playwright from criticizing the politician, Dutton argues that Jonson, although unwilling to risk an outright breach, was willing to offer covert criticism. Jonson's justifiable concerns for his own well-being may account for the elaborate "functional ambiguity" of the play. Given his recent history, he could not afford to follow Day into disgrace.[560]

Jonson's only acknowledged contributions to plot literature were his flattering epigrams to Cecil and Monteagle, but Dutton suggests that the sequence in which these appear in the 1616 folio undercuts the praises of both men. He concludes that "It is difficult to ignore the implication that, even as Jonson salutes

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[558] See *Jonson's Romish Plot*, ch. 4 for De Luna's interpretation of Jonson's involvement with the plot.

[559] For a recent overview of scholarship on Jonson's complex religious history, see Richard Harp, "Catholicism," *Ben Jonson Journal* 14.1 (2007), 112-16.

[560] That theatrical audiences or readers could identify the character of Volpone with a number of different individuals is attested by Robert C. Evans's evidence that at least one reader thought the play satirized Thomas Sutton. See *Jonson and the Contexts of his Time* (Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1994), ch. 3.According to De Luna (*Jonson's Romish Plot*, 146), Jonson disliked Day and referred to him as the "vernaculous Orator" who had satirized Cecil in his Preface to *Volpone.*

these two peers, he is seriously questioning their reputations" (*Folio* 146). While this contextualization is specific to the later folio publication, Dutton argues that *Volpone* offers us a good indication of Jonson's attitude to Cecil in the immediate aftermath of the plot. Unlike Day, whose satire of Cecil must have been virtually transparent, Jonson ensured that his play had "plausible deniability." The critical history of *Volpone* attests, in fact, to Jonson's success in creating a play that could not be tied directly to the Gunpowder Plot or widely recognized as an anti-Cecil satire. Dutton concludes that although there is no direct evidence that the play is "about" the plot, the accumulation of circumstantial evidence is compelling. Much of his most recent (and most extensive) argument for the play as a response to the plot comes from his detailed analysis of the prefatory materials to the 1607 quarto.[561] He observes Jonson's concerns with establishing his poetic authority through the commendatory verses, an unusual addition to a printed drama at this time. Donne's poem raises the question of the relationship between the play and Donne's unpublished *Metempsychosis*, also arguably an anti-Cecil satire.[562] Dutton's analysis of the play itself in *Ben Jonson, "Volpone" and the Gunpowder Plot* begins by considering the character of Sir Pol. He argues that "Sir Politic Would-be's role in the play more or less openly alludes to the post-Gunpowder-

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[561] Dutton's previous discussions of the play as a response to the plot include: *Ben Jonson: To the First Folio* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983); and, *Licensing, Censorship and Authorship in Early Modern England: Buggeswords* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2000), ch. 6. His most recent review of these arguments is in "Jonson's Metempsychosis Revisited: Patronage and Religious Controversy," in *Ben Jonson and the Politics of Genre*, ed. A. D. Cousins and Alison V. Scott (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009), 134-61.

[562] On *Metempsychosis* as anti-Cecil satire, see especially M. van Wyk Smith, "John Donne's Metempsychosis," *Review of English Studies*, 17-25, 141-52. Smith's ideas were extended by Brian M. Blackley, "The Generic Play and Spenserian Parody of John Donne's 'Metempsychosis,'" Diss., University of Kentucky, 1994.

Plot paranoia in England, carrying it on to the Counter-Reformation front line of Venice" (*"Volpone"* 65), as Sir Pol "buys completely into all the anti-Spanish anxieties that followed the Gunpowder Plot" (*"Volpone"* 56). Dutton's second line of argument links the beast fable frame of the play with the tradition of associating the wily Cecils with foxes: "*Volpone, or the Fox* hangs tantalizingly within that array of early modern beast fables, indeed fox-fables, which all seem energized or illuminated by their apparent proximity to the Cecil family and its unique hold on power" (*"Volpone"* 93). Along with Teague, Dutton finds that the "scrupulous and verifiable Venetian setting must in large part be aimed at deflecting attention away from the play's urgent concern with matters much closer to home" (*"Volpone"* 107).[563] Nevertheless, "the more closely we attend to the text, especially in its 1607 quarto version, where the extensive paratextual material informs the play itself, the more its Venice blends into London, its London blends into Venice" (*"Volpone"* 108). The final step of Dutton's argument is the recognition that "For all Sir Pol's posturing, the *real* plotting in the play is that conducted by Volpone and Mosca" (*"Volpone"* 110). Volpone's subversion of Venetian society "is a richly imaginative metaphor of Cecil's exploitation of English society, undermining the law, alienating fathers and sons, and coming between husbands and wives, in (as it might be seen) the remorseless pursuit of his own wealth and gratification" (*"Volpone"* 110).

[563] Teague argues that setting the courtroom scenes in Venice enables Jonson to critique English justice at a time when, following the Gunpowder trials, such scenes set in London would have elicited too many questions. See "Ben Jonson and London Courtrooms" in *Solon and Thespis: Law and Theater in the English Renaissance*, ed. Dennis Kezar (Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 2007), 64-77.

To Dutton's excellent analysis may be added the subtle but pervasive echoing of Day's play in Jonson's repetition of forms of the word "gull" throughout *Volpone*. These occur at least seven times in the play. In Act 1, Scene 4, Mosca, in response to Corbaccio's "I doe not doubt, to be a father to thee," says slyly: "Nor I, to gull my brother of his blessing" (127-28). In Act 2, Scene 1, the newcomer Peregrine, thrown off balance by his conversation with Sir Pol, asks himself: "Do's he gull me, trow? or is gull'd?" (24). After his performance as a mountebank, Volpone asks Mosca: "But, were they gull'd / With a beliefe, that I was SCOTO?" (2.4.34-35), while after their first court appearance, Mosca exults that he and Volpone have been able "To gull the court" (5.2.16). Corbaccio is correspondingly annoyed that he has been "gul'd" (5.3.65) by the parasite. In disguise, Volpone finally taunts Voltore, "Had you no quirke, / To auoide gullage, sir, by such a creature?" (5.9.11-12). Everyone in this play seems to be in danger of being gulled while attempting to gull others. One may be deceived in personal life, in political life, and even in court. In Jonson's Venice, as on Day's arcadian island, it is not always easy to tell who is gulling and who is being gulled.

In contrast to, and I suggest in response to, the satiric treatments of post-plot politics offered by Day and Jonson, Thomas Dekker the following year produced what appears to be a conventional treatment of religious conspiracy promulgated by Rome and Spain and averted by Elizabeth with the assistance of her loyal Privy Council. Dekker consciously rejects the satiric mode, placing his play within the patriotic tradition of Heywood's *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody*, which had enjoyed immense success in 1604-05 and basing his

interpretation upon "sources sanctioned or even inspired by the government" (Riely 56). The play was entered in the Stationer's Register 20 April 1607, following production by Prince Henry's players at Henslowe's theatre, the Fortune.[564] Although some earlier scholars believed that the play was actually a revision of an earlier one (*Truth's Supplication to Candlelight*), W. L. Halstead argues convincingly that this cannot be the case. Had the play been an old one subjected to modernization, the new topical references would have been added to the stage copy, whereas these references appeared in the holograph copy from which the text was printed.[565] He concludes: "That the text was printed from Dekker's holograph which he kept in his possession is important because the allusions to the death of Essex, the reign of James, and 'The Isle of Gulls' must have been a part of Dekker's original copy" (40).[566] Halstead consequently dates the writing of the play to late 1605 or early 1606. Since Day's play was not acted

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[564] The exact date of the first performance is unknown.

[565] Halstead points out that other aspects of the text such as the identifications of the allegorical figures that appear in the margins were unlikely to have been included in a stage copy. For the now discredited view that the play is a revision of an even earlier one, see Mary Leland Hunt, *Thomas Dekker: A Study* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1964), 36-42. Basing her argument partly upon the inclusion of such "archaic" features as dumb show and morality characters, Hunt claims that the topical references are later additions or changes and dates the original play between 1594 and 1596. Despite the lingering perception that dumb show had fallen out of fashion by the beginning of the seventeenth century, it was still being used in 1606 in plays such as *The Devil's Charter* (also an anti-Catholic play performed in the wake of the Gunpowder Plot). B. R. Pearn, in fact, counts sixteen plays between 1601 and 1610 that use this convention. See B. R. Pearn, "Dumb Show in Elizabethan Drama," *Review of English Studies* 11 (1935), 386; on the convention more generally, see Dieter Mehl, *The Elizabethan Dumb Show: The History of a Dramatic Convention*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1966.

[566] While W. L. Halstead ("Dating and Holograph Evidence in *The Whore of Bbylon*," *Notes and Queries* 180 [1941], 38-40) accepts that the passage in Act 4, Scene 2 refers to the execution of Essex, as had been suggested by Frederick Gard Fleay (*A Chronicle History of the London Stage, 1559-1642* [New York: B. Franklin, 1964]) and Mary Hunt, Riely has postulated that the reference is to Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk in relation to the Ridolfi plot. This would account for the changes of gender as well as for the presence of Florimell (Leicester) in the scene, which would be problematic were the warrant for his stepson's death being signed (*The Whore of Babylon*, 29-32). More recently, Julia Gasper has once again identified the warrant as that for Essex's execution (*The Dragon and the Dove*, Ch. 3).

until mid-February 1606, however, and references to the deaths of traitors would have had more topicality about this time, I would suggest the early months of 1606 as the earliest possible time of composition. If, as I propose below, there are also references to *Volpone*, then the writing must have been completed after the first performances of Jonson's play. This places the writing of the play during the period in which Day, and probably Jonson, were satirizing Cecil on stage, apparently with great commercial success.

Dekker's response to the plot, and to the earlier plays, is a relatively conventional anti-Catholic play that uses allegory and dumb show to display the evils of Rome and Spain as well as the glory of England under Elizabeth. It seems to have been an attempt to capitalize on Heywood's success, and Dekker was apparently bitterly disappointed by the play's failure.[567] The play begins with what had been the final scene of *If You Know Not Me*—the tableau of Elizabeth receiving the Bible originally scripted as part of her coronation procession. The remainder of the play tells the familiar story of Catholic plotting against the queen, particularly the assassination attempts of Parry and Dr. Lopez, along with the history of the Jesuit mission culminating in the Armada. In order to arrange his material to best dramatic effect, Dekker takes these incidents out of strict chronological order, a procedure he justifies in the "Lectori" by insisting that he writes "as a Poet, not as an Historian" (497).[568]

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[567] In the "Lectori," Dekker compares the spoiling of plays by players to the ruin of good fabric by a poor tailor or of children by inferior nurses.

[568] Kathleen E. McLuskie suggests that this also may have been a jibe at Jonson for his insistence upon historical correctness in plays like *Sejanus* (*Dekker and Heywood, Professional Dramatists* [Houndsmills: Macmillan, 1994], 52). Dekker may also have been protecting himself from political repercussions, particularly if he suspected that his play could be understood as a critique

This license, however, also allows him to draw the same connection between the commencement of the Jesuit mission and the preparation of the Armada that Northampton had made at Garnett's trial. Although the historical setting precludes any overt reference to the latest Catholic plot, evocative words and phrases would have reminded Dekker's audience of the Gunpowder affair. When the Whore gives the kings their orders to court Elizabeth, the Third King responds: "When mines are to be blown up, men dig low" (1.1.128), and when he decides to stay in England after his suit has been rejected, he suggests that while he works to subvert England from within, the others should operate from outside as, among other things, "devils in vaults" (1.2.276).[569] Susan Krantz observes that both of the above references to the plot are made by the King of Spain while a third is made by the Whore, "thus connecting Spain directly to the most recent episode of Roman Catholic treachery against the English-Protestant world" (273). By insisting upon this connection, Dekker refuses one of the tenets of the official interpretation of the plot and accepts instead Northampton's anti-Spanish version of history. Krantz suggests that the play thus expresses Dekker's dissatisfaction with James's foreign policy, contrasting it unfavourably with Elizabeth's. As she argues, the performance of the play by Prince Henry's Men and the evidence of

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of the new reign. Julia Gasper argues that critics who evaluate it as a history play are misguided, and that the play is an example of a minor genre, "the *comoedia apocalyptica*," which differs from the history play since it aims to interpret events in terms of Protestant historiography derived from the Book of Revelation and other biblical texts" (*The Dragon and the Dove: The Plays of Thomas Dekker* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1990], 62).

[569] Riely notes that the Third King's frequent references to "trains" are also ambiguous, referring generally to plots and more specifically to gunpowder.

Dekker's earlier post-plot pamphlet, *The Double PP*, indicate his sympathy with militant Protestantism.[570]

Kathleen E. McLuskie supports Krantz's view that Dekker critiques the current monarch by comparing him with the previous one, observing that "In the context of James's policy of peace in Europe and his failure to support Protestant struggles in the low countries, the oppositional political message was unmistakable" (51).[571] Perhaps in order to deflect suspicions arising from such potentially subversive references, Dekker compliments James as the phoenix rising from Elizabeth's ashes. In addition, the lengthy scene in which the King of Spain recruits Campeius offers an implicit critique of Elizabeth's parsimonious treatment of scholars. John Watkins also suggests that portraying the queen as the victim of continuous plotting makes her appear to have been weak and vulnerable, but if Dekker had intended such an interpretation to flatter James it seems unlikely that he would have made reference to the more recent plot.[572] Thus, the conventional content and structure of Dekker's play may have helped him to offer veiled criticism of James, displaying the gap between Elizabeth and her successor through allegory rather than satire.[573]

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[570] Although this pamphlet was published anonymously, there has never been any real question of Dekker's authorship. See *The Double PP, A Papist in Armes* (London, 1606).
[571] It is useful to remember that to praise Elizabeth was not necessarily to critique James at this early date. See Walsham, "'A Very Deborah?' The Myth of Elizabeth I as a Providential Monarch" in *The Myth of Elizabeth*, ed. Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 159.
[572] See *Representing Elizabeth in Stuart England: Literature, History, Sovereignty*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), 5-55.
[573] James H. Conover sees the play as "pro-Elizabeth" (*Thomas Dekker: An Analysis of Dramatic Structure* [The Hague: Mouton, 1969], 134), but does not suggest that it is anti-Jacobean; George R. Price reads it as a relatively uncomplicated demonstration of patriotism in the wake of the Gunpowder Plot (*Thomas Dekker* [New York: Twayne, 1969], 69-76); Irving Ribner suggests that Dekker "may have been deliberately courting the favour of James I by expressing political

In fact, Dekker explicitly rejects the effectiveness of satire in the theatre and criticizes those, like Day and Jonson, who practice it. In Act 2, Scene 1, Plain Dealing decries to the queen the state of an English theatre that thrives on satire. Representing the common Englishman who has converted from Marian Catholicism to Elizabethan Protestantism, Plain Dealing describes the evils of "ordinaries" and the gallants who frequent them, then tells the queen that he "left villains and knaves" in Babylon only to find

> knaves and fools here; for your ordinary is your isle of gulls, your ship of fools, your hospital of incurable madmen. It is the field where your captain and brave man is called to the last reckoning and is overthrown horse and foot; it is the only school to make an honest man a knave, for intelligencers may hear enough there to set twenty a begging of lands; it is the strangest chessboard in the world. (1.2.103-11)[574]

All of this takes place, Plain Dealing says, in "one little cockpit," which is "able to show all the follies of your kingdom, in a few apes of the kingdom" (2.1.117-20). When the queen asks if there are not physicians to cure these ills, Plain Dealing responds that many of the physicians are sicker than the patients. In addition, the queen has

> other fellows that take upon them to be surgeons, and by letting out the corruption of a state — and they let it out, I'll be sworn, for some of them,

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doctrine with which the king was closely concerned" (*The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare* [New York: Barnes & Noble, 1965], 285).

[574] It may have been this reference to the stage as chessboard that inspired Middleton almost twenty years later when he set out to intervene in contemporary politics. Critics have noticed that *A Game at Chess* borrows from Dekker's play. See, for example, Price, *Thomas Dekker*, 70.

> in places as big as this, and before a thousand people, rip up the bowels of vice in such a beastly manner, that like women at an execution, that can endure to see men quartered alive, the beholders learn more villainy than they knew before. (2.1.128-35)

The topicality of this scene poses challenges of interpretation, but it offers a fascinating glimpse into Dekker's attitude towards contemporary theatrical productions.

The references to gallants, the knight's ward, and the "little cockpit" in conjunction with the phrase "isle of gulls" all point to Day's play, acted in the private theatre of Blackfriars.[575] Dekker seems to be pointing his finger at playwrights like Day and Jonson who claim to satirize the follies of the state in order to change them. But by "rip[ping] up the bowels of vice" they become no better than those they criticize. Dekker does not deny the existence of "follies" in the state, but he insists that satire is not the best method for curing them. In such plays, in fact, these playwrights recreate the spectacle of the scaffold even as they condemn it. It is tempting to connect the phrase "beastly manner" with Jonson's beast fable, *Volpone*, particularly given the proximity of the reference to "a few apes of the kingdom." Evidence from a variety of sources suggests that Cecil's hunchback and his sexual appetites had led to his popular depiction as an ape.[576]

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[575] This scene has occasioned some attempts by critics to identify the theatre in question. Riely argues, *contra* Chambers, that the "cockpit" is more likely to refer to the Fortune itself than to a performance at court. Given the context, however, it seems most likely to me that Dekker is criticizing a play or plays performed at another theatre and the reference would fit Blackfriars well.

[576] At least one libel circulating at the time of his death referred to Cecil as an ape (see Bellany and McRae, *Early Stuart Libels*). Closer to the time of the play is Donne's unpublished

Thus, it is difficult not to see this little scene as a condemnation of Day's, and possibly Jonson's, methods of revealing the weaknesses of the Jacobean court. Yet Dekker's portrait of Elizabeth and her advisors, through a minor historical inaccuracy, may present an equally damaging indictment of the Cecils.

Marianne Gateson Riely has identified the four representatives of the Privy Council in the play as Lord Charles Howard (Fideli), William Cecil, Lord Burghley (Parthenophil), Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (Florimell), and Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon (Elfiron),[577] although she admits that the identification of Burghley as Parthenophil "rests on slender evidence" (97). There is, as she points out, little in the text itself to differentiate the counsellors, although this might have been remedied in performance by the actors' use of accents and costumes. Riely argues that Dekker has used "delicacy" in characterizing Burghley as Parthenophil (68), but one might question whether this is in fact something more subversive. In point of fact, it was Leicester who was patron to Campion before his defection to the Roman church, not Burghley. Cecil, who had conformed reluctantly to the Catholic church during the Marian period, became a defender of Protestantism against international Catholicism once Elizabeth had ascended the throne. The play represents the Campion affair and the Armada as the most significant attacks not only on Elizabeth but on Protestant England. Elizabeth's refusal to patronize Campion, despite Parthenophil's efforts, is contrasted with the Third King's courting of him. In this context, Elizabeth's failure to reward her

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Metempsychosis, which critics like Van Wyk Smith have read as anti-Cecil satire. In Donne's unfinished poem, the "great soul" comes finally to inhabit an ape.

[577] Felix Schelling had identified Parthenophil as Leicester and Fideli as Burghley (*Elizabethan Drama, 1558-1642* [New York: Russell, 1959], 1.289).

scholars becomes a much more serious criticism, since it leads to the Catholic mission and hence to the Armada. Dekker's audience would almost certainly have taken the next step of associating these events with the Gunpowder Plot. The disproportionate emphasis upon Campion's early patronage and recruitment by Spain is contrasted by the dismissal of his death in the simple phrase "But now hee's tan'e" (4.2.97). While James H. Conover sees this as a flaw in the dramatic structure, Dekker's reticence is almost inevitable. To have dramatized the priest's end would have been to court trouble after Garnett's sensational trial and execution. Leaving his ultimate fate suspended, however, again suggests the failure to contain the Catholic problem. Associating Burghley with Campion indicts him in initiating the crises of 1588 and 1605 and may cast aspersions upon his son. Although we cannot be certain that this was Dekker's intention, his manipulation of historical facts seems to have been purposeful given his attention to such details elsewhere in the play. Once again, this play dramatizes what are at least ambivalent attitudes to the "regnum Cecilianum."[578]

I have suggested, then, that at least three plays written and performed within the year following the Gunpowder Plot responded not only to the plot but to each other. Day places references to this event within a broad context of anti-court satire that nevertheless focuses on Cecil, who had succeeded in "gulling" an entire island into believing in a plot that he had either designed or manipulated. Jonson, more indirectly, describes a politics of misdirection in which sham plots

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[578] Gasper, who argues that the idealization of Elizabeth in the play is also a form of critique, corroborates this argument She believes that the death warrant the queen signs in Act 4, Scene 2 is Essex's rather than Mary Stewart's and that the scene shows that Cecil and the queen were mistaken about Lopez while Essex was right (*The Dragon and the Dove*, Ch 3)

conceal the real plot to take over the state.[579] Dekker seems to contrast a functioning Elizabethan court able to resist both force and fraud with a Jacobean court unable to contain such threats. The seeds of these troubles, however, have been sown not only by James's predecessor, but by Robert Cecil's father. Within the parameters permitted by the authorities, then, the theatre seems to have functioned during the year after the plot as a space for debating and contesting interpretations of the event, its causes and effects. By considering these plays in relation to one another, we may see playwrights operating in dialogue with each other and with their audiences, offering a variety of interpretative possibilities in contrast to the authorities' attempts to impose a univocal narrative.

5.4 The Plot Rewritten: Jonson's *Catiline, his Conspiracy*

For reasons that we can only guess, Jonson seems to have returned to the subject of the plot in 1611 with a new play based on Sallust's account of the Catilinarian conspiracy. De Luna plausibly attributes Jonson's renewed interest to the assassination of Henri IV in France on 14 May 1610. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that in 1609 Francis Herring had published the continuation of his 1606 Latin epic detailing the failed Midlands revolt that followed the discovery of the plot. Herring's sequel was the first literary work to focus on the rebellion, about which official publications had been virtually silent, and its publication suggests both a renewed interest in the plot before the French king's assassination

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[579] Dutton, *Ben Jonson, "Volpone" and the Gunpowder Plot*, 110. In this context, it is worth remembering John Harington's famous epigram "Of Treason" ("Treason doth never prosper, what's the reason? / For if it prosper, none dare call it Treason.") (*The Letters and Epigrams of Sir John Harington*, ed. Norbert Egbert McLure [Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1930], 25).

and a shifting of focus from the attempt on parliament to the larger project of taking over the country.[580] In 1610, Herring also endorsed the first English translation of his original poem, and about 1611 Phineas Fletcher wrote the first surviving version of his *Locustae*, considered by numerous critics to have been influenced by *Catiline* (and itself frequently considered an influence upon *Paradise Lost*).[581] This upsurge of interest in the plot may be explained by the increasingly acrimonious international dispute over the Oath of Allegiance as much as by the situation in France, particularly given the emphasis upon classical and Latinate publications. Nevertheless, the translation and consequent popularlization of such elite texts may reflect the influence of the sensational news from France.[582] This context explains Jonson's decision to revisit the plot without requiring us to resort to the unfounded speculations that De Luna offers.[583] While most critics have accepted her conclusion that the play offers a belated response to the plot, almost all remain sceptical of her attempt to read it as

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[580] Pauline Kewes claims that after 1603 fewer plays dealing with rebellion were written, while tyranny and absolutism became more frequent topics on the stage as the threat of a disputed succession receded and was replaced by anxieties about a monarchy that might become too strong. Despite this, Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* (1599) remained popular. See "Julius Caesar in Jacobean England," *Seventeenth Century* 17 (2002), 155-186.

[581] On the relations among these texts, see David Quint, "Milton, Fletcher, and the Gunpowder Plot," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 54 (1991), 261-68; Estelle Haan, "Milton's *In Quintum Novembris* and the Anglo-Latin Gunpowder Epic," *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 41 (1992), 221-295; 42 (1993), 368-93.In an interesting argument, Robert Wiltenburg also proposes that the characterization of Milton's Satan is indebted to Jonson's Catiline. See "Damnation in a Roman Dress: *Cataline*, Cataline, and Paradise Lost," *Milton Studies* 25 (1989), 89-108. On anti-Catholic satire in *Paradise Lost*, see John N. King, *Milton and Religious Controversy: Satire and Polemic in "Paradise Lost"* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000).

[582] Donne's satire, *Ignatius, his Conclave* saw its first publication, in Latin, during this year. Donne's text illustrates (as Herring's does) the way in which texts could move from elite to popular. *Ignatius* was almost immediately published in an English translation.

[583] De Luna explains Jonson's renewed interest in the context of the news from France, but she also suggests that Jonson had been deeply stung by criticism of his own role in the plot. This requires her to engage in the highly dubious conjecture that Jonson had been a spy for Cecil at the time (*Jonson's Romish Plot*, 144-70).

a "parallelograph" in which each character must correspond to one of the figures involved in the historical plot.[584]

Although De Luna argues initially that most playgoers would not have recognized the allusions to the plot, much of her argument actually depends on this recognition. Since it was only five years since the event, and memories had been kept alive through annual memorial services, it seems unlikely that any perceptive spectator or reader would have failed to discover the analogy.[585] Parallels between the two events were fairly commonplace and not accessible only to the classically educated. The "Discourse" that accompanied James's speech in the "King's Book" described the plotters as "worse then *Catilines*" (E4[v]), and Northampton told Garnett in his trial speech that if Catesby were alive, "he might vaunt, and without exception, that he had surmounted and transcended *Catiline* in the spheare of his owne treacherie" (Dd3[v]).[586] In 1608, Thomas Heywood published his translation of Sallust's account of the conspiracy, which attests to contemporary interest in the story. De Luna notes that while Heywood's translation "makes no explicit allusion to the Gunpowder Plot, many of his seemingly-gauche renderings make it clear that he was, instead, skillfully

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[584] Dutton accepts De Luna's main conclusion while criticizing her methodology and refusing her positive interpretation of Cicero (*Jonson, "Volpone" and the Gunpowder Plot*, 135-41); Annabel Patterson agrees that the play's "allusion to the Gunpowder Plot must have been unmistakable," "'Roman-cast Similitude': Ben Jonson and the English Use of Roman History," in *Rome in the Renaissance: The City and the Myth*, ed. P.A. Ramsey (Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1982), 387.
[585] Scholars no longer uncritically accept Joel Hurstfield's assertion that "the government made the maximum political capital out of the Plot," ("Gunpowder Plot and the Politics of Dissent," 116); however, as I have suggested, it did become the cornerstone of a "Jacobean myth of deliverance" that ensured at least annual memorialization.
[586] Northampton identified all of the traitors as Catilines a second time (Bb[v]) and Catesby as Catiline again later in his speech (Zz3[r]). He also made a reference to Fulvia (Aaa3[r]) to which I shall return below.

adjusting his word-choices wherever possible in order to suggest a topical application" (91), and that "at one point he has so skewed Sallust's Latin as to unmistakably suggest the Jesuit doctrine of equivocation" (94). We should note, however, that Heywood was working from the French, rather than directly from the Latin, which may explain some of these changes. But Heywood's interest in contemporary applications may also have manifested itself in his choice of prefatory materials. His letter "To the Reader," translated from Jean Bodin's *Methods*, addresses the problems of attempting to write recent history, noting that fear of offending inevitably compromises the author's neutrality. Throughout, the prefatory letter emphasizes such topics as the author's ability to separate the roles of historian and orator and the reader's discernment. Kings, he declares somewhat pointedly, are not the best judges of their own actions. Cloaking himself in Bodin's words, Heywood offers a critical look at the problems of interpreting contemporary events.

In his view, ambition rather than ethical or religious considerations motivated the Catilinarian conspirators. If De Luna is correct that Heywood was offering an unacknowledged parallel with the Gunpowder Plot, then he would have been aware that the official version of the plot narrative made religious fanaticism rather than ambition its cause. It may, in fact, have been Heywood's translation that spurred writers to turn their attention to this aspect of the conspiracy. Herring's continuation of his epic painted a picture of Digby as the classic overreacher, proudly lording it over his fellow conspirators before

receiving the devastating news that Fawkes had been captured.[587] By 1611, with Northumberland still languishing in the Tower and the "Regnum Cecilianum" clearly drawing to a close as Cecil's health failed, writers like Herring and Jonson may have gained confidence in representing the plot as the product of misplaced ambition as much as religious zeal.

The analogy of the Catilinarian conspiracy confronted the question of ambition directly and uncomfortably through its connection with the Essex revolt. Like Catiline, Catesby and some of the other Gunpowder conspirators had been involved in a previous plot against the state, a fact noted initially but not even mentioned in the official account of the trial. This discretion may have been partly an attempt to staunch the rumours that Cecil would benefit from Northumberland's fall as he had from Essex's. Had Jonson's play been performed in 1606, then, it might have been regarded as more daring. By 1611, however, Northumberland's imprisonment was less likely to have been connected with the ghostly appearance at the beginning of Jonson's play. De Luna, in fact, dismisses that idea that the ghost would have invoked memories of Essex: "If Jonson in employing the Ghost of Sylla meant to link the Essex Rebellion and the Powder Plot, causally, he surely cannot have intended the suggestion very seriously unless he believed Essex to have been, like Northampton, a secret Papist, merely posing—when it suited his convenience—as the arch Papist-hater of the realm" (109).[588] In her eagerness to establish exact correspondences, De Luna seems to

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[587] Herring (28-32) compares Digby to Nimrod, the proud and mighty hunter.
[588] De Luna was also puzzled by the line "And no religion binds men to be traitors," which is crucial to my interpretation of the play. While she finds it incongruous in a play set in pagan

have misunderstood the larger point Jonson is making—that the cause of the plot was not religion itself but the use of religion for personal gain. Rather than seeing it as a botched religious coup in the tradition of the Elizabethan Catholic plots, Jonson literally raises the spectre of a political plot in which Cecil was suspected of having played a dishonourable part.

This opening is one of the most arresting aspects of the play, garnering later imitations as well as both favourable and unfavourable commentary. In the late seventeenth century, Thomas Rymer was exasperated by the ghost's insistence upon addressing Catiline alone in his study rather than the entire city of Rome.[589] Later readers have generally reacted more positively to the scene, which was reinterpreted in a series of anti-Catholic poems later in the century, including John Oldham's first "Satyre against the Jesuits." Jonathan Goldberg describes it as "one of the most remarkable scenes ever written, the apparition of the past in the form of Sylla's Ghost, breathing life into Catiline's conspiracy" (193). In general, however, critics seem to have failed to appreciate the implications of the ghostly presence throughout the remainder of the play.

While Sylla's ghost may be unusually dramatic, ghosts were commonplace on the Renaissance stage. According to Peter Marshall, between 1560 and 1610 at least "fifty-one ghosts were featured in twenty-six plays" (*Beliefs* 257). In the tradition of *A Mirror for Magistrates*, literary ghosts

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Rome, the relationship between religion and treason was intensely important in Jacobean England, particularly in the wake of Henri IV's assassination in France and the Oath controversy.

[589] Thomas Rymer, *A short view of tragedy it's original, excellency and corruption : with some reflections on Shakespear and other practitioners for the stage / by Mr. Rymer* ... London, 1693 (Wing R2429), 160-63.

frequently served as negative exemplars in the *de casibus* tradition. Michelle O'Callaghan argues that the "ghosts populating the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage, pamphlets and dream-vision poems provided their culture with vehicles for animating memory, providing it with form and purpose" (82). For her, the stage ghosts function as embodiments of history who "return from the past to speak persuasively to the living, and the story they frequently tell, the failure of governance, is intended to be corrective" (82). In fact, the very first poem known to have been written on the plot was in the form of "prosopopaiae," the rhetorical device of creating fictional, or ghostly, speakers.[590] The Westminster schoolboy's poem conventionally has the spirits and minds of Catesby and Percy engage in dialogue—one penitent, the other still defiant in death.[591] The poem expresses loyal political sentiments and conventional Protestant doctrine. A spate of poems commemorating the Earl of Essex made the late rebel a hero and "the exemplar of a political cause in danger of losing its heroes, its agents, and of a history that has officially been forgotten" (O'Callaghan 86). The ghostly presence of Essex functioned as a silent rebuke to those who had participated in his fall.[592] All of these ghosts, then, spoke of the need to understand and memorialize the past in order to learn from its mistakes.[593]

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[590] On the "ghostly" nature of prosopopaiae, see Elizabeth Mary Sturgeon, "Ghostly Speech: Writing History and Reading Literature in the Renaissance," Diss. Northwestern University, 2004. The introduction provides a useful summary of Renaissance definitions of this rhetorical device, although Sturgeon may have been too ready to equate the creation of fictional speakers with the creation of spectral ones.

[591] Edward Hawes, *Trayterous Percyes and Catesbyes Prosopopoeia* (London, 1606).

[592] See O'Callaghan, "Dreaming the Dead," in *Reading the Early Modern Dream*, 85-89 and 158-59, n. 21.

[593] Philip Schwyzer connects the ghosts in the later revisions of the *Mirror for Magistrates* to a nationalistic agenda, arguing that only shared nationality connects ancient Britons with

Weldon Williams, however, points out that Jonson's apparition seems to fall within the tradition of the Senecan ghost rather than the *Mirror for Magistrates* and is particularly indebted to the ghost that introduces *Thyestes*.[594] Seneca's play, available to readers in a 1560 translation by Jasper Heywood, opens with a speech by Tantalus's ghost, raised unwillingly from Hades by Megæra to stir up trouble between his grandsons. That Jonson may have been reading *Thyestes* in the early Jacobean period is suggested by an allusion observed by Brock Cameron MacLeod in the quarto of *Sejanus*.[595] His depiction of the ghost as more a noxious breath than a visible presence echoes Seneca's description of Tantalus. The main distinction, however, seems to be that Sylla shows no reluctance to perform his duty of inciting Catiline to additional crimes. Consequently, he also becomes the negative exemplar of the *Mirror for Magistrates* tradition. Although each ghost makes a single speech before vanishing permanently from the stage, Tantalus remains a presence in the play through Thyestes' son of the same name. Similarly, I believe the ghostly presence in *Catiline* lingers throughout the play both in the women's plot and in Catiline himself, attesting to the difficulty of not repeating history.

During the play, Catiline first fears and then experiences a kind of ghostly dissolution. After losing the consulship, he exclaims: "To what a shaddow, am I melted! / ... Strooke through, like aire, and feele it not. My wounds / Close faster,

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Renaissance Englishmen. See *Literature, Nationalism, and Memory in Early Modern England and Wales* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), Ch. 4.

[594] "The Influence of Ben Jonson's *Catiline* upon John Oldham's Satyrs Upon the Jesuits," *ELH* 11.1 (1944), 38-62.

[595] See " An Unacknowledged Debt to Seneca in the Quarto *Sejanus*," *Notes and Queries* 50.248 (4) (2003), 427.

then they're made" (3.165-68). At the beginning of Act 5, Petreius, encouraging his army, pictures for them Catiline in hell, "Walking a wretched, and lesse ghost" (5.64). Catiline, like Sylla, is to become a negative exemplar, a picture of failed governance. But to whom will his ghost appear? The most obvious answer is Caesar. Philip J. Ayres claims that Jonson deliberately dehistoricized Caesar in order to make him simply an emblem of future tyranny. This is consistent with Pauline Kewes's observation that while Caesar was regarded more favourably in other types of literature and his assassination frequently read as a regicide, the stage maintained a consistently anti-Caesarian bias.[596] James, meanwhile, identified himself first with Caesar and only later with Augustus, becoming convinced that Caesar had been a tyrant. The ghostly appearance of Sylla and the transformation of Catiline into a ghost support a reading of Caesar as a future tyrant who will, like Sylla and Catiline, eventually have to be disposed of.

But other spectral presences haunt the play, particularly the women who disappear unremarked after the fourth act, just as the ghost does after the first. Like the "Would-Be" scenes in *Volpone*, the scenes involving the female conspirators have sometimes been considered expendable, and some critics have avoided discussing the women entirely.[597] Readers' disregard for the female characters may not be entirely surprising, for beginning with the first quarto edition of the play in 1611 the list of "Dramatis Personae" has relegated them to

[596] Kewes curiously suggests that Caesar's assassination was widely represented as an analogue for the Gunpowder Plot, but the Catilinarian conspiracy is referred to much more frequently. See"Julius Caesar in Jacobean England."

[597] De Luna makes only passing references to the women (*Jonson's Romish Plot*), while Philip J. Ayres ("The Nature of Jonson's Roman History") makes no mention of the women.

the bottom of the list on the left side of the ledger, equivalent with such minor characters as pages and servants on the right. Similarly, the Gunpowder Plot has for so many years been narrated as an exclusively male event that it is almost impossible to recall that women were involved, if not in the plot itself, then certainly in the events that surrounded it.

More recently, popular historians of the Gunpowder Plot, such as Alice Hogge and Antonia Fraser, as well as scholars including Arthur F. Marotti, Marie Rowlands, and Frances E. Dolan have begun the task of recovering the roles of Catholic women in post-Reformation England. Fraser observes how unlikely it is that rumours of the conspiracy would not have spread within the Catholic community, particularly to women and servants, while Hogge reviews more generally the female role in hiding priests.[598] Marotti and Dolan have contended that recusant women were considered dangerous because they resisted or subverted male authority.[599] In many cases, they were responsible for the Catholic upbringing of the next generation, while their husbands might conform outwardly in order to avoid the burden of recusancy fines. One of the factors suspected of motivating Catholics to rise in 1605 was a rumour that recusancy fines were going to be extended to women, forcing more wives to conform and thus making it more difficult to maintain and transmit the old religion.[600]

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[598] See Fraser, *The Gunpowder Plot: Terror and Faith in 1605*, 125-27; Hogge, *God's Secret Agents, passim.* See also Marie Rowlands, "Recusant Women," in *Women in English Society 1500-1800*, ed. Mary Prior (New York: Routledge, 1985), 149-80.

[599] See Arthur F. Marotti, *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy: Catholic and Anti-Catholic Discourses in Early Modern England* (Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 2005), ch. 2 ; Frances E. Dolan, *Whores of Babylon.*

[600] On the legal issues involving female recusancy, see Dolan, *Whores of Babylon*, 60-72.

While Dolan still accepts that it was, to all intents and purposes, a males-only conspiracy, she also asserts an unsubstantiated claim that "many" women were imprisoned after the plot was discovered (45).[601] We know little about women who may have been arrested for participating in the Midlands revolt; however, two female members of a prominent Catholic family were more seriously implicated by having hidden Father Garnett and other priests. Anne Vaux and her widowed sister Eleanor Brooksby were both questioned, but Vaux was involved more directly in the conspiracy through her personal devotion to Garnett. Arrested in the immediate aftermath of the plot, she was questioned and released on the bond of Lewis Pickering, but was rearrested for corresponding in orange juice with Garnett and not released until after his execution. [602] Protestants seem to have enjoyed speculating about possible sexual improprieties between this woman and the priest, and Garnett apologized to her on the scaffold for having involved her in scandal.[603] According to Mark Nicholls, the sisters continued to shelter priests until Eleanor's death in 1625, and Anne "kept what

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[601] BL Add. MS 11,402, f. 108r lists nine women arrested on 16 November, mostly wives of conspirators and suspected conspirators, as well as Anne Vaux (Dorothie Grant, Eliz: Cole, Mary Morgan, Martha Percie, Dorothy Wright, Margaret Wright, Mrs. Rookewood, Mistress Key, and Mistress Vaux).

[602] Lewis Pickering's connections with the plot are worth further investigation. Pickering was a puritan courtier who was accused of pinning a libel on the hearse of John Whitgift in 1604/05. According to the W. Perkins who provided the story John Vicars tells in the prefatory materials to *Mischief's Mystery* (1617), Pickering was brother-in-law to Robert Keyes, from whom he learned of trouble brewing among the Catholics. He tried to warn James early in 1605 but was unsuccessful. The plotters planned to use him to have the plot blamed on the puritans. For the details of Vicars's story, see Ch. 3. Pickering stood bond for both Mrs. Keyes as well as Anne Vaux, lending credibility to Perkins's identification of him as Keyes's brother-in-law (BL Add. MS 11,402, f. 108^{r}). Why Pickering would have stood bond for Anne Vaux, however, remains unclear.

[603] *A True and Perfect Relation*, Fff2^{v}.

amounted to a school for the sons of Catholic gentlefolk" ("Anne Vaux") in Derbyshire until the mid-1630s.

Anne Vaux has left few traces on the historiography of the plot; however, many of the plays associated with the plot feature women in political roles, often involving conspiracy. Lady Macbeth, King Lear's daughters, and Lucretia Borgia all play active roles in the male world of politics. In contrast, Jonson's Celia and Marston's Sophonisba are powerless victims of male conspiracy. In Dekker's *Whore of Babylon* the virtuous Protestant queen is juxtaposed with her evil double, the Roman church, making women both conspirators and victims.[604]

As several critics have noticed, Jonson gives his women larger and more ambivalent roles in *Catiline* than did his Roman sources. Christopher Gaggero observes that "While Sallust ... makes Fulvia a porous and motiveless vessel used by men to convey information between them, Jonson transforms her into a retentive *agent*, who acquires and trades intelligence and states her reasons for doing so" (412). Fulvia's statement of her motives to Cicero, however, is a lie, for she has revealed the conspiracy from personal jealousy rather than from any concern for the state. What is more interesting perhaps is that both Catiline and Cicero treat women not simply as functionaries but as equals. Catiline in the first act gives Aurelia a role parallel to his own, making her a partner in his conspiracy. In Act 3, when he asks if she has the women prepared and she assents, he tells

[604] Regina Buccola suggests that in this play the two come close to collapsing into each other, but this seems unlikely to have been Dekker's intention ("Virgin Fairies and Imperial Whores: The Unstable Ground of Religious Iconography in Thomas Dekker's *The Whore of Babylon*," *Marian Moments in Early Modern British Drama*, ed. Regina Buccola and Lisa Hopkins (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007, 141-60).

her: "you have your instructions: Ile trust you with the stuffe you have to work on. You'll forme it?" (3. 544-46). In the act of procreation, men were supposed to provide the matter and women the form.[605] Catiline, however, shares with Aurelia the "power to melt, / And cast in any mould" (1.448-49). In the same way, Cicero later makes Fulvia his colleague in exposing the conspiracy. While Dolan suggests that it is sexual activity that enables women to participate in public life, this seems an oversimplification of what actually happens in the play. At the end of Act 1, the Chorus offers an indictment of Roman women:

> Her women weare
> The spoiles of nations, in an eare,
> Chang'd for the treasure of a shell;
> And, in their loose attires doe swell
> More light then sailes, when all windes play (1.555-59)

He then admits, however, that the men are worse than the women and even suggests a possible gender inversion. Fulvia's call for a pearl acquired in exchange for sexual favours to be put in her ear at the beginning of the second act validates the Chorus's observation. Fulvia's ability to command such wealth depends upon male desire as much as female immorality.

But the women are not only immoral Roman matrons; they also appear to be English recusants. The opening of Act 2 with Fulvia at her toilet first raises this suspicion. Face painting, particularly when it hides decay, is associated with

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[605] Chapter 3 offers a discussion of how this idea was expressed in post-plot imagery of monstrous births.

Catholicism through the image of the Whore of Babylon.[606] Galla reports a rumour that Sempronia "paints, and hides / Her decayes very well" (2.61-62), yet she defends the older woman of the charge, insisting that she uses such natural cosmetics as bread and milk to enhance her complexion. The women also attack Catiline's wife for dressing in so much finery "that her selfe / Appeares the least part of her selfe" (2.74-75). The Roman church is likewise frequently accused of cloaking its theological errors under rich furnishings. Aurelia, like the church, is more likely to be hiding moral than physical decay, since Catiline has committed a series of heinous crimes in order to marry her.

That these women represent female Catholicism is suggested in a second way. Curius accuses Fulvia of tricking him by feigning overcautiousness. Pretending to fear a jealous husband, she has "runne often to the dore, / Or to the windowe, frome strange feares that were not" (2.255-56), or she has had her "well taught wayter, here, come running, / And crye her lord, and hide [Curius] without cause, / Crush'd in a chest, or thrust vp in a chimney" (2.262-64), when her husband was actually at his farm or could have been bribed into silence. The act of hiding a man could, of course, be what it appears to be, the concealment of a lover, but in early Jacobean London it was as likely to suggest hiding priests. Curius's mention of bribery heightens the suspicion that Jonson intends the latter

[606] On the representation of face-painting in early modern England, see Frances Dolan, "'Taking the Pencil out of God's Hand': Art, Nature, and Face-Painting in Early Modern England," *PMLA* 108.2 (1993), 224-39; Crystal Downing's rejoinder to Dolan, "Face Painting in Early Modern England," *PMLA* 109.7 (1994), 119-20; Jo Eldridge Carney, "'God Hath Given You One Face, and You Make Yourselves Another': Face Painting in the Renaissance," *Lamar Journal of the Humanities* 21.2 (1995), 21-34; Annette Drew-Bear, "Face-Painting in Ben Jonson's Plays," *Studies in Philology* 77 (1980), 388-401. It is possibly yet another reflection of the disregard for the women's parts in *Catiline* that Drew-Bear does not mention this scene in her survey of face-painting in Jonson's plays.

as well as the former meaning, since offering a husband money to conceal his wife's infidelity makes no real sense. In this way, Fulvia retains the upper hand in the relationship both by making herself responsible for Curius's safety and by withholding herself from him. She rewards his foolishness in divulging his participation in the conspiracy to her with betrayal to Cicero. The Roman women, then, are fundamental to Catiline's plot, just as the women who hid priests were crucial to the success of the Catholic mission.

Aurelia, like many recusant wives, works in concert with her husband, but her role must not be suspected.[607] Catiline tells her that his fellow conspirators "must not see, / How farre you are trusted with these priuacies" (1.188-89). Sempronia too operates independently, writing letters in support of Catiline's bid for the consulship, but she works at night. Just as her beauty may be unnatural, so her writing may be an unnatural act of feminine rhetorical skill and political participation. Dolan observes that the play depicts women as underminers from within who cannot be trusted by either side. They are, as she notes, never punished for their roles in the conspiracy. Thus, "Jonson's depiction of female traitors is as uncertain as his own shifting and irrecoverable relationship to Catholicism" (59). Women, and particularly Catholic women, may conceal their vicious actions with shows of virtue.

Like Catiline, however, the women seem to be threatened with a ghostly afterlife. Act 2 begins with Fulvia complaining of a noxious odour in her rooms

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[607] Dolan points out that many Catholic men attended Church of England services with sufficient regularity to avoid penalty while their wives maintained Catholic practices for children and servants in the home (*Whores of Babylon*, 69-70).

that recalls the "dire vapor" (1.12) that characterizes Sylla's ghost, while Sempronia approves Fulvia's tooth powder because of its pleasant scent. In Act 3, when Fulvia confides her secret to Cicero, she tells him that

> The extreme horror of it almost turn'd mee
> To aire, when first I heard it; I was all
> A vapor, when 'twas told me: And I long'd
> To vent it any where. (3. 288-91)

Fulvia's assertion that she has become "all / A vapor" after hearing of the plot seems to prefigure her actual disappearance from the play at the end of the act. Ironically, however, Cicero goes on to suggest that she will have eternal fame, not merely while she lives,

> But dead, her very name will be a statue!
> Not wrought for time, but rooted in the minds
> Of all posteritie: when brasse, and marble,
> I, and the *Capitol* it self be dust! (3. 352-55)

But this promised memorialization is curiously immaterial, and Cicero conveniently forgets Fulvia once she has supplied him with her information. Jonson's audience, however, might recall that in his speech at Garnett's trial, Northampton, conflating two different Fulvias, allowed her the final revenge of "thrusting needles into the tongue of *Cicero* (after hee was dead)" not for this

memory lapse but for "his sharpe inuectiues against / *Anthonie*" (Aaa3^{r-v}).[608] Female ambition, like its male counterpart, has a lengthy afterlife.

And while it is to ambition rather than religion that Jonson attributes Catiline's plot—and by extension, the Gunpowder Plot—both sides claim the stamp of providential approval. Directing his first address not to Catiline but to the city of Rome itself, Sylla's ghost seems to delight in cataloguing Catiline's crimes, both past and future, but he claims to speak not for himself but on behalf of "*Fate*" which will have Catiline "pursue / Deedes, after which, no mischiefe can be new" (1.43-44). In the opening of his first speech, Catiline too exults that Rome's fate has been "decree'd" (1.73), but he maintains a pragmatic attitude towards religion, using it to stoke the fires of ambition in Lentulus by hiring "flatt'ring AVGVRES" (1.139) to interpret "a vaine dreame, out of the SYBILL's bookes" (1.135) or to ensure the loyalty of his followers through the theatrical gesture of drinking a sacrament with a slave's blood.[609] As they await this ceremony, the conspirators debate the meaning of a series of providential signs—unnatural darkness, groans that seem to come from the city itself, and finally the fiery light above the Capitol—uncertain whether these signs predict their success or failure. While Catiline insists that Providence, or Fate, is on his side, so does Cato. In Act 3 when the Chorus announces that "The voice of CATO is the voice of *Rome*," Cato responds: "The voice of *Rome* is the consent of heauen" (3.60-

[608] De Luna suggests that both Jonson and Northampton incorrectly believed the two Fulvias to be the same person (*Jonson's Romish Plot* 78 and n. 15 and 16). Northampton's inclusion of this anecdote indicates some anxiety about the consequences of placing one's rhetorical talents at the service of the state.

[609] Catiline, however, does seem to be somewhat convinced by his own rhetoric later in the play, particularly when he insists upon his soldiers reverencing the silver eagle of his standard.

61). Cicero too believes that the gods would not "sleepe" (3.389) while the state they founded is endangered. As Cato and Cicero disagree on their response to the treason at the end of this act, Cato uses the sudden onset of thunder and lightning to threaten Cicero: "The gods / Grow angrie with your patience" (3.836-37). Doomed to death, Lentulus tells Cicero: "'Twas a cast at dice, / In FORTUNES hand, not long since, that thy selfe / Should'st haue heard these, or other words as fatall" (5.588-90). Petreius, recounting Catiline's final battle claims that the day grew dark "and *Fate* descended neerer to the earth" (5.635) as the final confrontation approached. It is, after all, *not* religion that binds men to be traitors, but ambition, the common thread that ties together the Essex revolt and the Gunpowder conspiracy.[610] Among the evils of ambition, Cicero declares that it "treades vpon religion" (3.251). But ambition is shared by conspirators and statesmen alike, and both may claim divine support for actions that are ultimately detrimental to the country.

Despite his reconversion to the Church of England, Jonson seems unconvinced by the Protestant providential interpretation of the plot that both religious and secular authorities encouraged. Instead, he suggests that religion may merely be a cover for ambition. In his speech at the trial of the lay plotters, Northampton had represented Digby as a man fallen through ambition, while at Garnett's trial he had attempted a compromise between the *de casibus* tradition

[610] De Luna was puzzled by Cicero's statement that "no religion binds men to be traitors" (3.369), insisting that the conspiracy is never given a religious motivation. Jonson has, however, put his finger here on the problem of interpretation shared by the Catholic and Protestant communities—the reason for which Catholics were put to death. Cicero, as the representative of the state, insists upon the ability to separate religious belief from subversive action, just as James had.

and the succession of Catholic plots by emphasizing the ambitions of the Catholic church after Pope Gregory VII. Thus he opened up the possibility of seeing the Catholic priests, as well as the lay conspirators, as men motivated by ambition, not for themselves but for the institution they represent. In the second half of *Catiline*, Jonson considers the problem of institutionalized ambition in the figures of both Cicero and Caesar.

Although she concluded that in her parallelograph Cicero must represent Cecil, De Luna complained that "Cicero was a poor choice, in terms of his historical personality, of a figure intended to 'shadow forth' Cecil: Cicero had a boastful manner, while Cecil's was quiet and self-effacing" (198). Once again, she has been misled by her insistence upon one-to-one correspondences, for she documents earlier Jonson's dislike of Northampton as well as Dekker's representation of the earl as "*A Papist Couchant*," a Catholic who "would pull down *stars*, but feares to clime" (C2^r^) in his *Double PP* pamphlet. Clearly, Cecil was not the only member of the Privy Council being libelled for his role in the arrests and trials of the plotters.[611] Given Jonson's concerns with the misuse of rhetoric and oratory in the play, it is quite possible that Cicero is intended to represent Northampton as well as Cecil.[612] Such a conflation of the two makes for

[611] Northampton's ambition was being satirized even before the plot. A 1603 libel (Bodleian MS Malone 23, 1a) criticizes Northampton's willingness to attend Protestant services since Elizabeth's death in exchange for a place on the Privy Council. Particularly interesting in relation to discussions of *Catiline* is the libel's appellation of Northampton as "Learned Curio," while the identification of James as "Basilius" recalls Day's play. Bellany and McRae (*Early Stuart Libels* BS) record four other manuscript copies of this libel, suggesting that it was very popular (BL MS Harley 3910, f. 11r; Folger MS V.a 339, ff. 189r; Huntington MS HM 198, 1.164; Rosenbach MS 1083/15 p. 153).

[612] De Luna, I think, is correct to see that some of the characteristics of Jonson's Cicero, such as his elaborate spy network, are more applicable to Cecil than to Northampton. Mark Nicholls

greater "plausible deniability" and also focuses upon the problem of ambition. In this play, Jonson has extended his satire of individual corruption in *Volpone* to an indictment of institutionalized ambition.

5.5 Ghosts of the Plot, 1611-1688

At this distance, we may never fully understand Jonson's intentions in revisiting the Gunpowder Plot in 1611, but the subsequent uses of the play may tell us at least a bit about what his contemporaries and later readers saw in his work. G. E. Bentley's list of allusions to the play demonstrates *Catiline*'s popularity in the later seventeenth century, while De Luna has traced its continued presence in anti-Catholic contexts.[613] This web of influence is worth further exploration for what it can tell us about how readers and viewers understood both the plot and the play in the later part of the century.

The play itself was reprinted not only in the folios of 1616 and 1640, but also in the quartos of 1635, 1669, and 1674 where it was tied to new playing contexts. The 1635 quarto reprinted the three original commendatory poems by Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher, and Nathaniel Field, which had blamed the original audience for failing to appreciate the play, thus perpetuating the emphasis upon Jonson's unpopular erudition. Dispensing with these commendations, the Restoration editions substituted a prologue and epilogue "To be Merrily spoke by

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suggests that the scope of Cecil's network has been exaggerated; however, we are dealing here more in perceptions than facts.

[613] See G. E. Bentley, *Shakespeare and Jonson: Their Reputations in the Seventeenth Century Compared* (Chicago: University of Chicago P, 1945); De Luna, *Jonson's Romish Plot*, 328. Dutton (*Jonson, "Volpone" and the Gunpowder Plot*) sees the popularity of both *Volpone* and *Catiline* as evidence that seventeenth-century readers understood that both were connected with the Gunpowder Plot, 141-50.

Mrs. *Nell*, in an *Amazonian* Habit" that seem to have been written to increase the play's popularity.[614] In the Prologue, the speaker offers herself as Muse to replace the dead poet. Although she urges men not to slight a female prologue, she directs most of her attention to courting the female members of the audience, with whom she "plots":

> *And ladies sure you'll vote for us entire,*
>
> *(This Plot doth prompt the Prologue to conspire)*
>
> *Such inoffensive Combination can*
>
> *But show, who best deserves true worth in Man.* (Prologue)

This prologue seems to neutralize the threat of female plotting by relegating it to comedy. In the epilogue, however, the speaker confesses that Jonson must have written for men, since he included none of the lighter elements of song and dance that appeal to women. Liking only one silent woman, Jonson scorned to write for a female audience. She adds, however, that "For all this, he did us, like Wonders prize; / Not for our Sex, but when he found us wise" (Prologue). Again, the prologue and epilogue appear to denigrate female political involvement while recognizing that women constitute an increasing segment of the theatrical audience. Moreover, the actress's Amazonian attire suggests unnatural female power, and audiences would have been aware that Nell Gwyn was mistress to Charles II. Given the anti-Catholic contexts in which the play was revived, her Catholicism must have added an additional layer of interpretation.

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[614] For the changing conventions of the prologue in Restoration drama, see *Prologues, Epilogues, Curtain-Raisers, and Afterpieces: The Rest of the Eighteenth-century London Stage*, ed. Daniel J. Ennis and Judith Bailey Slagle (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2007); *Of Books and Humankind: Essays and Poems Presented to Bonamy Dobree* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964).

Borrowings and imitations began even before the first stage revival of the play, with the 1627 print version of Fletcher's *Apollyonists*. While De Luna has catalogued Fletcher's possible borrowings, she fails to observe the significance of making Garnett rather than Catesby the ambitious plotter of the poem. Fletcher's poem, the first draft of which was probably written about 1611, is the first indication that the problem of ambition had been successfully transferred from the lay to the priestly plotters, likely as a result of Northampton's trial speech. In Thomas Campion's unpublished Gunpowder epic, tentatively dated between 1615 and 1618, another of the priests, Edward Oldcorne [Hall], takes this role. When Garnett addresses the conspirators after Fawkes's capture and tells them that the failure of the plot demonstrates that it was not ordained by God, Oldcorne overrules him, insisting that the merit of a plan should not be judged by its success or failure. It is at that point that the ghost of Ignatius appears before the assembled conspirators to incite them to both war and treachery and to unleash the Furies to assist them.[615] Campion's epic thus moves the demonic council of Fletcher's poem to earth and adds the feature of a ghost who, like Jonson's Sylla, incites others to conspiracy and rebellion. Although the poem was not published or translated into English until the twentieth century, it indicates increasing interest both in the rebellion that was to have accompanied the destruction of parliament, and in the representation of the priests as figures of ambition inciting their co-religionists to further crimes.

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[615] Thomas Campion, *De Puluerea Coniuratione (On the Gunpowder Plot) Sidney Sussex MS 59*, ed. David Lindley with translation and additional notes by Robin Sowerby, Leeds Texts and Monographs, New Series 10 (Leeds: Leeds Studies in English, 1987), Book 2.

While Bentley and De Luna focus upon borrowings in texts by Fletcher, Milton, Crashaw, and other "literary" writers, Susan Wiseman argues "that during the Civil War and Protectorate and at the Restoration, engagement with Jonson's texts was more complex and problematic than the listing of highly literary invocations suggests" (209). She considers, instead, popular allusions to Catiline in the play pamphlets of the Civil War period and concludes that "insofar as these plays are returning to Jonson's *Catiline* they transform the emotional dynamic of reception, not simply from theatre performance to reading – a large transformation in itself – but from tragedy into topical satire, melding news, politics and dramatic pleasures" (214). In many cases, she cautions, it is difficult to tell whether the allusion is to Jonson's conspirator or to a more appealing Machiavellian figure. It is worth noting, however, that all of these contexts, both popular and literary, were non-performative. Unlike the plays of 1606-07, Jonson's *Catiline* entered into dialogue primarily with non-dramatic texts.

While Wiseman observes that the play regained its tragic status after the Restoration, borrowings and imitations continued to be mostly satiric, particularly during the religious turmoil of the late 1670s and early 1680s. The most significant exception is Thomas Otway's *Venice Preserv'd*, which, as De Luna has shown, borrows both language and ideas from *Catiline* (*Romish* 349-53). Like Jonson's play, Otway's offers women ambiguous roles in the foiling of a plot that has been seen by modern critics as commentary upon various contemporary

events.[616] A series of poems in which ghostly Catholics appeared to new generations of their co-religionists, urging them on to new crimes against the Protestant state, also deliberately invoked *Catiline*. Many years ago, Harold Brooks compiled a list of "fictitious ghost" poems and recommended that a history of this genre be written.[617] Despite increasing interest in literary ghosts, however, there has yet to be a comprehensive study of this phenomenon in the seventeenth century.[618] Many of these popular poems cluster around the various plots late in the reign of Charles II. Of these, the best known is the first of John Oldham's "Satyres upon the Jesuits," which explicitly acknowledges, although in rather derogatory terms, its debt to Jonson. Weldon M. Williams notes that the major difference between Sylla's ghost and Garnett's is that the latter addresses a "cabal" rather than a lone man.[619] Fletcher's *Apollyonists* and Campion's epic provide the intermediate stages in the transformation of Jonson's classical ghost into Oldham's priestly spectre.

The lay plotters, however, could be similarly represented as spectral figures. An anonymous poem that appears to have been inspired by Oldham's has

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[616] The play also features the ghostly appearances of Pierre and Jaffeir to Belvidera, although these ghosts participate in the admonitory tradition. On the role of women in the play, see Katharine M. Rogers, "Masculine and Feminine Values in Restoration Drama: The Distinctive Power of *Venice Preserved*," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 27.4 (1985), 309-404; Elizabeth Gruber, "'Betray'd to Shame': *Venice Preserved* and the Paradox of She-Tragedy," *Connotations* 16.1-3 (2006/07), 158-71. For the debate about the play's politics, see: John Robert Moore, "Contemporary Satire in Otway's *Venice Preserved*," *PMLA* 43.1 (1928), 166-81; David Bywaters, "Venice, Its Senate, and Its Plot in Otway's *Venice Preserv'd*," *Modern Philology* 80.3 (1983), 256-63; Phillip Harth, "Political Interpretations of 'Venice Preserv'd,'" *Modern Philology* 85.4 (1988), 345-62.

[617] H. F. Brooks, "The Fictitious Ghost: A Poetic Genre," *Notes and Queries* 29 (1982), 51-55.

[618] The catalyst for this recent interest seems to have been Stephen Greenblatt's *Hamlet in Purgatory* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001).

[619] See Weldon M. Williams, "The Influence of Ben Jonson's *Catiline* upon John Oldham's Satyrs Upon the Jesuits," *ELH* 11.1 (1944), 38-62; on this group of satires more generally, see also Williams's "The Genesis of John Oldham's Satyres upon the Jesuits," *PMLA* 58.4 (1943): 958-70.

the ghost of Guy Fawkes appear before the poet on the morning of 5 November, a day celebrated by all true Protestants as the anniversary of the defeat of treacherous Catilines.[620] The immediate inspiration for the poem appears to be the Meal Tub plot, since Fawkes wants to see Elizabeth Cellier made a saint. [621] Once again, the poem illustrates the way in which Catholic ambition could be transferred between priests and lay plotters.

A later addition to this spectral genre is the anonymous "Scylla's Ghost: An Heroick Poem: Being a Satyr against Ambition, and the Late Horrid Phanatick Plot," published in 1684 along with an ode on Charles I's "Murder." What is particularly interesting about this poem is that, although it makes no direct reference to Jonson, it brings together a variety of themes from *Catiline*, particularly the evils of ambition and its relationship to religion. The poet begins by describing the age of Saturn, before ambition broke free from the vault in which it was chained and Jove slew his father. He then narrates a series of classical and biblical events caused by excessive ambition, in which "the more base, and weaker Woman can, / ... out-do the Lordly Creature Man" (3) for Athaliah "fir'd / With hot *Ambition*, and with *rage* inspir'd, / All branches of the Regal-Line cut down" (3).[622] Women, however, have also been the powerless victims of ambition and the wars it causes, in which "Virgins were ravish'd, aged Matrons made / Objects of Lust, and Victims to the Blade" (4). Now, the poet

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[620] Anon., *Faux's Ghost, or, Advise to Papists* (London, 1680), Wing F561.
[621] On Elizabeth Cellier, see Dolan, *Whores of Babylon*, ch. 4.
[622] Athaliah ruled Judah for six years after the death of her husband and promoted the worship of Baal (2 Chronicles 22.10-23-15). This allusion thus extends the poem's concerns with the relationship between ambition and religion.

envisions Sylla's ghost "Prompting the *Catilines* of this head-strong Age / To Plots, and Treasons, and Intestine Rage" (4). Sylla's spectre urges his "Pupils" (5) specifically to "*religious Villany*" (4). But religion, as in *Catiline*, is not so much the cause of plotting as a cover for it. Sylla's ghost advises:

> Tell them of dire Portents, and fearful Signs
> (Fit masks to cover all your black Designs)
> Of *Iago-Pilgrims*, *Armies in the Air*,
> And *Traytors*, though you tell not who or where;
> When you your selves the *real Traytors* are. (5)

Any plot may be "Cloath'd with *Religions* fairest out-side" (5) although "*Wealth* and *Interest* at the bottom lyes" (6).[623] The enemy has become not so much a particular faction as faction itself, with Catholics and puritans equally capable of fomenting rebellion for personal gain. The fall of Lentulus, who is identified with the Duke of Monmouth, Charles II's illegitimate Protestant son, compares with that of the angels. Cethegus appears to be his Scottish co-conspirator, the earl of Argyll. The poet compliments Charles II as Caesar and ends with a warning against repeating the horrors of civil war and regicide.

This anonymous poem traces to its conclusion the relationship between ambition and religion that Northampton's 1606 speech at Garnett's trial had introduced. While Northampton insisted upon narrating the development of secular ambition in the Catholic church, Jonson and his fellow playwrights recognized that Protestant statesmen were equally capable of using institutional

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[623] Like Jonson's ghost, this one leaves his "*loathsom, sulphurous Breath* behind" (*Scylla's Ghost* 6).

power for their own ends. The civil war and regicide proved that extreme Protestantism could be as dangerous to monarchy as the papal right of deposition. In 1970 Joel Hurstfield argued that the English government kept recollections of the Gunpowder Plot alive in order to justify anti-Catholicism ("Gunpowder" 116-17), but more recent scholars have challenged this view, suggesting that the plot was as much an embarrassment as a boon to political authorities.[624] This analysis of plot dramas suggests that the spectacles of trial and execution failed to contain the anxieties surrounding the plot. These included not only fears of Catholic plotting but also apprehensions about a Protestant state that created and represented itself in opposition to Catholicism. As in the development of the Anglo-Latin epic, satire offered the best opportunity of containment, but even this control was ultimately illusory.

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[624] See in particular Okines, "Why was there so little government reaction to the Gunpowder Plot?" *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 55.2 (2004), 275-92.

6. Conclusion: Echoes and Reverberations

The cultural impact of the Gunpowder Plot has generally been described in terms of the ritual practices, both official and unofficial, that marked the anniversary, with literary texts understood primarily as traces of these commemorative occasions. Studying these artifacts as texts, however, leads us to new insights about the relationship between the political and literary landscapes of seventeenth-century England. The literature of the Gunpowder Plot demonstrates first how the plot participated in a nascent public sphere, then how memories of it were cultivated for religio-poltical reasons, and finally how competing interest groups struggled to control the narrative of this significant incident in the nation's recent past.

The plot was discovered at a pivotal historical moment when the arrival of a Scottish monarch and the repudiation of Catholicism and growth of puritanism were redefining England politically, religiously, and geographically. For all the peacefulness of James Stuart's accession, tensions simmered beneath the surface as Englishmen were forced to compete for precedence at court with foreigners from the north, while Catholics and puritans both sought concessions from the new king. Whether seeking patronage by warning James against Catholic interests at court or fulfilling conciliar responsibilities by documenting the trials and punishments of the plotters, writers expressed anxieties about the dangers of ambition and the limits of religious toleration in the new reign.

At the beginning of this period, the Protestant nation defined itself largely in opposition to Catholicism, but individual religious identities were more fluid

than this binary indicates. Attempts to contain religious diversity manifested themselves in satire and invective directed particularly against English Catholics, and especially Jesuits, whose failure to reconcile their political and religious identities made them seem monstrous, or even demonic. The radicalization of puritanism and the growth of ceremonialism ultimately shattered the fragile Protestant consensus. Within this polarized political climate, associating one's enemies with the Gunpowder plotters identified them as both heretics and traitors.

At the same time, the availability of cheap print and the evolving role of sermons in post-Reformation culture were redefining the literary landscape. Both offered the state new opportunities to disseminate information about and interpretations of events, but by the 1620s both were becoming increasingly difficult to control. Even playwrights, subjected to the most direct censorship, had developed methods of commenting on current events by situating their dramas in other times and places. Not only could competing interpretations be disseminated to most subjects in these ways, but through reading and listening individuals became increasingly sophisticated interpreters, able to negotiate among multiple messages from various media and even within individual texts directed to more than one audience. Moreover, the development of the occasional political sermon recognized that ordinary people, even the illiterate, contributed, through thanksgiving and obedience, to ensuring their nation's peace and spiritual health. Between 1606 and 1641 writers and translators of Anglo-Latin Gunpowder epics increasingly reinforced this role, as their faith in the will and ability of a godly monarch to sustain God's favour declined.

Joel Hurstfield's contention that the Gunpowder Plot is not merely "the story of an explosion which never took place" but has in it "the basic ingredients of the whole human order" (100) is strikingly echoed in David Quint's observation that Milton revisited the event throughout his literary career because in it he "had found the recurring plot of history itself" (*Epic* 281). Seventeenth-century Englishpersons frequently viewed the Gunpowder Plot as a kind of microcosm of English history. But how they understood that history depended upon the narrative they constructed around it. Some saw England attacked repeatedly from outside by international Catholicism, while others saw it undermined from within by those who appeared to be English but subscribed to foreign religions. Whether viewed as the founding moment for a new Protestant Britain or merely a step on the road towards apocalypse, the plot continued to echo in the English historical and literary consciousness well beyond the seventeenth century.

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